LITHERLAND HIGH SCHOOL

LIVO CATCH-UP 10

Year 8 – The Outsiders: Of Mice and Men



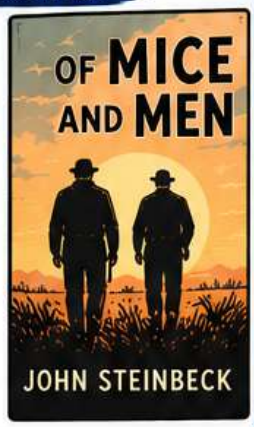


You have missed some lessons. Don't worry – this will give you the essential knowledge you need to join back in.

1 WHAT IS THE NOVEL?

Of Mice and Men is a novella written by John Steinbeck.

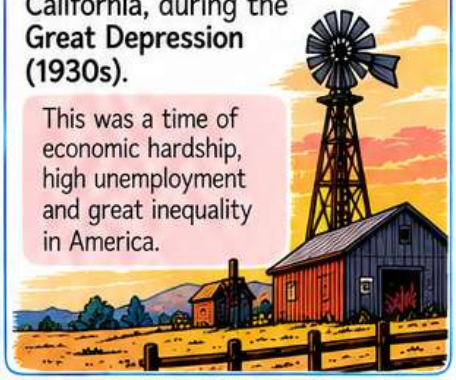
It follows two men, George and Lennie, as they travel in search of work during a difficult time in American history. The story explores important themes such as friendship, loneliness and the struggle for a better life.



2 WHEN AND WHERE?

The story is set in **Soledad, California, during the Great Depression (1930s).**

This was a time of economic hardship, high unemployment and great inequality in America.



3 MAIN CHARACTERS



George

- small, intelligent
- protective
- responsible
- cares for Lennie
- dreams of a better life



Lennie

- large and physically strong
- has a mental disability
- gentle and kind
- relies on George
- loves soft thinge

4 KEY THEMES

- FRIENDSHIP AND LOYALTY
- LONELINESS AND ISOLATION
- INEQUALITY AND INJUSTICE
- THE AMERICAN DREAM
- KINDNESS AND COMPASSION
- POWER AND VULNERABILITY

5 CONTEXT

Steinbeck was inspired by the real lives of migrant workers during the Great Depression.

- Many people lost their jobs and homes.
- Life was difficult for poor workers and minorities.
- Women and minority groups faced discrimination.
- The American Dream – the idea that anyone can have a better life – was hard to achieve for many people.



6 WRITER'S MESSAGE

Steinbeck wants readers to think about:

- how society treats people who are vulnerable
- the importance of kindness and friendship
- the loneliness many people feel in society
- the difficulties of achieving the American Dream



7 LANGUAGE AND STRUCTURE

- Steinbeck uses simple, clear language.
- He uses powerful descriptions of the rural setting to create a specific mood.
- Animal imagery (e.g. "dragging his feet like a bear") helps create first impressions.
- Repetition and motifs (e.g. soft things, dreams) are used to highlight important ideas.



8 IMPORTANT IDEAS

- **Dreams** – George and Lennie want to own a farm.
- **Friendship** – they rely on each other.
- **Risk** – Lennie's actions can cause danger.
- **Choices** – characters are forced to make difficult decisions.
- **Hope** – even in difficult times, people still dream of a better future.

9 KEY VOCABULARY

Proletariat	working-class people
Injustice	unfair treatment
Context	the time and place in which a text is written
Symbiotic	a close, dependent relationship
Foreshadowing	a hint about what might happen later
Motif	a repeated idea or symbol
Vulnerable	at risk or in need of support
Segregation	keeping groups of people separate
Perspective	a particular point of view

10 YOUR CATCH-UP 10

Answer these without looking back.

1. Who wrote Of Mice and Men?
2. When and where is the story set?
3. Name the two main characters.
4. Give two key themes in the novella.
5. What was the Great Depression?
6. Give one example of how Steinbeck uses language to create first impressions.
7. What is the American Dream?
8. Choose one key word from the vocabulary list and write its meaning.
9. How is George different to Lennie?
10. What message do you think Steinbeck wants readers to think about?

FINAL CHECK

I now know:

- ☐ what Of Mice and Men is about
- ☐ when and where it is set
- ☐ who the main characters are
- ☐ key themes in the novella
- ☐ important context
- ☐ key vocabulary
- ☐ how Steinbeck uses language
- ☐ the writer's message
- ☐ and I feel ready to rejoin the lesson!



NOW I'M READY TO REJOIN THE LESSON!