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### Of Mice and Men – Active Reading Assignment English 9 Honors

**DIRECTIONS:** Using complete sentences and proper punctuation, answer the following questions while reading and annotating *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck.

# Chapter 1

1) Setting is the general place or time in history in which the action of a work of literature takes place. It is the particular physical surroundings in which a scene or episode that is part of a larger work occurs. In at least 2-3 sentences, describe the setting of *Of Mice and Men*.

- 2) Clearly define the following word using <u>context clues</u> and/or a dictionary. Then, find and define your own words (two different words from Chapter 1 that you are unfamiliar with). In parentheses on the line provided, record the page number where each word can be found.
  - a. Migrant Workers -
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ (Steinbeck \_\_\_\_\_) -
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ (Steinbeck \_\_\_\_\_) –
- 3) Analyze the way both Lennie and George are first described. How is this initial description fitting when we find out more about each man?

4) Is the relationship between George and Lennie one of friendship, or does George only feel obligated to take care of Lennie? Support your claim with specific evidence from the text.

5) Analyze why Lennie has a dead mouse and why George takes it away from him.

6) Discuss what happened at the last place where Lennie and Geroge worked.

7) Describe the dream George and Lennie share for their future. Why is this dream so important to both men?

#### Chapter 2

8) Describe the bunk house. What does the description of the bunk house tell the reader about the men who live there?

9) What do we find out about Curley, his wife, and his father through George's discussions with others?

10) How would you describe Curley and his wife? What do their actions tell you about each of their characters?

11) Re-read Steinbeck's description of Slim in this chapter. What does this description tell you about Slim's character? Is he a man to be trusted and looked up to? Explain why or why not.

12) What is Lennie eagerly talking about in this chapter?

# Chapter 3

13) Explain Carlson's reasons for shooting Candy's dog.

14) Discuss Candy's reasons for not shooting the dog.

15) Compare Candy to his dog.

16) Examine the fight between Lennie and Curley. What does this fight show about their characters?

17) Explain why George doesn't help Lennie in the fight.

# Chapter 4

- 18) What do Crook's room and the things in it tell you about his character?
- 19) Discuss what Crooks says to Lennie about loneliness.
- 20) Analyze why Crooks would react so negatively to Lennie but then let him inside his room anyway.

21) Explain why Crooks tortures and taunts Lennie and George.

22) Why is Crooks called "Crooks"? How does this reflect his personality?

# Chapter 5

23) How have Curley's wife's dreams for her life changed or been lost?

24) Why does Curley's wife tell Lennie about "the letter"? What do you think the letter symbolizes? Explain your response.

25) Discuss how Lennie's killing of the puppy parallels his killing of Curley's wife and the mice.

26) Explain how Candy reacts to the death of Curley's wife.

27) What options do George and Candy discuss after the discovery of the body?

28) For each major character listed below, describe his/her physical attributes and personality in at least one paragraph (5-7 sentences). Be sure to cite your descriptions with page numbers from the text.

a. Lennie

b. George

c. Candy

d. Curley

e. Curley's Wife

f. Slim

g. Carlson

# Chapter 6

29) Examine the significance of the rabbit appearing at the end of the book.

30) Why did George kill Lennie? Was he justified in doing that? Explain your reasoning.

31) Discuss what happens to the dream at the end of the novella for both Lennie and George.

32) In what ways does Slim show understanding for George's decision? Why does Carlson ask the last question?

33) Clearly define the literary terms listed below and give an example from the novella of each.

- a. Protagonist
  - i. Example:
- b. Antagonist
  - i. Example:
- c. Foreshadowing
  - i. Example:
- d. Symbol
  - i. Example:
- e. Theme
  - i. Example:
- f. Tone
  - i. Example:

34) A tragedy is a dramatic composition, often in verse, dealing with a serious or somber theme, typically that of a great person destined through a flaw of character or conflict with some overpowering force, as fate or society, to downfall or destruction. Determine how *Of Mice and Men* is a tragedy.