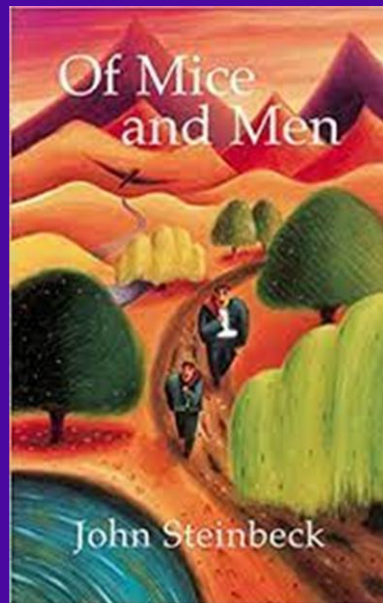


THE
DUSTON TDS 4-19
SCHOOL

Knowledge Organiser

Year 9

Unit 3: Of Mice and Men by John Steinbeck



Name:

Class:

Big Questions

What was life like for migrant workers in the 1930s?
How are George and Lennie presented differently in chapter 1?
How are George and Lennie presented differently in chapter 1? (Extended Writing)
To what extent is the ranch welcoming and inviting?
How is hierarchy evident on the ranch?
How does Steinbeck portray Curley's Wife
What does the shooting of Candy's dog show us about life on the ranch?
How does Steinbeck use language to demonstrate each characters' involvement in the fight?
How does Steinbeck use language to demonstrate each characters' involvement in the fight? (Extended Writing)
How is Crooks presented in chapter 4?
What impact has discrimination and racial prejudice had on Crooks?
How does Steinbeck portray Curley's wife throughout the novella?
Is Curley's wife a victim?
How responsible is George for Lennie's actions?
How is George and Lennie's relationship presented throughout the novella?
Was Lennie's fate always inevitable?

Prior knowledge

Learned knowledge throughout the unit

Key Terminology

Microcosm	A community of place which represents the miniature characteristics of something much larger.
Discrimination/Prejudice	Prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against someone based on the belief that one's own race is superior.
Segregation	The action or state of setting someone or something apart from others.
Migrant	A person who moves from one place to another in order to find work or better living conditions.
Motive	A deeper reason for doing something. It might not be obvious to the other person that you are doing something to gain something else.
Hierarchy	A system in which members of an organisation or society are ranked according to relative status or authority.
Mundane	Lacking interest or excitement; dull and repetitive.
Ranch	A large farm where produce is made and distributed. A place where migrants could work, with accommodation, to escape the economic crisis.
Optimism vs. Pessimism	Optimism—being hopeful or confident about the future. Pessimism— seeing the worst aspect or believing something will get worse.
Resentment	Bitter at being treated unfairly.
Ostracised	Excluded from a society or group.
Sacrifice	To give up (something valued) for the sake of something else.
Dependent	Relying on another or requiring additional support.
Escapism	Seeking distraction and relief from something unpleasant.
Apathy	A lack of interest, enthusiasm or concern.
Patriarchy	A system of society or government in which the father or eldest male is head of the family and descent is reckoned through the male line.
Racism	Prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism by an individual, community, or institution against a person or people on the basis of their membership of a particular racial or ethnic group, typically one that is a minority or marginalized.
Sexism	Prejudice, stereotyping, or discrimination, typically against women, on the basis of sex.
Cyclical	When something goes in a cycle.
Zoomorphism	Attributing animalistic characteristics to a human.

Additional Terminology

	Term	Definition
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Homework Tasks

Knowledge is power, so the more you know, the more secure you will be in your learning.

Year 9: Unit 3 Homework: <i>Of Mice and Men</i>		
Task 1: <u>Week 2</u>	Due date:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read 'Wider Reading 1' on page 10• Complete the reflection questions and the 10 question quiz that follows
Task 2: <u>Week 4</u>	Due date:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read 'Wider Reading 2' on page 13• Complete the reflection questions and the 10 question quiz that follows.
Task 3: <u>Week 6</u>	Due date:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read 'Wider Reading 3' on page 16• Complete the reflection questions and the 10 question quiz that follows

If you have 'no homework', or you have finished all of the above, try these tasks on a weekly basis to ensure your understanding of the novella is secure.

1. Create a timeline of the 5 most important events in the novella's plot. Explain what each moment shows you about the novella's themes.
2. Create character profiles for each of the main characters – include key characteristics and quotations. Bullet point 3 key moments in each character's journey and explain what they reveal about the character.
3. Research John Steinbeck's life and work. These notes could include information about the writer's personal and professional life, themes associated with his novels and any context linked to the period he wrote in.

Example analytical writing

How does Steinbeck present the relationship between George and Lennie?

1 Steinbeck presents the relationship of George and Lennie as caring, and protective. It is similar to that
2 of a father and son, which has been presented from the outset of the novella. In this extract, which is at
3 the beginning of the novella, the relationship between the two characters is very quickly established
4 with the introduction of these two characters walking 'in single file' down a path. Steinbeck captures
5 George's paternal, strong leading character immediately with his positioning at the front of the path.
6 'The first man, was small and quick' and 'behind him walked his opposite' Steinbeck's subtle positioning
7 of these characters allows the reader an insight into the way these two characters interact, and thus
8 imply the leader is the stronger, paternal figure.

9 The clever use of verbs in describing the character's further allows the reader to imply their relationship
10 is similar to a father and son. George is presented as wary, 'with restless eyes' which suggests that he is
11 looking out for danger, protecting his partner. Whereas Lennie, his 'opposite' is described, 'dragging his
12 feet' this connotes childish mannerisms, and a reluctance to keep up with George, much like a father
13 and small child. These verbs help establish their relationship, and we are afforded the knowledge that
14 the unlikely couple have a strong bond, where George feels protective of Lennie.

15 Furthermore, the relationship is presented as unequal with Steinbeck's use of animal imagery to
16 describe Lennie's actions. The reader is able to see a clear divide between the characters through the
17 description of Lennie's walking 'the way a bear drags his claws' and 'snorting into the water like a horse.'
18 Steinbeck only uses animal imagery for the character of Lennie which implies George is almost his
19 master, or most certainly his superior in intelligence. In contrast, Steinbeck uses powerful and sharp
20 verbs to describe George. 'Small, strong hands' and 'sharp, strong features' connote George's character
21 is both able and protective. The adjective 'strong' is repeated within the extract; further suggesting
22 George is the more powerful, protective of the two. This links back to a paternal relationship, where a
23 father is protective over their child, and in effect, unequal.

24 The paternal relationship is reinforced when Steinbeck introduces speech into the extract. 'The small
25 man stepped nervously beside him. 'Lennie!' he said sharply.' The use of the exclamation mark conveys
26 George's exasperation with Lennie, just as a parent can become exasperated by the actions of a small
27 child. The verb 'sharply' further adds to the effect of George being a father figure to George, because
28 the tone created by this verb suggests that George is quickly trying to correct something Lennie is doing
29 (drinking from the pool). George's comman of 'don't drink so much' suggests he cares for Lennie's
30 health and does not want him to get sick from drinking the water. However, Lennie's childish nature
31 continues as he' continued to snort into the pool.' Suggesting, he is disobeying his 'father figure' George.

32 Although their relationship at times appears to be unequal, Lennie has much love for his companion
33 too, and is content in his company. This is conveyed through the use of positive verbs 'he smiled happily',
34 and the actions of Lennie at the pool. 'Lennie dabbled his big paw in the water and wiggled his finger'.
35 The playful verbs further convey this content feeling that Lennie has in George's company, and he is
36 eager to please his companion. Much like a child does to their parents. 'Look George. Look what I done.'
37 Steinbeck purposely creates the grammatically incorrect speech for Lennie to imply a childish, emerging
38 speech development, much like a child. It helps to create the idea that Lennie needs looking after, and
39 that George is this person to do this.

KS3 READING MARK SCHEME [Y7, 8, 9]



Success Criteria		Nothing to reward (0 marks)		Developing (1 mark)		Secure (2 marks)		Excelling (3 marks)	
1 – Task and Big Ideas	<i>Not evidenced</i>		Some relevance to big ideas and task. Simple approach to task and discussion.		Clear, relevant and supported approach to task and big ideas.		Thoughtful, developed approach to task and big ideas. Engages fully with the task.		
2 – Quotations and references	<i>Not evidenced</i>		Some quotations and/or references used but will be limited.		Relevant, clear quotations that are embedded into sentences.		Fully embedded, judicious quotations and consistent references with more than one explored per paragraph.		
3 – Subject Terminology and writers' methods	<i>Not evidenced</i>		Identification of some methods used by the writer with some possible use of subject terminology.		Subject terminology is used to explore a range of writers' methods.		Sophisticated and ambitious use of subject terminology to explore writers' methods. Consideration of language, structure and form.		
4 – Zoom on key words + discuss effect	<i>Not evidenced</i>		Some exploration and discussion exploring single words.		Clear exploration and discussion considering the connotations of single words.		Perceptive and insightful exploration linked clearly to the big ideas.		
5 – Analysis of writer's purpose/intentions	<i>Not evidenced</i>		Some understanding although often explains rather than analyses. Simple comment on writer's intentions.		Clear understanding and analysis shown. Clear and relevant ideas and comments on writer's intentions.		Developed interpretation of the text. A considered and exploratory approach where layers of meaning and links between context and text are consistent.		
6 – Focus on the question	<i>Not evidenced</i>		Little focus on the argument throughout.		Some clear focus on the argument throughout.		Consistent focus on the argument throughout.		

Wider reading 1: ‘Goodbye Lennie and George – I, for one, will miss Of Mice and Men’ by Ryan Wilson

This article was published in the Guardian newspaper in May 2016

<https://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/2016/may/08/goodbye-lennie-and-george-i-for-one-will-miss-of-mice-and-men>

1 As the last GCSE cohort studying Steinbeck’s novel starts exams in 2016, let’s remember how it gave
2 students a real chance to engage with literature

3 In a few weeks’ time, thousands of year 11 students will enter examination halls all over the country,
4 anxiously clutching copies of John Steinbeck’s *Of Mice and Men*. As they put the finishing touches to
5 their essays and hand over their papers, it will mark the end of an era in English teaching.

6 The novel is taking something of an enforced rest from the curriculum. In 2014, the then education
7 secretary, Michael Gove, announced that British children should study British writers, and so Steinbeck
8 must make way for Austen, Dickens and Bronte from next year.

9 There’s nothing wrong with them, of course, but let’s take a moment to mark the passing of a book
10 which has been central to students’ experience of English for well over a decade. The government was
11 concerned that as many as 90% of young people study the novel. But as someone who has taught and
12 examined *Of Mice and Men* more times than I care to remember, I’d like to offer some reassurance. Yes,
13 it is short, but everything you’d want to teach a child about literature is there. Symbolism, structure,
14 pathos, characterisation, imagery: it’s got it all. More than that, the themes of hope, friendship, loyalty
15 and vulnerability speak to students and their very modern concerns. The idea of choosing to believe that
16 there is something better just around the corner, despite the horror of one’s present circumstances, is
17 very real especially for many from disadvantaged and difficult backgrounds.

18 I know I will not be the only one to have stood in front of a class of fairly tough teenagers, and marvelled
19 at how they are transfixed by this story of two friends seeking to make a better life for themselves. They
20 wince as Lennie, the kindly but vulnerable farm labourer, is subjected to bullying at the hands of Curley,
21 the boss’s son. They sneer and scoff at the “sluttish” behaviour of Curley’s wife, before realising that she
22 too is fragile and insecure despite her confident exterior. They are shocked at the treatment of Crooks,
23 the stable buck who is ostracised for his skin colour, and Candy, the swamper who is deemed too old to
24 be of value. They quite enjoy the swearing. And every single time you read the ending, you could hear a
25 pin drop.

26 Maybe this is fanciful or naive, but I like to think that as they learn about how characters are more
27 complex than they appear, so they learn that people are too. Maybe next time they have to deal with
28 someone who is weaker than them, or who has been cast out by society, or who comes across badly,
29 they’ll call to mind the inhabitants of the Salinas Valley and pause before they react.

30 I’ve overseen the most fascinating discussions often sparked off by the most unlikely students. Students
31 who have rarely taken much interest, suddenly form passionate views on the nature of friendship, or
32 whether loyalty should have any limits. They want to talk about the extent to which ethnic minorities
33 still metaphorically live in a space removed from mainstream society, or whether bullies ever win. Let’s

34 not kid ourselves, some of these students may not read many more books in their lives, and I'm happy
35 that this will have given at least some the experience of really engaging with literature and feeling its
36 relevance.

37 It's true that *Of Mice and Men* has been a fixture of many English departments for a long time. I could
38 pretty much recite the whole thing. But each cohort of students discovers the text anew, and I never
39 tired of witnessing their reactions, or challenging their perceptions. We'll get there with Dickens too,
40 but I suspect it'll be more of a struggle.

41 It's worth saying, by the way, that the official position is that nothing has been banned and, while
42 American texts no longer feature on the GCSE set text lists, schools are free to supplement this with any
43 book they choose. I'm sure English teachers will join me in suppressing a smirk at the idea that there
44 would be time to luxuriate in reading non-compulsory books with a class who are facing more exams
45 than any year 11 in recent history.

46 So for now, George and Lennie must join Atticus Finch and Holden Caulfield at the back of the cupboard
47 until another education secretary comes along and gives them a reprieve. Nothing lasts forever, and we
48 will get used to the new changes in time. But I for one will miss them.

As part of homework task 1, you will be completing a knowledge retrieval quiz based on your understanding of the wider reading. Before you complete the quiz, consider the following questions to help your knowledge of the text.

1. What is the writer's view of the government's decision to remove 'Of Mice and Men' from the GCSE exam curriculum?

2. Why does the writer think it is a good novella for young people to study?

3. According to the writer, what kind of discussions do students have about the book?

Homework Quiz 1

	Write your answer in the box below each question.	✓✗
1	What does the writer of the article say will happen in 'a few weeks' time' (in 2016)?	
2	Who announced that students should study British writers?	
3	When did the Michael Gove make his announcement?	
4	What 4 themes does the novella cover?	
5	What percentage of young people did they think studied the novel?	
6	What adjectives does the writer use to describe the character of Curley's wife?	
7	Why is Candy not seen as having any 'value' on the ranch?	
8	Where are the characters inhabitants of?	
9	What is the official government position on 'Of Mice and Men'?	
10	Where are George and Lennie joining Atticus Finch and Holden Caulfield?	
TOTAL		

Wider reading 2: Idaho parents push for schools to ban *Of Mice and Men* for its 'profanities' by Richard Lea

This article was published in The Guardian newspaper in May 2016

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2015/may/07/idaho-parents-profane-of-mice-and-men-banned-schools-john-steinbeck>

1 John Steinbeck under fire after curriculum review in Coeur d'Alene counts more than 100 unsuitable
2 words in Depression-era classic.

3 Hailed by the Nobel prize judges in 1962 for his realism and sympathetic humour, John Steinbeck is
4 under attack in the US, where parents in Idaho have branded *Of Mice and Men* "neither a quality story
5 nor a page-turner" and asked for it to be removed from classrooms.

6 A curriculum review committee in the city of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho has recommended the 1937 novella
7 should no longer be taught in classrooms, according to the *Spokesman-Review*, and that ninth-graders
8 should study it "on a voluntary, small-group basis" only.

9 For parent Mary Jo Finney, the use of words such as "bastard" and "God damn" makes it unsuitable for
10 14- or 15-year-old students. After counting more than 100 "profanities", she expressed her shock to the
11 *Spokesman-Review* that "teachers actually had the audacity to have students read these profanities out
12 loud in class".

13 Steinbeck's story of the difficulties faced by migrant fieldworkers in the Great Depression is a fixture on
14 high-school syllabuses in the US, the UK and beyond, but since 1953 has also become one of America's
15 most frequently-challenged books.

16 In the same week, one of the novels on the American Library Association's most recent list of banned
17 books, *The Kite Runner* by Afghan-born Khaled Hosseini, has come under attack in North Carolina.

18 According to the *Citizen-Times*, a parent in Asheville complained about the global bestseller's language
19 and "adult themes".

20 Baldwin also objected that Erich Maria Remarque's 1929 novel, *All Quiet on the Western Front* had been
21 "removed from the curriculum without parents knowing about it".

22 Hosseini's 2003 book has been removed from classrooms until a committee at Asheville's Reynolds High
23 School has considered Baldwin's complaint. It's not yet clear if parents concerned by Hosseini's depiction
24 of war and chaos in Afghanistan will be reassured by Remarque's evocation of the shock and horror of
25 mechanised warfare in France.

As part of homework task 2, you will be completing a knowledge retrieval quiz based on your understanding of the wider reading. Before you complete the quiz, consider the following questions to help your knowledge of the text.

1. What does the word 'audacity' mean. Use an online dictionary to check if you're not sure.

2. Why do some people argue that *Of Mice and Men* is not a suitable book for school students to study?

3. Do you think the government should have the power to ban certain books? Give reasons for your answer.

Additional note space:

Homework Quiz 2

	Write your answer in the box below each question.	✓ ✗
1	How many unsuitable words were counted?	
2	When did Nobel judges 'hail' the novel?	
3	What did they hail it for?	
4	Where are the parents who are complaining about the novel?	
5	What have the parents branded the novel?	
6	Where is the curriculum review committee?	
7	What have the curriculum review committee recommended?	
8	Who complained about teachers having the audacity to read profanities aloud?	
9	What has happened since 1953?	
10	Which other book has recently been complained about?	
TOTAL		

Wider reading 3: Mum's anger at children being told to read racist language in *Of Mice and Men*

This article was published in the Metro newspaper in 2019 [Of Mice and Men N-word racism row at Orchard School in Bristol | Metro News](#)

1 A mother is furious with her daughter's school after she says a teacher allowed children to say the n-
2 word while reading *Of Mice and Men*.

3 Her 12-year-old was studying the American classic during an English lesson at Nene Park Academy in
4 Peterborough.

5 John Steinbeck's novel tells the story of migrant workers in 1930s America, but it has come to be known
6 for its offensive and racist language.

7 The mum says her daughter was the only black child in the class and she was 'upset that they felt
8 comfortable saying it with her there'.

9 She told Metro.co.uk: 'When a child said "I don't want to say it", another child said "it's ok I'll say it" and
10 then read it out loud.

11 'She was just upset that they felt comfortable saying it with her there, not caring. Apart from that one
12 girl who didn't want to say it.

13 'But the teacher allowed another child to say it so it didn't make a difference.' She added: 'She was the
14 only black child in the class. It was not like she could speak to anyone about it because it was only her.'

15 The mum-of-two, who works in a primary school, said she only found out what happened to her
16 daughter when her son said he was starting to read *Of Mice and Men* in his English class, and his friends
17 told him about the n-word in the book.

18 She said she complained to the school and her son's teacher agreed not to say it out loud in class.
19 Instead, the teacher made the class read it in groups, but the mum claims a child on the same table as
20 her son said, 'I want to say the word, I want to say the word.'

21 She said they didn't say the word but it's 'still upsetting'. She believes schools should teach about racism
22 but it should be incorporated into history lessons.

23 The mum added: 'The syllabus needs updating. It's 2019. My sisters did the book and that was over 20
24 years ago. It's time to get a bit more relevant.

25 'When I was growing up I went through it, people calling me the n-word. So I know what it feels like.
26 'It's just degrading. It's really upsetting. I'm not racist to anyone or call anyone names so I don't expect
27 it to me.

28 'I feel like schools having books with these words in, children are going to think that they can say them.'
29 Nene Park Academy defended the book being taught as it is 'important students learn valuable lessons
30 from the mistakes of the past'.

31 Principal Robin Grover said: 'As a multicultural academy community we educate our students about the
32 importance of tolerance towards others, empathy, and the unacceptance of racial prejudice.

33 'Of Mice and Men is a text which has universal themes around the hardships of migrant workers which
34 are still considered relevant to 21st Century society.

35 'Historically, we have chosen not to censor the language of the text because through sensitive and
36 creative teaching we feel students can gain a fuller understanding of racial prejudice over the course of
37 history and its impact on modern day society.

38 'It is important students learn valuable lessons from the mistakes of the past to continue to grow
39 harmoniously within a multicultural and richly diverse society.

40 'We take complaints to the school very seriously and following a parent raising concerns about the use
41 of this literature in a school lesson we were in immediate contact with the parent to discuss this matter.'



As part of homework task 3, you will be completing a knowledge retrieval quiz based on your understanding of the wider reading. Before you complete the quiz, consider the following questions to help your knowledge of the text.

1. Why did the mother complain to the school?

2. Why did the mother's child feel like she couldn't speak to anyone in the class about it?

3. Why does the word 'censor' mean? Use an online dictionary to look it up if you're not sure.

Homework Quiz 3

Write your answer in the box below each question.		 
1	Why was the mum angry?	
2	Where was the school?	
3	How old was the student?	
4	What happened when the mum was growing up?	
5	What year does the mum say it is?	
6	What does the mum think is going to make children think they can be racist?	
7	How did the school respond to the criticism?	
8	What 'universal theme' does the Principal describe in Of Mice and Men?	
9	What does 'prejudice' mean. Use an online dictionary to look it up if you're not sure.	
10	Why does the Principal think it is important for students to study the past?	
TOTAL		



Wider reading list

Other novels by Steinbeck

The Grapes of Wrath— Set against the background of dust bowl Oklahoma and Californian migrant life, it tells of the Joad family, who, like thousands of others, are forced to travel West in search of the promised land.

East of Eden— California's fertile Salinas Valley is home to two families whose destinies are fruitfully, and fatally, intertwined.

Other American Novels

To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee— A lawyer's advice to his children as he defends the real mockingbird of Harper Lee's classic novel - a black man charged with the rape of a white girl. Through the young eyes of Scout and Jem Finch, Harper Lee explores with exuberant humour the irrationality of adult attitudes to race and class in the Deep South of the 1930s.

Invisible Man by Ralph Ellison- It addresses many of the social and intellectual issues facing African Americans early in the twentieth century which tells the extraordinary story of a man invisible 'simply because people refuse to see me'.

Young Adult Reads on Race and Social Injustice

The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas - Inspired by the Black Lives Matter movement, it involves the police shooting of an unarmed black teen. The speaker is a girl named Starr Carter who is sixteen her friend, Khalil, has an altercation with the cops and ends up being shot. Throughout the rest of the book, there are themes regarding police brutality against the black community, stereotypes, and racialized poverty.

Film adaptations (be careful of plot changes!)

Of Mice and Men (director Gary Sinise) 1991