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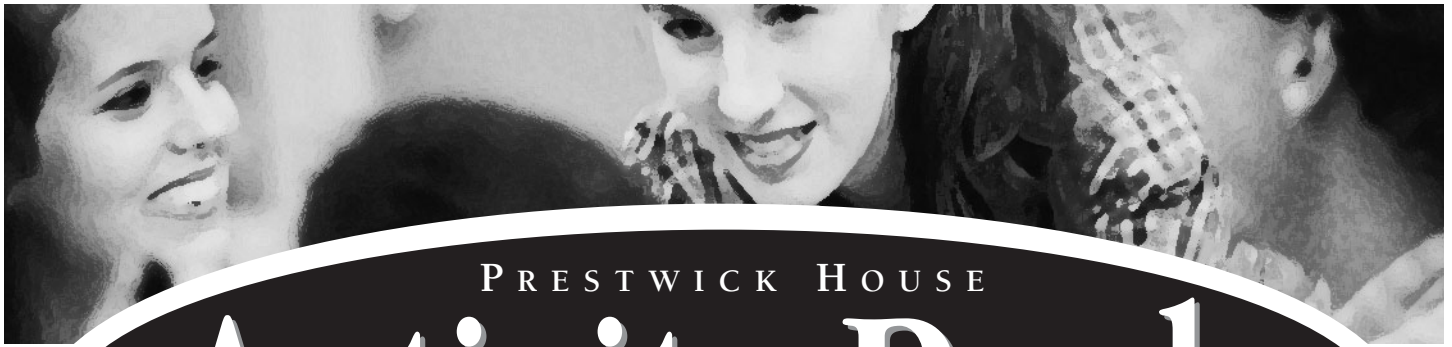
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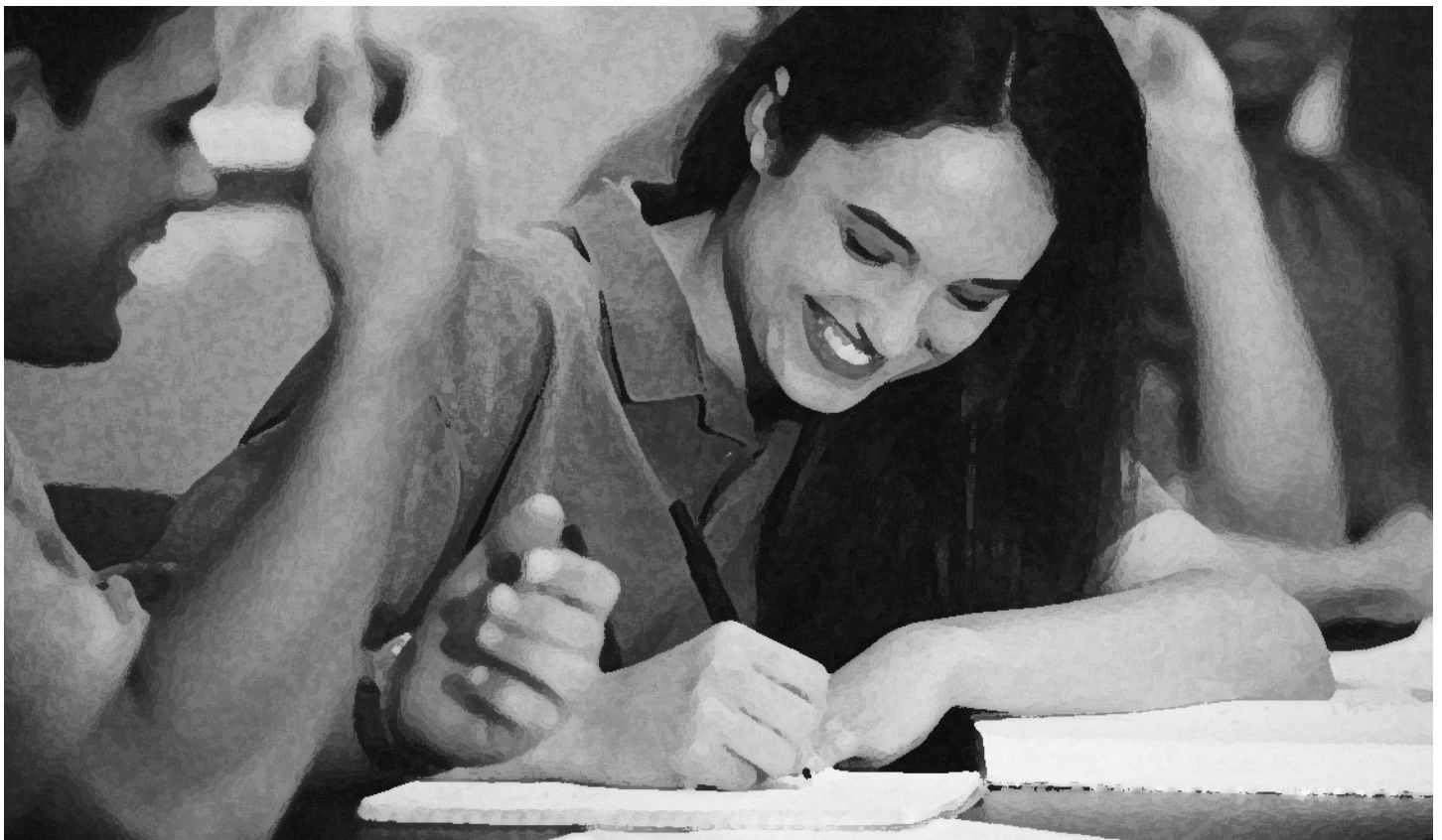


PRESTWICK HOUSE

Activity Pack

OF MICE AND MEN

BY JOHN STEINBECK



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Introduction

To The Teacher

Using and Sequencing Materials

In creating the Activity Packs, our aim was to:

- Provide numerous activities on various levels so that teachers can select activities appropriate for their classes.
- Write only activities that have significant educational objectives.
- Fashion detailed activities for specific books rather than offer vague generalized suggestions.
- Provide activities that stimulate student learning by appealing to multiple teaching and learning styles.
- Make partners of teacher users so that an ongoing interaction enables us to provide free, updated versions of these packets.
- Sequence activities so that they can be used before, during, and after the reading.
- Provide, in most instances, all the materials necessary for completing the activity. (Exceptions are activities that use audios, videos, maps, the Internet, or other readily available materials.)

Small Group Work

Although we specifically recommend that some activities be done in groups, most have been written with small group work in mind. For those who have not done much of this type activity, we offer some suggestions for your consideration in our Appendix .

Dramatizations

In order to encourage student participation and provide a variety of options we structured the dramatic activities in a fashion that provided students more opportunities and more choices. See Appendix for suggestions.

Satiric Cartoons

Students should understand that in satiric cartoons, a realistic depiction is not required; in fact, they should know that some very famous cartoonists, like James Thurber, drew very simple line images. Because visual cartoons can make the abstract concept of satire very concrete, we have included some in the Activity Packs.

Note: Not every Activity Pack will make use of all Appendices.

All page references and quotations in this Activity Pack come from the Penguin Book edition of *Of Mice and Men*, published 1993.

Of Mice and Men

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*Please note that the novel, *Of Mice and Men*, is divided into six sections. We have included the page breakdown for each section below.

Section 1—Pages 1-16
Section 2—Pages 17-37
Section 3—Pages 38-65
Section 4—Pages 66-83
Section 5—Pages 84-98
Section 6—Pages 99-107

Of Mice and Men

Activity Pack Teacher's Edition

Pre-reading

Objective: Understanding the socio-historical context of Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*.

Activity

- A. In this 1939 Library of Congress print, we see a migrant worker, his sleeping quarters, and all his worldly possessions. We are told that he shares this campsite with two other men, who are also migrant workers. In a small group, prepare a list of questions you would ask the man if you had the opportunity to interview him. *Note to teacher: See Appendix for suggestions about small group activities*



Of Mice and Men

Activity Pack Student Edition

Pre-reading

Objective: Understanding the socio-historical context of Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*.

Activity

- A. In this 1939 Library of Congress print, we see a migrant worker, his sleeping quarters, and all his worldly possessions. We are told that he shares this campsite with two other men, who are also migrant workers. In a small group, prepare a list of questions you would ask the man if you had the opportunity to interview him.



B. In the second 1939 print, we see a group of migrant workers picking lettuce in Salinas Valley, California. Remembering that in 1939, the country was still deep in The Depression and people were happy to have any work, imagine the workers, at the end of their workday, waiting for a truck that will drop them off at their campsite. Using dialogue, create a conversation that might have taken place between three of these workers.



B. In the second 1939 print, we see a group of migrant workers picking lettuce in Salinas Valley, California. Remembering that in 1939, the country was still deep in The Depression and people were happy to have any work, imagine the workers, at the end of their workday, waiting for a truck that will drop them off at their campsite. Using dialogue, create a conversation that might have taken place between three of these workers.



Section 1
Description
Symbolism
Characterization
Inference
Editorial Writing
Realism
Naturalism
Foreshadowing
Repetition

Objective: Visualizing a scene.
Recognizing the use of concrete detail in descriptive writing.

Activity

Steinbeck opens the novel with a description of a deep, green pool.

- A. List all the concrete details that are included in the description through page 8. For instance, willow and sycamores are described in detail. Steinbeck mentions the wildlife around the pool “A stilted heron labored up into the air and pounded down river”; and “A water snake slipped along the pool, its head held up like a little periscope.”
- B. List some ideas that come to mind as you read Steinbeck’s description.

Objective: Drawing conclusions about the possible causes and results of a situation.
Understanding thematic ideas.

Activity

In spite of his frustration with Lennie, George stands by him. He copes with their situation by holding onto their shared dream. The hope of independence and continued companionship is an important theme and a recurring motif in *Of Mice and Men*.

- A. Complete the following chart that analyzes George’s dream and how it relates to his problems.

Section 1
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Symbolism
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- A. Complete the following chart that analyzes George’s dream and how it relates to his problems.

**The Problems and Dreams
of George and Lennie**

Problems that George and Lennie face	Realistic consequences for George and Lennie	Solutions found in the dream
1. Lennie gets in trouble.	<i>George and Lennie keep losing jobs.</i>	<i>George and Lennie would own their own farm and be their own bosses.</i>
2. Lennie has a compulsion to touch soft things.	<i>Lennie does “bad things.” He touches things he should not: dead mice, the girl’s dress.</i>	<i>George and Lennie will raise rabbits on their farm; Lennie can tend them and pet them as much as he wants.</i>
3. Lennie does not remember things and has no knowledge of what is dangerous.	<i>Lennie’s childlike innocence causes others to despise him.</i>	<i>Their lives would be stable.</i>
4. People do not accept Lennie.	<i>George has to hide Lennie’s disability by telling him to be quiet, at least until people see him work.</i>	<i>George will be able control who comes on his property.</i>
5. George has little control or pleasure in life.	<i>George is frustrated and angry.</i>	<i>George will be his own boss and can go to the circus or rest when he likes.</i>

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2. Lennie has a compulsion to touch soft things.		
3. Lennie does not remember things and has no knowledge of what is dangerous.		
4. People do not accept Lennie.		
5. George has little control or pleasure in life.		

Objective: Relating literature to life.
Understanding how symbols are used to create meaning.

Activity I

At a symbolic level, the dream for George and Lennie's future represents a universal dream of humanity. All people dream of companionship, independence, plenty, security, etc.

Note to teacher: See Appendix for suggestions about small group activities.

- A. In small groups, list and discuss the details of each universal quality involved in George and Lennie's hope and dream.
- B. Relate and discuss your individual desires. In your discussion, answer the question: If you could remake your life any way at all, how would you make it?
- C. Point out what is universal about each group member's individual dream.
- D. Discuss movies or literature that deal with people pursuing their dreams.
- E. Prepare a five-minute discussion about the wants/desires/dreams of people, including those of George and Lennie. Present the discussion to the rest of the class.

Activity II

Commercials and advertisements try to exploit the dreams of the public and, in the process, make people desire more. In effect, advertisers are implying anyone could be like the people in commercials by using a specific product.

Find four magazine advertisements that attempt to exploit a universal dream. Beneath each ad, indicate:

- what dream is being exploited
- how successful you think the ad is
- what might be included to improve the ad
- what is wrong with or unrealistic about the ad

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Objective: Recognizing how character traits are revealed.
Inferring meaning about a character by contrasting him or her with other characters.

Activity

George and Lennie are frequently presented as opposites. Use the following chart to contrast their physical and mental characteristics, personalities, and attitudes.

Contrast Chart

Point of Contrast	George	Lennie
Physical Characteristics	<i>small, moves quickly, average strength</i>	<i>large, slow, strong</i>
Mental Characteristics	<i>alert, intelligent</i>	<i>handicapped literal understanding</i>
Personality	<i>compassionate caring angry controlling protective</i>	<i>caring good natured dependent eager for comfort childlike naive</i>
Attitude	<i>suspicious negative worried anxious parental</i>	<i>eager to please positive obedient</i>

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Contrast Chart

Point of Contrast	George	Lennie
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Physical Characteristics

Mental Characteristics

Personality

Attitude

Objective: Relating literature to life and social issues.
Writing about social issues.

Activity

George describes the life of a migrant worker to Lennie.

“Guys like us, that work on ranches, are the loneliest guys in the world. They got no family. They don’t belong no place. They come to a ranch an’ work up a stake and then they go into town and blow their stake, and the first thing you know they’re poundin’ their tail on some other ranch. They ain’t got nothing to look ahead to.” (Pgs. 13-14)

Read the fact sheet about migrant laborers on the next page. Write an editorial expressing a viewpoint you have about using migrant labor in the 21st century. In it, use some of the facts you have learned to back up your opinion. Give the editorial a title. Remember that an editorial does not have the same factual, unbiased format as a news story.

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FACT SHEET ON FARMWORKERS

There are up to 2.5 million hired farmworkers nationwide. Adult migrant farmworkers on average have completed eight or fewer years of formal education.

Estimated farm labor force in the El Paso-Juárez region: 12,000. The majority are legal immigrants from Mexico, and the rest are American-born citizens of Mexican origin. Women and children are part of the farm labor force.

The average farmworker is employed about 25 weeks a year, and few earn more than \$6,000 a year.

Four of five farmworkers do not have employer-provided health insurance.

Fewer than 15 per cent of the nation's migrant farmworkers received medical services provided by Migrant Health Program's rural health clinics.

Poor and uninsured farmworkers have little access to physician care and hospital services.

A U.S. General Accounting Office report estimates that each year farmworkers suffer up to 300,000 acute illnesses and injuries from exposure to pesticides.

In some hired farmworker families, children as young as 10 must work in the fields to contribute to the family income. The National Child Labor Committee estimates that each year there are at least 100,000 minors illegally working on farms and 1 million child-labor law violations.

A 1990 study of children hired to do farm work reveals that one-third of them had been injured while working the previous year.

Hired farmworkers are more likely to receive fewer benefits than they should because many employers do not report all earnings to the Social Security Administration.

Numerous studies tell of migrant farmworkers living in shacks, barns, old school buses, and other seriously substandard dwellings. A family may have to sleep on a dirt floor in a one-room house with no furniture, running water, or electricity.

Workers who don't get drinking water may suffer dehydration, heatstroke, or other heat-related conditions.

The absence of hand-washing facilities contributes to the spread of diseases and the retention of pesticide residue on workers' skin.

Most farmworkers are young, married, foreign-born males, and more than two-thirds are Hispanic.

Some of the information is from *Fields of Misery*, special supplement of the El Paso Herald-Post, Saturday, October 22, 1994.

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Objective: Understanding and responding to a literary text that expresses both realism and naturalism.

Activity

Steinbeck is considered a realistic writer. In addition, he has a tendency to be naturalistic. As you read the novel, complete the **Aspects of Realism** and **Aspects of Naturalism** charts by giving examples that show aspects of both.

Objective: Understanding and responding to a literary text that expresses both realism and naturalism.

Activity

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Aspects of Realism in Of Mice and Men

Record	Section 1	Section 2	Section 3	Section 4	Sections 5, 6
Ordinary details of Life	<i>starting a new job</i>				
Close Analysis of Life	<i>the details of George taking away the mouse</i>				
Verifiable	<i>George is frustrated by Lennie's behavior</i>				
Scientific, showing responses to stimuli					
Direct, simple language					

Aspects of Realism in *Of Mice and Men*

Record	Section 1	Section 2	Section 3	Section 4	Sections 5, 6
Ordinary details of Life					
Close Analysis of Life					
Verifiable					
Scientific, showing responses to stimuli					
Direct, simple language					

Aspects of Naturalism in *Of Mice and Men*

Record	Section 1	Section 2	Section 3	Section 4	Sections 5, 6
Struggle against forces beyond human control (deterministic forces)	<i>lack of power because of low social status</i>				
Nature as indifferent to human struggle	<i>Lennie's limited abilities</i>				
Humans as animals, instinctive	<i>description of the way Lennie walks and drinks</i>				
Death as natural	<i>the death of the mouse</i>				
Life as a sequence of cause and effect; chain of events flowing from one event	<i>George's anger leads to Lennie's sorrow, which leads to George comforting him.</i>				

Aspects of Naturalism in *Of Mice and Men*

Record	Section 1	Section 2	Section 3	Section 4	Sections 5, 6
Struggle against forces beyond human control (deterministic forces)					
Nature as indifferent to human struggle					
Humans as animals, instinctive					
Death as natural					
Life as a sequence of cause and effect; chain of events flowing from one event					

Objective: Recognizing and interpreting the use of foreshadowing to indicate inevitability.
Interpreting repetition in a literary work.

Activity

The primary tenet of naturalism in literature is that humans are driven by forces beyond our control. Humans do not have free will; the outcomes of their lives are determined not by choice, but by circumstances. Given specific conditions, what happens to a person is inevitable; it is going to happen no matter what.

The structure of *Of Mice and Men* is a pattern of inevitability. For instance, in the first section, the pattern of Lennie wanting to touch soft things and then getting in trouble is established. Lennie, because he is slow, cannot control his urge to find comfort by petting something soft. George cannot control the fact that Lennie touches soft things in inappropriate ways, like the girl's dress in Weed.

The reader understands that these things happen over and over when George says to Lennie, "You get in trouble. You do bad things and I got to get you out." (Pg. 11) We realize that George suspects Lennie may do something else wrong when he tells Lennie, "You can remember this place, can't you?...Well, look. Lennie—if you jus' happen to get in trouble like you always done before, I want you to come right here an' hide in the brush."

As you read the novel, complete the **Pattern of Inevitability** chart that follows.

Objective: Recognizing and interpreting the use of foreshadowing to indicate inevitability.
Interpreting repetition in a literary work.

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As you read the novel, complete the **Pattern of Inevitability** chart that follows.

PATTERN OF INEVITABILITY

Pattern	Section 1	Section 2	Section 3	Section 4	Section 5, 6
Lennie's desire to touch soft things	<i>the mouse velvet cloth</i>	<i>promise of the pup</i>	<i>petting the pup</i>	<i>in the barn petting the pup</i>	<i>touches Curley's wife's hair</i>
Lennie getting in trouble for touching soft things	<i>the girl's dress in Weed</i>	<i>George tells him not to go near Curley's wife</i>	<i>brings the pup in the bunkhouse</i>	<i>should not be with the pup so much</i>	<i>kills pup and Curley's wife</i>
The dream	<i>George telling Lennie the dream after he yells at the larger man</i>	<i>Lennie tells Candy they are getting "a stake" together</i>	<i>Candy joins in</i>	<i>Lennie/Candy tell Crooks</i>	<i>George re-tells the dream just before he kills Lennie</i>
George protecting Lennie	<i>tells him not to talk; escape from Weed, hide in an irrigation ditch</i>	<i>talks for Lennie in bunkhouse</i>	<i>tells Lennie he (George) feels guilty for pushing Lennie</i>	<i>gets him out of bunkhouse</i>	<i>wants to bring Lennie in so Curley won't get him; kills Lennie to protect him from Curley</i>

PATTERN OF INEVITABILITY

Pattern	Section 1	Section 2	Section 3	Section 4	Section 5, 6
Lennie's desire to touch soft things					

Lennie getting in trouble for touching soft things

The dream

George protecting Lennie

George expressing his power over Lennie	<i>orders him to give up the mouse and get firewood</i>	<i>Lennie does not talk until George tells him to</i>	<i>George tells Slim the story of Lennie almost drowning after George told him to jump in the river</i> <i>George says, "Get him, Lennie." instead of letting Curley win the fight.</i>	<i>tells Lennie to get out of Crooks' room</i>	<i>tells Lennie to "look across the river"</i>
Lennie's inability to control his strength	<i>kills mouse</i>	<i>George tells Candy that Lennie is strong and does not know any rules</i>	<i>crushes Curley's hand</i>	<i>threatens Crooks</i>	<i>breaks both the pup's and Curley's wife's neck</i>
George and Lennie losing jobs	<i>Lennie causes them to lose jobs</i>	<i>worried about the boss</i>	<i>fear they will get fired</i>	<i>fear the boss will find out who crushed Curley's hand</i>	<i>George says he'll just stay a migrant</i>
George's problem with Lennie	<i>mouse, ketchup, cannot remember</i>	<i>Curley and the boss are suspicious of Lennie</i>	<i>George tells Slim about the trouble Lennie gets in</i>	<i>says he has to watch Lennie all of the time</i>	<i>George cannot protect Lennie this time</i>

**George expressing
his power over
Lennie**

**Lennie's inability
to control his
strength**

**George and Lennie
losing jobs**

**George's problem
with Lennie**

Objective: Inferring meaning from a character's actions.

Activity

- A. List the descriptive detail about Lennie that indicates he is mentally challenged. Pay particular attention to his facial expressions and what he does with his hands.
- B. After reading the directions in Appendix on how to prepare a scene, dramatize the scenes on pages 5-6 and 8-9 in which George forces Lennie to surrender the mouse.

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Section 2
Setting
Description
Narrative Technique
Characterization
Inference

Objective: Visualizing details of setting.
Writing informative text with detailed description.
Writing in an organized manner.

Activity

When Steinbeck first wrote *Of Mice and Men* as a novel, his intention was that it could also be performed as a play. The description of the bunkhouse at the start of Section 2 is like a set design, including the sun that comes in through the window in the morning and acts like a spotlight.

- A. Re-read the first two pages of section 2 and draw a diagram of the bunkhouse; include the important details that are mentioned.
- B. Notice the spatial arrangement of the description and the way Steinbeck gives the reader a general impression of the bunkhouse, then directs the reader's attention from the walls, to what is against the walls, to the center of the room. Pay attention to the way each sentence connects to the previous sentence and directs you to different things, in the way your eyes might naturally travel around a room.
- C. Select a room of interest to you. Write a one-paragraph description of the room, paying careful attention to detail and following a spatial arrangement the same way Steinbeck does. Be sure to connect your sentences with transitions and have smooth continuity in the description.

Remember to:

- Give the general impression of the room.
- Decide how a person might look at the room and what direction his or her eyes would travel.
- List all the detail in a specific order. Notice what connects to what.
- Use a list to plan your writing.

Section 2
Setting
Description
Narrative Technique
Characterization
Inference

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Writing informative text with detailed description.
Writing in an organized manner.

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When Steinbeck first wrote *Of Mice and Men* as a novel, his intention was that it could also be performed as a play. The description of the bunkhouse at the start of Section 2 is like a set design, including the sun that comes in through the window in the morning and acts like a spotlight.

- A. Re-read the first two pages of section 2 and draw a diagram of the bunkhouse; include the important details that are mentioned.
- B. Notice the spatial arrangement of the description and the way Steinbeck gives the reader a general impression of the bunkhouse, then directs the reader's attention from the walls, to what is against the walls, to the center of the room. Pay attention to the way each sentence connects to the previous sentence and directs you to different things, in the way your eyes might naturally travel around a room.
- C. Select a room of interest to you. Write a one-paragraph description of the room, paying careful attention to detail and following a spatial arrangement the same way Steinbeck does. Be sure to connect your sentences with transitions and have smooth continuity in the description.

Remember to:

- Give the general impression of the room.
- Decide how a person might look at the room and what direction his or her eyes would travel.
- List all the detail in a specific order. Notice what connects to what.
- Use a list to plan your writing.

Objective: Interpreting the impact of the narrative device of a choral character.

Activity

In Greek drama, a group of characters, or *chorus*, would comment on the action of the play and provide any background information the audience needed. In more modern times, some plays include “choral characters” who comment on the action, provide information, and interpret the situations for the audience.

In *Of Mice and Men*, Candy functions as a choral character; when George and Lennie arrive at the ranch, Candy tells them about the people on the ranch. Steinbeck uses this device to make the situation on the ranch clear to the reader.

Complete the following chart on Candy’s role so far.

Objective: Interpreting the impact of the narrative device of a choral character.

Activity

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In *Of Mice and Men*, Candy functions as a choral character; when George and Lennie arrive at the ranch, Candy tells them about the people on the ranch. Steinbeck uses this device to make the situation on the ranch clear to the reader.

Complete the following chart on Candy’s role so far.

The Role of the Old Swamper (Candy)			
Candy's Information	Candy's Interpretation	The Significance as George sees it	What the reader should understand
The boss was angry; George and Lennie were late.	<i>The boss takes his anger out on Crooks.</i>	<i>George knows they are already in trouble.</i>	<i>The boss is a threat.</i>
The boss gave a gallon of whiskey to the men at Christmas.	<i>The boss is a nice fellow.</i>	<i>It's hard to know how to take the boss.</i>	<i>He seems fair.</i>
Curley is a little guy who is a fighter. He won't get fired because he is the boss' son.	<i>Curley hates big guys and does not give anyone a chance. He gets away with hurting others.</i>	<i>Curley may go after Lennie; antagonism has developed between George and Curley.</i>	<i>Lennie may get in trouble with Curley.</i>
Curley's wife is interested in the men on the ranch. Curley is nervous about having a wife on a ranch of men.	<i>Curley's wife is a "tart."</i>	<i>Lennie might have problems because of her.</i>	<i>It is too early to tell, but Lennie shows interest in her, which may foreshadow trouble.</i>

The Role of the Old Swamper (Candy)			
Candy's Information	Candy's Interpretation	The Significance as George sees it	What the reader should understand
<hr/>			
The boss was angry; George and Lennie were late.			
<hr/>			
The boss gave a gallon of whiskey to the men at Christmas.			
<hr/>			
Curley is a little guy who is a fighter. He won't get fired because he is the boss' son.			
<hr/>			
Curley's wife is interested in the men on the ranch. Curley is nervous about having a wife on a ranch of men.			

Objective: Understanding characters by interpreting their thoughts and language.
Inferring character traits.

Activity

In this section, the boss, Curley, and Slim reveal their character to the reader by their reactions to George and Lennie. Each of the three responds to situations in different ways. Their interpretations reflect their own character and concerns.

Complete the following chart that contrasts the reactions of the boss, Curley, and Slim to George and Lennie.

Objective: Understanding characters by interpreting their thoughts and language.
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Complete the following chart that contrasts the reactions of the boss, Curley, and Slim to George and Lennie.

Reactions to George and Lennie

Characters	What is said in this section	What the character means	What is suggested about the character
The boss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “What are you trying to put over?” • “I said what stake you got in this guy? You takin’ his pay away from him?” • “Well, I never seen one guy take so much trouble for another guy. I just like to know what your interest is.” (Pg. 22) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He accuses George of taking advantage of Lennie and taking Lennie’s money. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He is the sort of person who takes advantage of others. • He could also be the type who looks out for other people.
Curley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “...he’s gotta talk when he’s spoke to. What the hell are you gettin’ into it for?” • “Oh, so it’s that way.” George was tense, and motionless. “Yeah, it’s that way.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curley enjoy saving power over people. • When Curley says “that way,” it seems to suggest he sees men traveling together as strange; perhaps he thinks they are homosexual. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He doesn’t get along with others. • He’s suspicious. • He has to have control and respect because he is insecure about his size and his wife. • He measures himself against others.

Reactions to George and Lennie

Characters	What is said in this section	What the character means	What is suggested about the character
The boss			

Curley

- *He glanced coldly at George and then at Lennie. His arms gradually bent at the elbows and his hands closed into fists. He stiffened and went into a slight crouch. His glance was at once calculating and pugnacious. Lennie squirmed under the look and shifted his feet nervously. Curley stepped gingerly close to him. "You the new guys the old man was waitin' for?" (Pg. 25)*
- *Curley wants to intimidate the rest of the men, especially new workers.*
- *It is obvious that Curley does not understand simple friendship.*
- *Curley is a bully.*

Slim

- *Slim looked approvingly at George for having given the compliment. He leaned over the table and snapped the corner of a loose card. "You guys travel around together?" His tone was friendly. It invited confidence without demanding it.*
- *Slim is interested in others.*
- *Friendly*
- *Slim looked through George and beyond him. "Ain't many guys travel around together," he mused. "I don't know why. Maybe ever'body in the whole damn world is scared of each other." (Pgs. 34-35)*
- *He accepts the fact the men travel together for comfort and protection.*
- *Open minded*
- *Takes time to think about things.*
- *Wise*

Reactions to George and Lennie			
Characters	What is said in this section	What the character means	What is suggested about the character
Slim			

Objective: Recognizing the way character traits are revealed.
Interpreting the thoughts and language of characters.

Activity

- Step 1:** In small groups, complete the attached diagrams for the characters indicated.
- Step 2:** Write the connections between the person's physical description and his or her personality. Enter it as a generalization at the bottom of the chart.
- Step 3:** The groups should share descriptions of people and discuss how their physical traits are related to their personality.
- Step 4:** Re-read the description of Slim and make a group collage from magazine pictures you can find that might relate to or have the same image as Steinbeck gave to Slim.
- Step 5:** Each group will then prepare and present one assigned profile to the rest of the class and also share and discuss the collage with the rest of the class.

Objective: Recognizing the way character traits are revealed.
Interpreting the thoughts and language of characters.

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Characterization Diagram for Carlson

Personality

friendly
speaks his mind
problem solver

Attitude Toward Others

positive

Physical Description

large man
big stomach

Position on the Ranch

worker

Concerns

does not like Candy's dog

Group generalization about this character:

**Characterization Diagram for
Carlson**

Personality

Attitude Toward Others

Physical Description

Position on the Ranch

Concerns

Group generalization about this character:

Characterization Diagram for Curley

Personality

nervous
ready to fight
jealous

Attitude Toward Others

hostile
pugnacious
angry
likes to give orders
takes advantage

Physical Description

small
boxer

Position on the Ranch

worker
boss' son

Concerns

respect
how he compares to others
his wife

Group generalization about this character:

**Characterization Diagram for
Curley**

Personality

Attitude Toward Others

Physical Description

Position on the Ranch

Concerns

Group generalization about this character:

Characterization Diagram for The Boss

Personality

outspoken
aggressive
can be mean

Attitude Toward Others

critical
suspicious
demanding

Physical Description

powerful stomach

Position on the Ranch

in charge of the ranch

Concerns

wants the work to be done
wants to be liked

Group generalization about this character:

**Characterization Diagram for
The Boss**

Personality

Attitude Toward Others

Physical Description

Position on the Ranch

Concerns

Group generalization about this character:

Characterization Diagram for Curley's Wife

Personality

friendly
doesn't observe propriety
goes in the bunkhouse
(men's area)

Attitude Toward Others

positive
flirtatious

Physical Description

pretty
too much makeup
wears revealing clothes

Position on the Ranch

does not have a name
her husband's property

Concerns

attention
wants to be liked

Group generalization about this character:

**Characterization Diagram for
Curley's Wife**

Personality

Attitude Toward Others

Physical Description

Position on the Ranch

Concerns

Group generalization about this character:

**Characterization Diagram for
Slim**

Personality

friendly
a listener

Attitude Toward Others

accepting

Physical Description

tall
dignified

Position on the Ranch

leader of the men
skilled

Concerns

getting work done

Group generalization about this character:

**Characterization Diagram for
Slim**

Personality

Attitude Toward Others

Physical Description

Position on the Ranch

Concerns

Group generalization about this character:

Characterization Diagram for Candy

Personality

talkative
gossip
helpful
seems powerless, easily
pushed around

Attitude Toward Others

positive
loves his dog

Physical Description

old
lost hand
weak

Position on the Ranch

“Swamper”
cleans up
helps newcomers

Concerns

his dog
watching others
his age
his weakness
death

Group generalization about this character:

**Characterization Diagram for
Candy**

Personality

Attitude Toward Others

Physical Description

Position on the Ranch

Concerns

Group generalization about this character:

Objective: Relating literature to life and social issues.
Responding to literary characters.

Activity

Feminists accuse men of objectifying women; the verb “objectify” means to think of a person not as a complete human being, but as an object. When the men objectify Curley’s wife, they are stressing her physical characteristics more than her internal ones. The men on the ranch, including Curley, treat Curley’s wife as an object not really a person.

- A. In small groups discuss how the media (television, videos, music, newspapers, magazines, movies) and advertising contribute to the objectification of women in American society.
- B. List incidents and comments from the story that support the position that Curley’s wife is being objectified by the men.
- C. After each group has made its presentation, the class as a whole should decide if Curley’s wife is being objectified in the novel and how Steinbeck portrays her.

Objective: Responding to literary text with dramatic interpretation.

Activity

- A. In small groups, dramatize the following scenes. (See Appendix for directions.) Each group will have one scene to dramatize.
 - The boss questions George. (Pgs. 21-23)
 - Curley questions George and Lennie. (Pgs. 25-26)
 - Curley’s wife comes into the bunkhouse. (Pgs. 30-32)
 - George tells Lennie not to look at Curley’s wife. (Pgs. 32-33)
 - Slim enters and talks with George. (Pgs. 33-34)
- B. At the end of each scene, all members will summarize what the group expects will happen in the next section and why.

Objective: Relating literature to life and social issues.
Responding to literary characters.

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Section 3
Inference
Persuasive Writing
Plot
Point of View
Caricature

Objective: Drawing inferences about the relationship between events in a literary work.
Responding to the philosophical position put forth in a story.
Using persuasive techniques.

Activity

- A. In small groups, consider the section in *Of Mice and Men* when Lennie crushes Curley's hand. Some view this event as an inevitable result of a chain of events that Lennie could not control. Complete the following diagram showing the causal chain.

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Plot
Point of View
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Responding to the philosophical position put forth in a story.
Using persuasive techniques.

Activity

- A. In small groups, consider the section in *Of Mice and Men* when Lennie crushes Curley's hand. Some view this event as an inevitable result of a chain of events that Lennie could not control. Complete the following diagram showing the causal chain.

Causal Chain of Events

Curley is anxious
because he cannot
find his wife

So,
He rushes into the
barn and accuses
Slim of being with
her.

But,
Slim tells Curley off. **And**
The other men hear and
agree with Slim.

As a Result,
Curley feels
humiliated.

Then, Curley sees
Lennie, who is smiling
about the possibility
of getting the farm.

But,
Curley thinks Lennie
is laughing at him. **So,**
Curley starts slashing
Lennie's face.

In Desperation,
Lennie cries out for
George.

And George tells
Lennie to "get" Curley.

As a Result,
Lennie grabs
Curley's hand,
crushing it.

Causal Chain of Events

**Curley is anxious
because he cannot
find his wife**

So,

But,

And

As a Result,

Then, Curley sees

But,

So,

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And George tells

**As a Result,
Lennie grabs
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Causal Chain of Events

- B. George makes a choice to let Lennie hurt Curley, knowing how powerful Lennie is. When Curley starts hitting Lennie, George said, “Get him.” Slim jumped up to stop Curley, but George held Slim back, repeating, “Get him, Lennie.”

What is your view of this? Do you think George should be held responsible? Write a letter to Curley (from any other major character) and explain your feelings to him.

- C. List the internal forces that Curley is experiencing, considering the psychological issues he already appears to have. Do you think Curley is responsible for striking out at Lennie? State your position and list your reasons.

- B. George makes a choice to let Lennie hurt Curley, knowing how powerful Lennie is. When Curley starts hitting Lennie, George said, “Get him.” Slim jumped up to stop Curley, but George held Slim back, repeating, “Get him, Lennie.”

What is your view of this? Do you think George should be held responsible? Write a letter to Curley (from any other major character) and explain your feelings to him.

- C. List the internal forces that Curley is experiencing, considering the psychological issues he already appears to have. Do you think Curley is responsible for striking out at Lennie? State your position and list your reasons.

Objective: Recognizing rising action in a plot.

Activity

Complete the following chart on how each aspect of George's situation has become more intense and what you predict the outcomes may be.

George's Situation		
Aspects	The way things have intensified	Your Prediction
Lack of job security	<i>Lennie has hurt Curley, the boss' son.</i>	<i>Answers will vary.</i>
Conflict with Curley	<i>Curley has more reason than ever to fight with George and Lennie.</i>	
The possibility of getting the dream	<i>Candy has money to offer. If they get fired, they cannot save the money they need.</i>	
The issue of Curley's wife	<i>The men are fed up with Curley's anxiety over her; she has become a focus point.</i>	

Objective: Recognizing rising action in a plot.

Activity

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Aspects	The way things have intensified	Your Prediction
---------	---------------------------------	-----------------

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----------------------	--	--

Conflict with Curley		
----------------------	--	--

The possibility of getting the dream		
--------------------------------------	--	--

The issue of Curley's wife		
----------------------------	--	--

Objective: Interpreting and responding to a character's language and actions.

Activity

In this section, Steinbeck gives the reader descriptions of the intense emotional reactions of the characters. Read the description below of characters' reactions and for each bolded name, one per section, provide a different finish to the section than the book has.

Description 1 – George

The door opened. Slim came in, followed by Curley and Carlson and Whit. Slim's hands were black with tar and he was scowling. Curley hung close to his elbow.

Curley said, "Well, I didn't mean nothing, Slim. I just ast you."

Slim said, "Well, you been askin' me too often. I'm gettin' God damn sick of it. If you can't look after your own God damn wife, what you expect me to do about it? You lay offa me."

"I'm jus' trying' to tell you I didn't mean nothing," said Curley. "I jus' thought you might of saw her..."

Candy joined the attack with joy. "Glove fulla vaseline," he said disgustedly. Curley glared at him. His eyes slipped on past and lighted on Lennie; and Lennie was still smiling with delight at the memory of the ranch.

Curley stepped over to Lennie like a terrier. "What the hell you laughin' at?"

Lennie looked blankly at him. "Huh?" (Pgs. 61-62)

Description 2 – Lennie

Lennie looked helplessly at George, and then he got up and tried to retreat. Curley was balanced and poised. He slashed at Lennie with his left, and then smashed down his nose with a right. Lennie gave a cry of terror. Blood welled from his nose. "George," he cried.... Lennie's hand remained at his sides; he was too frightened to defend himself....

Curley's fist was swinging when Lennie reached for it. The next minute Curley was flopping like a fish on a line, and his closed fist was lost in Lennie's big hand. George ran down the room. "Leggo of him, Lennie. Let go."

But Lennie watched in terror the flopping little man whom he held. Blood ran down Lennie's face, one of his eyes was cut and closed. George slapped him in the face again and again, and still Lennie help on to the closed fist. Curley was white and shrunken by now, and his struggling had become weak. He stood crying, his fist lost in Lennie's paw....

Curley sat down on the floor, looking in wonder at his crushed hand. Slim and Carlson bent over him. Then Slim straightened up and regarded Lennie with horror. "We got to get him in to a doctor," he said. "Looks to me like ever' bone in his han' is bust." (Pgs. 62-63)

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Description 3 – Slim

Slim smiled wryly. He knelt down beside Curley. “You got your senses in hand enough to listen?” he asked. Curley nodded. “Well, then listen,” Slim went on. “I think you got your han’ caught in a machine. If you don’t tell nobody what happened we ain’t going to. But you jus’ tell an’ try to get this guy canned and we’ll tell ever’body, an’ then will you get the laugh....”

Candy nodded solemnly. “That’s jus’ what you done,” he said. “Right this morning when Curley first lit intil your frien’, you says, ‘He better not fool with Lennie if he knows what’s good for ’um.’ That’s jus’ what you says to me....”

Lennie smiled with his bruised mouth. “I didn’t want no trouble,” he said. He walked toward the door, but just before he came to it, he turned back. “George?” (Pgs. 64-65)

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Objective: Inferring meaning from a character's actions or words.

Activity

As a good writer, Steinbeck does not always give the reader all the information; much is left to the reader's ability to infer or assume. As an example, on page 9, George demands Lennie's mouse and, "[s]lowly, like a terrier..." Lennie gives it up. On page 62, Steinbeck writes "Curley stepped over to Lennie like a terrier." Obviously, the reader must determine how these actions are the same, differ, or are similar to this type of dog. You might infer the first terrier was scolded and moved with its head down; the second dog, however, would scamper over, eyes angry, ready for a fight.

What might you infer about the characters from the following incidents or quotes?

1. "Slim neither encouraged nor discouraged him [George]. He just sat back quiet and receptive." (Pg. 39)

Answers may vary. Example:

Slim is the type of person who observes things, rather than the type who takes action on his own.

2. "[Lennie] clean forgot I told him to jump in. Well, I ain't done nothing like that no more." (Pg. 40)

Answers may vary. Example:

George is sorry that he teased Lennie.

3. "He [Lennie] ain't mean."

Answers may vary. Example:

Lennie is a good person at heart.

4. "There ain't no more harm in him [Lennie] than a kid neither, except he's so strong." (Pg. 45)

Answers may vary. Example:

Lennie is not bright, but he can be dangerous because he does not know his own strength.

5. "Candy looked for help from face to face." (Pg. 45)

Answers may vary. Example:

Candy is too weak and old to stand up for himself.

Objective: Inferring meaning from a character's actions or words.

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3. "He [Lennie] ain't mean."
4. "There ain't no more harm in him [Lennie] than a kid neither, except he's so strong." (Pg. 45)
5. "Candy looked for help from face to face." (Pg. 45)

6. Candy said hopefully, "You ain't got no gun."
"The hell I ain't. Got a Luger. It won't hurt him none at all."
Candy said, "Maybe tomorra. Le's wait till tomorra."
"I don't see no reason for it," said Carlson. He went to his bunk, pulled his bag from underneath it and took out a Luger pistol. "Let's get it over with," he said.
(Pg. 47)

Answers may vary. Example:

The gun may be important later in the plot.

7. "You seen what they done to my dog tonight? They says he wasn't no good to himself nor nobody else. When they can me here I wisht somebody'd shoot me."
(Pg. 60)

Answers may vary. Example:

Candy equates himself with his dog.

8. "Slim throwed a scare inta you [Curley]. You're yella as a frog belly." (Pg, 62)

Answers may vary. Example:

Curley only picks on people he can dominate.

9. The thing they [George and Lennie] had never really believed in was coming true." (Pg. 60)

Answers may vary. Example:

The dream of the farm will happen some day.

10. "Suddenly Lennie let go of his hold. He crouched cowering against the wall." (Pg. 64)

Answers may vary. Example:

Lennie does not realize he acted in self defense.

6. Candy said hopefully, "You ain't got no gun."
"The hell I ain't. Got a Luger. It won't hurt him none at all."
Candy said, "Maybe tomorra. Le's wait till tomorra."
"I don't see no reason for it," said Carlson. He went to his bunk, pulled his bag from underneath it and took out a Luger pistol. "Let's get it over with," he said.
(Pg. 47)
7. "You seen what they done to my dog tonight? They says he wasn't no good to himself nor nobody else. When they can me here I wisht somebody'd shoot me."
(Pg. 60)
8. "Slim throwed a scare inta you [Curley]. You're yella as a frog belly." (Pg, 62)
9. The thing they [George and Lennie] had never really believed in was coming true." (Pg. 60)
10. "Suddenly Lennie let go of his hold. He crouched cowering against the wall." (Pg. 64)

Objective: Seeing a character from a different point of view.
Understanding the purpose of caricature.

Activity

- A. In small groups (see Appendix), discuss the purpose of a caricature. Obtain the editorial section from a newspaper. Find and discuss examples of caricature in the newspaper. The Internet may be another source for information on caricature.
- B. Of all the characters, Curley best lends himself to a caricature. Consider what aspect of Curley's personality or physical appearance you would emphasize and draw him as a caricature.

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Section 4

Characterization

Objective: Giving added meaning and understanding to a character.

Activity

In small groups with the proper number of students, read the directions for monologues and interviews. Then, each group should prepare one of the following. (See Appendices)

1. *Interview* Crooks about racism in the 1930's.
2. Have Crooks give a *monologue* about his loneliness.
3. *Dramatize* a conversation between Whit and Candy about what happened with Curley's wife in Crooks' room while the men were in town.
4. Have George give a *monologue* about leaving Lennie, about needing a break.
5. Imagine that Curley's wife finally gets an opportunity to talk to another woman about her life with Curley on the ranch. Write down this *conversation*.
6. Have Lennie give a *monologue* about meeting Crooks and about his dream.
7. *Dramatize* the scene between Crooks and Lennie.

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7. *Dramatize* the scene between Crooks and Lennie.

Sections 1-6

Journalistic Style

Objective: Writing an article, editorial, and headlines for a paper.

Activity

After re-reading the following scenes from *Of Mice and Men*, prepare a newspaper story and a headline for one scene and an editorial and headline for a different scene out of the four below. Be sure to include who, what, when, where, and why in your news story. Remember that a news story is objective, unbiased, and presents only the facts as they happened. An editorial, however, allows you to express your own opinion. Make sure, though, that your opinions are supported by facts in the novel.

1. The incidents at Weed
2. Curley's wife's death
3. Lennie's death
4. The scene of Lennie crushing Curley's hand

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1. The incidents at Weed
2. Curley's wife's death
3. Lennie's death
4. The scene of Lennie crushing Curley's hand

Section 4

Literary Comparison

Objective: Relating literature to life.

Activity

Crooks, in the following remarks, expresses his view on men wanting to own property. Although he is initially negative about the possibility, he is eager to join Candy, George, and Lennie when Candy convinces him they almost have the money.

Crooks interrupted brutally. "You guys is just kiddin' yourself. You'll talk about it a hell of a lot, but you won't get no land. You'll be a swamper here till they take you out in a box. Hell, I seen too many guys. Lennie here'll quit an' be on the road in two, three weeks. Seems like ever' guy got land in his head."

Candy rubbed his cheek angrily. "You God damn right we're gonna do it. George says we are. We got the money right now."

"Yeah?" said Crooks. "An' where's George now? In town in a whore house. That's where your money's goin'. Jesus, I seen it happen too many times. I seen too many guys with land in their head. They never get none under their hand."

Candy cried, "Sure they all want it. Everybody wants a little bit of land, not much. Jus' som'thin' that was his. Somethin' he could live on and there couldn't nobody throw him off of it. I never had none. I planted crops for damn near ever'body in this state, but they wasn't my crops, and when I harvested 'em, it wasn't none of my harvest."
(Pgs. 75-76)

Read the selection below from the book, *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*. In it, the narrator explains her confusion about land and her family's feelings on owning it. Compare this selection to the one from *Of Mice And Men*. In your small groups, discuss:

The desires both selections have in common.

The differences between them.

What young people today value and why these specific things are valued.

How your group feels about owning land.

Prepare to engage in a discussion with the other groups regarding these topics.

from *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*

I asked him once why he had to go away, why the land was so important. He took my hand and said in his quiet way; "Look out there, Cassie girl. All that belongs to you. You ain't never had to live on nobody's place but your own and long as I live and the family survives, you'll never have to. That's important. You may not understand that now, but one day you will. Then you'll see...."

"Two hundred acres of this place been Logan land for almost fifty years now, the other two hundred for fifteen. We've been through bad times and good times but we ain't never lost none of it. Ain't gonna start now."

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"Two hundred acres of this place been Logan land for almost fifty years now, the other two hundred for fifteen. We've been through bad times and good times but we ain't never lost none of it. Ain't gonna start now."

Sections 5-6
Plot
Dialogue
Naturalism

Objective: Recognizing the climax of a story.
Relating literature to social issues.

Activity I

In Section 5, George seems to accept reality. He says to Candy (in reference to Lennie's killing Curley's wife and to the dream),

“I should have knew...I guess maybe way back in my head I did....

“—I think I knowed from the very first. I think I knowed we'd never do her.

He usta like to hear about it so much I got to thinking maybe we would.” (Pg. 94)

George then decides to kill Lennie.

- A. In your small groups, list the reasons George has for reaching this decision and come to an understanding about what the climax in *Of Mice and Men* is.
- B. Complete the **Support for George's Decision** chart by citing reasons from the text.

Activity II

While the local police in 1939 might not have bothered to investigate the death of one more migrant worker, in the modern world, we can be sure they would investigate.

Write a scenario in which two detectives come to the ranch to investigate the shooting. Indicate the people the police talk to, the questions they ask, and the conclusions they come to.

Sections 5-6

Plot

Dialogue

Naturalism

Objective: Recognizing the climax of a story.
Relating literature to social issues.

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Support for George's Decision

Reasons for George's Decision

Text Supporting George's Decision

- *Earlier acts.*
- *Mentions of mercy killing.*
- *Lennie's mental condition.*

*Slim drowning pups.
Carlson shooting Candy's dog.
Candy's wishing that someone
would put him out of his
misery.*

- *Characters who understand the killing and/or approve of what George did.*

*Crooks tells Lennie that he (Lennie)
would be put in a cage with a collar
around the neck if not for George.
Candy feels sorry for Lennie.
Slim tells George that Lennie would
suffer in an institution and later says,
"I swear you hadda."*

- *George's options.*

*Let Lennie get shot by someone else.
Try to put Lennie in an institution.
Try to run with Lennie.*

- *The pattern of the text.*

*Lennie keeps killing things and
getting them both into trouble
George is unable to control Lennie.*

Support for George's Decision

Reasons for George's Decision

**Text Supporting George's
Decision**

Objective: Evaluating the impact of the author's use of images of nature and naturalism.

Activity

Complete the following chart, **Images Related to Ideas of the Novel**. Read the image presented that come from the text, decide the idea it suggests, and interpret how the image affects *Of Mice and Men*. Consider how the picture Steinbeck presents reinforces the naturalistic philosophy of the novel.

Objective: Evaluating the impact of the author's use of images of nature and naturalism.

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Complete the following chart, **Images Related to Ideas of the Novel**. Read the image presented that come from the text, decide the idea it suggests, and interpret how the image affects *Of Mice and Men*. Consider how the picture Steinbeck presents reinforces the naturalistic philosophy of the novel.

Images Related to Ideas of the Novel		
Image	Idea Suggested	The Relationship of the Image to the Naturalistic Tendency
<p>The Snake</p> <p>THE deep green pool of the Salinas River was still in the late afternoon. Already the sun had left the valley to go climbing up the slopes of the Gabilan mountains, and the hilltops were rosy in the sun. But by the pool among the mottled sycamores, a pleasant shade had fallen.</p> <p>A water snake glided smoothly up the pool, twisting its periscope head from side to side; and it swam the length of the pool and came to the legs of a motionless heron that stood in the shallows. A silent head and beak lanced down and plucked it out by the head, and the beak swallowed the little snake while its tail waved frantically.</p> <p>A far rush of wind sounded and a gust drove through the tops of the trees like a wave....</p> <p>As quickly as it had come, the wind died, and the clearing was quiet again. The heron stood in the shallows, motionless and waiting. Another little water snake swam up the pool, turning its periscope head from side to side. (Pgs. 99-100)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>In a peaceful but uncaring nature, the weak still perish</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Nature reflects the mood and events of the story.</i> • <i>Only the fittest survive.</i> • <i>Survival and death are interrelated.</i> • <i>Something dies to support the life of something else.</i> • <i>Life goes on, no matter who or what dies.</i>

Images Related to Ideas of the Novel		
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The Contrast of Slim and Carlson

Slim twitched George's elbow.
"Come on, George. Me an' you'll go in an' get a drink."

George let himself be helped to his feet. "Y'eah, a drink."

Slim said, "You hadda, George. I swear you hadda. Come on with me." He led George into the entrance of the trail and up toward the highway.

Curley and Carlson looked after them.

And Carlson said, "Now what the hell ya suppose is eatin' them two guys?" (Pg. 107)

Death

Curley's wife lay with a half-covering of yellow hay. And the meanness and the plannings and the discontent and the ache for attention were all gone from her face. She was very pretty and simple, and her face was sweet and young. Now her rouged cheeks and her reddened lips made her seem alive and sleeping very lightly. The curls, tiny little sausages, were spread on the hay behind her head, and her lips were parted. (Pgs. 92-93)

- *People can be insensitive*
- *In spite of the harshness of reality, people can express compassion.*
- *People are unable to overcome their psychological make-up.*
- *George had no freedom in this situation; he had to kill Lennie.*
- *Death is peaceful*
- *Life may be much more difficult than death.*
- *Beauty exists in death.*
- *Death is a natural finish to life.*
- *Curley's wife's way of living (flirting, being surrounded by men and a jealous husband, and tempting Lennie) determined her death.*
- *Her "ache for attention," which she could not control nor understand, contributed to her fate.*

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Wrap-Up

Objective: Recognizing the significance of the novel's title.
Relating any allusions in a title to a story's major theme.

Activity

- A. The title, *Of Mice and Men*, is an allusion to a line in a poem called "To a Mouse," by Robert Burns. Read the short portion below that refers to Steinbeck's title and the rendering of it into modern English. Then, explain the poem's meaning.
- B. In a paragraph or two, explain what you feel the connection is between the book and the poem. Be prepared to read the paragraph aloud.

[A mouse has been disturbed by the poet, who speaks to it philosophically. These are the last two verses.]

But Mousie, thou art no thy lane,
In proving foresight may be vain:
The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men
Gang aft agley,
An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain,
For promis'd joy!
Still thou art blest, compared wi' me!
The present only toucheth thee:
But och! I backward cast my e'e,
On prospects drear!
An' forward, tho' I canna see,
I guess an' fear!

But, Mousie, you are not alone
In proving foresight may be vain
The best-laid plans of mice and men
Often go astray,
And leave us nothing but grief and pain
For promised joy
Still you are blessed, compared with me.
You are only affected by the present.
But ah, I cast my eye backwards
On dreary prospects
And though I cannot see the future
I guess and fear!

Objective: Writing statements of theme and supporting your thesis with details from the novel.

Activity

For each of the following topics present in the novel, write a thematic statement that includes Steinbeck's point of view on the topic. Then cite incidents or comments from the book that support each thematic statement. Make sure you understand the definition of theme before you proceed.

Wrap-Up

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Topic #1 – Social injustice

Thematic Statement:

Comments from the book that support Topic #1 – Social injustice

Topic #2 – Human suffering/loneliness

Thematic Statement:

Comments from the book that support Topic #2 – Human suffering/loneliness

Topic #3 - Dreams/hopes

Thematic Statement:

Comments from the book that support Topic #3 - Dreams/hopes

Topic #1 – Social injustice

Thematic Statement:

Comments from the book that support Topic #1 – Social injustice

Topic #2 – Human suffering/loneliness

Thematic Statement:

Comments from the book that support Topic #2 – Human suffering/loneliness

Topic #3 - Dreams/hopes

Thematic Statement:

Comments from the book that support Topic #3 - Dreams/hopes

Topic #4 – Mercy killing

Thematic Statement:

Comments from the book that support Topic #4 – Mercy killing

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Thematic Statement:

Comments from the book that support Topic #4 – Mercy killing

Objective: Recognizing the qualities of this work that give it universal and enduring appeal.

Activity

On Booktalk, a talk show in which knowledgeable guests discuss books with a moderator, the moderator and four guests will discuss *Of Mice and Men*.

Note to Teacher: Put students in groups of five. After they have worked together to prepare questions and answers, they should choose one person to be the moderator. When the show is done in front of the class, students should be prepared to ask questions. The first question is given below.

Moderator: When *Of Mice and Men* was first published as a novel, and then later as a play, it was an immediate success both times. Over sixty years later, it is still one of the most popular books read in schools. What do you suppose accounts for its huge and enduring popularity?

Guest:

Objective: Predicting the future of a character based on what we know of his past.
Writing a dialogue.

Activity

Working in groups of two, imagine five or six years in the future that George stops at a highway reststop and runs into Slim or Curley. Write the conversation you think might take place between George and either Slim or Curley. The dialogue (performed in front of the class) should last five to six minutes.

Objective: Recognizing the qualities of this work that give it universal and enduring appeal.

Activity

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Objective: Visualizing the characters.

Activity

- A. If you were casting the roles in this book for a new film version, who would you pick for each role and why?

Character	Actor	Why
George		
Lennie		
Curley		
Slim		
Candy		
Crooks		
Candy's wife		
Carlson		
The boss		

- B. If you were doing the film version, is there anything you would consider changing in the plot or setting? Explain why you would make these changes.

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Candy's wife		
Carlson		
The boss		

- B. If you were doing the film version, is there anything you would consider changing in the plot or setting? Explain why you would make these changes.

Objective: Writing a defining poem from a character's point of view.

Activity

The sample below will give you the form of a defining poem.

Joy is
The first day of summer vacation
Going to the beach with your friends!
Knocking in the game-winning run
Being with the one you love.

Write a five-line defining poem from the point of view of each of the following:

1. From the point of view of Curley's wife, write a defining poem on love or loneliness.
2. From Slim's point of view, write a defining poem on work.
3. From George's point of view, write a defining poem on friendship.
4. From Curley's point of view, write a defining poem on women.

Objective: Writing a defining poem from a character's point of view.

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4. From Curley's point of view, write a defining poem on women.

Appendix I

Dramatization of Scenes in the Novel

Introduction

While reading, visualize how the characters move in terms of their gestures and in relation to each other. See them touching each other or backing away. Hear the tones in their voices and the inflections, volume, and emphasis they use when they speak to each other. Imaginatively experience the feelings and meanings they are communicating to each other.

Then, plan the movements and gestures of the characters. For example, if the narrator says “his eyes flashing about restlessly. Turning me around by one arm he moved a broad flat hand along the front vistas...” plan on performing those actions.

Next, decide the tone, volume, and inflection you think would be in the character’s voice.

Finally practice your skit.

Appendix II

Directions for Interviews

Planning in Small Groups

First, discuss what you as interviewer want to know and the reasons you want to know it. Decide your specific questions.

Second, anticipate what the person being interviewed will answer. Use as many quotations from the text as possible. The answers should be consistent with what the character or narrative text says.

Finally, plan the interviewer's summary remarks. Try to explain how the information in the questions/answers relates to the plot in general and to the thematic ideas of the novel.

Appendix III

SMALL GROUP LEARNING

Small Group Learning is defined as two to five students working together for a common goal. For it to be successful, three basic elements must be present.

1. **SOCIAL SKILLS IN GROUP WORK:** Most students, unless they are taught the appropriate skills, do not participate as effectively as they might in small group work. Like any other skill, those needed for group work must be identified, practiced, and reinforced. To this end, we have included a Social Skills Behavior Checklist which we will ask you to use to rate your group. At this time, please read the related objectives listed below.

Social-Behavioral Objectives

1. Everyone is addressed by his or her first name.
2. Everyone speaks quietly in order not to disturb other groups.
3. No one ever uses put-downs or name calling.
4. Everyone is always physically and mentally part of the group. The following are prohibited and may result in the group's grade being lowered:
 - A. Putting one's head down on the desk.
 - B. Reading or working on unrelated items.
 - C. Moving about the room or talking to members of other groups.
5. Everyone is encouraged to participate and does participate.
6. Everyone offers praise and encouragement.
7. Everyone recognizes that on some points of opinion two equally valid points of view can be supported.
8. Everyone also recognizes, however, that the worth of an idea (opinion) depends on the strength of the facts that support it.

Social-Intellectual Objectives

9. Ideas are discussed aloud.
10. Ideas are summarized.
11. Clarification is asked for and received.
12. Explanations are given until everyone understands.
13. Ideas, not people, are criticized.
14. Difficult ideas are paraphrased.
15. Multiple points of view are examined.
16. Work is organized within available time and available resources.
17. Questions are asked and answered satisfactorily.
18. Ideas are examined, elaborated on, and pulled together.
19. Reasons and rationale are asked for and provided.
20. Conclusions are challenged with new information.
21. Ideas are created in brainstorming.

2. **POSITIVE INTERDEPENDENCE:** Critical to successful *group work* is the realization on the part of the students “that we are all in this together; we either sink or swim as a group.” In terms of this unit, it may mean that everyone in the group will share the group grade on the project, whether it is an “A” or an “F.”
3. **INDIVIDUAL ACCOUNTABILITY:** The bottom line of any teaching method is, of course, how well the students have mastered the objectives being taught. Therefore, you must understand that the small group process, while it is more fun than other methods, is serious business. At the conclusion of this unit, a test may be used to evaluate how well each individual has mastered the objectives. As a consequence, the student who slacks off in the group or in his homework not only lets the group down, but also hurts him or herself.

PROCEDURES FOR SMALL GROUP WORK

As well as mastery of content and concepts, grades will be based on the demonstration of the following skills.

1. **Linguistic-Intellectual Skills** – These skills are fostered when students examine ideas from multiple points of view and critically probe for strengths and weaknesses.
2. **Group Social Skills** – Before anything else can be mastered, the small group must function effectively as a learning unit, which makes the mastery of these skills the first priority.

Linguistic-Intellectual Skills to be Demonstrated

Examples of these skills in action

Explaining

It seems to me...
One way of looking at it...
How does everyone feel about...
The idea that...

Encouraging

What's your idea?
I didn't think of that.
Good idea!
That helps.
Good; go on with that thought.

Clarifying Let's put it this way...

Perhaps if we draw a chart...
It may mean that...
How does this sound...
Where does this lead us?

Elaborating

That's right, and it also may include...
Another instance of that is when...
A point we might also include...

Qualifying

I agree with your premise, but...
I see it leading somewhere else...
That is one reason, but it may also...
I agree with the examples, but I come to a different conclusion.
Does that conclusion hold up in every instance?

Questioning

Why do you say that?
What is the proof for that conclusion?
Is that a valid generalization?
How did you reach that point?

Disagreeing

It seems to me there could be a different reason.
But looking at it from his point of view...
We may be jumping to a conclusion without looking at all the facts.
Here's another way of looking at it...

SMALL GROUP EVALUATION SHEET

Social-Behavioral Skills in our group	Poor				Good
1. Everyone is addressed by his or her first name.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Everyone speaks quietly. (If one group gets loud, other groups get louder to hear each other.)	1	2	3	4	5
3. No one ever uses put-downs or name calling.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Everyone is always physically and mentally part of the group.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Everyone is encouraged to and does participate.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Everyone offers praise and encouragement.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Everyone recognizes that on some opinions, two equally valid points of view can be supported.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Everyone also recognizes, however, that the worth of an idea (opinion) depends on the strength of the facts that support it.	1	2	3	4	5
Social-Intellectual Skills in our group					
9. Ideas are examined and discussed aloud.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Ideas are summarized.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Clarification is asked for and received.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Explanations are given until everyone understands.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Ideas, not people, are criticized.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Difficult ideas are paraphrased.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Multiple points of view are examined.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Work is organized within available time and available resources.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Questions are asked and answered satisfactorily.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Ideas are examined, elaborated on, and pulled together.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Reasons and rationales are asked for and provided.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Conclusions are challenged with new information.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Ideas are created in brainstorming.	1	2	3	4	5
Total Score					

STUDENT ROLES IN GROUP DISCUSSIONS

1. **Reader:** The reader's job is to read the questions aloud and to be sure everyone knows the meaning of unfamiliar words and understands the questions.
2. **Recorder:** The recorder takes notes and is responsible for writing down the group's final answers.
3. **Timer and Voice Monitor:** The timer and voice monitor is responsible for reminding individuals when they get too loud and for keeping track of the time. Because of a concern for finishing the project on time, the monitor will be the one to get the students back on task when they stray or get bogged down on one point.
4. **Checker and Encourager:** This person's chief responsibility is to encourage all members to contribute, to compliment when appropriate, and to remind everyone of the necessity of avoiding name calling and/or put-downs.

Appendix IV

Directions for a Dramatic Monologue

First, discuss the aspects of the character you want to reveal, and the viewpoint you want to express.

Second, decide what parts of the text you will use in your monologue. You can convert narrative description into something a character says.

Finally, write out the monologue, including what you think the character would say about the topic.

Of Mice and Men

Terms and Definitions

Caricature - an exaggerated flat character. Certain features or mannerisms are exaggerated for satirical effect. Example: Napoleon in *Animal Farm*.

Characterization - the methods, incidents, speech, etc., an author uses to reveal the people in the book.

Climax - the point of greatest dramatic tension or excitement in a story. Example: Othello's murder of Desdemona.

Concrete - language referring to something that can be perceived by the senses. Examples: pavement, hunger, locomotive

Conflict - the struggle that propels the action. There are three types of conflict: *man versus man* (Example: a typical Western, in which the sheriff confronts the outlaws); *man versus nature* (Example: a story about someone surviving in a small boat on the ocean); *man versus himself* (Example: the main character of a story fighting his or her own drug abuse). Most books include all three types of conflict.

Determinism - the philosophical belief that every action one takes, no matter how small, occurs because of previous actions. Human will, therefore, is not involved; one event leads to the next.

Editorial - a piece written in a newspaper, which expresses a viewpoint, as opposed to a news article, which presents only facts.

Falling Action - additional action following the climax.

Foreshadowing - the use of hints or clues in a story to suggest what action is to come. Foreshadowing is frequently used to create interest and build suspense.

Generalization - an idea, statement, or conclusion that is formed for an entire group or category. Generalizations can pertain to nearly anything. Example: Pit bulls are vicious dogs.

Imagery - the use of words to evoke sensory impressions that are beyond the words themselves. Similar to *symbol* and *motif*. Example: "Get thee to a nunnery," from *Hamlet* implies purity and chastity, not simply a convent.

Inference - the act of drawing a conclusion that is not actually stated. For example, in *The Pigman*, since John and Lorraine are writing a memorial epic about the incident with the Pigman, we may infer that the Pigman is now dead and the incident is important to them.

Monologue - an extended speech uttered by one speaker, either to others or as if alone. In prose fiction, the interior monologue is a representation of a character's unspoken thoughts sometimes rendered in the style known as "stream of consciousness."

Motif - a situation, incident, idea, or image that is found and repeated significantly in a novel.
Example: In *Hamlet*, revenge is a frequently repeated idea.

Naturalism - a literary movement that began in the late nineteenth century, which emphasized that man was as much a prisoner of instinct, environment, and heredity as animals; man has no free will in the theory of naturalism. Examples: *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets*, *The Call of the Wild*

Parody - a mocking imitation of a subject or person designed to ridicule the subject in an exaggerated, often sarcastic way.

Plot - the pattern of events in a novel. Is it believable or credible given its setting? Is it well-paced as opposed to slow moving?

Realism - a literary movement that has at its core the depiction of life as it really is, with no attempt to hide or gloss over the problems, hardships, or ugliness of life. Example: *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

Rising Action - the part of the story's plot that adds complications to the problems and increases the reader's interest.

Satire - using humor to ridicule. Example: *Animal Farm*

Setting - when and where the short story, play, or novel takes place. Example: *Macbeth* takes place in the eleventh century in Scotland, which greatly influences the story and adds the elements of truthfulness to its violence.

Symbol - an object, person, or place that has a meaning in itself and that also stands for something larger than itself, usually an idea or concept; some concrete thing which represents an abstraction. Example: The sea could be symbolic for "the unknown," since the sea is something which is physical and can be seen by the reader, but has elements which cannot be understood, it can be used *symbolically* to stand for the abstraction of "mystery," "obscurity," or "the unknown."

Theme - the central or dominant idea behind the story; the most important aspect that emerges from how the book treats its subject. Sometimes theme is easy to see, but, at other times, it may be more difficult. Theme is usually expressed indirectly, as an element the reader must figure out. It is a universal statement about humanity, rather than a simple statement dealing with plot or characters in the story. Themes are generally hinted at through different devices: a phrase or quotation that introduces the novel, a recurring element in the book, or an observation made that is reinforced through plot, dialogue, or characters. It must be emphasized that not all works of literature have themes in them.

In a story about a man who is diagnosed with cancer and, through medicine and will-power, returns to his former occupation, the theme might be: “real courage is demonstrated through internal bravery and perseverance.” In a poem about a flower that grows, blooms, and dies, the theme might be: “youth fades and death comes to all.”

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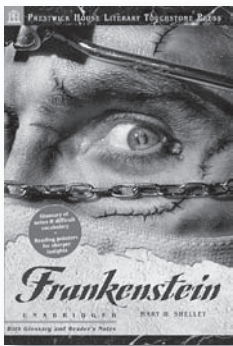
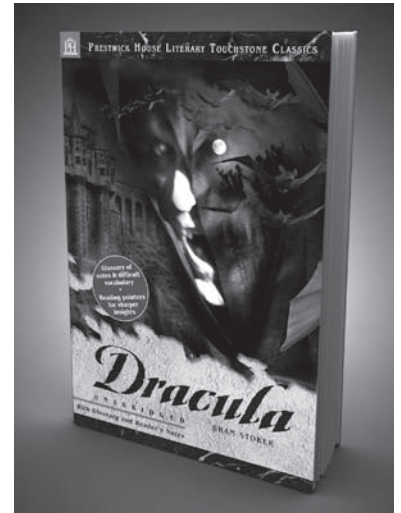
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