

Junior
Certificate
School
Programme

Of Mice and Men

By John Steinbeck



Of Mice and Men

Of Mice and Men Workbook
Published by

Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST)
Junior Certificate School Programme
Blackrock Education Centre, Kill Avenue, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin
Phone: 01 2365000
Email: jcsp@pdst.ie

First Published 2012, Updated in 2020

Copyright ©PDST, JCSP.

The Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST), The Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP), the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy, the Demonstration Library Project and the Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) Action Plan are funded by the Teacher Education Section of the Department of Education and Skills (DES).

All rights reserved

The purpose of this publication is to enhance teaching and learning within the Junior Certificate School Programme.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means for commercial gain without prior written permission of the publisher.

Every effort has been made to ensure that this book contains accurate information. However, PDST, JCSP, its agents and the authors shall not be liable for any loss or damage suffered by readers as a result of any information contained herein.

Written and shared by Samantha Burton and Amy McElroy

Novel Resources Coordinated by Denise O'Flanagan, JCSP Advisor

Updated by Siobhan Daly, JCSP Advisor

Of Mice and Men

Pre Reading: Chapter Prediction Chart

Chapter	Pre Reading Prediction: What I think will happen	After Reading: What did happen?
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		

Of Mice and Men

Pre Reading

George and Lennie fantasise about the “American Dream.”

They dream of becoming successful, independent and improving their lives.

Write down three of your own dreams that you hope to achieve in life:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Research

“Of Mice and Men” takes place in the 1930s during the Great Depression. Using a computer, research three facts about life during the Great Depression.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Of Mice and Men

Questions

Chapter One

1. Where is this story set?
2. Describe the two men that walk towards the green pool.
3. What are your first impressions of George?
4. How does Lennie behave when we first meet him?
5. What plan does George have for getting work on the ranch? Do you think that his plan will succeed?
6. How does being with Lennie make life difficult for George?
7. Why do Lennie and George see themselves as different to the other men who work on ranches?
8. What plan do they have for their future?
9. Describe the relationship between the two men. Do you think that their relationship is a positive one? Why?

Activity

1. Draw a picture of Lennie and George, showing how they are described in the story.
2. Draw a picture showing the future life together they dream of.

Of Mice and Men

Chapter Two

1. Why is the boss suspicious of George and Lennie?
2. Why does George lie and say that himself and Lennie are related?
3. What does the old man (Candy) say about Curley's wife?
4. Why does George tell Lennie he's scared?
5. Describe Curley's wife. What are your first impressions of this character?
6. Identify one piece of information in this chapter that suggests that Lennie may get into trouble at this ranch.

Activity: Job Advertisements

In this chapter, George and Lennie start a new job on the ranch.

Write out the job advertisement that would have appeared in the newspaper advertising the position of 'ranch worker'.

Make sure you mention the **type of work** the applicant will have to do, and the **living arrangements** on the ranch.

This advertisement should include **information** and **formal language**.

Of Mice and Men

Chapter Three

1. Why is George so proud of Lennie as the chapter begins?
2. “*Hardly none of the guys ever travel together*”. What sort of life must the ranch workers lead? Would you like to work there? Why?
3. What reasons does George give Slim, to explain his friendship with Lennie?
4. “*He’s jes’ like a kid, ain’t he.*” Why does Slim say this about Lennie?
5. What opinion does Whit have of Curley’s wife? Do you think that this opinion is justified?
6. How do you know George is interested in getting a stake with Lennie?
7. Why does Lennie ask George to tell him about the place they’ll get together? Does George want this as much as Lennie, do you think?
8. How do you think George will feel if he doesn’t succeed in buying the ranch?
9. Why does Lennie injure Curley? Was he right to do so?
10. Do you have sympathy for Lennie in this chapter? Why?
11. How does George treat Lennie after his fight with Curley?

Of Mice and Men

Activity

Talking and Listening.

George and Lennie seem to be very good friends, even though they are not alike. Discuss with your partner what you think makes a good friend.

Choose three things that you both think are very important, to give as feedback to the class.

Of Mice and Men

Reflection: What have I learned about the characters so far?

George	
Lennie	
Candy	
Curley	
Curley's Wife	
Crooks	

Of Mice and Men

Chapter Four

1. How does Crooks react when Lennie goes into his room uninvited?
2. Describe Crook's childhood in your own words.
3. What is Crook's response to Lennie and George's dream of having land of their own? Demonstrate how his opinion changes over the course of the chapter.
4. *"If you....guys would want a hand to work for nothing – just his keep, why I'd come an' lend a hand."* Why do you think Crooks wants to join them?
5. *"They left all the weak ones here."* Why does Curley's wife say this about the men who didn't go to town?
6. *"Think I don't like to talk to somebody ever' once in a while?"* Do you think a lot of the characters are lonely? Explain your answer.
7. Do you think Curley and his wife have a good relationship? Explain your point of view.
8. Why isn't Candy afraid of Curley's wife anymore?
9. In your opinion, what sort of person is Curley's wife? Give reasons for your answer.
10. Why does Crooks change his mind about going to work with the others?

Of Mice and Men

Activity

Diary Entry

Imagine you are Curley's wife. Write a diary entry, explaining how you feel about life on the ranch. You should mention your relationship with Curley and how the other men treat you. Talk about your feelings and your hopes for the future too.

Research

Crooks suffers as a result of the racist attitudes of the other men.

See what information you can find out about racism and inequality in America in the 1930s. Try to find at least three facts that show what life was like for black people in the USA at this time.

Sketch Map

Draw a sketch map of the ranch. Mark in where you picture the bunkhouse, the stables, the barn, the boss's house and the fields where the men work.

Of Mice and Men

Chapter Five

1. “He picked up the pup and hurled it from him.” Why does Lennie react like this?
2. What reason does Curley’s wife give for wanting to talk to Lennie? What does this tell us about with Curley’s wife?
3. How does Lennie explain what happened to his pup?
4. Why is Lennie reluctant to speak to Curley’s wife?
5. Is Curley’s wife content her life? Explain.
6. What reason does Lennie give for liking rabbits so much? What does this tell us about him?
7. Explain in your own words what happens to Curley’s wife in the barn.
8. How do Candy and George protect Lennie?
9. What implications could Lennie’s behaviour have on George and Candy’s dream?
10. Has George’s opinion of and attitude to Lennie changed? Can you find evidence in the text to support your answer?
11. How do you feel at this point in the story? Do you have any sympathy for Lennie? Why?

Of Mice and Men

Activity

Point of view (perspective) Exercise

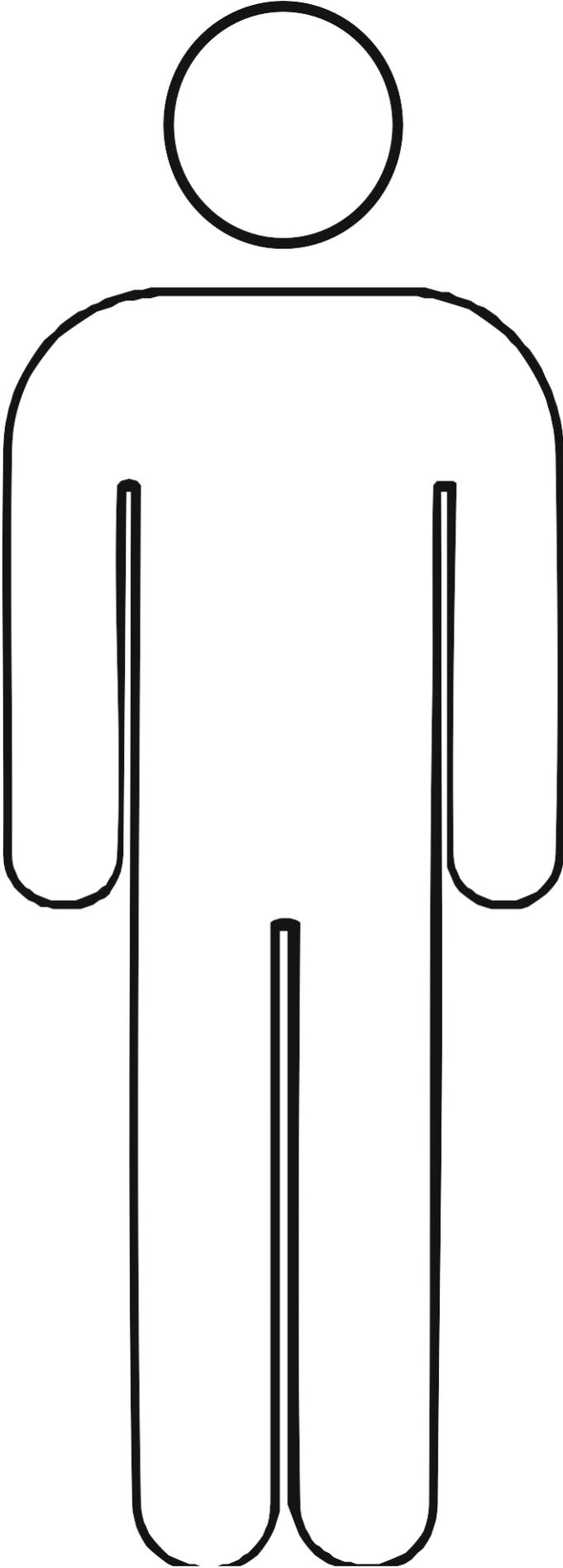
- (a) Imagine you are Curley's wife. Re-tell this incident from her point of view.
- (b) Imagine you are George. Tell what happened in the barn from his point of view. Also, explain what you are going to do next and your reasons for doing it.

Roll on the Wall

Pretend this outline is George. Write everything he is feeling inside the outline.

Write everything that is going on in his life outside the outline.

Of Mice and Men



Of Mice and Men

Chapter Six

1. Why is Lennie so worried as he waits by the pool?
2. How does George treat Lennie when he finds him?
3. Why does Slim tell George “*You hadda, George*”? How does this make you feel about the character of Slim?
4. What does Carlson not understand when he asks “*Now what the hell ya suppose is eatin’ them two guys?*”
5. Do you think that Lennie was fully responsible for George’s dream failing to become a reality? Why?
6. Do you think George should have done something else instead? Think of a way that George could have punished Lennie differently.
7. Were you satisfied with the ending of the story? Explain your answer.

Activity

News Report

Imagine you are a television news reporter. Write out the text of your news report covering the day’s events at the ranch.

Diary Entry

Imagine you are George. Write a diary entry, explaining **how you feel** at the end of the novel. You should mention your relationship with Lennie and how the other men are treating you. Talk about your feelings and your future too.

Of Mice and Men

Personal Response – Your feelings on the ending

Write about the ending of the novel “Of Mice and Men”. You should mention the following points:

1. What happens in the end?
2. Were you surprised by the ending? Why/Why not?
3. How have characters changed from the beginning to the end of the novel?
4. If you were writing the next chapter, what would happen next?
5. Is there a hero in this story? If so what makes him/her a hero?
6. Is there a villain in this story? Explain your answer.
7. Does the author send us a message in this story? What is that message?
8. What makes this ending so sad? Explain your opinion.

Of Mice and Men

Questions

1. Discuss an interesting character from the novel.
2. Write about the relationship between two characters in the story. How do they treat each other in the story?
3. Describe a sad or worrying event that happens in the story. Explain how well the writer describes this sadness or worry.
4. What is the most exciting part of the novel? How did the writer make that part of the story exciting?
5. Describe in detail the beginning of the novel; you may refer to where it is set, any incidents that happen and characters. Do you think it was a good beginning? Why/Why not?
6. Discuss a friendship that develops or fails between two people in the novel. Why do you think this friendship develops or fails?
7. Describe your favourite moment in the novel and say why it is your favourite.
8. Who is your favourite character in the novel? Explain why he/she is your favourite.

Of Mice and Men

Film Studies

Watch the film adaptation of 'Of Mice and Men' and answer the following questions:

1. Do you think the main actors are well chosen? Explain your choice.
2. Is the setting how you imagined? Explain your answer.
3. Do you think the use of music added to the film? Explain your answer.
4. What differences do you notice between the novel and the film?
5. What did you prefer about the novel?
6. What did you prefer about the film?
7. If you were the casting director, what actors would you choose for the main roles? Give reasons for your choices.
8. If you were the director, would you change anything about the film?
Explain your answer.

Of Mice and Men

Final Reflections

1. *'Of Mice and Men' is a story about friendship and loneliness.*

Discuss this statement using quotation and examples from the novel to support your points.

2. *George was a kind man who did all he could for Lennie.*

To what extent do you agree with this statement? Refer to the novel and use quotation to support your points.

3. *The author, John Steinbeck, describes mean characters in beautiful surroundings.*

To what extent do you agree with this statement? Refer to the novel and use quotation to support your points.

4. *Lennie and George were doomed from the start.*

To what extent do you agree with this statement? Refer to the novel and use quotation to support your points.

5. *Hopes and dreams help people to survive, even if they can never become real.*

How true is this for characters in 'Of Mice and Men'?

6. *The author, John Steinbeck, prepares his readers for the final scene beside the pool.*

Do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer referring to moments in the story and using quotation.

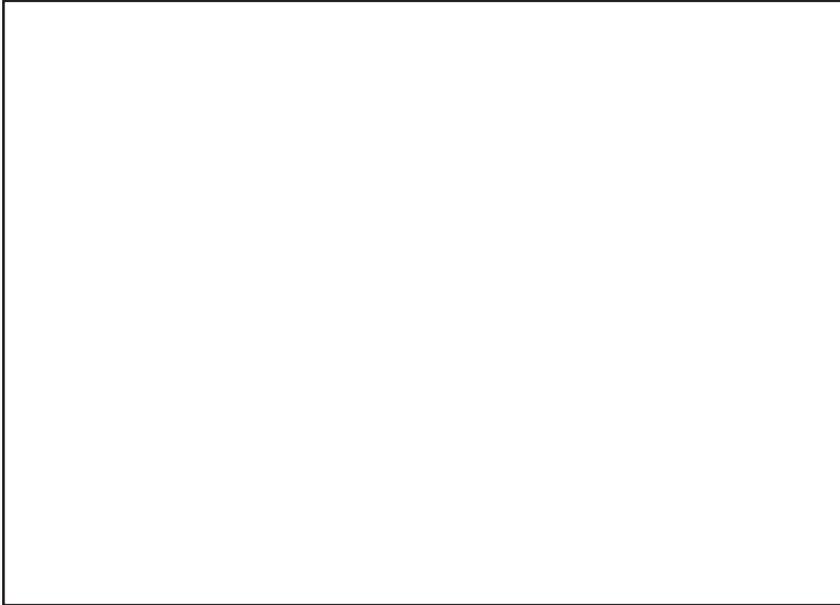
Important Moments in 'Of Mice and Men'

Use the chart below to remind yourself of the most exciting parts of the story. Draw a picture in each box and write what is happening beside it. Try to include a key quote too.

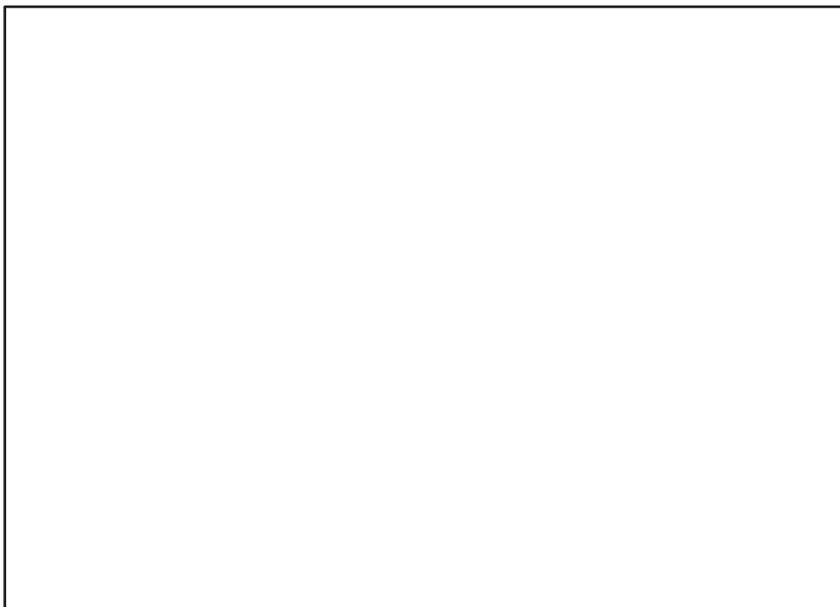
There are only six boxes, so decide on your key moments before you begin.

Of Mice and Men

Of Mice and Men







Alternative Ending

Write an alternative ending to the story. Draw the ending in the box below.

