

Name:

“Ransom of Red Chief” Study Questions

- 1) Why did Bill and Sam decide to kidnap a prominent citizen's child? Why did they decide on a semi-rural area rather than the city?
- 2) How did the little boy respond at first to being kidnapped?
- 3) The boy shows a decided change to being kidnapped. How does he now respond to it?
- 4) How does Red Chief respond to the offer of going home?
- 5) How did Sam wake up the next morning? What was Red Chief doing?
- 6) What did Sam expect to see when he looked toward Summit?
- 7) What does Bill think about Red Chief?
- 8) Why do you think Bill responds this way to the ransom letter? ...

Bill begged me tearfully to make the ransom fifteen hundred dollars instead of two thousand. "I ain't attempting," says he, "to decry the celebrated moral aspect of parental affection, but we're dealing with humans, and it ain't human for anybody to give up two thousand dollars for that forty-pound chunk of freckled wildcat. I'm willing to take a chance at fifteen hundred dollars. You can charge the difference up to me."

- 9) How do Bill and Sam sign the ransom letter? Could this signature be taken two ways? How?
- 10) Why did Sam go to Poplar Cove? What does Sam experience upon his return to the cave? Why does Sam ask Bill if there is heart disease in his family?
- 11) What proposal does Ebenezer Dorset offer Sam and Bill? How do Bill and Sam respond?
- 12) What is ironic about this story?