The contest

*Plot summary*

The story explores the mundanely of rural American life, using a beard contest as the event in which to explore the contest. The contest begins as something to pass the time initially and then snowballs into the all-encompassing event in the lives of the characters. It then disappears as quickly as it began and the characters return to their daily existence.

*Themes*

Masculinity –

* The story explores violent, physical and testosterone based types of masculinity.

Boredom & obsession –

* The story explores how boredom and a complete lack of outside influence from the outside world can lead to obsession with little events.

*Tone*

The tone of the piece is humorous and light-hearted. Throughout the story the narrator gently pokes fun at rural American life.

*Characters*

**Interestingly the story lacks any central character to follow. In its place the story makes the contest its protagonist. A number of character’s play supporting roles.**