Short Story Analysis

PLOT
1. How does the story get started? What is the initial incident?
2. Are the events or incidents of the plot presented in flashback or in chronological order?
3. Briefly describe the rising action of the story.
4. What is the high point, or climax, of the story?
5. Discuss the falling action or close of the story.

CHARACTERS
6. Who is the single main character that the story centers around?
7. How does the author handle characterization?
   (1) by description?
   (2) through conversation of the characters?
   (3) in the actions of the characters?
   (4) using a combination of these methods?
8. Who tells the story? What point of view is used?
   (1) first-person?
   (2) omniscient?
9. Was there a villain in the story? A hero? A dynamic character?
10. Name one major personality trait of each leading character, and tell how the author makes the reader conscious of this trait.
11. Did you identify with any of the characters? Which ones? Why?

SETTING
12. Where does the primary action take place?
13. What is the time setting for the action? Period of history? Season? Time of day?
14. How much time does the story cover? A few minutes? A lifetime? How long?

CONFLICTS
15. Identify the conflict(s) that the leading character or characters confront.
16. How is the conflict resolved?

OTHER QUESTIONS
17. Explain the title. What is its relationship to the story?
18. What is the predominant element in the story: plot, characters, setting, theme?
19. What mood does this story create?
20. Does this story contain any of the following elements?
   (1) symbolism
   (2) incongruity
   (3) suspense
   (4) surprise ending
   (5) irony
   (6) satire
21. Can you find any examples of figurative language, such as simile, metaphor or personification?
22. Is this story realistic or true to life? Explain your answers by giving examples.
23. Does the story contain a single effect or impression for the reader? If so, what?
24. What is the general theme of the story? What is the underlying theme? Can you name any other stories with a similar theme?
25. Does the story have a moral? If not, what do you think the purpose of the author was?