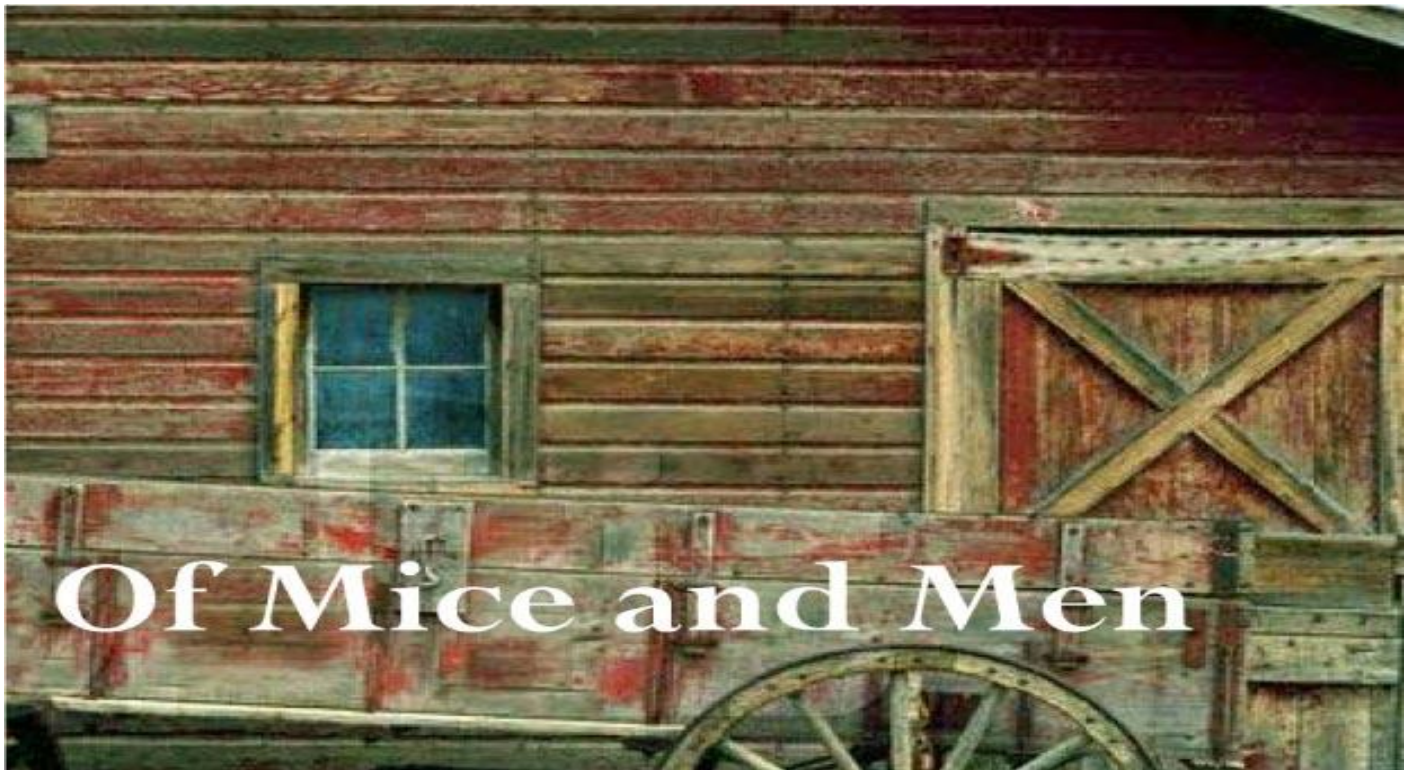


Prime Stage Theatre



Teacher Resource and Tour Guide



February 23-March 2, 2007

Wayne Brinda, Ed.D, Artistic Director

Deborah Wein, Education Director

Mimi Botkin, Educator



Our Education Programming is funded in part by:

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Introduction & How to Use this Guide

This guide was based on continual research conducted by the Prime Stage Artistic Director on reluctant and struggling readers and the results of a study Prime Stage conducted with students and teachers from two schools that explored how to “Connect kids to literary classics” through the theatre and in the classroom. The study’s participants made the following significant recommendations:

- Provide resources that help students connect the literature, the play, and their lives
- Provide resources that help teachers create engaging and enriching experiences
- Change the name of the curriculum or study guide to a “Resource and Tour Guide”
- Introduce the world of literature and the world of the play to help students and teachers
- Adequately prepare for the experience of seeing literature come to life on stage

Reluctant and Struggling Readers – Much research is conducted on students designated as reluctant and struggling readers. There are many websites devoted to this subject; Links to some of these can be found on the education pages of our website. In summary, reluctant readers want choice; help navigating through complex literature, and experiences to share their responses with peers and adults (Baker 2002; Gambrell 1996; Ivey 2002; Reeves 2004; Sumara 2002; Tovani 2000). Struggling readers need support with vocabulary, “chunking” ideas rather than decoding words, visualizing, expressing what they see, and how to ask questions as they read.

This guide addresses those concerns by providing a range of information that reluctant readers can choose to explore, read, and discuss as they discover *Of Mice and Men*. For struggling readers, complex or unfamiliar vocabulary is highlighted to help you create “word walls” or other strategies that address comprehension and, ultimately, enjoyment of the literature.

Visualization, Imagery & Imagination – Wilhelm (2004), in *Reading is Seeing*, proposed addressing visualization can:

- Heighten motivation, engagement, and enjoyment of reading
- Enhance comprehension of both narrative and expository texts
- Stimulate prior knowledge
- Provide a “template” for more sophisticated strategies, such as inferring
- Develop awareness of one’s reading processes (metacognition)
- Increase reader’s ability to share, critique, and revise what is learned with others
- Improve test scores

Imagery – *Recreating in one’s mind the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and touches described by an author* (Clewell 2006). Pictures in this guide can help your students visualize and describe what they read and see.

How to use this guide – This guide is not just a collection of lesson plans. While you will find lesson suggestions throughout the guide, the material is designed to provide material that will enrich your lessons with students, encourage them to read the literature, improve their vocabulary with words **highlighted in bold** that may be unfamiliar to them, and comprehension of the literature, and stimulate an enjoyment of reading and exploring literature. The guide is designed to help you find ways of helping your students see the literature, not just as words on pages, but as vibrant images, character, settings, conflicts, and ideas that relate to their lives today.

We hope you find this **Resource and Tour Guide** useful, helpful, and enjoyable. **Thank you.**



Statement of Prime Stage Theatre's Commitment to Literacy

Literacy, in relation to adolescent learners, is defined by Jetton and Dole (2004) as constructive, fluent, strategic, motivated, and a lifelong pursuit.

Theater has demonstrated its effectiveness as a strategy to teach reading, speaking and listening skills, focus, discipline, teamwork and patience as well as any sport. On the middle school and high school level, it helps teachers build a better understanding of the world, an enjoyment of English, languages, and reading. Good teachers strive to help their students connect to the literature by connecting it to their own world. This puts the literature into a framework for students to understand and appreciate. Good actors bring the characters from the pages to life, giving them full dimension, providing a multi-sensory experience, allowing students to "see" and vicariously "live in" the literature. The mission of Prime Stage to 'Bring Literature to Life' provides the best of both disciplines. Prime Stage Theatre has the privilege, through generous funding from local foundations, to realize its mission of addressing adolescent literacy through theatrical productions and educational programs. Our distinctive Adopt-a-School Program, Resource Guides, Teacher Workshops, and Mentor Program make theater accessible to middle school and high school educators, students and their families. Through theatre, students connect literature to their lives, and to the larger community in which they live.

We hope you will take full advantage of the materials provided so that your students have fun and valuable experiences with many teachable moments.

A Word about the Lessons

Our Educator Resources include activities that we suggest you do with your class to enhance your fieldtrip to Prime Stage. Some activities and lessons are appropriate for doing in-class before attending the play, on the bus ride to the theatre, and after you come home.

The lessons, which have been designed by fellow teachers and our Education Director, meet PA Humanities and National Standards for Arts Education. Please let us know which sections are most helpful as you prepare your students for a fieldtrip to Prime Stage.

Please view our website and use us as a resource for teaching literature in your classrooms.

Prime Stage, where seeing is believing! www.primestage.com

Wayne Brinda, Ed.D, Artistic Director and Founder of Prime Stage Theatre

Deborah H. Wein, Education Director

Mimi Botkin, Educator



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Celebrate the Century: Search the Web for U.S. History of the 1930s

Search the Web to learn the stories behind the stamps issued by the United States Postal Service commemorating the

people, places, events, and trends of the 1930s. Explore Web sites related to the Empire State Building, Superman, the Great Depression, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the Monopoly® board game and more!

http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson079.shtml

PLEASE NOTE:

All the photographs in this guide are from the internet. The sources are listed on the final page.

John Steinbeck-Biography

John Ernst Steinbeck was born in Salinas, California, on February 27, 1902 of German and Irish ancestry. His father, John Steinbeck, Sr., served as the County Treasurer while his mother, Olive (Hamilton) Steinbeck, a former school teacher, fostered Steinbeck's love of reading and the written word. During summers he worked as a hired hand on nearby ranches, nourishing his impression of the California countryside and its people.

After graduating from Salinas High School in 1919, Steinbeck attended Stanford University. Originally an English major, he pursued a program of independent study and his attendance was sporadic. During this time he worked periodically at various jobs and left Stanford permanently in 1925 to pursue his writing career in New York. However, he was unsuccessful in getting any of his writing published and finally returned to California.

His first novel, *Cup of Gold* was published in 1929, but attracted little attention. His two subsequent novels, *The Pastures of Heaven* and *To a God Unknown*, were also poorly received by the literary world.

Steinbeck married his first wife, Carol Henning in 1930. They lived in Pacific Grove where much of the material for *Tortilla Flat* and *Cannery Row* was gathered. *Tortilla Flat* (1935) marked the turning point in Steinbeck's literary career. It received the California Commonwealth Club's Gold Medal for best novel by a California author. Steinbeck continued writing, relying upon extensive research and his personal observation of the human condition for his stories. ***The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) won the Pulitzer Prize.**

During World War II, Steinbeck was a war correspondent for the New York Herald Tribune. Some of his dispatches were later collected and made into



"Literature is as old as speech. It grew out of human need for it and it has not changed except to become more needed. The skalds, the bards, the writers are not separate and exclusive. From the beginning, their functions, their duties, their responsibilities have been decreed by our species...the writer is delegated to declare and to celebrate man's proven capacity for greatness of heart and spirit - for gallantry in defeat, for courage, compassion and love. In the endless war against weakness and despair, these are the bright rally flags of hope and of emulation. I hold that a writer who does not passionately believe in the perfectibility of man has no dedication nor any membership in literature."

- John Steinbeck's Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech

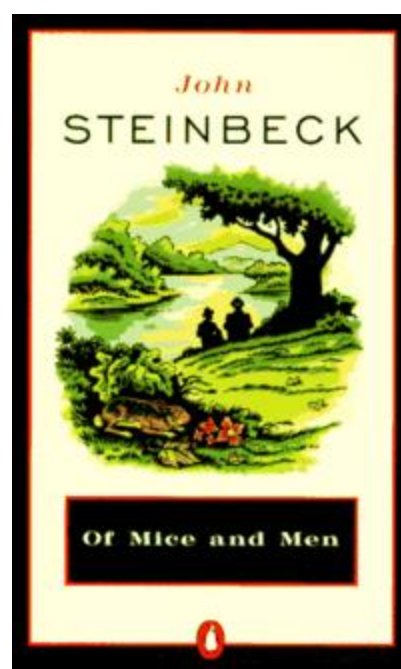
Once There Was a War.

John Steinbeck was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1962 “...for his realistic as well as imaginative writings, distinguished by a sympathetic humor and a keen social perception.”

Throughout his life John Steinbeck remained a private person who shunned publicity. He died December 20, 1968, in New York City and is survived by his third wife, Elaine (Scott) Steinbeck and one son, Thomas. His ashes were placed in the Garden of Memories Cemetery in Salinas.



Movie poster for 1939 film version of *Of Mice and Men*.



The Pulitzer Prize is named for Joseph Pulitzer, an Hungarian-born, Pulitzer was the most skillful of newspaper publisher, a passionate crusader against dishonest government, a fierce, hawk-like competitor who did not shrink from sensationalism in circulation struggles, and a visionary who richly endowed his profession. A Pulitzer Prize is the highest national honor given in print journalism, literary achievements, and musical compositions. It is administered by Columbia University in New York City. Visit <http://www.pulitzer.org> for more information that would appeal to your students.

The Nobel Prize for Literature Since 1901, the Nobel Prize has been honoring men and women from all corners of the globe for outstanding achievements in physics, chemistry, medicine, literature, and for work in peace. The foundations for the prize were laid in 1895 when Alfred Nobel wrote his last will, leaving much of his wealth to the establishment of the Nobel Prize. <http://nobelprize.org/nobel/foundation/index.html>

Tour of the Book/Play and Resources

About the Title

"The best laid plans of mice and men go oft astray." - Robert Burns

This saying so impressed John Steinbeck that he titled his novel after it. What does this saying mean to you? As you read the novel, *'Of Mice and Men'*, try to determine the connection to this phrase. What plans, dreams and wishes of the characters were made to go astray? How does this lead to feelings of isolation and loneliness?



Standard English Translation

But Mouse, you are not alone,
 In proving foresight may be vain:
The best laid schemes of mice and men
Go often askew,
 And leaves us nothing but grief and pain,
 For promised joy!

Still you are blest, compared with me!
 The present only touches you:
 But oh! I backward cast my eye,
 On prospects dreary!
 And forward, though I cannot see,
 I guess and fear!

This is only an excerpt from the poem. For the entire poem, go to:

<http://www.robertburns.org/>



About the Book

Of Mice and Men takes place during an era in United States history called the **Great Depression**. Steinbeck wanted his novel to reach the very workers he was writing about, but he knew that many poor farm workers were **illiterate**. He had seen theater troupes performing for **farm labor camps**, and he got the idea that he could write a novel that was made up almost entirely of dialogue, so that it could also be produced as a play.

Steinbeck had almost finished his first draft of the novel when his dog tore the manuscript to shreds. He wrote to his editor, "Two months work to do over again. I was pretty mad, but the poor little fellow may have been acting critically." He eventually rewrote the novel and it was published in 1937. The play was produced soon after, and both the novel and the play were huge successes. *Of Mice and Men* has remained one of Steinbeck's most popular novels, and it's been made into a movie three times, in 1939, 1981, and 1992.

The novel was removed from Tennessee public schools in 1984 when the School Board Chair promised to remove all "filthy books" from public school curricula and libraries. This classic was also banned from a public school in Ohio in 1980.



Why do you think 'Of Mice and Men' has been designated a banned book? How have you been affected by reading it?

Lesson Suggestion!

Some readers criticize *Of Mice and Men* for having two-dimensional characters. What do you think? Does this criticism have merit? Do the characters seem real, or are they "flat"—that is, lacking in complexity and depth? Why or why not? Write a paragraph about your thoughts.

About the Themes

DREAMS FRIENDSHIP LONELINESS

Like many American authors, including F. Scott Fitzgerald, John Steinbeck skewers the American Dream. Steinbeck suggests that the freedom to follow one's own desires is impossible.

Make a list of all the characters in the novel. What do you learn about each character that suggests that he or she will never be able to fulfill his or her dream?

Notable Quotations from the book:

Throughout the work of John Steinbeck, the power of friendship emerges as an important theme. An underlying belief that relationships can transform our lives and make suffering bearable appears in *Of Mice and Men*, as when George explains his relationship with 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...With us it ain't like that. We got a future. We got somebody to talk to that gives a damn about us. We don't have to sit in no bar room blowin' in our jack jus' because we got no place else to go. If them other guys gets in jail they can rot for all anybody gives a damn. But not us."

What sets Lennie and George apart from the other guys? What keeps them going?

After Lennie shares with Crooks his plan to buy a farm, Crooks tries to spoil Lennie's hopes. He tells Lennie:

"I seen hundreds of men come by on the road an' on the ranches, with their bindles on their back an' that same damn thing in their heads...every damn one of 'em got a little piece of land in his head. An' never a God damn one of 'em ever gets it. Just like heaven. Ever'body wants a little piece of lan'. I read plenty of books out here. Nobody never gets to heaven, and nobody gets no land."

What do Crook's comments indicate about his character or personality?

What do they say about human nature?



About the American Dream

What is the American Dream?

The term was first used by James Truslow Adams in his book *The Epic of America* which was written in 1931. He states: "The American Dream is "that dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone, with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement. It is a difficult dream for the European upper classes to interpret adequately, and too many of us ourselves have grown weary and mistrustful of it. It is not a dream of motor cars and high wages merely, but a dream of social order in which each man and each woman shall be able to attain to the fullest stature of which they are innately capable, and be recognized by others for what they are, regardless of the fortuitous circumstances of birth or position."

In the United States' Declaration of Independence, our founding fathers: "...held certain truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness."

Were homesteaders who left the big cities of the east to find happiness and their piece of land in the unknown wilderness pursuing these inalienable Rights? Were the immigrants who came to the United States looking for their bit of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, their Dream? And what did the desire of the veteran of World War II - to settle down, to have a home, a car and a family - tell us about this evolving Dream? Is the American Dream attainable by all Americans? Would Martin Luther King feel his Dream was attained? Did Malcolm X realize his Dream?

Might this sentiment be considered the foundation of the American Dream?

Some say, that the American Dream has become the pursuit of material prosperity - that people work more hours to get bigger cars, fancier homes, the fruits of prosperity for their families - but have less time to enjoy their prosperity. Others say that the American Dream is beyond the grasp of the working poor who must work two jobs to insure their family's survival. Yet others look toward a new American Dream with less focus on financial gain and more emphasis on living a simple, fulfilling life.

Thomas Wolfe said, "...to every man, regardless of his birth, his shining, golden opportunity ...the right to live, to work, to be himself, and to become whatever thing his manhood and his vision can combine to make him."

Is this your American Dream?



Connecting to the Literature through Photographs

Pittsburgh in the 1930s



The flood in
downtown
Pittsburgh,
1936

View of the
City of
Pittsburgh,
1938





Strip District **Hooverville**. 1925-1935
View of a Strip District shanty town, where unemployed and homeless men found shelter in shacks in the foreground. Penn Avenue is in the background. A sign on the shack advertises the sale of "washing fluid," and notes that "Profits Go To Father Cox."

A **Hooverville** was the popular name for a shanty town, examples of which were found in many United States communities during the Great

Depression of the 1930s.

The word "Hooverville" derives from the name of the President of the United States at the beginning of the Depression, Herbert Hoover. They used Hoover's name because they were frustrated and disappointed with his involvement in the relief effort for the Depression.

Great Depression
ca. 1925-1935

Men building housing during The Great Depression. Pittsburgh, Pa.



The Line ca. 1925-1935

Men waiting in line during The Great Depression.

Pittsburgh, Pa.

What do you think they are waiting for?





Services: ca. 1925-1935 **Father James R. Cox**, Pittsburgh Catholic priest, political and social activist and **“Pastor of the Poor”** conducting a worship service. Born in 1886, the son of a Pittsburgh mill worker, he was instrumental in organizing food-relief programs and was noted for his work helping the homeless and unemployed find shelter during The Great Depression. In the mid 1930’s, President Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed him to the State Recovery Board of the National Recovery Administration. Pittsburgh, Pa.

Dinner Time
ca. 1925-1935

Four boys having their dinner at a food-relief program to help the poor.
Pittsburgh, Pa.

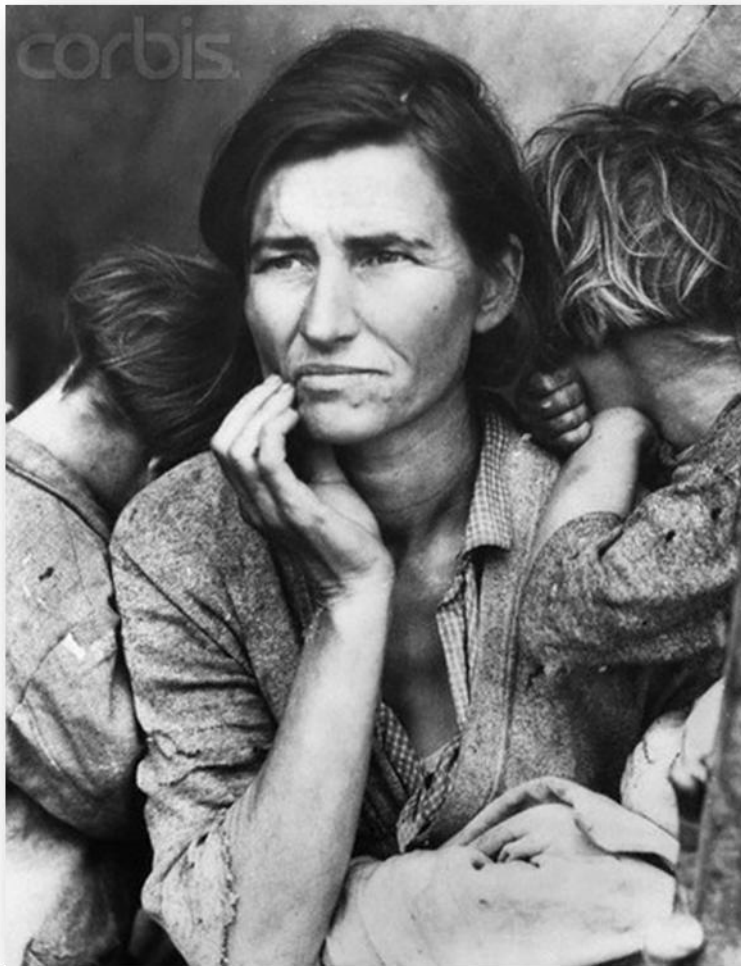


Lesson Suggestion!

George goes out of his way to protect Lennie, his slow-witted, lumbering giant of a friend, from people. To George, people and their institutions cannot understand Lennie, and they can only hurt him. Have you ever felt protective of a friend or family member? How did you protect that person? Explain what happened in a paragraph or two.

Connecting to the Literature through Photographs

America in the 1930s



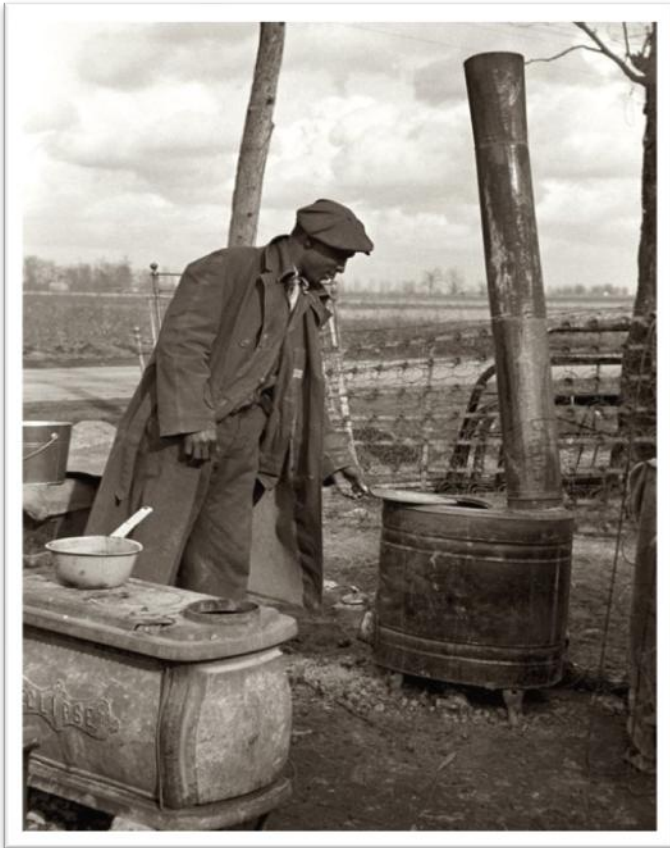
This is a very famous photograph, taken by Dorothea Lange. It represents the plight of the migrant workers in the 1930s and the poverty they faced every day. This woman's name was Florence Owens Thompson. You can read about her at:

<http://www.migrantgrandson.com/the.htm>

February 1939. "On U.S. 99 between Bakersfield and the Ridge, en route to San Diego. Migrant man shaving by roadside." Medium-format nitrate negative by Dorothea Lange for the Farm Security Administration, January 1939.

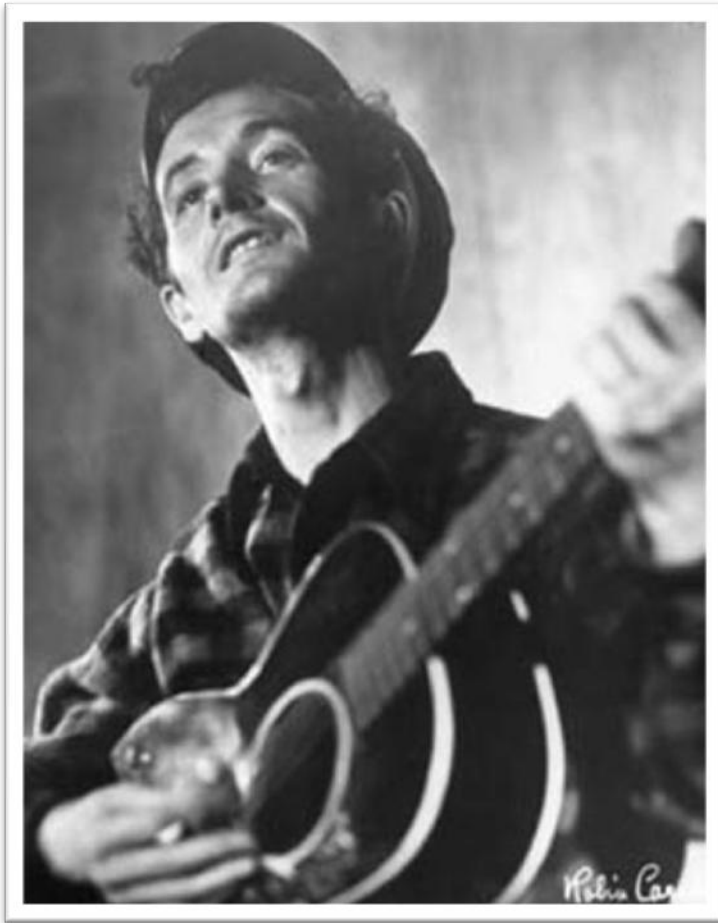


An evicted sharecropper among his possessions in New Madrid County, Missouri, January 1939.



Migrant families, leaving Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas and Missouri for job opportunities in California, packed everything they could carry on their cars, and usually lived out of them as well.





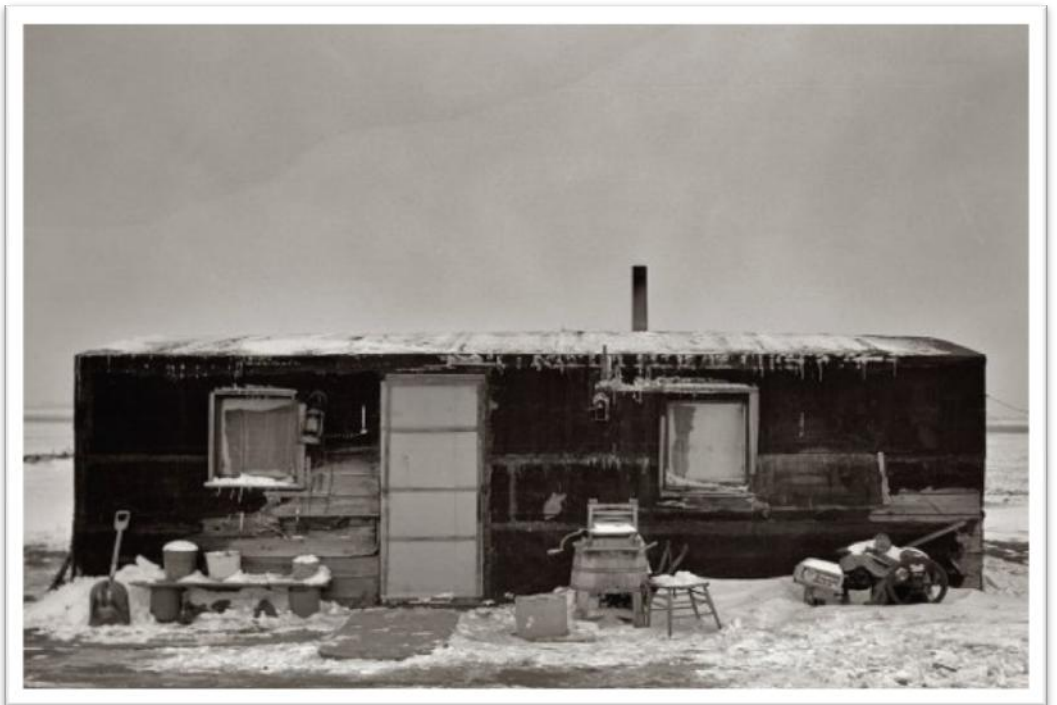
*On the edge of your cities you'll see
me and then,
I come with the dust and I've gone
with the wind.*

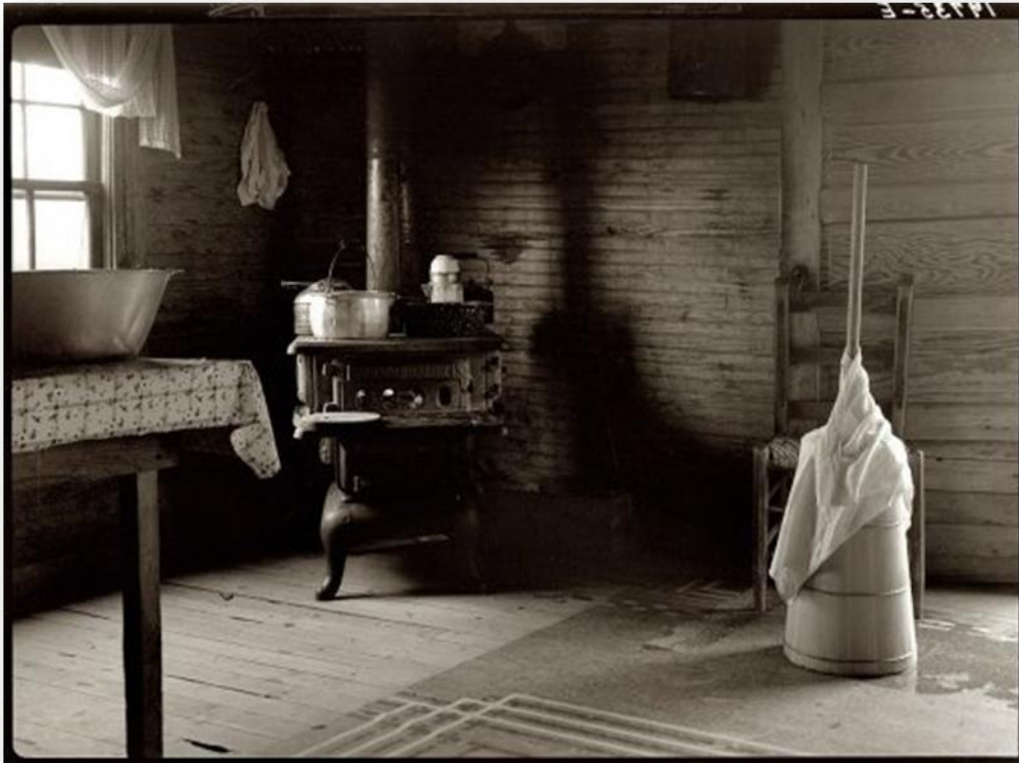
Woody Guthrie

Woody Guthrie was an American songwriter and folk musician. He is probably most famous for the song "This Land is Your Land". For more, go to:

www.woodyguthrie.org

November 1936 near Dickens, Iowa. Three-room shack, the residence of L.H. Nissen, hired man for a tenant farmer. Farm is owned by a loan company. Ten people live in the shack: mother, father, seven children, one grandchild. 35mm nitrate negative by Russell Lee, Farm Security Administration.





July 1939. Corner of sharecropper's kitchen showing stove and butter churn. Person County, North Carolina. Photograph by Dorothea Lange.



September 1939. "Rural schoolroom in Wisconsin."





February 1939. Calipatria, Imperial Valley. Farm Security Administration emergency migratory labor camp. Daughter of ex-tenant farmers on thirds and fourths in cotton. Had fifty dollars when set out. Went to Phoenix, picked cotton, pulled bolls, made eighty cents a day. Stayed until school

closed. Went to Idaho, picked peas until August. Left McCall with forty dollars "in hand." Went to Cedar City and Parowan, Utah, a distance of 700 miles. Picked peas through September. Went to Hollister, California. Picked peas through October. Left Hollister for Calipatria for early peas which froze. Now receiving Farm Security Administration food grant and waiting for work to begin. "Back in Oklahoma, we are sinking. You work your head off for a crop and then see it burn up. You live in debts that you can never get out of. This isn't a good life, but I say that it's a better life than it was." Photo and caption by Dorothea Lange.

California Bound with everything they own on their truck.



Together: Shoulder to shoulder: A letter from a woman who lived through this challenging time in American history.

The times of depression and struggling for livelihood brought caring families closer together. Together and standing shoulder to shoulder made us able to stand when it would have been easy to give up.

We stuck together, went to church together, and when one of us needed a boost we all together rallied and helped.

Oh, it wasn't easy, neither my sibling or myself took abuse lightly.

The road was rough, but we were tough, after while we had enough.

We were all determined to make life better; everyone worked hard and we're all done well.

We've overcome the obstacles, put them behind us. Life is great. To God be the glory-and credit.

Iva Townson Helm
Iva's Dust Bowl Memories
301 Taft Highway, Bakersfield, CA

Dorothea Lange

"You put your camera around your neck along with putting on your shoes, and there it is, an appendage of the body that shares your life with you. The camera is an instrument that teaches people how to see without a camera." – Dorothea Lange

The insightful and compassionate photographs of Dorothea Lange (1895 – 1965) have exerted a profound influence on the development of modern documentary photography. Lange's concern for people, her appreciation of the ordinary, and the striking empathy she showed for her subjects make her unique among photographers of her day. In 1935 Lange began her landmark work for the California and Federal Resettlement Administrations (later the Farm Security Administration).



Collaborating with her second husband, labor economist Paul Schuster Taylor, she documented the troubled exodus of farm families escaping the dust bowl as they migrated West in search of work. Lange's documentary style achieved its fullest expression in these years, with photographs such as "Migrant Mother" becoming instantly recognized symbols of the migrant experience. Coupled with Taylor's essays and captions, her photographs were hailed as persuasive evidence of the urgent need for government programs to assist disadvantaged Americans.

About the World of *Of Mice and Men*

Franklin D. Roosevelt



Assuming the Presidency at the depth of the Great Depression, Franklin D. Roosevelt helped the American people regain faith in themselves. He brought hope as he promised prompt, vigorous action, and asserted in his Inaugural Address, "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself."

He was elected President in November 1932, to the first of four terms. By March there were 13,000,000 unemployed, and almost every bank was closed. In his first "hundred days," he proposed, and Congress enacted, a sweeping program to bring recovery to business and agriculture, relief to the unemployed and to those in danger of losing farms and homes, and reform, especially through the establishment of the Tennessee Valley Authority.

By 1935 the Nation had achieved some measure of recovery, but businessmen and bankers were turning more and more against Roosevelt's New Deal program. They feared his experiments, were appalled because he had taken the Nation off the gold standard and allowed deficits in the budget, and disliked the concessions to labor. Roosevelt responded with a new program of reform: Social Security, heavier taxes on the wealthy, new controls over banks and public utilities, and an enormous work relief program for the unemployed.

In 1936 he was re-elected by a top-heavy margin. Just as the nation's economy was improving, the US was attacked by the Japanese at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The country was plunged into World War II.

For more information about President Roosevelt, please visit
The Franklin D. Roosevelt Library at <http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu>

The Great Depression was a dramatic, worldwide economic downturn beginning in some countries as early as 1928. The beginning of the Great Depression in the United States is associated with the stock market crash on October 29, 1929, known as Black Tuesday. The depression had devastating effects in both the industrialized countries and those which exported raw materials. International trade declined sharply, as did personal incomes, tax revenues, prices and profits. Cities all around the world were hit hard, especially those dependent on heavy

industry. Construction was virtually halted in many countries. Farming and rural areas suffered as crop prices fell by 40 to 60 percent.^[1] Mining and logging areas had perhaps the most striking



Christmas dinner during the Depression

blow because the demand fell sharply and there were few employment alternatives.

The New Deal was the title President Franklin D. Roosevelt gave to a sequence of programs and promises he initiated between 1933 and 1938 with the goal of giving reform to the people and economy of the United States during the Great Depression. Dozens of alphabet agencies (so named because of their acronyms, as with the SEC), were created as a result of the New Deal. Historians distinguish

between the "First New Deal" of 1933, which had aimed at wide reaching reforms for all groups affected by the Depression, and the "Second New Deal" (1935–36), which aimed at reforms between business, unions and workers.



The Farm Security Administration

(FSA) was created in the Department of Agriculture in 1937. The FSA and its predecessor,

the Resettlement Administration (RA), were New Deal programs designed to assist poor farmers during the **Dust Bowl** and the Great Depression.

Federal Emergency Relief

Administration (FERA) was the name given by the Roosevelt Administration to a program similar to unemployment-relief efforts of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) set up by Herbert Hoover and the U.S. Congress in 1932. It was established as a result of the Federal Emergency Relief Act of 1933.

The Federal Emergency Relief Act was the first direct-relief operation under the New Deal, and



Stone steps in Schenley Park, Pittsburgh, built by the WPA

was headed by Harry L. Hopkins, a New York social worker who was one of Franklin D. Roosevelt's most influential advisers. Hopkins was a believer in relief efforts that emphasized work, and had established a similar program in New York State during Roosevelt's administration as governor.

FERA's main goal was alleviating adult unemployment. In order to achieve this goal, FERA provided state assistance for the unemployed and their families. From when it began in May 1933 until when it closed its operations in December, 1935, it gave states and localities \$3.1 billion to operate local work projects. FERA provided work for over 20 million people and developed facilities on public lands across the country. Faced with continued high unemployment and concerns for public welfare during the coming winter of 1933-34, FERA instituted the Civil Works Administration (CWA) as a \$400 million short-term measure to get people to work. The Federal Emergency Relief Administration was terminated in 1935 and its work taken over by the WPA and the Social Security Board.

Projects of FERA, and then the WPA

Road, bridge, street, railroad construction

Waterway improvements

Land clearing projects

Park and playground maintenance

School maintenance projects

Workshops and training centers

Water and sewer pipeline repairs

Fuelwood gathering

Relief Centers and the Homeless



<http://content.lib.washington.edu/feraweb/index.html>

As you travel around Pittsburgh, look for the bridges and schools built by the WPA!

The Federal Government's Role in Regard to Camps

As the migrants came into California in the middle thirties, they congregated in "squatter camps" along the side of roads, on the banks of canals or close to a town where they could obtain water and supplies. These were not healthy living conditions. The mortality rate among small children and infants was high and many were suffering from malnutrition and rickets. Tuberculosis was prevalent among young and old alike. Many parents did not know where to turn for help.

The Farm Security Administration was already starting to construct camps for migrant workers because, with a few exceptions, the camps managed by the farmers were not too much better than the "squatter camps."

One of the important discoveries the F.S.A. made was that when the migrant family was "taken off wheels" their annual income increased 20% due to the fact that most of their income went for gas while they traveled from place to place looking for work.

These camps were the federal government's answer to the problem created by the Dust Bowl migration. They were clean, safe, havens to a multitude of migrants. They also gave the children of these migrants a chance to grow up in a better world than the one they had left. These children of the Dust Bowl camps are the teachers, community leaders and business owners of our communities today.

Act or Program	Acronym	Year Enacted	Significance
Agricultural Adjustment Act	AAA	1933	Protected farmers from price drops by providing crop subsidies to reduce production, educational programs to teach methods of preventing soil erosion.
Civil Works Administration	CWA	1933	Provided public works jobs at \$15/week to four million workers in 1934.
Civilian Conservation Corps	CCC	1933	Sent 250,000 young men to work camps to perform reforestation and conservation tasks. Removed surplus of workers from cities, provided healthy conditions for boys, provided money for families.
Federal Emergency Relief Act	FERA	1933	Distributed millions of dollars of direct aid to unemployed workers.
Glass-Steagall Act	FDIC	1933	Created federally insured bank deposits (\$2500 per investor at first) to prevent bank failures.
National Industrial Recovery Act	NIRA	1933	Created NRA to enforce codes of fair competition, minimum wages, and to permit collective bargaining of workers.
National Youth Administration	NYA	1935	Provided part-time employment to more than two million college and high school students.
Public Works	PWA	1933	Received \$3.3 billion appropriation from Congress for

Administration			public works projects.
Rural Electrification Administration	REA	1935	Encouraged farmers to join cooperatives to bring electricity to farms. Despite its efforts, by 1940 only 40% of American farms were electrified.
Securities and Exchange Commission	SEC	1934	Regulated stock market and restricted margin buying.
Social Security Act		1935	Response to critics (Dr. Townsend and Huey Long), it provided pensions, unemployment insurance, and aid to blind, deaf, disabled, and dependent children.
Tennessee Valley Authority	TVA	1933	Federal government build series of dams to prevent flooding and sell electricity. First public competition with private power industries
Wagner Act	NLRB	1935	Allowed workers to join unions and outlawed union-busting tactics by management.
Works Progress Administration	WPA	1935	Employed 8.5 million workers in construction and other jobs, but more importantly provided work in arts, theater, and literary projects.

The Dust Bowl

The most visible evidence of how dry the 1930s became was the dust storm. Tons of topsoil were blown off barren fields and carried in storm clouds for hundreds of miles. Technically, the driest region of the Plains – southeastern Colorado, southwest Kansas and the panhandles of Oklahoma and Texas – became known as the Dust Bowl, and many dust storms started there. But the entire region, and eventually the entire country, was affected.



The Dust Bowl got its

name after Black Sunday, April 14, 1935. More and more dust storms had been blowing up in the years leading up to that day. In 1932, 14 dust storms were recorded on the Plains. In 1933, there were 38 storms. By 1934, it was estimated that 100 million acres of farmland had lost all or most of the topsoil to the winds. By April 1935, there had been weeks of dust storms, but the cloud that appeared on the horizon that Sunday was the worst. Winds were clocked at 60 mph. Then it hit.

"The impact is like a shovelful of fine sand flung against the face," Avis D. Carlson wrote in a New Republic article. "People caught in their own yards grope for the doorstep. Cars come to a standstill, for no light in the world can penetrate that swirling murk... We live with the dust, eat it, sleep with it, watch it strip us of possessions and the hope of possessions. It is becoming Real."

The day after Black Sunday, an Associated Press reporter used the term "**Dust Bowl**" for the first time. "Three little words achingly familiar on the Western farmer's tongue, rule life in the dust bowl of the continent – if it rains." The term stuck and was used by radio reporters and writers, in private letters and public speeches.

In the central and northern plains, dust was everywhere.



Calling Off School for Dust Each winter, students all across the North secretly – or openly – hope for snowstorms so that school will be called off.

During the Depression, schools across the Plains sent students home because of the dust storms. Some school administrators were worried about what might happen to the students' health. There had been cases of "dust pneumonia" where dust clogged up the lungs just like the disease. Other administrators and teachers, especially in the southern Plains, knew that people had gotten lost in dust storms when visibility went to zero.

Don McGinley remembers being let out of the Ogallala, Nebraska, school because of a dust storm. It was so bad that his mother thought the world might be coming to an end.



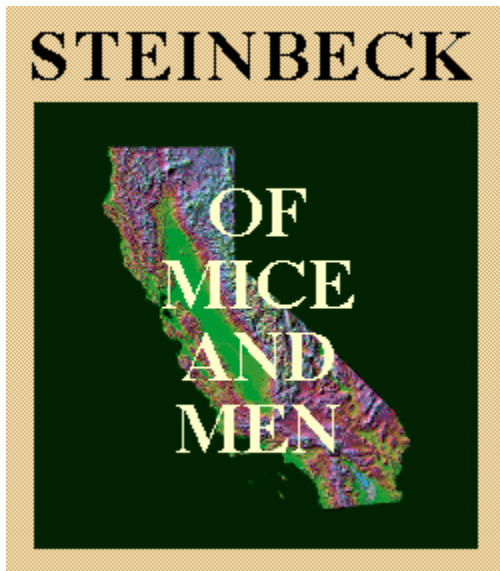
In *Telling Tales Out of School*, a book by the National Retired Teachers Association, Taleta Elfeldt says, "One day in March 1934, my beginners were busy reading. All of a sudden there was total darkness. It was as though a huge curtain had been drawn around our building... I realized a dust storm had hit because soon the room was filled with a 'fog of dust' ... We teachers walked home holding wet towels over our faces in order to breathe."

Other rural teachers talked about lighting lanterns in the middle of the day so that children could see to recite their lessons. And sometimes, children were kept in the schoolhouse all night to make sure they wouldn't get lost walking home or be overcome by the dust.

The dust was dangerous, and schools were taking no chances.



About the Characters and the Plot



Steinbeck

Clinging to each other in their loneliness and alienation, George and his simple-minded friend Lennie dream, as drifters will, of a place to call their own. But after they come to work on a ranch in the in the Salinas Valley their hopes, like “the best laid schemes o’ mice an’ men, begin to go awry.

Book Blurb—Penguin 1986

Two (Of Mice and Men and Cannery Row) evocative, beautifully rendered portraits of “outsiders” struggling to understand their own unique places in the world.

Main Characters

George Milton - small, quick, dark of face and eyes, restless

Lennie Small - huge, shapeless, pale eyes, slow moving

Candy - old swamper, missing one hand

The Boss - owner of a ranch below Soledad

Crooks - Negro **stable buck**, had a back injury

Curley - Boss’ son, short, once a **welterweight boxer**

Slim - **jerklime skinner**, local authority

Carlson (Carl) - a ranch hand

Curley’s wife – a **tart**, tease

Whit – a young laborer at the ranch

The following characters are in the book, but not in the play.

Smitty - fought with Crooks at earlier party

Whitey – previous bunkhouse occupant, overly clean

Bill Tenner – former pea cultivator, operator at the ranch

Susy – owns a house in town; two-fifty a go

Clara – owns another house; three **bucks**

Al Wilts – Deputy Sheriff in Soledad

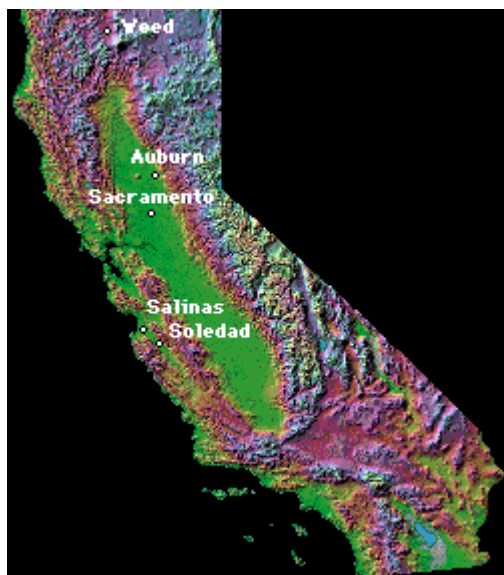
Aunt Clara – Lennie’s dead aunt, from his Auburn childhood

Chapter Summaries

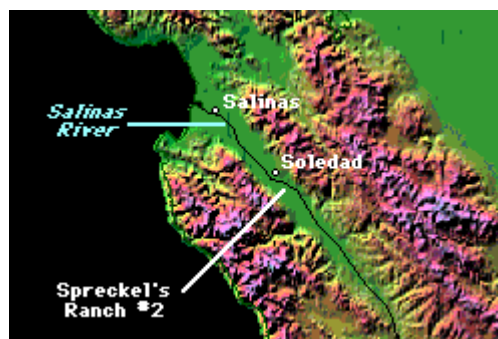
- 1 Hot Thursday late afternoon. George and Lennie spend the night by the Salinas River, a few miles south of Soledad. They plan to start work the next day and dream of a future farm where Lennie can tend rabbits.
- 2 Friday morning at the bunkhouse. George and Lennie sign up to buck barley. Curley tries to pick a fight with Lennie. Candy tells George Curley’s wife is a tart. George reminds Lennie where to hide if there’s trouble. They meet Curley’s wife, Slim and Carlson. Lennie wants one of Slim’s dog Lulu’s pups.
- 3 Friday evening. George tells Slim Lennie grabbed a red-dressed girl in Weed. Lennie gets a pup. Carlson shoots Candy’s old dog with his Luger. Slim goes to the barn to treat a horse. While the rest go to see if Slim’s with Curley or Curley’s wife, Candy commits his \$350 to George and Lennie’s \$600 dream. When everyone returns, Curley beats on Lennie until George tells Lennie to “get him.” Lennie crushes Curley’s hand. Slim orders Curley to say it was a machine accident.
- 4 Saturday night at Crook’s room in the barn. All but Candy and Lennie go to town. Lennie drops in on Crooks who philosophizes about companionship. Candy drops by and talks of their dreams. Curley’s wife shows up and insults them all. Candy brags of their ranch. She infers that Lennie is the machine which got Curley. She threatens Crooks with a lynching. George arrives and all leave Crooks’ room.
- 5 Sunday afternoon. While the rest play horseshoes, Lenny kills his puppy in the barn. Curley’s wife shows up. Lennie explains his fondness for soft things, and she

encourages him to stroke her hair. When she wants him to stop he breaks her neck out of fear. Candy finds her and brings George. When the men find out Curley goes for his shotgun. Carlson goes for his Luger, but it's missing and he assumes Lennie took it. Whit is sent to Soledad for Al Wilt. Candy stays with the body while all to after Lennie.

- 6 Late afternoon. Lennie comes to the river. His dead Aunt Clara appears and scolds him. A huge imaginary rabbit tells him George will leave him. George shows up and reassures Lennie. While they talk of their dream, George puts the Luger to the base of Lennie's skull and fires. When they see Lennie everyone assumes George took the gun from him and shot him. Slim says "You had, George," and takes him for a drink.



Places mentioned in *Of Mice and Men*



The ranch in *Of Mice and Men*

Lesson Suggestion!

Of Mice and Men has only one female character, and she has no name. She is simply known as "Curley's wife." The men on the farm call her a "tart" and a "tramp," because her sexuality tempts them. Write a paragraph about Curley's wife. Is she a villain, or is she a victim like all the other characters?

Vocabulary

Chapter One

acres (n.): An **acre** is an area of land equal to 4,840 square yards or 43,560 square feet. For comparison, a football field is 45,000 square feet, so one acre is a little smaller than a football field.

anguished (adj.): **anguish** is a feeling of great physical or mental pain. The look on Lennie's face would show the mental pain he feels at the thought of George leaving him.

bank (n.): the part of land that meets a body of water

bundle (n.): a small bundle of items rolled up inside a blanket and carried over the shoulder or on the back; a bedroll.



brusquely (adv.): quickly; bluntly; abruptly; almost rudely

bucking (v.): To **buck** in this instance is to throw large bags of grain on a truck. Barley is poured into large burlap bags (75 or more pounds) and passed brigade-style (in a line) to the truck.

carp (n.): a freshwater fish.

cat house (n.): whore house; house of prostitution

contemplated (v.) To **contemplate** something is to think about it. Lennie is thinking about running away.



'coons (n.): raccoons.

current (n.): the strong flow of water in a definite direction

debris (n.): remains. In this case, the "debris of the winter's flooding" would be drops of water falling from the leaves of the tree.

elaborate (adj.): expressed in great detail

flats (n.): level, flat ground

heron (n.): a wading bird (that is, a bird that is often found wading in the water, usually in a search for food) with a long neck, beak, and legs.

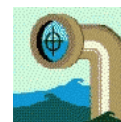


junctures (n.): A juncture is where two things come together. The juncture of a willow leaf is where the two sides of the leaf meet in the center.

mimicking (v.): imitating

morosely (adv.): in a sad, gloomy manner

mottled (adj.): having a variety of hues or colors; variegated, like marble



periscope (n.): a device that, through a series of mirrors and prisms, allows one to view something not directly in the line of sight. Periscopes are used on submarines to allow the sailors to see above the waterline.

rabbit hutch (n.): A type of cage for keeping rabbits.

recumbent (adj.): still; without movement

reeds (n.): tall grass with hollow stems, often found in or near water.

single file (n.): a line of people, animals, or things moving one after the other. Instead of walking side by side, George and Lennie walk in single file; George first, then Lennie behind him.

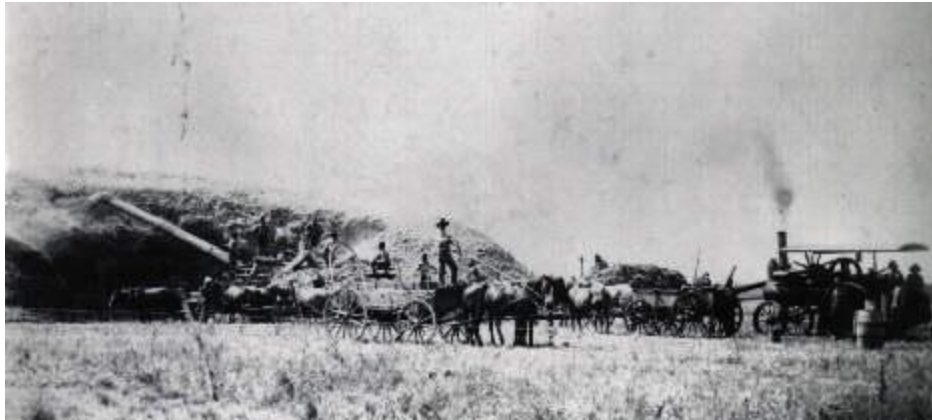
stake (n.): an amount of money

stilted (adj.): In the instance, stilted refers to the legs of the heron which are very long and thin, like stilts.



sycamores (n.): a type of shade tree with leaves resembling the leaves of a maple tree.

thrashin' machines (n): Thrashing machines, sometimes called threshers or threshing



machines, are used on farms to separate the grain or seed from the straw of such plants as barley or wheat.

tramps (n.): In this case, a tramp is a person who travels about on foot, usually doing odd jobs for a living (To "tramp" means to travel on foot).

unslung (v.): removed; took off

wearily (adv.): tired; in a tired way

willows (n.): a type of tree with narrow leaves and strong, flexible twigs and branches.

Chapter Two

abruptly (adv.): suddenly; almost rudely

apprehensive (adj.): anxious; fearful

archly (adv.): playfully

axles (n.): bars connecting two opposite wheels

bale (n.): a large bundle of something that has been compressed and tied together. Grains such as hay, wheat, and barley are often made into bales after they're harvested.



barley (n.): a type of cereal grass. The grain from the barley plant is often used for making malts and for animal feed.

bitch (n.): a female dog

blacksmith (n.): a person who works with iron, especially in the making of horseshoes.



bridled (v.): to pull one's head back in anger or pride; especially when one feels one has been offended

bristled (adj.): stiff and prickly

bristly (adj.): stiff and prickly

brusquely (adv.): roughly; abruptly

buckers (n.): people who buck grain bags

bunk house (n): a building that provides sleeping quarters for workers on a ranch or farm.

bunks (n): beds

burlap (n.): a coarse, inexpensive, woven fabric; often used for making grain sacks

calculating (adj.): shrewd; scheming

cesspool (n.): a deep hole in the ground into which sewage from sinks, toilets, etc. is drained.

cockier (adj.): To be cocky is to be conceited, overbearing, and aggressive.

complacently (adv.): in a pleased, satisfied manner



cultivator (n.): a large farm machine used for cultivation (the preparation of the earth for planting).

derogatory (adj.):
belittling and insulting

dinner (n.): the major meal of the day. In this case, **dinner** is served in the middle of the day.

disengage (v.): free

dousing (n): to douse is to be drenched with liquid. A dousing refers to someone having been covered with a liquid, in this case water, during a washing.

dragfooted (adj.) lame; dragging a lame foot

gingerly (adv.): in a careful, cautious way

grain teams (n): A team is two or more horses harnessed to a wagon or other drawn vehicle. Grain teams would be the teams (horses and wagons) used to haul grain in from the fields.

graybacks (n.): lice; parasites. Lice are small, wingless insects that live off the blood of other animals.

grizzled (adj.): gray

handy (adj.): clever with one's hands; especially, in this case, in terms of fighting

harness (n.): the leather straps and metal pieces by which a horse or mule is fastened to a vehicle.

hatchet face (n): a lean, sharp face

heavy-laden (adj.) heavily loaded

insteps (n.): the parts of the shoes between the toe and the ankle



laboring (adj.): working, particularly work that involves physical labor.

lamely (adv.): To be lame is to be crippled; especially to have an injured leg or foot.

lashed (v.): swung around quickly

lean (adj.): thin

leaves (n.): pages

levelly (adv.): Something that is level is flat and horizontal. To stare at someone **levelly** is to stare at that person straight on -- not looking up or down.

lice: a type of parasite.

lightweight (n.): a boxer who weighs between 127 - 135 pounds

liniment (n.): a medicated liquid rubbed on the skin to ease sore muscles and sprains

mollified (adj.): soothed; pacified

mules (n): a type of shoe or slipper than does not cover the heel.

muzzle (n.): the projecting part (the part that sticks out) of a dogs head that includes the mouth, nose, and jaw.

nosey (adj.): nosy. A nosey person is one who tends to pry into the business of others.

ominously (adv.): in a threatening way

peered (v.): To peer is to look closely or squint at something to see it more clearly.

pocket (n.): in this instance, a pocket would be a hollow or cavity in the land filled with gold ore

precede (v.): go before or ahead of

pugnacious (adj.): eager and ready to fight

rectangular (adj.): A rectangle is a shape that is longer than it is wide. The **rectangular** bunk house is a building that is longer than it is wide.

rouged (adj.): colored red, as with lipstick



scourges (n.): a scourge is anything that inflicts discomfort or suffering; in this case, any variety of insects and pests

scowled (v.): a scowl is an angry look achieved by frowning and scrunching the eyebrows together.

sheep dog (n.): a breed of dog trained to herd sheep.



shepherds (n.): dogs bred to herd sheep.

skeptically (adv.): To be skeptical is to doubt or question something. George is doubting that the bunk house, and especially his mattress, is really clean

slough (v): get rid of

soiled (adj.): dirty; stained

solitaire lay (n): Solitaire is a one-person game of cards. A solitaire lay is the set up of the cards at the beginning of the game.

spurs (n.): sharp, pointed metal devices worn on the heels of a boots, used to urge

on horses when riding.

squinted (v.): To squint one's eyes is to look or peer with the eyes partly closed or narrowed.

squirmed (v.): twisted and turned; wriggled

stable buck (n.): a stable is a building where horses are kept. A buck, in this case, is a derogatory word for a black man. A stable buck, then, would be a black man who works in a stable.

stocky (adj.): heavily and solidly built

swamper (n.): a handyman; someone who performs odd jobs often involving cleaning

tart (n.) a woman of loose morals; one who is prone to be sexually unfaithful

tick (n.) mattress covering



ticking (n.): the cloth case for a mattress. In this instance, the cloth case was made from burlap.

time book (n): a book used to record the hours of workers

trace chains (n): the chains that connect a horse's harness to a vehicle

tramp (n.): In this case, a tramp is a woman of loose morals who is sexually promiscuous

vials (n.): small bottles

viciously (adv.): cruelly; in a mean way

wheeler (n.): the horse harnessed nearest to the front wheels of a vehicle.

Chapter Three

alfalfa: a plant widely grown for animal feed



barrel: the long part of a gun through which the bullet travels when it is fired

bemused: preoccupied; deep in thought

bleated: A bleat is the cry usually associated with a goat, sheep, or calf. In this case, Lennie cries out with terror in an animal-like way.

candy wagon: a crew bus or truck used for transporting people

chamber: the part of the gun that holds the next bullet to be shot

'cots: apricots.

cowering: To cower is to shrink and tremble from fear.

crouched: To crouch is to bend low with arms and legs drawn close to the body.



defensively: To be defensive is to be on guard against attack, be it verbal or physical. George is on guard against an attack about his relationship with Lennie.

derision: To deride someone is to make fun of that person. The sound of voices of **derision** would be the sound of people making fun of, or laughing at, another.

does (n.): female rabbits

dusk (n.): shadowy; gloomy (dusk is the period of time that comes just before dark or evening)

ejector: the mechanism of a gun that throws out the empty cartridge of a fired bullet

euchre: a card game

hands: workers

loaded shell: an unfired bullet

magazine: the part of the gun that holds the bullets

orchard (n.): an area where many fruit or nut trees are planted.

pig pen: a pen, in this case, is a small enclosure for animals. A pig pen is a small enclosure for pigs.

receptive: able and willing to listen to and accept information, new ideas, etc. Slim is willing to listen to what George is about to tell him.

reprehensible: To reprehend someone is to reprimand or criticize that person. Something that is reprehensible is something that is deserving of criticism.

rheumatism: a painful condition involving the joints and muscles

run: an enclosure for animals in which they can exercise, feed, etc.

sarcastically: in a mean way; bitterly

setter dog (n): A setter is any of several breeds of long-haired dogs usually trained to work with hunters.

slug: a single drink; especially of alcohol



smoke (v.): Many meats and fish can be preserved by the means of smoking. To smoke meat is to expose it for a length of time to

smoke house: a building where meat or fish is cured (prepared) by means of dense smoke.

thong: a narrow strip of material; in this case, leather



Chapter Four

aloof (adj.): distant; removed; cool

appraised: judged

arouse: to excite; bring about

blackjack game: a gambling card game; also known as "Twenty-One"

champing (v.): chewing noisily

contemptuously: full of contempt or scorn

ego: sense of self; self-awareness

hame (n.): the piece along the side of a horse collar to which the trace chains are attached

intensity (n.): great strength and sharpness

keg (n.): a small barrel



mauled (adj.): torn; worn-out. To maul something is to treat it roughly or clumsily.

meager (adj.): of poor quality or small amount

persuasive (adj.): convincing

riveter (n.): a tool used to fasten rivets. Rivets are small metal bolts or pins used to attach fabric and leather pieces together

rummy (n.): a card game

scornful: **Scorn** is a feeling of contempt for someone or something; the belief that a person or thing is worthless. Crooks is scornful of Lennie because he thinks Lennie's plan is nothing more than a dream.

spectacles (n.): eyeglasses

subsided: became less excited; calmed down

twict: a sharp, sudden punch

whinnied: the low, gently sound (sometimes called a "neigh") that a horse makes

Chapters Five and Six

craftily (adv.): in a sly, cunning manner

darkly (adv.): deeply; richly; secretly

drawn (v.): To draw someone out is to get that person to talk. Curley's wife cannot get Lennie to talk to her.

dugs (n.): nipples; teets

emphasis (n.): force; expression; stress

fainter (adj.): weaker; dimmer; unclear





gingham (n.): a cotton cloth, usually woven in stripes or checks.

gust (n.): a strong, sudden rush of air

hovered (v.): lingered; stayed suspended

jack-pin (n.): Also known as a belaying pin, a jack pin is a removable wooden or metal pin inserted in the rail of ships around which ropes can be fastened.



monotonous (adj.): flat, with no expression

pulley (n.): a small wheel with a groove or rim in which a rope or chain runs. Pulleys are used with ropes or chains to lift heavy items.



snooker (n.): a type of pool game.

sulkily (adv.): in a gloomy manner

sullenly (adv.): sadly; in a depressing and gloomy way

taloned (adj.): A talon is a finger-like claw. A four-taloned fork would be a fork with four "claws."

wisps (n.): tiny, slight strands or pieces

writhed (v.): twisted



Allusions

Chapter One

Galiban Mountains: a small mountain range situated east of the Salinas River

Howard street: There is a Howard Street in San Francisco, a city in Northern California. On their travel south from Weed, the two men may have stopped in San Francisco to look for work.

Sacramento: The capital of California, Sacramento is located about eighty miles northeast of San Francisco.

Salinas River: a river that flows north through Soledad and empties into Monterey Bay..

Soledad: a city in near the coast of California, approximately 130 miles south of San Francisco.

watchin' that blackboard: During this era, employment agencies would post available jobs on a blackboard in front of their offices. Prospective employees would wait in front of the offices, watching the blackboard for any new jobs.


Weed: A mining town in Northern California, near Mt. Shasta.

work cards: A job assignment from an employment agency would be written on a work card to be presented by the worker to the employer.

Chapter Two

American River: a river in Northern California that runs past Auburn, through Sacramento, and flows into the Sacramento River.

eatin' raw eggs: It's thought by some that eating raw eggs can increase strength and, especially in men, sexual performance and stamina.



pan gold: a method of obtaining gold by using a pan to sift it out from other rocks and minerals that might flow through a river or stream.

Stetson hat:



temple dancer: a dancer from India or other Southeast Asian countries, known for the delicate movements of the hands and body.

vaseline: the brand name for petroleum jelly; a greasy, jelly-like substance made from petroleum. Among its other uses, Vaseline is often used as a lubricant (softener) for the skin.

work slips: the work cards given to Lennie and George by an employment agency

writin' to the patent medicine houses: Patent medicines are medications that can be purchased without a doctor's prescription and often through the mail. Some of these medicines would claim to increase sexual performance.

Chapter Three

Auburn: a city in Northern California about thirty-five miles northeast of

fence picket: a pointed stake made of wood. Put a number of pickets together and you'll get a picket fence.

Golden Gloves: an amateur boxing organization.

horseshoe game: A game in which players toss horseshoes at two facing stakes driven into the ground.



kewpie doll lamp: Kewpie dolls are a particular type of doll first manufactured at the beginning of the 20th century.



Luger: a type of pistol.

phonograph: Before CD players and tape decks there were phonographs, machines that played records.

run up the river: During the salmon mating season, thousands of the fish will swim upstream, struggling against the current, spawn (lay their eggs), and then die. During a salmon run, the fish are easy to catch.

Sacramento River: a California river that runs from Shasta Lake in the north, through Sacramento and into the San Francisco Bay

San Quentin: a state prison near San Francisco, California.



scoring board: a board with holes and pegs used to keep score in certain card games

set the pegs: to set up the pegs on a scoring board before the beginning of a card game.

walkin' bow-legged: To walk bow-legged is to walk with the knees turned out. Whit's reference here is to the way a man might walk who had contracted a venereal disease from Clara's place.

Chapter Four

roll your hoop: a popular amusement of children in the past was running while rolling a large metal hoop with a stick. Telling Curley's wife to "**roll your hoop,**" is



Candy's way of calling her young and immature.



Chapter Five

an' spoke in the radio: Large Hollywood movie premiers were major events during the 1930s and were often broadcast on the radio. Actors entering the theater would be interviewed and would speak to an audience of radio listeners throughout the country.

Jackson fork: a large mechanical hay fork, used for lifting large amounts of hay.

previews: previews or openings (premiers) of motion pictures.

Chapter Six

bull's-eye glasses: glasses with thick, convex lenses (a convex lens is one that curves outward)

Idioms

Chapter One

blow their stake: Lose and/or spend all their money

blowin' in our jack: losing, spending, or gambling away all our money

bustin' a gut: Your gut is your stomach area. To bust a gut is to engage in very hard physical labor -- so hard that you ache all over -- even in your gut.

in hot water: to be **in hot water** is to be in trouble.

jungle-up: During the Great Depression, many wanderers (hoboes and tramps) would settle for the night in groups. These areas would be known as hobo jungles. To jungle-up is to camp out for the evening in the company of other like companions of the road.

live off the fatta the lan': Live off the fat of the land. The fat of the land is an expression that refers to having the best of everything. In the case of Lennie and George and their dream for a place of their own, it also means that they believe they will be able to survive and prosper by simply relying on what they can grow and raise -- that the land is so "fat" they will need nothing else to be happy.

Chapter Two

bum steer: **bum**, in this instance, means false or erroneous. A bum steer is false information or directions.

canned: fired

clear out: leave for good

done quite a bit in the ring: The ring here refers to a boxing ring. Candy is making a reference to the fact that Curley has done some boxing.



Drink hearty: in other words, "Drink up, drink well, have a good time!"

flapper: mouth

game: courageous

gang up: attack as a group

get the can: get fired

got the eye: Candy is referring to the fact that, instead of being faithful to her husband, Curley's wife tends to look around at other men.

in heat: For a female animal (in this case, a dog), to be in heat (also known as estrus) is to be in a state of sexual excitement when she will accept mating from a male.

jail bait: a girl below the legal age of consent for sex; an underage girl who tempts a man to sexual intimacy which is punishable by imprisonment

licked: beat; loses the fight

old lady: mother, or, in this case, Lennie's Aunt Clara.

old man: in this case, father

pants is full of ants: To have "ants in one's pants" is to be nervous and restless.

pants rabbits: any type of parasites, such as lice; especially those that might affect the genital area

picking scraps: A **scrap** is a fight or argument. To pick a scrap is to provoke fights or quarrels.

plug himself up for a fighter: to "plug oneself up" is to advertise or display oneself; to boast. George is referring to the fact that Curley may want to prove what a good fighter he is by going after Lennie.

poison: A woman who is poison is one who can only mean trouble, especially to a man.

poke: A poke is a wallet or purse. Poke also refers to money; especially all the money one has.



pokin' your big ears into our business: eavesdropping; listening in, uninvited, on a private conversation

poop: energy; desire

rassel: lift, carry, and handle; especially something heavy and awkward

rattrap: a rattrap is a hopeless situation; one that no good can come from. George is warning Lennie to stay away from Curley's wife because getting involved with her would only result in a bad situation.

scrappy: aggressive; fond of fighting and arguing

shove off: leave

shove out of here: get out of here

slang her pups: gave birth to her pups

sore as hell: extremely angry

take the rap: take the blame; be the one who gets into trouble

tangles: fights; argues

two bits: a quarter; twenty-five cents

what stake you got in this guy: In this case, a stake is an interest (financial, personal, etc.) in a person or thing. The boss is asking George what interest he has in Lennie.

what the hell's he got on his shoulder: This refers to the expression "to have a chip on one's shoulder," which is used to describe someone who is bad tempered, easily angered, or always ready for a fight. George is wondering why Curley seems so bad tempered.

Chapter Three

bucks: dollars



crack: A crack refers to an attempt or a try. In this instance, a crack means one session of sexual intercourse with a prostitute.

cut off his wind: wind, in this case, refers to breath or the ability to breathe. When someone is hit in the stomach and has his wind cut off, that person may have trouble breathing for a time.

flat bust: completely broke; without any money

flop: sexual intercourse with a prostitute

goo-goos: silly young men; idiots; perhaps those who are a little love struck

hoosegow: jail

looloo: a sexy woman

make it stick: To make something stick is to be successful. Curley was not successful in his attempt to scare or intimidate Slim.

old lady: in this case, wife

on the county: on welfare; on public relief

people: family

punk: an insignificant person; someone of no importance

rabbits in: jumps in

roll up a stake: save up some money

scram: leave, usually in a hurry

set on the trigger: Someone set on the trigger is on the verge of causing (just about to cause) trouble.

set you back: cost

shot: one drink (an ounce) of liquor

start a party out to lynch: To lynch is to murder someone, usually by hanging, without following a legal procedure. A lynch party is a mob of people who take the



law in their own hands and are determined to illegally kill someone. According to George, some men in the town of Weed wanted to capture Lennie and kill him.

throw a litter: give birth. A litter is the young of an animal that were born at the same time.

throw a scare: scare, intimidate

welter: a welterweight; a boxer who weighs 136 to 147 pounds

wing-ding: a terrific person; someone to be admired

yella-jackets in his drawers: **Yellow-jackets** are a form of wasps. **Drawers**, in this case, are underwear. Whit's description of Curley is a lot like saying that he has ants in his pants; that is, that he is restless and nervous.

yella: yellow; a coward

Chapter Four

balony: nonsense

booby hatch: insane asylum; a place designed to house people who are mentally unstable

corn: whiskey made from corn

cover 'im up: protect him; make excuses for him; cover up for him

doped out: figured out

old lady: in this case, the mother dog

put me in pitchers: put me in pictures; gotten me a job as an actress in the movies (motion pictures)

right cross: in boxing, a punch delivered by the boxer's right fist

screwy: crazy



sellin' me: trying to make me believe

set: sit; sit down

strung up on a tree: hanged, lynched

take you out in a box: in this case, the box is a coffin. Crooks is telling Candy that the old man will remain where he is until he dies.

took a powder: left

went with shows: been an entertainer on the stage.

Chapter Five

we'd never do her: "her," in this case, refers to their plan to own a farm. George is saying that he thinks they all knew they would never really accomplish their dream of living on their own place.

Lesson Suggestion!

George goes out of his way to protect Lennie, his slow-witted, lumbering giant of a friend, from people. To George, people and their institutions cannot understand Lennie, and they can only hurt him. Have you ever felt protective of a friend or family member? How did you protect that person? Explain what happened in a paragraph or two.



Bringing the Literature to the Stage

The Prime Stage Theatre Production

Rich Keitel, Director

John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* is currently celebrating its 70th year in publication and is still one of the most widely read and beloved stories in American literature. My son's seventh grade class read the novel at Community Day School and I had a very interesting discussion with the students there last fall. There have been three wonderful film adaptations of the novel: Lon Chaney and Burgess Meredith in 1939, Randy Quaid and Robert Blake in 1981 and Gary Sinise and John Malkovich in 1992. It is also one of the most widely produced plays in the country. This adaptation is very true to the novel, in fact, this play contains 85% of the dialogue in the novel.



It is always interesting to think about why a work of art captures the zeitgeist. There are many ideas that intrigue me about this play. Let's start with the title, taken from the poem by Robert Burns (1759 - 96), "The best laid schemes o' mice and men Gang aft agley [*often go wrong*]." Lennie and George make grandiose schemes to live off the fat of the land only to have their dreams end in tragedy. Who among us has not made great plans and had wonderful dreams that get shattered? Certainly the Pittsburgh Pirates of the last fifteen years can identify with that! One theme that I hope the play conveys is the story of friendship amidst the loneliness in the play. Lennie certainly depends on George, but I think George needs Lennie just as much and would be lost without him. I also am intrigued by the theme of the poor migrant worker struggling during the Depression against the wealthy owners, a theme Steinbeck would explore further in his masterpiece *The Grapes of Wrath* - read the book! See the movie! They are both brilliant.

The novel/play has come under criticism for misogyny, in that there is only one female character and she is depicted as a temptress, and the other woman mentioned in the play are prostitutes. I think Curley's wife is just as lonely as the men in this play, and I think the men are scared of women. There is not a loving, nurturing relationship between a man and a woman in the entire play.

As director, it is my job to choose the cast and prepare a unified production that achieves Steinbeck's vision. I consider myself a collaborator, working with the cast and crew, producers, designers, and the audience to utilize their good ideas - and, yes, I even take into account my sons' seventh grade class's comments!

Enjoy the show!



Costume Designer, Paula Parker

Costumes are one more tool to help bring the characters to life on stage. Not only do the costumes need to be historically accurate but they also need to reflect a character's personality. They need to be appropriate for the mood and style of the production.



When preparing to costume a show, I research the era/time period the play is being set in and what the fashions and clothing were of that particular time. For *Of Mice & Men*, I studied photos from the Great Depression.

The challenge for this particular show would be the natural wear and tear of the characters clothing. Photos show how tired and worn out people were as were the clothes they wore. They wouldn't have had access to a washer or dryer – they would have washed their clothes in a tin basin or in a creek using a rock to scrub with which over time would break down the fiber in the fabric. They would have laid them on rocks or hung over a rope to dry in the sun which would over time fade the colors. They would have worn the same clothes day in and day out until they literally fell apart and were no longer able to be repaired.

Prop Master, Michael Kiser

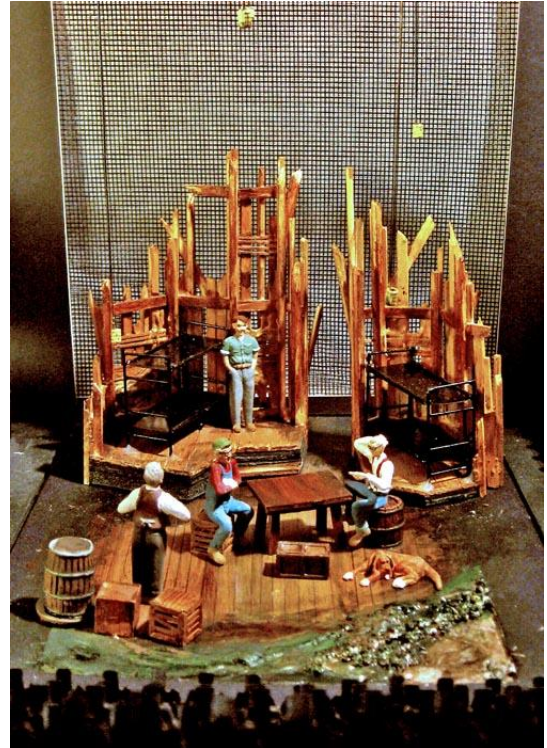
The job of the prop master is to add the extra spice and flavoring to a production. If the job were done correctly, an audience would never notice any of the work he or she has put in, it just becomes second nature. That is why research is so important to any production. For example, if a script calls for a worn out, old hammer and instead a bright shiny new one is used, it sticks out like a sore thumb. Part of my job is to search and locate items that not only fit the script, but are regionally and historically accurate as well.

For “Of Mice and Men” I have been researching tools and everyday items that would have been seen and used in California during the 1930's. This includes finding authentic items from that decade, or aging new items to look worn and used from that period. As a prop master, I also have to take into account how the prop is going to be used, and must make sure it can hold up night after night for all performances.



Set Designer, Johnmichael Bohach

One of the major challenges when adapting a novel to the stage is capturing the world that the author creates in the paragraphs of the text. Often times the settings change rapidly, the characters move from an indoor location to an outside one within a matter of sentences. With *Of Mice and Men*, this meant that the set design needed to accommodate multiple scenes in a variety of locations: the riverbed of the Salinas, the interior of the workers' bunkhouse, along with the vast barn and the claustrophobic lean-to that Crooks inhabits. In my design I decided to slightly abstract the realism of the play. Tall wooden structures suggest the trees of the surrounding forest but rotate around to reveal the interior of the dilapidated bunkhouse. The beams are silhouetted against a vibrant backdrop, gesturing to the image of a cage imprisoning the characters from their dreams of escape. They further rotate to provide various environments for the rest of the scenes as the story plays out.



The set for "Of Mice and Men"



Lighting Designer, Amanda Bodnar

Lighting is the element of the design that first and foremost allows the audience to see the action taking place on the stage. However, it has the ability to do so much more than that. It can isolate a single open space into several smaller spaces with the use of light and dark. It can change the color of the scene to an endless number of hues. Light can give the impression that we are inside, outside and even change the temperature of the space. Lighting gives us the sense of time with how the "sun" comes through the trees and the windows or how the stars can twinkle at twilight. As you are watching theater, don't miss how the lights or lack thereof, change and interact with every aspect of the experience.



Theatre Etiquette

Going to a play is a special experience. We offer these Theatre Etiquette suggestions to make the experience a positive one that you and the people seating near you will remember for a long time.

If you came with a group, please stay together. Wait for the ushers to help find your seat - they want make sure everyone is in the right place.

Once you are ushered to your seat, make yourself comfortable, enjoy reading the playbill, and look over the theatrical space. Imagine what you will be seeing during the play.

Please silence all cell phones and pagers before the performance. And please do not use them during a performance. If you have to take a call, please go to the lobby.

Photographs and the use of recording devices are strictly prohibited in the theatre. They are disturbing to the actors and the audience.

Chewing gum or eating during the performance can be disturbing to others sitting near you. So, please leave all gum and food in the lobby before the play begins.

When the house lights dim and the play begins, you will be ready to enjoy the show.

Remember that live theatre requires active listening. The actors can see, hear and sense you. Although we welcome laughter and applause, we ask that you do not talk with your neighbor during the performance.

Please stay in your seat until the break between acts (intermission). One goes to the bathroom or gets a drink before the performance or at intermission.

Intermission is the time for you to visit the restrooms, enjoy refreshments in our lobby and discuss the show with your friends and family.

Food and drinks are permitted only in the lobby and outside the theatre.

Show appreciation by clapping. The actors love to hear applause. This shows how much you enjoyed it.

Be polite and attentive. These suggestions can help you play your part to make the experience special for everyone.



The New Hazlett Theatre



Resources for Of Mice and Men

<http://www.ac.wvu.edu/~stephan/Steinbeck/mice.html>

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/lessons/97/dream/thedream.html>

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/collections/fsac/>

<http://www.loc.gov/folklife/source/>

<http://images.library.pitt.edu>

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/history/presidents/fr32.html>

http://nobelprize.org/nobel_foundation/index.html

<http://home.earthlink.net/~gfeldmeth/chart.newdeal.html>

http://net.unl.edu/artsFeat/ap_migrantmother.html

<http://www.pbs.org/ktca/americanphotography/>

<http://www.teacherweb.com/ny/greathollow/mrsriviello/hf3.stm>

http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1962/steinbeck-bio.html

<http://www.ac.wvu.edu/~stephan/Steinbeck/>

http://www.lausd.k12.ca.us/Belmont_HS/mice/index.html

<http://www.universalteacher.org.uk/prose/ofmiceandmen.htm>

<http://www.lifestreamcenter.net/DrB/Lessons/mice-men/index.htm>

<http://www.123helpme.com/view.asp?id=23316>

<http://www.93950.com/steinbeck/>

http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson079.shtml

<http://www.weedpatchcamp.com/>

<http://images.google.com/images>

<http://newdeal.feri.org/index.htm>

<http://www.shorpy.com>

<http://www.steinbeck.org/>



***Of Mice and Men* Resource and Tour Guide Teacher Evaluation Form**

Prime Stage constantly assesses the work provided by its education department. Your feedback is important. May we add you to our e-mailing list? If so, please include your email address. You may use additional pages to make further comments and suggestions. Once complete, please return your form and your students' forms by mail or fax. *Thank you.*

YOUR NAME: _____

NAME OF SCHOOL: _____

ADDRESS OF SCHOOL: _____

CONTACT NUMBER (DAY): _____ OTHER: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

How did you learn of the Resource and Tour Guide? _____

Were you told of it when you booked tickets? _____ Did you find it on the website? _____

Which subjects are you using the Guide for?

Which sections of the Guide have been most useful?

How could we improve the Guide for future programs?

Please add any further comments on a second page. Thank you for your time.

Please mail or fax your comments to:

Prime Stage Theatre, P.O. Box 1849, Pittsburgh, PA 15230

Telephone: 412.771.7373



***Of Mice and Men* Resource and Tour Guide Student Evaluation Form**

We are very interested in what you thought of the book and the play. Please write your answers on this page and draw a picture of your favorite moment on the back of this page or on another sheet of paper. Your teacher will collect your responses and send them to us. **Thank you.**

YOUR NAME: _____

NAME OF SCHOOL: _____

GRADE: _____ NAME OF TEACHER: _____

What part/parts of *Of Mice and Men* did you enjoy when you read the book?

What part/parts of *Of Mice and Men* confused you when you read the book?

What part/parts of the play version of *Of Mice and Men* did you enjoy?

What part/parts of the play version of *Of Mice and Men* helped you understand the book?

What was/were your favorite images or characters when you read the book?

What was/were your favorite images or characters when you saw the play?



