

Bonnie and Clyde

(Drama) (1967)

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Major Characters

- Clyde Barrow**.....**Warren Beatty**
 A charming small-time professional criminal from Texas who decides to begin a new career as a bank robber after being released from prison. During the 1930s economic depression, he becomes famous as the leader of “The Barrows Gang.”
- Bonnie Parker**.....**Faye Dunaway**
 A young, beautiful and struggling waitress who decides to join Clyde in his life of crime, rather than continue working at her underpaid and boring job.
- C.W. Moss**.....**Michael J. Pollard**
 A poor and uneducated mechanic, who is also both sweet and smart, who decides to join Bonnie and Clyde because of the excitement.
- Buck Barrow**.....**Gene Hackman**
 Clyde’s brother, who had also served time in prison, who joins Bonnie and his brother in their new life of crime.
- Blanche**.....**Estelle Parsons**
 Buck’s wife, the daughter of a preacher (church speaker), who is nervous and very uncomfortable taking part in criminal activity.
- Captain Frank Hammer**.....**Denver Pyle**
 A Texan police officer who is captured by Clyde and his gang.
- Ivan Moss**.....**Dub Taylor**
 CW’s boss, who is very suspicious of CW’s life with Bonnie and Clyde.

Plot Summary

This film is the story of Clyde Barrow and Bonnie Parker, a couple of petty criminals who became famous throughout the United States after successfully robbing a series of banks between 1931 and 1934. Although they could be violent and dangerous, and in fact did kill several people, it is clear that a large part of the American public sympathized with them. Perhaps this is because as the depression caused great economic hardship throughout the

country, many people may have felt that robbing a bank was not such a bad thing to do. Regardless, this film did much to insure that the real Bonnie and Clyde would remain as two of the truly legendary figures of American cultural history.

The story begins when Bonnie, a beautiful Dallas waitress, catches Clyde trying to steal her mother's car. He is a small time Texas thief who had just been released from prison, but Bonnie sees in him a handsome and charming young man, and one who can take her away from her life of poverty and boredom. Soon, the two get to know each other and fall in love, and then decide to rob every bank they can from Texas to Missouri. Of course they don't mean to cause any harm, but they do. Lots.

After a while, they join forces with CW Moss, an uneducated but sweet and smart young mechanic. Soon after that, they are joined by Clyde's brother Buck, a recently released criminal himself, and Buck's wife Blanche, who is conservative, nervous and of little use to the others. Still, they are a team, and together they become known as "The Barrows Gang," the nation's most wanted bank robbers. And robbery after robbery, shoot-out after shoot-out, they become the objects of increasing media attention and public curiosity, in large part because they really did seem unstoppable. At least for a while.....

A Brief Note on the Use of Non-Standard English Used in this Film:

Bonnie and Clyde were poor and undereducated, and much of their English was grammatically incorrect. Thus, while you should always try to understand everything that is said, you should also try to avoid saying the following types of errors, all of which are common throughout the film:

"I ain't seen him."

Still widely used, but it sounds terrible. Instead, you should use the conjugated form of "to be" or "to have" (In this case, "haven't").

I don't want you people to worry about nothing.

This movie is filled with double (and even triple) negatives.

It don't mean a damn to them?

A non-standard (although arguably logical!) conjugation.

Where do you think she could have went?

Understandable confusion between the present perfect form (went) and the past participle (gone).

Some Words and Expressions that You May not Know

Bonnie sees Clyde getting ready to steal her mother's car.....and so begins a great romance.

Clyde Barrow was born to a family of sharecroppers.

Poor farmers who gave a share of what they grew to the land owner in exchange for paying rent. There are few if any left in the U.S.

He became a small-time thief.

A way of describing an unimportant criminal who robs and steals.

He served two years for armed robbery and was released on good behavior in 1931.

“Armed robbery” is the act of robbing a person or business with a gun. If a prisoner is “released on good behavior,” they are let out of prison earlier than their full prison sentence because they have behaved well while they were there.

Hey, boy, what are you doing with mama's car?

“Mama” is a very old-fashioned way of saying mom (It was particularly common in the American South).

Ain't you ashamed?

A very non-grammatical way of saying “am not, aren't” or “isn't”. You should recognize it, but avoid saying it. Very common in this film.

Oh come on, be serious. :: What you talking about?

I've been thinking about buying me one.

“Come on” is the most versatile phrasal verb in English, often taking on the meaning of the words that immediately come before or after it. Here, it does mean “be serious.” Note that the correct way of saying the second sentence is “...thinking about buying *myself* one.”

Bull!

A shorter alternative word for “bullshit,” which is one of the great obscenities in English. Both refer to lies, half-truths, distortions, etc...

What kind of work do you do? :: **None of your business**.

A very common way of telling a person that they are asking for personal information that you do not want to tell or admit.

What line of work are you in when you're not stealing cars?

One way of saying "What kind of work do you do?"

I'm looking for suitable employment at the moment.

A useful adjective meaning proper, appropriate or correct.

My, my...the things that turn up in the streets these days.

"My my" is a colloquial way of expressing disappointment or other emotion. If something unexpectedly "turns up," it suddenly appears.

What do y'all do for a good time around here? Listen to the grass grow?

"Y'all" is a common way of saying "You people" in the Southern United States (It is a literal contraction of "you+all").

I chopped two toes off that foot with an axe.

"To chop" something in two is to cut it into pieces. An "ax" is a large cutting tool that is often used to cut trees and wood.

Why?! :: To get off work detail.

In this context, "to get off" something is to no longer be forced to do it. "Work detail" refers to jobs that prisoners are required to do in prison.

Shoot! I knew you never robbed any place, you faker.

"Shoot" is another colloquial way of expressing emotion such as anger or disappointment. A "faker" is a person who pretends to do something, but doesn't really ("To fake" is also a useful verb).

Bet you wouldn't have the gumption to use it.

"Gumption" is an educated word for courage, or perhaps nerve.

Hey, slow down! Take it easy!

A very widely used way of saying relax, although here it is Clyde's way of telling Bonnie to not be so sexually assertive or forceful.

Cut it out!

An excellent colloquial expression which simply means "stop that!"

I might as well tell you right off; I ain't much of a lover boy.

To do something "right off" is to do it first before anything else, or perhaps immediately. A "lover boy" is Clyde's way of referring to a man who is sexually skilled or experienced.

I never saw no percentage in it.

Clyde's strange way of telling Bonnie he isn't interested in sex because he doesn't see a way to make money at it!

Your advertising is just dandy. Folks would never guess you didn't have a thing to sell.

"Dandy" is a very old-fashioned but still used word for good or agreeable. "Folks" is a widely used way of saying people, or parents.

If all you want is a stud service, you get on back to West Dallas.

A "stud" is a slang word for a sexually skilled and strong man. (It is also used more formally to refer to male animals, especially horses, that are used to get females pregnant).

It don't make a damn to them if you're waiting on tables or picking cotton.

"It don't make a damn" is Clyde's way of saying it doesn't make a difference to them, or more specifically, they don't care. "To wait tables" is to work as a waiter or waitress in a restaurant.

You and me travelling together; we could pick a path clean across this state.

A "path" is a trail or passage way. This is Clyde's way of saying that if they stay together, they can steal, rob and travel all across Texas.

How would you like to go walking into the dining room of the Adolphus Hotel in Dallas, wearing a nice silk dress and have everybody waiting on you?

"Silk" is an expensive cloth or fabric. This is Clyde's way of asking Bonnie if she'd like to be so rich that can she stay and eat in fancy Dallas hotels.

You got a right to that! :: Where did you figure all that up?!

"To figure" something is to think it, and thus to "figure up" something is to think it up, or think about it, although this is rare today.

You may be the best damn girl in Texas!

A very common and somewhat crude filler word to express emotion such as anger, surprise, or in this case, excitement.

Bonnie and Clyde become a team in crime.

You went to school, but you didn't take to it much because you were a lot smarter than everybody else.

"To take to" something is to become interested in it, or to start to like it.

You just up and quit one day.

"To up and quit" is to suddenly leave, though this is very dated.

A cement plant.

A factory where cement is produced. Cement is a hard material made from wet powder that is used to make sidewalks, buildings and other structures.

Those drivers come in to eat your greasy burgers...and they kid you and you kid them back, but they're stupid and dumb boys...with big old tattoos on.

A "greasy burger" is a hamburger that is fatty. "To kid" a person is to make fun of them, or to talk to them in a joking manner. A "tattoo" is a drawing that is burned into a person's skin.

All they're ever trying to do is to get into your pants, whether you want them to or not.

"To get into a person's pants" is a slangy way of saying to have sex with them.

You're a knock-out!

A colloquial expression for a truly beautiful woman ("To knock out" a person is to hit them so hard that they lose consciousness).

We came in this one! :: That doesn't mean we have to go home in it!

A great piece of dialog which shows Clyde's attitude toward stealing any car or anything that he happens to like.

These accommodations ain't particularly deluxe.

If a meal, hotel or any other product is "deluxe," it is of the highest quality. A widely used word in advertising.

If they after us, I want the first shot.

In this case, a "shot" is a gun shot, or the act of shooting. Note Clyde will occasionally drop the verb to be.

That set her spinning.

"To set a person spinning" is to get them emotionally excited or upset. To spin is to turn around in circles while staying in the same place.

I'm gonna get you a Smith and Wesson. It will go in your hand easy.

Note that "going to"----> "gonna" in rapid speech. A "Smith and Wesson" is a well known brand of hand gun.

They moved us off; Now it belongs to them.

In the economic depression of the 1930s, it was common for banks to force people to leave their homes if they could not make their mortgage (home loan) payments.

That's a pitiful shame. :: You're darn right.

"Pitiful" is another word for pathetic, or perhaps beyond hope.

"Darn" is a gentler way of expressing emotion than damn.

Y'all mind? Hey Davis, come on over here.

"Do you people mind...?"

Your mama could take this bank!

Note the versatility of the verb "to take." This is Clyde's way of saying the bank is so easy to rob that even Bonnie's mother could do it.

This is a stick-up. Just take it easy and nothing's gonna happen to you.

A "stick-up" is the actual act of robbing a bank, business or person, while using a gun (People are told to stick up their hands in the air).

It was a bank, but we failed three weeks ago.

When a bank or business "fails," it goes out of business because it can't pay its debts.

Get the hell out of here!

A common and colloquial way to simply say "Leave!"

You try to get something to eat around here and some son-of-a-bitch comes up to you with a meat cleaver.

A "son-of-a-bitch" is a mean or abusive person. Crude and colloquial.

I ain't against him!

Clyde's way of saying that he had nothing personal against the person he just tried to rob, and for him, it was just part of his "job."

CW joins the gang, and soon a bank robbery goes terribly wrong.

Dirt in the fuel line just blowed it away.

The "fuel line" for a car is the tube that takes gas to the engine.

In this case, "to blow away" something means to greatly hurt or destroy it, but note that the correct past tense should be "it *blew* it away."

This is a four cylinder Ford coupe.

Automobiles usually have four, six or eight cylinders, which are a part of the engine (Note that Bonnie and Moss pronounce coupe with an accented "e" at the end [coupe-AY]), but in fact it should be with just a "p" sound at the end of the word).

It's a pity. We sure could have used a smart guy like you who knows so much about automobiles.

Another way of saying "It's ashamed."

Are you a good driver, boy? :: Yeah, I reckon I am.

"Reckon" is a very dated and incorrect way of saying to think.

You think you got the guts for our line of work?

To have "the guts" to do something is to have the courage to do it (Guts are literally stomach intestines).

I spent a year in reformatory! :: A man with a record!

A "reformatory" is a place where kids who get into trouble are sent to prevent them from becoming criminals. In this case, a "record" is a "criminal record," which lists how many times a person has been arrested and convicted of various crimes.

I know you got the nerve to short change old ladies coming in for gas...but have you got what it takes to pull bank jobs with us?

To have "the nerve" to do something is to have the courage or guts to do it. "To short change" a customer or client is to intentionally give them back less than what they are owed, usually in a way that they don't notice. If a person "has what it takes" to do something, they have the skills and attitude necessary to do it, and to "pull a bank job" is to be part of a bank robbery.

I'm afraid we're overdrawn again.

If your checking account is "overdrawn," you do not have enough money to pay for all the checks you have written.

Come on everybody! Get it up here!

This is Clyde's way of telling the bank employees to put their money clearly on the counter so that they can easily grab it.

What the hell are you doing parking this car?!

Commonly added to WH questions in order to show emotion such as anger or frustration.

On account of you, I killed a man, and now we're all going to be wanted for murder.

A grammatically interesting way of saying "Because of you...."

Do a dumb-ass thing like that again and I'm going to kill you!

A very slangy adjective meaning really stupid.

They're going to be running after me
and anybody who's running with me.

Clyde's way of warning Bonnie that since he is wanted for murder, she will also be wanted for murder because they are seen as a team by the police (even though Clyde is the one who actually killed a person).

That's murder, and it's going to get **rough**.

When describing a situation in general, a good word for difficult, or emotionally or physically exhausting.

***Buck and Blanche join the others, and soon the entire
"Barrows Gang" faces the law in a small Missouri town.***

You're filling out there boy! Must be that prison food.

If a person "fills out," they gain weight and become fatter.

It's the face powder that gives a man interest,
but it's the baking powder that keeps him home.

"Face powder" is used as makeup or facial cosmetic, and "baking powder" is used for cooking. A silly observation which is saying that men are first attracted to women because of their physical beauty, but they stay attracted in the long run because of a woman's ability to cook.

Hey sis, I'm just so glad to meet you.

A short and slangy way of saying sister.

How did you find us here in this neck of the woods?!

A strange expression that implies a part of the world that is distant, hidden and isolated from other places.

I'm a mess. Been driving all day.

If a person is "a mess," this means they are either very upset, exhausted or in a very bad situation. Note again the dropping of the pronoun "I."

I declare! I asked you not to take my picture.

A very old fashioned way of expressing great emotion and disapproval.

Come on, I want to have a chat with you.

A "chat" is an excellent word for a small conversation.

Bonnie? She's a peach.

A very old-fashioned way of referring to an attractive or nice woman.

Is she as good as she looks? :: She's better.

If these words are two men referring to a woman, then they are talking about how she has sex.

He put me on the spot. I had to.

"To put a person on the spot" is to force them to quickly make an important decision without time to think (In this case, Clyde is saying he had to kill the banker because he had no choice).

That time you broke out of jail; Is that true that she talked you into going back?

"To break out of jail" is to escape from it. If a person "talks you into" doing something, they convince you that you should do it.

I figured we'd all drive up to Missouri.

"To figure" is a common colloquial way of saying to think.

We have a nice little place to hole up in. We have us a regular vacation.

"To hole up in" a place is to stay there for a long period of time, hiding from the police or others. People often hole up in an isolated house.

I did a little toe cutting. That ain't but half of it.

Clyde's slangy way of saying he did a lot more than what he had just said ("That's only half the story...").

Breaking those damn rocks with a sledge hammer night and day.

A "sledge hammer" is a giant hammer-like tool that is used to break huge objects like rocks into small pieces. Clyde is describing the type of "work" he was forced to do in prison.

The very next week, I got paroled.

If a prisoner is "paroled," they are let out of prison early, so long as they agree to certain conditions, such as meeting a parole officer every week.

I walked out of that God-forsaken jail on crutches.

If a place is "God-forsaken," it is horrible (because God has abandoned it). "Crutches" are the large supporting sticks or poles that people place between their underarms and the ground to help them walk (especially if they have a broken leg).

Ain't life grand?

Clyde's colorful way of saying that life is great.

Dairy farm.

A farm where cows are raised to produce milk, cheese and other dairy products.

She's so sick and weakly...I want you to try and persuade her to take a little brandy, just to keep her spirits up.

A person who is "weakly" is weak or fragile, but this is no longer used.

"To persuade" a person to do something is to convince them to do it.

"Brandy" is a type of smooth hard liquor, and to "keep a person's spirits up" is to keep them happy or in a good mood.

Ma's a teetotaler.....she wouldn't touch a drop.

A teetotaler is a person who never drinks liquor, even a drop.

That's the doc.

"Doc" is a short and slangy word for a doctor.

He doctored it all up with the brandy, the fresh milk.

In this case, "to doctor up" something is to fix or change it so that it will taste better.

She says, son, whatever you do, don't sell that cow!

This is the "punch line," or final line, to the joke that Buck is telling.

Mama wants to keep the cows for milk, not knowing that what she really likes is the brandy that the doctor put inside the milk.

I gave him a month's rent in advance. We're all set.

If everything is "all set," then everything has been taken care of and the plan can move forward.

A frigidaire, not an icebox!

A popular brand of refrigerator.

You sure can play checkers.

A type of board game that is popular among children.

You need a haircut. You're looking just like a hillbilly, boy.

A "hillbilly" is a negative slang word for an uneducated person who grows up in the country (as opposed to a big city).

Oh, mercy me, don't!

This is a very dated and Southern US way for expressing great emotion or excitement.

"You've heard of a woman's glory being spent on a downright cur...

These are the first words of Bonnie's poem: A woman's "glory" is her greatness, beauty or honor. A "downright cur" is a complete jerk or worthless human being. Cur is a rarely used but still powerful word.

....Now Sal was a gal of rare beauty,
though her features were coarse and tough..”

A “gal” is a woman or girl (the female version of guy, though much more rarely used). A person’s “features” are usually their physical characteristics, such as height, weight or beauty. If a person is “coarse,” they are rough in manner, or physically lumpy or aged, and not smooth or soft. “Tough” is strong or hard.

She was cock-eyed and had a harelip and no teeth!

“Cockeyed” is a slangy way of saying cross-eyed, which is the adjective that describes a person whose eyes are both turned in toward their nose. A “harelip” is another word for a cleft lip, which is a birth defect that leaves the lip looking very deformed.

“She never once faltered from beauty to play on the up and up....

“To falter” is to stumble, walk with great difficulty, or grow weak. To do something “on the up and up” is to do it honestly.

....Sal told me this tale in the evening...”

A “tale” is a story.

I thought you would be happier if I got shot! ::

Yeah, it would have saved us a lot of trouble!

Note that in this context, “to save” means to prevent or avoid.

Blanche, I killed a guy! Now we’re in this!

Buck’s way of saying they are all wanted now for the crimes that he and Clyde had done.

Just shut up your big mouth! :: Cut it out, Bonnie!

In this case, a way of saying “Stop saying that!”

Get rid of her! :: I can’t; she’s Buck’s wife!

“To get rid of” a person is to force them to leave or go away, or if in the right context, to kill them.

She’s nothing but a dumb, stupid, back-country hick!

A “back-country hick” is a very uneducated person from the country. Hick is still a commonly used word, but this expression is rare.

You were just a West Dallas waitress.

Spent your time picking-up truck drivers!

In this context, “to pick up” a person is to try and meet and attract them, so that they will later become sexually or romantically involved.

Ignorant, uneducated hillbilly!...The only special thing about you is your peculiar ideas about lovemaking!”
 If a person is “ignorant,” they are uneducated or know very little. A “hillbilly” is a slang word for an uneducated person from the country. “Peculiar” is an excellent word meaning strange or bizarre.

A Texas Ranger is captured and released, and the Barrows gang continues to rob, steal and run.

Law enforcement officers throughout the Southwest are amazed at the... bandit Clyde Barrow and his yellow-haired companion, Bonnie Parker...
 In this case, “law enforcement officers” are the police, and possibly the FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation). If a person is “amazed,” they are filled with surprise, shock or wonder. A “bandit” is an armed robber.

...who continue to elude their would-be captors, since engaging in a street battle in Jospin, Missouri, slaying three of their number.
 To elude” the police means to successfully avoid being captured by them. “Captors” are those who try to capture or arrest others. “To engage” in a battle is to take part in it, and “to slay” a person is to murder or violently kill them.

They have been credited with robbing the Mesquite Bank in the mentioned city and the JJ Landry oil refinery in Arps, Texas.
 “Aforementioned” is another way of saying previously mentioned. An oil “refinery” is where oil is turned into gas and other products.

The fast travelling Barrows have been rumored to have a hand in the robbing of two Piggly Wiggly stores.
 A “rumor” is a piece of news that travels quickly between people, although it’s not clear it is true. “To have a hand in” something is to take part in it (Piggly Wiggly is the name of a grocery store).

“Lone cop arrests two officers in hunt for Barrow”
 These are the words in a newspaper headline: A “lone cop” is one individual policeman, and in this case, “officers” are police officers.

A V-8 sedan.
 A “V-8” is a type of car engine, and a sedan is a type of car that usually has four doors and a back seat for passengers.

It took a lot of telephoning and explaining to convince the motorcycle cop that his captives were two highway patrolmen...

A “motorcycle cop” is a policeman who drives around on a motorcycle. “Captives” are people who are held prisoner by somebody, and the “highway patrol” are police officers employed by the State (Texas, Oklahoma, etc.) to drive on that state’s highways.

....and a blond haired stenographer from the highway patrol!

A “stenographer” is a person who writes down the words of speeches and then types them on a typewriter. The equipment is modernized, but the profession still exists in court rooms today.

Sheriff!

The highest ranking police officer in a police department.

Look here! We’re in the custody of Captain Frank Hammer; Frank here is a Texas Ranger.

To be “in the custody of” a person is to be under arrest, or held captive by them. A “Captain” is another military ranking or level, below that of Sheriff when discussing the police. The “Texas Rangers” were police that worked for the state of Texas (as opposed to cities such as Dallas).

I believe you got your spurs all tangled up there!

A “spur” is a metal object worn on a boot that cowboys use to get horses to move faster (The verb “to spur” means to encourage to act or move). If two things are “tangled up,” they are caught in each other so that they are hard to separate (such as two ropes or two articles of clothing).

I think Frank just figured on some easy pickings.

“To figure” is to think. “Easy pickings” is a slangy expression to describe anything that would be easy to do or accomplish (In this case, Frank thought it would be easy to capture the Barrows gang).

You ought to be home protecting the rights of poor folks.

This is an interesting line since Clyde always felt he was for “the people,” and that the police were just on the side of the rich.

We’ve got to discourage this bounty hunting for the Barrows gang.

A “bounty” is reward money that the police offer anyone who will help capture a criminal, and thus “bounty hunting” is the act of individuals trying to find and catch criminals in order to collect that money.

All of us just as friendly as pie.

A very dated expression to mean very friendly, although “easy as pie” is still used.

Buck, get the Kodak!

Kodak is a well known brand of camera.

See what come of your mischief, not doing your job.

“Mischief” is bad or naughty behavior that can cause trouble or damage (Note the dropping of the 3rd person s).

Next time, I’ll aim a little lower.

“To aim” a gun is to point it in a specific direction, at a particular target.

There I was, starring square into the face of death.

“To stare” is to look fixedly at something, and to “stare square into” something is to look directly into it. This is the speaker’s way of saying that he was convinced that he was going to die.

All I can say is that they did right by me and

I’m bringing a mess of flowers to their funeral.

“To do right by” somebody is a slangy way of saying to treat them well (A “mess of flowers” is a lot flowers, but this is never used).

I’m not going to risk my life in Oklahoma.

Note that state police officers are only required to serve in the states that they are hired (Here, the Texas Ranger didn’t want to cross the state border). Oklahoma is the state directly North of Texas.

Ain’t much, is it? :: Well, times are hard.

This is a reference to the economic depression of the 1930s (People will say that times are hard if the economy is bad).

Let’s get down to it.

A way of saying “Let’s start doing what we have to do” (In this case, dividing the money that they stole between the gang members).

I could have got killed, same as everybody,

and I’m wanted by the law, same as everybody.

In this film, “the law” almost always refers to the police. This is Blanche’s way of saying she deserves her share of the money, even though Bonnie thinks she hasn’t done anything to earn it.

I’m a nervous wreck, and that’s the truth.

A common expression to describe a person who is extremely nervous and perhaps about to have a nervous (psychological) breakdown. If a car or other machine is a wreck, it’s been completely destroyed.

I have to take sass from Miss Bonnie Parker. :: Hold your horses, Blanche; You're going to get your share.

"Sass" is a slangy word for disrespectful talk or attitude, although this is very rare (However the adjective "sassy," which means loud in style, defiant, or with a young and aggressive attitude, is still used).

I married the preacher's daughter and she thinks she's still taking up the collection.

A "preacher" is a minister or other official who gives speeches in church. In this context, "to take up the collection" is to ask members for money for the church.

***The Barrows Gang meet Eugene and Velma,
and then find themselves trapped by the law again.***

There's a hole in the oil pan....We've got to swipe another car if we want to get anywhere.

An "oil pan" is where the oil is held in the engine.

"To swipe" is a useful colloquial word meaning to steal.

Come on! Kick it in the pants!

In this case, a silly way of telling a person to make the car go faster.

I'm going to tear them apart, those punks.

"To tear a person apart" is to physically attack and hurt them (or literally, to tear their arms and legs from their body).

A "punk" is a bully, or a mean or abusive young person.

We better get the police and let them handle this.

"To handle" a situation is to take care of it.

Oh my Lord, they're coming after us! :: Step on it, Velma!

Another way of expressing great emotion such as fear or surprise (but much less common than "Oh my God"). "Step on it" is a common way of telling a person to drive as fast as possible (i.e....step on the gas).

You want to go for a ride in that new car?

The word to use when you want somebody else to take you somewhere in their car.

Can we all fit in there?

In this case, "to fit" is to have enough physical space.

Don't be scared; It ain't like you was the law or anything. You're just folks, just like us. That's all.
 This is Clyde's way of telling Eugene and Velma that they are all on the same side, against the police and the rich.

You two must be in love, I bet.
 A common way of expressing certainty (though usually it's at the beginning of the sentence).

I'm from Wisconsin, originally. Where the cheese comes from.
 Wisconsin is a Midwestern state that is famous for its cheese.

I ordered mine well done; Who's got the other hamburger?
 Remember that in a restaurant, you "order" food, even though this sounds a little bit aggressive.

You're a grand host, Buck.
 An interesting old word that means wonderful, excellent, etc.

What would they say if they heard that? Lordy, they'd have a fit!
 "Lordy" is a very dated way of expressing emotion. A "fit" is an excellent word to describe a sudden and loud outburst of anger.

I'm an undertaker. :: Get them out of here!
 An "undertaker" is a person whose job it is to arrange funerals and the burying of the dead.

Where do you think she could have went?
 Note the correct past participle is *gone*.

We've been cutting and pasting everything we could find about you.
 "To paste" is to stick or fasten with glue or paste. Here, the speaker is talking about newspaper articles about Bonnie and Clyde.

Clyde, there's the shot I took of you.
 In this case, a "shot" is a photograph.

We thank you for the food we are about to receive. Amen.
 The final word that Christians say after thanking or praying to God.

We ain't headed to nowhere. We're just running from.
 An interesting way to use prepositions as a form of emphasis (They're not going anywhere in particular other than where they can avoid the police).

If we did half that stuff that they say we did in those papers, we'd be millionaires by now, wouldn't we?

Note how "stuff" often means things in general, but here refers to specific crimes and bank robberies.

We could have done \$2,000 just as easy as pie.

A still used cliché meaning very easily.

I pulled up outside there and I saw them laws.

While "the law" is sometimes used to refer to the police, only Clyde would use the plural "laws" to refer to a group of police officers!

We were talking about the time we were gonna settle down and get us a home.

In this context, "to settle down" is to begin to lead a new life that is more calm and stable, perhaps in a newly bought house.

She says "you know...I couldn't bear to live more than three miles from my precious mother."

If a person cannot "bear" to do something, they don't have the courage or strength to do it. "Precious" is a useful adjective meaning much loved or of great value.

Bonnie picked it out, day after we robbed the armory.

"To pick out" something is to select one from a group of a few or more. An "armory" is a place filled with guns and other weapons of war.

What's the matter with you besides your nasty disposition?

"Nasty" is a cool little adjective that means disagreeable or unpleasant in behavior, or perhaps morally obscene. A person's "disposition" is their general character, attitude or behavior.

Hold on!

A very common way of telling a person to wait.

I've got the blues so bad.

"The blues" is a widely used way of referring to emotional depression or general sadness.

When we started out, I thought we were really going somewhere, but this is it. We're just going.

Another clever use of language; Here, Clyde is complaining because their lives seem to have no real direction or purpose.

Why don't you go back to your Pa's house?

"Pa" is a very dated word for dad or father.

There's no telling how all this happened. I was a preacher's daughter.
 "There's no telling..." is one way of saying "It's impossible to know..."

What church was your Pa affiliated with? :: Baptist.
 If a person is "affiliated with" a particular church, they belong to it.
 "Baptist" is a denomination or branch of Christianity.

He thought the world of Buck.
 To "think the world of" a person is to greatly like or respect them.

He forgave him because he paid his debt to society.
 If a criminal "pays their debt to society," they do the punishment that they were ordered to do, such as spending several years in prison.

We were Disciples of Christ.
 Another denomination of Christianity.

I'd rather go to jail than go on like this.
 "To go on" doing something is to continue doing it
 (In this case, living as criminals on the run from the police).

It ain't got a chance. Half his head is blown off.
 If a person's head is "blown off," it has probably been shot by gunfire.

Don't shoot! The kids are in the cross-fire!
 "Cross-fire" is the use of two or more guns fired against each other or in various directions, often endangering innocent people who are not directly involved in the fighting.

Shoot it! Knock the hell out of it!
 One way of saying to destroy it or blow it up (In this case, "it" is a car).

Can y'all spare us some drinking water?
 In this case, "to spare" some water is to give it to someone else because it is not needed (A common questions among beggars on America's city streets is "Spare a quarter?")

Are they fainting?
 "To faint" is to lose consciousness.

What's that on your chest? :: Tattoo, daddy.
 A drawing that is burned into a person's skin so that it can't be removed.

What the hell made you do a damn fool thing like that?

Note that “the hell” is added to Wh questions to show emotion such as anger. “Damn fool” is an ungrammatical but effective adjective which means stupid or ridiculous (*foolish* is more correct).

It says here “Clyde fled his dying brother....”

“To flee” is to run away in order to escape (past tense = fled).

While we’re lying around here nearly dead,
they had us holding up the Grand Prairie Bank!

“To hold up” a bank is to rob it with guns. Clyde is complaining that the newspapers are saying they did things that in fact they did not do.

Guess they hung that one on us just for luck.

In this case, “to hang” something on another person is to blame them for having done it, when in fact they did not.

How come they’re always referring to me as an unidentified suspect?

“How come” is an alternative way of asking why. A “suspect” is a person who is believed to have committed a crime, but who has not yet been shown or proven to have done so.

How does it feel to have a couple of big deals stay in your house?

A “big deal” is something that is very important, although here CW is referring to specific people (Bonnie and Clyde), which is never done.

Come on, let’s go have some supper. I’m starving.

“Supper” is an old-fashioned word for dinner.

You look like trash, all marked up like that. Cheap trash.

If a piece of paper is “marked up,” it is written on, but in this case, Ivan is referring to CW’s body, which is covered with tattoos (“*White trash*” is a very negative expression referring to poor and uneducated people).

The law catches up with Bonnie and Clyde.

The word is out that Bonnie and Clyde are holed up just out of town and they’re fixing to bust in and take Blanche out.

If “the word is out,” lots of people have heard the news (in this case, that Bonnie and Clyde are near). If a person is “holed up,” they’re hiding in a particular building. If a person is “fixing” to do something, they’re planning to do it, though this verb is dated. Finally, “to bust in” to a building is to violently enter it, often by knocking down doors.

I guess it's been kind of rough on you, hasn't it?
 If a situation has been "rough on" somebody,
 it has been very difficult or tiring for them.

I imagine old Buck wasn't a bad sort, was he?
 A dated way of saying a bad guy.

I reckon Clyde just sort of led him astray, didn't he?
 "To reckon" is a very dated way of saying to think. "To lead a person
 astray" is to lead them in a wrong direction, often so that it causes them
 great trouble or problems.

I don't recollect his last name.
 "To recollect" a name is to remember it
 (As here, it's often used in the negative).

"You heard the story of Jesse James....and those
 who squeal are usually found dying or dead....
 Another one of Bonnie's poems: "To squeal" is to make a high sound
 like a pig, or more colloquially, to tell the police as to the location or
 activities of a person who has done something illegal.

...They call them cold hearted killers, they say they are heartless and mean,
 but I say with pride, I knew Clyde, when he was upright, honest and clean...
 If a person is "cold hearted" or "heartless," they are mean, abusive and
 indifferent to the suffering of others. A person who is "upright" is
 honest, fair and responsible, but this word is a bit old-fashioned.

...If a policeman is killed in Dallas, and they have no clue to guide.....
 A "clue" is a small piece of evidence, such as a written note
 or a fingerprint, that leads to the solution of a crime.

....if they can't find a fiend, they just wipe the
slate clean, and they hang it on Bonnie and Clyde...
 A "fiend" is a great little word for a totally evil person or criminal.
 "To wipe the slate clean" means to start all over, in this case looking
 for the criminals (a slate is a thin piece of rock, or here, an imaginary
 record of past mistakes). "To hang" a crime on somebody is to blame
 them for it, even if they did not do it.

...If they try to act like citizens, and rent them a nice little flat, about
 the third night, they're invited to fight, by a sub gun's rat-a-tat-tat...
 A "flat" is a British word for an apartment. A "sub gun" is a never used
 way of referring to a sub machine gun, which is an extremely powerful
 gun that can shoot hundreds of bullets a minute. "Rat-a-tat-tat" is the
 sound that machine guns makes.

....Someday they'll go down together, they'll bury them side by side, to few it will be grief, to the law a relief, but it's death for Bonnie and Clyde..."

In this case, if "they go down together," this means they will probably die together. "Grief" is great sadness or feelings of suffering.

You did just perfect :: I never figured on that.

"To figure on" something is to count on or expect it.

Why do you want to merry me? :: To make an honest women out of you.

"To make an honest person out of" somebody is to influence them so that they become honest and moral. A somewhat silly expression.

What would you do if you could start all over clean, with no record and nobody after us? :: ...I wouldn't live in the same state where we pull our jobs.

In this case, a "record" is a "criminal record" that the police keep on all individuals. "To pull a job" is a very slangy way of saying to do a job, though here, the job that Clyde is talking about is robbing banks.

I'm your pa, I'm your kin! Not that there Clyde Barrow!

"Pa" is an old-fashioned word for dad, and "kin" is an old word for any close relative that is related by blood.

I made a deal and got you off with a couple years.

"To get a person off" is to work out a deal where they are given less punishment than they could have gotten (in this case, years in prison).

Clyde's got a sense. Don't you know that?

A "sense" is an intuitive or internal feeling about a situation.

He's over there in the hardware store getting light bulbs for his daddy.

A "hardware store" sells all types of tools to build houses and other buildings, such as hammers, screws, toilets, wood, etc...

If that boy didn't have his head strapped on, he'd lose it.

If something is "strapped on," it is tied down with rope or something else so that it will not fall off.

I got a flat tire; I ain't got no spare.

A "flat tire" is one in which the air has leaked out because there is a hole in it. A "spare tire" is an extra one, often kept in the trunk of a car.

Bonnie and Clyde

Some Possible ESL Questions for Class Discussion

1. Why do you think so much of the American public was so fascinated by Bonnie and Clyde?
2. Were Bonnie and Clyde heroes or villains, or a little of both?
3. Have there been common criminals in the history of your country that have had a similar impact as these two?
4. What attracted Bonnie to Clyde? And what about Clyde to Bonnie?
5. Did you like this film? Why or why not?