

Answer Key

Literary Analysis SkillBuilder, page 62

Responses will vary. Possible responses are provided.

Identity of the Hitchhiker

- It is raining when Adams leaves New York. The hitchhiker always has drops of rain on his shoulders.
- Hitchhiker calls to Adams. His voice is spooky.
- Mechanic says that he rarely sees hitchhikers on the turnpike and that it hasn't rained all week.
- Hitchhiker looks the same every time Adams sees him and always has drops of rain on his shoulders.
- Music becomes ominous as Adams sees the hitchhiker at the end of the road in Ohio.
- Hitchhiker is standing where the road ends; Adams has trouble finding the new road.
- Hitchhiker seems to beckon Adams toward the approaching train.
- The girl can't see the hitchhiker even though Adams sees him clearly.
- The hitchhiker keeps up with the car even when it is traveling at high rates of speed.

Ending

- Adams begins to be unnerved by the appearance of the hitchhiker the third time he sees him.
- No one else sees the hitchhiker. Henry believes Adams is crazy.
- Adams feels unbearably alone and isolated.
- Adams decides to kill the hitchhiker by running him over, even if he almost kills himself doing so.
- The girl thinks Adams is crazy and incoherent.
- Music speeds up and becomes more sinister as Adams approaches Gallup.
- He refers to the countryside as lunar, lifeless, and cold—an unearthly place.
- There are several references to sleep throughout the play. His mother warns him not to fall asleep; he gets a good night's sleep in Pittsburgh; he wakes Henry out of sleep; the girl tells him he needs to sleep; he cannot sleep by the time he is in New Mexico.

Follow Up: Students' endings will vary. All endings should build on the mysterious presence of the hitchhiker and should account for the changes in Adams as he drives farther and farther.