O. Henry's "The Ransom of"
Before reading:

1. How would you expect a kidnapper to behave?
   - sneaky
   - cruel
   - mean
   - rough

2. What would it feel like to be kidnapped?
   - confused
   - terrified
   - scared

3. How would a parent feel if his or her child got kidnapped?
   - terrible
   - vengeful
In the first three paragraphs of page 1, the narrator shares that he and his partner have come up with the idea to kidnap someone. Why do they decide on the town of Summit?

They’re a group of harmless people who will not go after them.

It is a semi-rural community and they care for their children.

What is ironic about the town's name?

Summit means “highest point” or “top,” so you would expect a town of that name to be hilly or mountainous. Instead it turns out to be a flat town...“as flat as a flannel-cake.”
Do Now: Reread the first two pages of "The Ransom of Red Chief."
Underline and label examples of irony.
IRONY

The town is named Summit even though it is "flat as a flannel-cake."

Red Chief (the boy who is kidnapped) is not scared. He is having fun camping and does not want to go home.

Bill, the kidnapper, is scared of Red-Chief.

"Yes, sir, that boy seemed to be having the time of his life. The fun of camping out in a cave had made him forget that he was a captive, himself. He immediately christened me Snake-eye, the Spy, and announced that, when his braves returned from the warpath, I was to be broiled at the stake at the rising of the sun."

"We weren't afraid he'd run away."

When Sam, the other kidnapper, went to see what was happening in Summit he expected to see everyone in the town out looking for the missing child. But instead he saw a "peaceful landscape." No one was looking for the child.
Characterize Red Chief.

10-year-old boy
bold
funny
reckless
energetic
playful
bad
rowdy
sneaky
Do Now: Reread pages 10 and 11. What is ironic about how Ebenezer Dorset responds to the ransom note? Based on the text, why does he respond this way?

The kidnappers, Bill and Sam, pay Mr. Dorset the ransom money in order to bring the boy back home.

This is ironic because usually parents (Dorset) pay ransom money to get their children back.

Mr. Dorsett responds this way because he knows his son is hard to control and he suspects the kidnappers are sorry that they took him.
THE RANSOM OF RED CHIEF by O. Henry

Irony

Irony is a contrast or contradiction between what is stated and what is meant or between what is expected and what actually happens. “The Ransom of Red Chief” contains mostly situational irony, a contradiction between what happens and what is expected to happen. The story also contains examples of verbal irony, when a word or phrase is used to suggest the opposite of its usual meaning. Complete the chart with information from the story and your own experience as a reader.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What We Expect</th>
<th>What Happens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How we expect the kidnappers to behave:</td>
<td>Sam and Bill were friendly. They tried to play with Red Chief. Bill became scared of Red Chief.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sneaky cruel mean rough</td>
<td>Irony—kidnapper scared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How we expect Red Chief to react to the kidnapping:</td>
<td>Red Chief had the time of his life. He was having fun camping, telling stories and playing with Bill.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Irony—captive not scared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How we expect Red Chief’s father to react to the kidnapping:</td>
<td>Dorsett was not worried about his son. He demanded money to take him back.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>terrible vengeful</td>
<td>Irony—kidnappers pay ransom</td>
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</tbody>
</table>