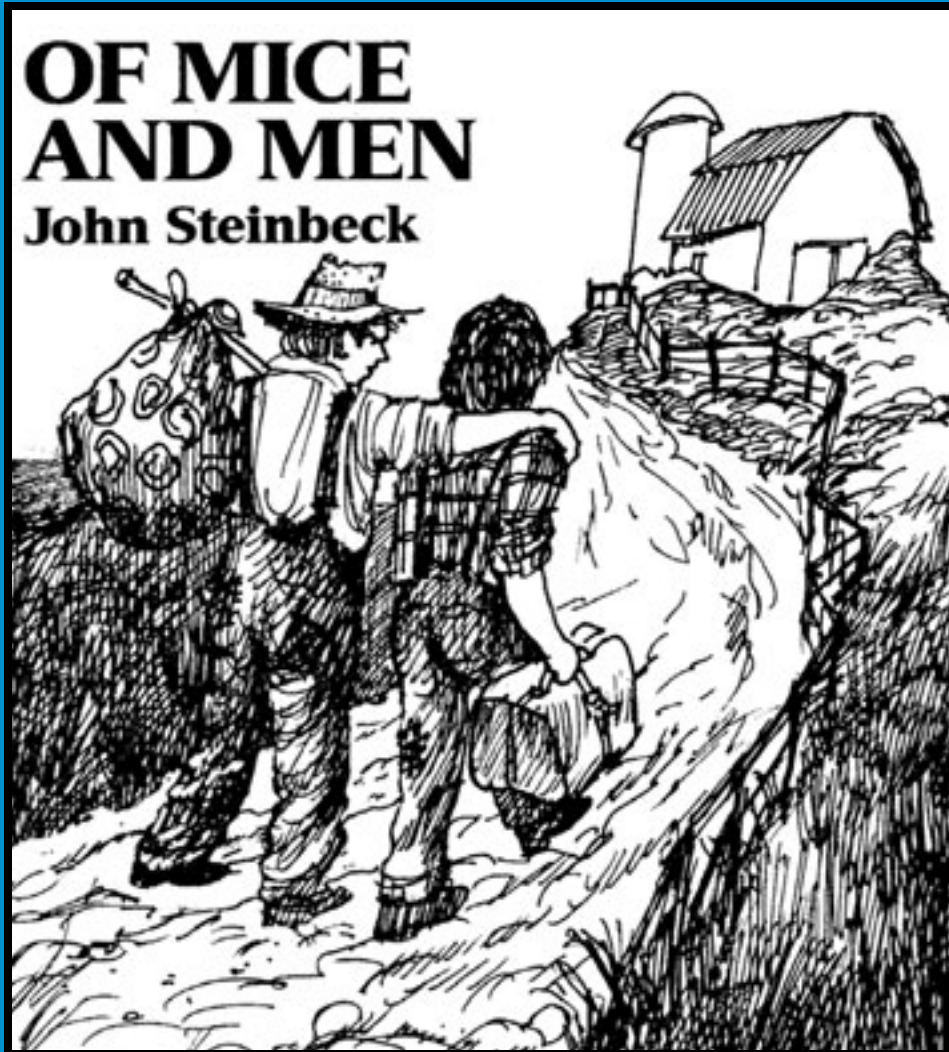


Novel·Ties



A Study Guide

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LEARNING LINKS

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For the Teacher

This reproducible study guide to use in conjunction with the novel *Of Mice and Men* consists of lessons for guided reading. Written in chapter-by-chapter format, the guide contains a synopsis, pre-reading activities, vocabulary and comprehension exercises, as well as extension activities to be used as follow-up to the novel.

In a homogeneous classroom, whole class instruction with one title is appropriate. In a heterogeneous classroom, reading groups should be formed: each group works on a different novel at its own reading level. Depending upon the length of time devoted to reading in the classroom, each novel, with its guide and accompanying lessons, may be completed in three to six weeks.

Begin using NOVEL-TIES for reading development by distributing the novel and a folder to each child. Distribute duplicated pages of the study guide for students to place in their folders. After examining the cover and glancing through the book, students can participate in several pre-reading activities. Vocabulary questions should be considered prior to reading a chapter; all other work should be done after the chapter has been read. Comprehension questions can be answered orally or in writing. The classroom teacher should determine the amount of work to be assigned, always keeping in mind that readers must be nurtured and that the ultimate goal is encouraging students' love of reading.

The benefits of using NOVEL-TIES are numerous. Students read good literature in the original, rather than in abridged or edited form. The good reading habits, formed by practice in focusing on interpretive comprehension and literary techniques, will be transferred to the books students read independently. Passive readers become active, avid readers.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Great Depression

The Great Depression refers to the severe worldwide economic crisis, which was precipitated by the Wall Street stock market crash in October 1929. At that time millions of dollars of stock were subject to panic selling in a matter of hours. This forced the closure of many banks whose reserves were involved in stock speculation. Suddenly, the investments of millions of people were lost. In the United States businesses closed, people lost their homes, and by 1933, sixteen million people, or one-third of the labor force, were unemployed. Complete recovery from the Depression came only with the heavy defense spending of World War II in the 1940s.

The Salinas Valley

The Salinas Valley in the Central Coast region of California lies along the Salinas River between the Gabilan Range and the Santa Lucia Range. The city of Salinas was established after Mexico seceded from Spain in 1822 and began granting rancho lands. Named for a nearby salt marsh, Salinas became the seat of Monterey County in 1872 and incorporated in 1874.

Agriculture dominates the economy of the valley. In particular, a large majority of the salad greens consumed in the U.S. are grown within this region. For this reason, the Salinas Valley is known as “The Salad Bowl of the World.”

Born in the Salinas Valley in 1902, John Steinbeck spent many years roaming the hills and valleys that were used in his stories. He did not only know what the Salinas Valley looked like; he also knew how the people who lived there were treated. Working many odd jobs, Steinbeck was able to incorporate his experiences into those of the characters in his books.

PAGES 1–16 [Penguin Edition]

Vocabulary: Draw a line from each word on the left to its definition on the right. Then use the numbered words to fill in the blanks in the sentences below.

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. recumbent | a. gazed at attentively |
| 2. lumbered | b. in a lordly or arrogant manner |
| 3. emerge | c. position suggestive of resting |
| 4. morosely | d. come forth into view |
| 5. contemplated | e. sad or gloomy |
| 6. imperiously | f. in a downcast manner |
| 7. dejected | g. moved clumsily, as if burdened |

.....

- Sharon stared _____ at the broken vase, afraid to tell her mother that she was the one who had broken it.
- As we gazed at the wetlands bordering the creek, we saw a heron _____ from the grass and fly overhead.
- Albert became _____ when he realized that he was the only one in his group of friends who would not be going away for the summer.
- When Justine first got her cast removed, she _____ about as if her leg were still encased in plaster.
- The teacher _____ the papers before her with care; she wanted to make very sure that the two students who sat next to each other had not copied each other's work.
- Accustomed to ordering her servants about, Mrs. Stoddard was unprepared for criticism when she spoke _____ to her fellow volunteers.
- The doctor eased his patient into a(n) _____ position before beginning the examination.

Questions:

- How is Lennie characterized when he is first introduced? What leads to this impression?
- What is the relationship between Lennie and George?
- Why are Lennie and George traveling?
- Why are Lennie and George forced to lead a nomadic life?