



OF MICE AND MEN



Characters

George
Lennie
Slim
Curley
Curley's Wife
Candy
Crooks

Plot

1. Plot focusses on the characters of George and Lennie – 2 migrant workers. George is smart and looks after Lennie, as Lennie has a mental disability. (it was unusual for men to work in pairs).
2. The novel starts with George and Lennie going to a new job, as they had to leave their old one due to Lennie's behaviour.
3. They spend a night by a peaceful pool before going to the ranch, George tells Lennie to go back there if he ever gets in trouble. We find out that they have a dream of owning their own land and having their own small farm. We also learn Lennie likes to stroke soft things like mice/rabbits.
4. George and Lennie arrive at the bunk house, George speaks for Lennie when they meet the boss. We are introduced to the characters Candy, Curley, Curley's Wife and Slim.
5. Slim gives a puppy to Lennie whilst Candy agrees to having his old dog shot. George and Lennie discuss their 'Dream' and Candy asks if he can join them - he has some money to help. Curley turns on Lennie and Lennie crushes Curley's hand.
6. Curley's wife reveals how lonely she is. Lennie accidentally kills the puppy.
7. Lennie and Curley's Wife talk together, he panics and ends up breaking her neck. Lennie flees and the men go after him.
8. Lennie waits for George by the pool. George finds Lennie, comforts him, and then shoots him before the others get to him.

Themes

- Dreams
- The American Dream
- Friendship
- Isolation/Loneliness
- Racism
- Role of Women
- Ageism

Landscape

- Soledad, California.
- Near the Salinas River and Gabilan mountains
- Farms / Ranches

Settings

- Green Pool
- The Ranch
- The Bunkhouse
- The Barn



OF MICE AND MEN CONTEXT



The American Dream

- The American Dream is a national ethos of the United States, the set of ideals (democracy, rights, liberty, opportunity and equality) in which freedom includes the opportunity for prosperity and success regardless of social class or circumstances of birth.
- People believed that they could move to America and become successful and buy a house and land and become self-sufficient.
- The American Dream is rooted in the Declaration of Independence, which proclaims that "all men are created equal" with the right to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

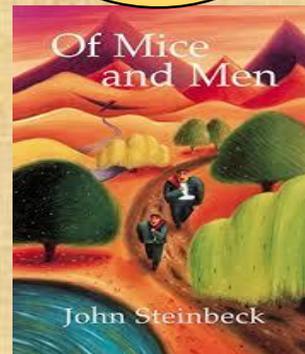
Author:

John Steinbeck
(1902 – 1968)

The Great Depression

- The Great Depression was a severe economic depression that took place in the 1930s in America, as a result of the stock market crashing.
- The 'Wall Street Crash' took happened in 1929 –it was the start of the great depression.
- It had a huge effect on jobs – people had to move to find work.
- Created lots of migrant workers (people who had to move from their homes to find work)

- John Steinbeck is an American author.
- Wrote about society in America/ Ordinary people
- Published *Of Mice and Men* in 1937





OF MICE AND MEN LENNIE AND GEORGE



Lennie: Is big and strong (a hard worker) and is described as being both childlike and animal like. He has a mental disability and relies on George to look after him. He doesn't know his own strength and will do anything George tells him. He likes to touch soft things, like mice and rabbits and puppies.



George : Is a father figure to Lennie – Lennie looks to George to see how to behave. He is responsible and a hard worker. He is small, quick and alert. He is smart and has to think and speak for both of them. He cares about Lennie – he promised Lennie's aunt Clara that he would look after him.

Adjectives to describe George

- Small
- Sensible
- Responsible
- Caring/thoughtful
- Sharp
- Strong
- Alert
- Leader
- Modest

"..an live off the fatta the lan"

"..they walked single file down the path, but even in the open, one stayed behind the other"

Adjectives to describe Lennie

- Big
- Animalistic
- Childlike
- Strong
- Weak minded
- Innocent
- Naïve
- Hardworking
- Loyal

"Because I got you, an you got me"

George: Top 5 Quotes

1. "The first man was small and quick, dark of face with restless eyes and sharp, strong features"
2. "God a'mighty if I was alone I could live so easy"
3. "We kinda look after each other"
4. "I want you to stay with me Lennie...your aunt Clara wouldn't like you running off by yourself"
5. "Guys like us, that work on ranches are the lonliest guys in the world.."

Lennie: Top 5 Quotes

1. ".. A huge man, shapeless of face, with large pale eyes, with wide, sloping shoulders; as he walked heavily, dragging his feet a little, the way a bear drags his paws."
2. "...drank with long gulps, snorting into the water like a horse."
3. "I wasn't doing anything bad with it George, jus strokin it."
4. "Lennie, who had been watching, imitated George exactly"
5. "Tell me like you done before...About the rabbits"



OF MICE AND MEN CHARACTERS



Curley's Wife

- Only female character
 - Pretty
 - Dangerous
 - Temptress
 - Lonely
 - Attention seeker

1. "She had full, rouged lips and widespread eyes, heavily made up. Her fingernails were red. Her hair hung in little rolled clusters like sausages. She wore a cotton house dress and red mules.."
2. "Jesus, what a tramp"

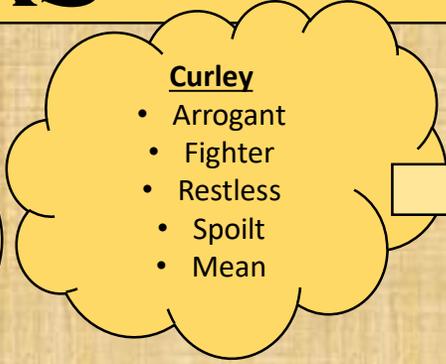


Slim

- Majestic
- Confident
- Calm
- Wise
- Thoughtful
- Friendly
- Popular
- Godlike



1. "Understanding beyond thought"
2. "His authority was so great that his word was taken on any subject be it politics or love."
3. "There was a gravity in his manner and a quiet so profound , that all talk stopped when spoke."

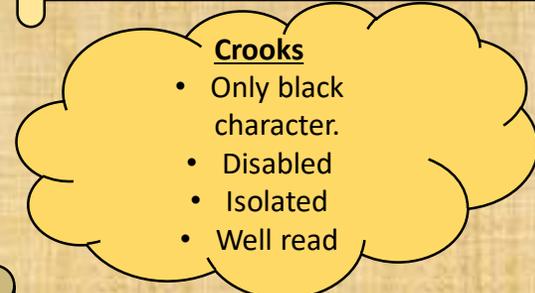


Curley

- Arrogant
- Fighter
- Restless
- Spoilt
- Mean



1. "Curley's like alotta little guys, he hates big guys. He's alla time picking scraps with big guys"
2. "Curley's pants is just crawling with ants"



Crooks

- Only black character.
- Disabled
- Isolated
- Well read



1. "Nice fella too. Got a crooked back where a horse kicked him. The boss gives him hell when he is mad. But the stable buck don't give a damn about that. He reads a lot. Got books in his room"



Candy

- Old
- Disabled
- Isolated
- Kind
- Loves his old dog.

1. "I aint much good with only one hand"
2. The old swamper's face was grinning with delight"



OF MICE AND MEN



Loneliness/Isolation

- Steinbeck is making the point that migrant workers lead a lonely life – not Lennie and George they have each other.
- Curley's wife is isolated because of her gender/lonely because Curley barely pays her any attention.
- Candy is isolated because of his age and disability, finds company in his old dog.
- Crooks is isolated because of his race and disability, uses his books to help him feel less lonely.
- Lennie is isolated because of his disability (he doesn't go into town with the other men).

Friendship

- Of Mice and Men is a story of Friendship between George and Lennie, even though it seems that Lennie relies on George – they both need each other.
- There is a lack of friendships elsewhere in the novel as all of the other migrant workers move from job to job alone.
 - Curley's wife is desperate for friendship/attention.
- Crooks has learned to live without it, and is suspicious and jealous of anyone who has it; like George and Lennie.

Dreams/American Dream

- The novel is concerned with the American Dream, and although people aspire to it, it doesn't work out for some.
- George and Lennie have their dream of living off the fat of the land – Candy is also included in this.
- Curley's wife had a 'dream' of being an actress.

Themes

Role of Women

- Curley's wife is not given a name, she is only known as Curley's wife.
 - She is the only woman.
 - She is objectified by the men.
- She is seen as being dangerous – the red the she wears symbolises this.
- She is portrayed as being lonely and isolated from the rest of society.
- Her husband sees her as sex object (glove with Vaseline)
 - Other men call her a 'tart' and 'jail bait'.

Ageism

- Candy feels isolated because of his age.
- Future looks bleak if you are too old to work.
- Candy's dog is shot because he is too old, and so is seen as worthless – even though he is important to Candy.

Racism

- Racist language is used to refer to Crooks – all characters do this.
- Crooks sleeps in the stable away from the other farm workers.
- Crooks is isolated because he is black.
- Crooks is the only black character