

Approved for use in English III

Summary of the Work:

Gripping tragic tale about the unlikely pair: George is a small and quick minded man; Lennie, a man of tremendous size and strength, has the mind of a young child. Yet together they have formed a family, clinging to each other in order to ward off loneliness and alienation. Set in California during the depression the two men travel from ranch to ranch working anywhere they find suitable work, all the time looking out for each other. George and Lennie have a plan to own their own land and a shack they can call their own. When they land a job in the Salinas valley, the fulfillment of their dream seems to be within reach. George has his hands full when it comes to keeping Lennie out of trouble but their friendship is strong. However, George cannot guard Lennie from a flirtatious woman.

Rationale:

John Steinbeck's novella *Of Mice and Men* is a classic piece of American literature depicting themes such as, the fragility of people's dreams and/or plans, friendship, and loneliness. The title, taken from Robert Burns's poem "To a Mouse," is a literary allusion. The allusion is appropriate to the main characters George and Lennie because the two characters are lowly in the eyes of the world.

Of Mice and Men is a controversial text filled with rich descriptions and deep concepts of character. It is the depictions of the characters, their motivations, and their resulting actions, which fuels the story. Through the use of character and description, Steinbeck is able to address controversial issues, such as euthanasia, capital punishment, and racism. It is the characters that tell the central themes of loneliness, isolation, and oppression, particularly focusing on the socially weak. The text looks at the dreams of men and how human actions and reactions can destroy even the most meticulously detailed plans.

Professional Reviews and/or Critical Essays:

Wilson's Senior High School 11/01/02

Notable/Best Books (A.L.A.)

Wilson's Fiction 04/01/01

L.A. Recommended Foreign Language 02/01/99

* Print resources are available from the library media center and libraries in the district. Contact any library media specialist to view the scholarly sources.

* Scholarly reviews are also available online through Books in Print and Gale. Contact the library media specialist to obtain username and password information to access the subscription database of full-text reviews.

Noted Distinction:

Author John Steinbeck is a Pulitzer Prize-winner

Readability:

- Lexile Score: 630
- Readability Level: 8.1

Learning Resources Guidelines:

- The novel meets the Learning Resources Guidelines.

Standard Alignment: [\(link\)](#)

Approval:

Submitted to Committee:

Approved for Adoption:

Notes on the Text:

The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

Steinbeck's narrative method is unremarkable but effective in a simple way; for this reason it is not an obvious subject for study. The structure of the novella is clear and quite simple: each chapter is an extended episode, in the same place. Some things happen while others, which have happened, are re-told.

Connection to the Curriculum:

Steinbeck's work depicts the time and mannerisms of California during the depression, in regional style.

Of Mice and Men is a perfect example of American literature

Additional Connections:

(AP, Honors, Essential/Applied, Dramas, Films, etc.)