

Of Mice and Men Study Guide

John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*, published in 1937, is one of the author's most widely read novels, largely due to its ubiquitous presence in the high school curriculum. As a result, this mythic story of two opposites - the clever, wiry [George](#) Milton and the lumbering, powerful [Lennie](#) Small - has assumed an important place in the American literary canon. The novel is deceptively simple - it is short and straight-forwardly written. But beneath this approachable surface Steinbeck explores mysterious and haunting themes, largely pivoting on the search for comfort, decency and companionship in a lonely, cruel world.

Of Mice and Men was Steinbeck's seventh novel. Though he had achieved critical and popular success with his two preceding novels, *Tortilla Flat* (1935) and *In Dubious Battle* (1936), *Of Mice and Men* was an instant success on another level altogether. The book was chosen as a Book-of-the-Month club selection and garnered Steinbeck the financial stability and creative confidence necessary for his embarkation on his subsequent novel, *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), which continues to be viewed as the best work of his career. Steinbeck drew his inspiration for the work from his experience living and working as a "handlertiff" - or itinerant farmhand - during the 1920s. In a 1937 interview in *The New York Times*, Steinbeck said that the character of Lennie was based on a mentally impaired man he met in his travels who was prone to episodes of uncontrollable rage. The central question of where or how such a man might fit into society drives the action of *Of Mice and Men*, and the rest of the characters in the book are developed largely in terms of their relationships to this enigmatic central figure.

Steinbeck's novel is not, in the strictest sense, a novel; it's better described as a novelized play. The work is easily divisible into three acts of two scenes each, with each chapter comprising a scene. These chapters all take place in fixed locations. Chapter One occurs, aside from a brief stroll at the very opening, at a clearing by the Salinas River. Chapters Two and Three occur in the bunk house at the ranch where Lennie and George have found work. Chapter Four occurs in the quarters of [Crooks](#), the black stable buck. Chapter Five takes place in the barn, and Chapter Six brings us back to the clearing by the river. In all cases, the introduction and description of characters largely occurs in dialogue rather than in expository prose. With rare exceptions, Steinbeck's narrator is quite unobtrusive. He writes in a combination of stage-directions and dialogue - in other words, *Of Mice and Men* is very much like a play. The Steinbeck critic Susan Shillinglaw describes the work as an experimental "play-novelette, intended to be both a novella and a script for a play."

This play-like structure allowed the work to be quickly adapted to the stage, with the first production mounted on Broadway in 1937, the year of the novel's publication. This production was quite successful, and was directed by the famous playwright George S. Kaufman. The play was revived in 1974 with James Earl Jones in the role of Lennie. *Of Mice and Men* has also been frequently adapted into cinema - first in 1939, in a production directed by Lewis Milestone (who regularly and skillfully directed adaptations of literary works, including *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1930)), with Lon Chaney, Jr. and Lennie and Burgess Merideth as

Of Mice And Men Study Guide

Mike Jess



Of Mice And Men Study Guide:

The book delves into Of Mice And Men Study Guide. Of Mice And Men Study Guide is a vital topic that needs to be grasped by everyone, ranging from students and scholars to the general public. This book will furnish comprehensive and in-depth insights into Of Mice And Men Study Guide, encompassing both the fundamentals and more intricate discussions.

1. This book is structured into several chapters, namely:

- Chapter 1: Introduction to Of Mice And Men Study Guide
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- Chapter 3: Of Mice And Men Study Guide in Everyday Life
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- Chapter 5: Conclusion

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This book is crafted in an easy-to-understand language and is complemented by engaging illustrations. This book is highly recommended for anyone seeking to gain a comprehensive understanding of Of Mice And Men Study Guide.

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