

# Indian camp analysis essay



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## Indian Camp by Ernest Hemingway From “ In Our Time” (1925) Summary

The story begins at the break of dawn as Nick, his father, and his Uncle George are rowed across a lake by some local Indians.

They are on an emergency medical call. The boats arrive on shore and they soon come upon some shanties. Nick, his father, and his uncle enter the one nearest the road. Inside a pregnant Indian woman lies in agony on the lower berth of a bunk bed.

She screams with pain and terror. Despite two days of excruciating labor, the woman has not been able to deliver her child, and the local midwives are unable to help her. The woman’s husband is on the top bunk with a cut foot. Nick’s father explains to Nick that babies are supposed to be born head first but sometimes become turned around. He says that he may have to operate on this woman. When he does operate, several men must hold the woman down.

A boy is born. Nick’s father asks Nick if he likes being an intern. Nick lies and says he likes it fine. However, Nick refuses to watch his father sew up the woman.

Nick’s father says that the father of the baby must be very excited. He goes over to the father and pulls back his blanket. The father’s throat is slit and the razor lies next to him. Nick’s father tells Uncle George to take Nick away, but he does not do so before Nick sees his father tip the Indian father’s head back.

Nick's father apologizes for bringing him. Nick asks if women always have a hard time having babies. The answer from his father is no. Nick then asks why the man killed himself, to which his father replies that he must not have been able to stand things. Nick asks if many people kill themselves.

His father says no. Then, Nick asks if dying is hard. His father says that he thinks it is probably pretty easy. Character Analysis Nick is the protagonist of the story. I would guess that he is around twelve years old. Nick's father is a doctor and it seems he has the same career plans for his son.

Nick does not enjoy being an intern, contrary to what he tells his father. He looks away when his father sews up the woman, and shows no interest in his work (this seems to be autobiographical, as Hemingway's father was a doctor and Hemingway himself did not follow in his footsteps, as it was very normal to do in that time). Nick lies to his father so he won't disappoint him, and also to prove that he is brave, a man (masculinity being a major theme in the story, e. g. , the typically female act of childbirth is turned into a male-dominated situation). Nick is deeply affected by the death of the male Indian.

It's probably his first encounter with death. He asks his father whether it's normal for people to kill themselves and if it's hard to die. These questions are very adult. Yet Nick has a very childish thought at the end of the story, he doesn't believe he'll ever die. The contrast shows the transition from childhood to adulthood.