

Year 10 'Of Mice and Men' Knowledge Organiser



Zoom in
- single
word



Zoom out
- whole
phrase



Context

Key Context John Steinbeck was born in Salinas, California in 1902. Although his family was wealthy, he was interested in the lives of the farm labourers and spent time working with them. He used his experiences as material for his writing. On October 29 1929, millions of dollars were wiped out in the Wall Street Crash. It led to the People losing their life savings and a third of America's population became unemployed. A series of droughts in southern mid-western states like Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas led to failed harvests and dried-up land. Farmers were forced to move off their land: they could not repay the bank loans, which had helped buy the farms and had to sell what they owned to pay their debts. Racism/sexism were common, especially in Southern states due to economic climate, & history of slavery.

Key Characters

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| George Milton | George is one of the two lead protagonists (with Lennie) in <i>Of Mice and Men</i> . Although he is occasionally short-tempered with Lennie, he is a loyal and caring friend. George could be described as an idealist, as he harbours dreams of one day owning his own farm and land. George is relatively smart, |
| Lennie Small | Lennie is a kind and simple character, who possesses enormous physical strength. At both the beginning and end of the novel he likes to pet soft things, is totally devoted to George, and is an unintentional threat to both himself and others. Lennie's huge size makes him a target of others - principally Curley. Lennie dreams of tending the rabbits on his and George's own farm. |
| Curley's Wife | Curley's Wife is initially introduced to the reader as a 'tramp', a 'rat-trap' and a 'tart', such are the views towards women on the farm. However, she emerges as one of the most complex characters in the text, revealing openly that she is disappointed with her life, that 'Curley ain't a nice fella' and that she is lonely. Eventually her longing for attention becomes her downfall. |

Key vocabulary

Dreams

Racism

Friendship

Loneliness

Prejudice



Isolation

Migrant

Great depression

Novella

Dependent

Key terminology

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|------------------------|--|
| Simile | "Slowly, like a terrier who doesn't want to bring a ball to its master, Lennie approached, drew back." |
| Personification | "The sycamore leaves whispered in a little night breeze." |
| Metaphor | "Lennie covered his face with huge paws and bleated with terror." |
| Foreshadowing | The shooting of Candy's dog foreshadows the shooting of Lennie. Lennie killing animals foreshadows him killing people. |

Key quotations

George - C1: "Guys like us...that work on ranches, are the loneliest guys in the world. They got no family. They don't belong no place..."

Slim - C2: "Aint 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."

Candy - C3: "I ought to of shot that dog myself, George. I shouldn't of ought to let no stranger shoot my dog."

Crooks - C4: "A guy needs somebody to be near him. He whined, a guy goes nuts if he aint got nobody".

Curley's wife - C5: 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."

Chapter 6 - 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.