

Of Mice and Men

for AQA



Contents

Introduction	ii
Resource listing	iv
Specification summaries	vii
Assessment Objective maps	ix
Route through	
Week 1: pre-reading and Section One	1
Week 2: Section Two	4
Week 3: Section Three	6
Week 4: Section Four	9
Week 5: Section Five	11
Week 6: Section Six and post-reading	14
Resources	17

Introduction

This GCSE pack is designed as a ‘route through’ the text, with teaching ideas, accompanying resources and suggestions for differentiation. The pack is designed to be flexible, creative and engaging, yet with assessment objectives at its heart. It contains all of the Teachit resources you need, some of which were specially commissioned.

The pack has been devised primarily for AQA GCSE English Literature (Unit 1, Section B: Exploring cultures). The activities and ideas within it will help students to develop a close understanding of the text, explore its social, cultural and historical contexts, consider Steinbeck’s ideas and perspectives, and analyse his use of language and structure. As such, the pack is also relevant to Controlled Assessment for GCSE English Language (Unit 3 Part a: Understanding written texts – extended reading) or GCSE English (Unit 3 Part a: Understanding creative texts – literary reading).

Of Mice and Men is in six sections (or chapters), and the pack is organised into six corresponding weekly parts. Suggested teaching ideas for each section are structured as follows:

- ❖ starter activities
- ❖ introduction activities
- ❖ development activities
- ❖ plenary activities
- ❖ extension activities.

There is a wealth of activities for each section – altogether more than six weeks’ worth, in fact! Which activities you choose, and how many you use, will depend on the nature of your classes, how much time you have available (including whether or not you’re having to spend class time reading the text), and whether you’re teaching the text in preparation for Controlled Assessment or the Literature examination, or both. The intention is that you pick the activities that are best suited to your students’ needs.

Some activities are sequential, so you might, for example, follow a starter activity on context with the introduction, development and plenary activity on context from the same section; alternatively, you might decide that for your students it’s more appropriate to select just one or two of these activities. Other activities within each section are more stand-alone: you’re free to decide which to use and how you’ll combine them within a lesson or series of lessons. For Controlled Assessment, you’ll naturally hone in on those ideas and activities that are most relevant to your chosen task and/or the chapter(s) you’re focusing on, adapting them as appropriate.

Throughout the pack you’ll find activities which directly address the English Literature GCSE exam. For Controlled Assessment, however, we’ve left things more open, due to the changing nature of the task banks and the personalisation involved in task setting. To help you select activities relevant to the outcomes for which you’re teaching, we’ve included assessment grids for each specification: in each grid, the activities in the pack are matched to the appropriate Assessment Objectives.

The overall structure of the pack lends itself to a ‘first reading’ of the novel – in other words, students can read Section One and work on the week one activities without needing to know the rest of the novel. Within each section we’ve drawn attention to any parts of a resource which might refer to (and might give away) later events so that you can avoid those parts, or use them later, when students know the whole text. If you’re using the pack in this way, you’ll probably want to allow more time for Section 6: use some of this time to revisit earlier activities and to explore how

Steinbeck ties everything together. Alternatively, if your students have been able to read the novel in advance, you'll be able to explore connections between characters, themes and events and think about the significance of the novel's structure from the start. The activities within week six include some suggestions for revision: you may decide to save some of these ideas and resources to return to at a later stage.

A note on editions

We've used AQA's recommended edition of *Of Mice and Men* (New Longman Literature 'plain edition', published by Pearson: ISBN: 9780582827646) and where page numbers are included they refer to this version.

This edition has been divided into numbered sections 'to reflect the structure of the original novel'. In some editions, these divisions are indicated only by a line break or a new page.

We've referred mainly to 'Section One', etc. but in some resources the sections are referred to as 'Chapter One', etc. – the terms 'section' and 'chapter' are interchangeable. Similarly, some resources refer to *Of Mice and Men* as a 'novel'; others to a 'novella'; others simply to a 'text'. Take your pick!

Accessing the resources in this pack

This pack includes copies of the resources featured within it. We've also provided links to each of our resources so that you can access them directly on teachit.co.uk. The resources are available in adaptable formats, making it easy to differentiate the tasks by ability. Please log in first to access any of them on Teachit.

Alongside the hyperlinked resource title, we've included the file number or name for each original resource – just pop this into Teachit's search engine.

If you've accessed this pack as a Teachit subscriber then the usual permissions apply. Teachit.plus subscribers can access the Word documents and any PowerPoints; Teachit.works subscribers will also have access to any interactive activities, including the ability to adapt and save them. If you've bought this pack as a free member, please note that you won't be able to adapt and save your own versions of the interactive activities.

To help with navigation, there is a contents table detailing which part of the pack each resource is used in and the page number.

Our thanks go to contributor Helen Stacey who has written this pack and to the following contributors whose resources are also included:

Heather Doherty, Craig Ennew, Hannah Roberts, Matthew Lynch, Alison Smith, Lucy Meredith, Clare Lewis, Rachael Gibson, Emma James Tomlinson, Kevin Brown, Rebecca Foster, Natalie Kirkwood, Ruth Bravo, Peter Hale, Delia Higgins, Emma Litterick, Alison Powell,

We hope you enjoy using this pack. If you have any questions, please get in touch: email support@teachit.co.uk or call us on 01225 788850. Alternatively, you might like to give some feedback for other Teachit members – you can do this by adding a comment on the [6 week teaching pack – *Of Mice and Men* for AQA](#) resource page on Teachit (please log in to access this!).

Week 1: pre-reading and Section One

Suggested starter activities

1. **Predictions:** Using the resource [Judge a book by its cover!](#) (Teachit filename: 18660) encourage students to make predictions about the text.
2. With more able students, take a look at **Robert Burns's 'To a Mouse'**, which is available here with audio readings: http://www.bbc.co.uk/arts/robertburns/works/to_a_mouse/. A standard English 'translation' is here: <http://www.robertburns.org/inenglish/extracts.shtml>. Prompt students to explore the poem (how and why does the mouse suffer, where does the poet's sympathy lie, what is the relationship between man and nature, etc.), and hypothesise about the significance of the novel's title.
Lit AO1 / Lang AO3 (i, ii) / English AO2 (i, ii)
3. **Context sneak preview:** Show students images and video footage of the dust storms that hit the American Mid West at the time (<http://www.history.com/topics/dust-bowl> has a useful photo gallery and short clip). Contrast with images of the Salinas Valley and the Gabilan Mountains (<http://steinbeckcountry.sutromedia.com/gabilan-mountains.html>). Ask students to record and compare their impressions. *Lit AO4 / English AO2 (iv)*

Suggested introduction activities

4. **Historical context:** Watch the beginning of the BBC Bitesize 'Historical Context' videos on *Of Mice and Men* and then ask students to recap some of the key themes and ideas they will encounter. The first clip is here: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/john-steinbecks-of-mice-and-men-historical-context-pt-1-4/8168.html>; for future reference, the other video clips are 8169, 8170 and 8171. **NB** To avoid giving away events in the novel, watch only the first two minutes and 53 seconds of this first video clip (up to '... and sometimes drew on actual events'). *Lit AO4 / English AO2 (iv)*
5. **Close reading:** Read the first extract (Extract study: section 1a) referenced in [A comprehensive pack](#) (Teachit filename: 4876). Highlight or colour code the descriptions of the setting in one colour, and interaction between the characters in another. How does the setting contrast with or fit the characters' situation? *Lit AO1, AO2 / Lang AO3 (i, iii) / English AO2 (i, iii)*
6. **Close reading:** Read the second extract (Extract study: section 1b) referenced in [A comprehensive pack](#) (Teachit filename: 4876). Underline the repeated phrasing that George uses when describing the dream to Lennie. Discuss how this technique reveals aspects of Lennie's character, as well as reinforcing the idealism of the dream. *Lit AO1, AO2 / Lang AO3 (i, iii) / English AO2 (i, iii)*
7. **Learning about Lennie:** Once students have read Section 1, use the resource [Lennie in quotes](#) (Teachit filename: 20559) to explore his character in more detail.
Lit AO1 / Lang AO3 (ii, iii), English AO2 (ii, iii)
8. **Exploring setting:** Focus on Steinbeck's description in this opening chapter. Ask students to look for references to wildlife and plantlife, colour, sound and movement. Discuss the atmosphere Steinbeck creates and the effect on the reader, pinpointing features of language, style and structure.
Lit AO1, AO2 / Lang AO3 (i, iii), English AO2 (i, iii)

Suggested development activities

9. **Historical context:** Use the resource [Historical context – sources and questions](#) (Teachit filename: 22280) to explore contextual influences on the novel more fully, introducing students to some of Steinbeck's experiences, influences and ideas. *Lit AO4 / Lang AO3 (ii) / English AO2 (ii)*

10. **Close reading:** Using the Extract study: Section 1(a) and Extract study: Section 1(b) questions in [A comprehensive pack](#) (Teachit filename: 4876), analyse the characterisation in this section.
Lit AO1 / Lang AO3 (i) / English AO2 (i)
11. **Learning about Lennie:** If you used the introductory resource **Lennie in quotes** you could follow this with work on either of the Section 1 Part (a) questions from [Exam style practice questions for AQA GCSE English Literature](#) (Teachit filename: 22651), both of which focus on the presentation of Lennie and George. Alternatively, to consolidate work on Lennie for less able students, follow up with the resource **Wanted!** (Teachit filename: 12360), which gets them pinpointing details from the text.
Lit AO1, AO2 / Lang AO3 (i, iii) / English AO2 (i, iii)
12. **Exploring setting:** Ask students to create a collage or montage to represent the clearing, using references and images from Steinbeck's description. Explore the significance of this setting with students. How does Steinbeck use the setting to reveal aspects of George and Lennie's character? Why does Steinbeck start the novel here rather than beginning with George and Lennie's first day at the ranch? Ask students to relate this setting to what they have seen and read about America at this time. What ideas might Steinbeck be suggesting through his use of setting? How might students convey this in their collage or montage? *Lit AO1, AO2, AO4 / Lang AO3 (ii) / English AO2 (ii, iv)*
13. **Consolidation work:** Using the resource [Section 1 Learning grid](#) (Teachit filename 22120), encourage students to discuss the key characters, themes and settings in the first section. Higher ability students could list key quotations as part of this exercise and provide evidence for points and connections that they make. *Lit AO1, Lang AO3 (i, ii), English AO2 (i, ii)*

Suggested plenary activities

14. **Context summary:** Use the resource [Match the contextual information](#) (Teachit filename: 8558) to help students build a picture of the main influences on the text. The interactive version could be used to check students' understanding. *Lit AO4, English AO2 (iv)*
15. **Contextual key words:** Select some key words regarding the context of the novel, and display these as anagrams to solve. Example key words (taken from the resource **Match the contextual information**): courage, determination, prosperity, hardship, American Dream, family, wealth, immigration, success.
Lit AO4, English AO2 (iv)
16. **Learning about Lennie:** Using the resource [Evaluating a PEE paragraph](#) (Teachit filename: 21741), students could peer assess their work on Lennie's character and set targets for improvement. Alternatively, discuss what Steinbeck's presentation of Lennie suggests to us so far about the society in which the novel is set. *Lit AO1, AO4 / Lang AO3 (i) / English (i, iii)*

Suggested extension opportunities

17. Ask students to do some research of their own on the Great Depression and Dust Bowl area. You could give students a 'Dust Bowl' artist to research and present, or look at lyrics and songs by Woody Guthrie, a balladeer of the time. Artists' impressions include photography by Dorothea Lange and Arthur Rothstein, or paintings by Thomas Hart Benton, Alexander Hogue and Otis Dozier. *Lit AO4, English AO2 (iv)*
18. Students could research Steinbeck's career. Ask them to find and then annotate extracts from Steinbeck's texts, highlighting similarities and differences in style and ideas, to create a class 'guide to Steinbeck'. *Lit AO2 / Lang AO3 (ii, iii) / English AO2 (ii, iii)*

Preparing for assessment

19. Introduce students to the Assessment Objectives and some past paper questions from the outset so that they know what they will be expected to do and are familiar with the form the exam tasks will take. If you're also using *Of Mice and Men* for English Language (or only for English Controlled Assessment),

you'll probably want to explain this at the outset too, sharing the Assessment Objectives with students so that they can see which skills they will need to demonstrate. A summary of Assessment Objectives and weightings is available in the introduction to this pack.

20. See Activity 11 above and the resource [Exam style practice questions for AQA GCSE English Literature](#) (Teachit filename: 22651) for questions relevant to Section One of the novel.

Teachit sample

Judge a book by its cover (18660)

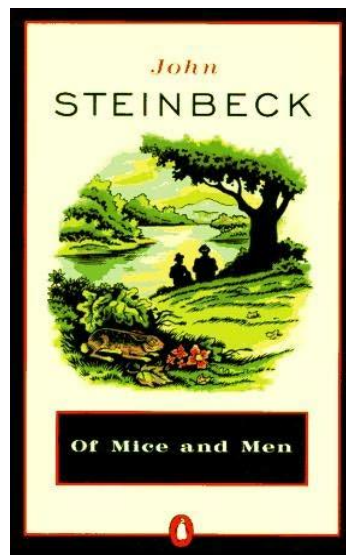
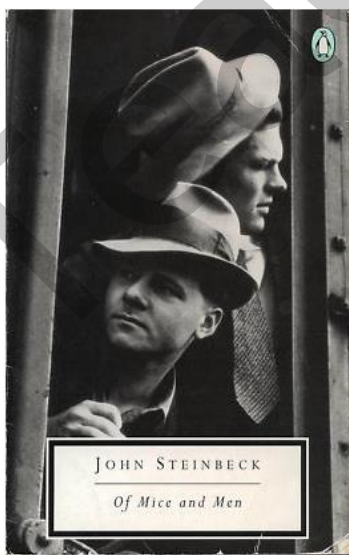
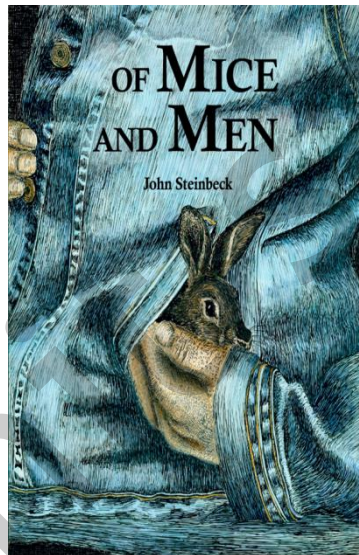
Task

Draw a mind-map with the following headings:

- setting
- plot
- characters
- themes

Look at the book covers and posters for John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* below. Using these images, make some predictions about the book using your mind-map headings as a guide.

Share your ideas with a partner, and then discuss with the rest of the class to see if your ideas are similar.



Extract study: section 1 (a)

Overview:

We are introduced to the main characters of George and Lennie.
'Evening of a hot day ... Jesus Christ you're a crazy bastard.'

1. Read the first paragraph in the extract. How does Steinbeck strike an immediate contrast between the two characters? In particular, find words within each description that are direct 'opposites' to each other.
2. George and Lennie take very different approaches to drinking the water. What does each man's approach say about his character?
3. What do George's first words to Lennie tell us about the relationship between the two men?
4. There are three places in the extract where Lennie is compared to an animal. Find them, explaining how this gives us a stronger idea of Lennie's physical presence in the novel.
5. What other examples of **imagery** (metaphors and similes) can you find in the extract? How do they give us a clearer picture of the two men and their environment?

Extension

Compare the ways in which the two characters talk. How does Lennie's grammar and sentence construction differ from George's? What is particularly characteristic of George's speech, especially when he 'gets mad'?

Extract study: section 1 (b)

Overview:

Lennie asks George to tell him about the Dream Farm.

'Lennie spoke ... one of them to Lennie.'

1. Steinbeck indicates that this conversation has happened many times before. Find **three** quotations from the extracts that show this. What is the significance of this?
2. George's mood changes through the extract. Show **how** Steinbeck presents this, and suggest why it is so. (Clue: Steinbeck's use of **adverbs** may help you see this).
3. What do Lennie's contributions and interruptions tell us about his character?
4. George often uses the specific colloquial language of the itinerant worker. Copy down these examples from the extract and explain *in your own words* what they mean:

'work up a stake'	'blow their stake'
'get the jack'	'poundin' their tail'
5. How does the extract tie in with what you know about 'The American Dream'? Do you think George and Lennie's plans are realistic or romantic? How does Steinbeck give us a clue about this?

Extension

Some critics have accused Steinbeck of portraying the relationship between George and Lennie in an overly sentimental way. Find some examples in the extract that these critics might have been thinking of, and try to explain their viewpoint. What do you think about this issue?

"OF MICE & MEN"

LENNIE

What do we learn about Lennie in chapter 1? Explain what each of the following quotes helps us to understand or predict...

"...he walked heavily, dragging his feet a little, the way a bear drags his paws."

"...drank with long gulps, snorting into the water like a horse."

"Lennie, who had been watching, imitated George exactly."

"Lennie dabbled his big paw in the water and wiggled his fingers so the water arose in little splashes"

"I remember that...but...what'd we do then? I remember some girls come by and you says... you says..."

"Uh-uh-Jus' a dead mouse, George. I didn't kill it. Honest! I just found it. I found it dead."

"Slowly, like a terrier who doesn't want to bring a ball to its master, Lennie approached, drew back, approached again."

"Lennie droned to himself softly, 'I ain't gonna say nothin'... I ain't gonna say nothin'... I ain't gonna say nothin'..."

"Lennie's lip quivered and tears started in his eyes."

"Jus' wanted to feel that little girl's dress - jus' wanted to pet it like it was a mouse..." (George)

"I'd lay out in the sun and nobody'd hurt me. An' if I foun' a mouse, I could keep it."

"Let's have different colour rabbits, George."

Find two more quotes in chapter 1 that help us to understand Lennie. Write them in the spaces below and explain what they tell the reader...

Blank space for writing a quote and explanation.

Blank space for writing a quote and explanation.

Historical context (22280)

Teaching notes

The sources and comprehension questions below introduce students to the background context to Steinbeck's novel.

Sources 1-4 and questions 1-8 should be accessible to most students. Sources 5 and 6, and their accompanying questions (9-12) are designed for Higher Tier students. For further challenge, mix up the questions and remove the source references.

Please note that due to copyright restrictions source 6 can only be accessed via the separate PDF file. To download this file, please type 22280 into the Teachit search bar and click on the second PDF icon.

If you'd like to try a more active approach, catering to students' competitive spirit and any desire they may have to start leaping out of their seats, try this team game.

Instructions for the team game

1. Your class will be working in groups of three. Each group needs a set of sources and a set of questions.
2. Cut up the questions for each group, numbering them on the back and stacking them with number 1 on top. Put each set of questions on a desk at the front of the classroom.
3. Give each group a copy of the source texts and time to read them through before you begin.
4. When you (and they) are ready, call 'go', and at this point, one student from each group should 'run' to the front for the first question only, and return to their team.
5. The team agree an answer and a second team member takes the answer to the teacher, which is checked before permission is given to pick up the second question from their colour pile. If the answer is incorrect, the student must return to their team for another go.
6. Students should rotate their roles and keep familiarising themselves with the texts while they await their next question.
7. This process should be repeated until you have a winning team.

Follow-up activities

- Students could write a descriptive piece about ranch life, using the relevant sources.
- Students could create their own fictional ranch character, who has experienced losing his livelihood and leaving his family in search of work in the West. They could write a diary entry for this character about his experience, or write a third person narrative of the events.

Source 1

The subject of *Of Mice and Men* was an incident occurring a dozen years earlier: In the mid-1920s, Steinbeck had seen a troubled man kill a straw boss*, and he told a New York reporter that this gave him the story. Characters most likely emerged from his past as well: Lennie is one of several 'unfinished people' in Steinbeck's canon, those with the sensibilities of a child. He knew one such boy in Salinas, a child most often seen outside Bell's Candy Store. Each Easter the boy was given a rabbit, and in the week following he would pet the rabbit to death ...

Extract from Susan Shillinglaw, *A Journey into Steinbeck's California*

* straw boss: a junior supervisor who has some responsibility but little authority

Source 2

(A description of Tom Collins, the man on whom the central character in Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath* is based.)

An intrepid, resourceful and exceptionally compassionate man, Collins was the manager of a model Farm Security Administration camp, located in Kern County at the southern end of California's Central Valley. The Arvin Sanitary Camp was one of several proposed demonstration camps intended to provide humane, clean, democratic – but temporary – living conditions for the growing army of migrant workers entering California from the lower Middle West and Dust Bowl region ... He and Steinbeck, both Rooseveltian Democrats, hit it off immediately in the late summer of 1936, when the novelist went south on the first of several gruelling research trips with Collins during the next two years to investigate field conditions ... Collins guided Steinbeck through the intricacies of the agricultural labor scene, put him in direct contact with migrant families, and permitted Steinbeck to incorporate 'great gobs' of information into his own writing. 'Letter from Tom ... He is so good. I need this stuff. It is exact and just the thing that will be used against me if I am wrong,' Steinbeck noted in *Working Days* on June 24, 1938.

Extract from the Introduction to John Steinbeck, *Grapes of Wrath*, (1939)

Source 3

About the Dust Bowl

For eight years dust blew on the southern plains. It came in a yellowish-brown haze from the South and in rolling walls of black from the North. The simplest acts of life — breathing, eating a meal, taking a walk — were no longer simple. Children wore dust masks to and from school, women hung wet sheets over windows in a futile attempt to stop the dirt, farmers watched helplessly as their crops blew away.

The Dust Bowl of the 1930s lasted about a decade. Its primary area of impact was on the southern Plains. The northern Plains were not so badly affected, but nonetheless, the drought, windblown dust and agricultural decline were no strangers to the north. In fact the agricultural devastation helped to lengthen the Depression whose effects were felt worldwide. The movement of people on the Plains was also profound.

Extract from <http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/depression/dustbowl.htm>

Source 4

The physical background for *Of Mice and Men* came from Steinbeck's own early years in a California agricultural valley ... In his childhood he spent a good deal of time on a ranch near King City, south of Salinas, that was owned by relatives of his mother, and during his high school years he worked summers in the fields and orchards near home.

More important in planting the germ of the novel was an experience he had during a period when he dropped out of college. He entered Stanford in 1919, already ambitious to become a writer and determined to follow his own particular interests in the curriculum. Experiencing some difficulty with courses and grades the following year, he decided to break away, shed his identity as a university student, and make his way for a while as a workingman. 'I was a bindle-stiff* myself for quite a spell,' he told reporters some years later. 'I worked in the same country that the story is laid in.'

Tall and husky, he was hired as a labourer on a ranch near Chualar, a short distance – in miles – from the prosperous neighbourhood in Salinas where he was born, and for a time he became a part of this very different world. The fact that he was promoted to straw boss suggests that he got on well with his fellow workers. He had a talent for being inconspicuous: they probably learned very little about him while he was gathering impressions of them.

From 'A Historical Introduction to *Of Mice and Men*', Anne Loftis, in *The Short Novels of John Steinbeck*, ed. Jackson J Benson (1990)

* bindle-stiff: someone carrying their clothes or bedding

Source 5

In the camps the word would come whispering, There's work at Shafter. And the cars would be loaded in the night, the highways crowded – a gold rush for work. At Shafter the people would pile up, five times too many to do the work. A gold rush for work. They stole away in the night, frantic for work. And along the roads lay the temptations, the fields that could bear food.

That's owned. That ain't our'n.

Well, maybe we could get a little piece of her. Maybe – a little piece. Right down there – a patch. Jimson weed now. Christ, I could git enough potatoes off'n that little patch to feed my whole family!

It ain't our'n. It got to have Jimson weeds.

Extract from John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939)

<p>1.</p> <p>What was the inspiration for Steinbeck writing <i>Of Mice and Men</i>?</p> <p>(Source 1)</p>	<p>2.</p> <p>How is Lennie described and what was the inspiration for him?</p> <p>(Source 1)</p>	<p>3.</p> <p>Where did Steinbeck go that gave him research material for writing his novels?</p> <p>(Source 2)</p>
<p>4.</p> <p>How are the living conditions of the camps described? Quote from the text.</p> <p>(Source 2)</p>	<p>5.</p> <p>What effect did the dust storms have on children, women and farmers?</p> <p>(Source 3)</p>	<p>6.</p> <p>What were the more permanent effects of the dust bowl?</p> <p>(Source 3)</p>
<p>7.</p> <p>What childhood experience had an impact on Steinbeck's novels?</p> <p>(Source 4)</p>	<p>8.</p> <p>When Steinbeck dropped out of college, what did he do? Why is this relevant to <i>Of Mice and Men</i>?</p> <p>(Source 4)</p>	<p>9.</p> <p>How did Steinbeck fit in to ranch life?</p> <p>(Source 4)</p>
<p>10.</p> <p>What metaphor is used to describe the desperate scramble for work?</p> <p>(Source 5)</p>	<p>11.</p> <p>What were the temptations for the travelling 'bindle-stiffs'.</p> <p>(Source 5)</p>	<p>12.</p> <p>What is in the foreground of the picture, and what is in the background, and why is this relevant?</p> <p>(Source 6)</p>

Answers

- 1. What was the inspiration for Steinbeck writing *Of Mice and Men*? (Source 1)**

An incident Steinbeck had witnessed in the 1920s when a troubled man killed a straw boss.
- 2. How is Lennie described and what was the inspiration for him? (Source 1)**

An 'unfinished character', again from Steinbeck's own experience, who was inspired by a child in his home town Salinas.
- 3. Where did Steinbeck go that gave him research material for writing his novels? (Source 2)**

The Arvin Sanitary Camp, a camp for migrant workers in California.
- 4. How are the living conditions of the camps described? (Source 2)**

Quote from the text. 'humane, clean, democratic – but temporary'
- 5. What effect did the dust storms have on children, women and farmers? (Source 3)**

Children wore dust masks to and from school; women draped wet sheets over windows to attempt to stop the dust; farmers lost their crops.
- 6. What were the more permanent effects of the dust bowl? (Source 3)**

Drought, windblown dust and agricultural decline, as well as mass movement of the people.
- 7. What childhood experience had an impact on Steinbeck's novels? (Source 4)**

Working on a ranch owned by some relatives.
- 8. When Steinbeck dropped out of college, what did he do? Why is this relevant to *Of Mice and Men*? (Source 4)**

He worked as a 'bindle-stiff', travelling the country just like the characters in the novel.
- 9. How did Steinbeck fit in to ranch life? (Source 4)**

He obviously got on well with the work as he was promoted; he managed to keep a low profile but gathered information too.
- 10. What metaphor is used to describe the desperate scramble for work? (Source 5)**

'A gold rush'.
- 11. What were the temptations for the travelling 'bindle-stiffs'? (Source 5)**

The fields either side of their road, where they could have their own 'patch' of land. (The references to Jimson weeds are explained in the part that follows: they are necessary for creating secret vegetable patches to conceal this illegal use of land.)
- 12. What is in the foreground of the picture, and what is in the background, and why is this relevant? (Source 6)**

Damaged property and land are in the foreground; men rebuilding are in the background. The legible part of the article suggests that at this time, Americans were trying to claw back some use for their damaged land – albeit non-agricultural.

Teaching notes

The following questions are designed to meet the assessment objectives for *Of Mice and Men* for GCSE English Literature Unit 1, Section B: Exploring cultures. Where we have created practice questions, they follow a similar structure and wording to the questions that have been set for examination.

Questions are provided for each section of the text, according to the passage focused on in **Part (a)**. It is not necessary to have completed a reading of the whole text in order to answer **Part (a)** of each question, so you may wish to use one or more of these with students as they study a particular section. **Part (b)** of each question requires reference to the novel as a whole.

Where available, past paper questions have been identified for you to use as possible practice questions for that section of the text. These can be downloaded here:

<http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-literature-9710/past-papers-and-mark-schemes>. Please note that for copyright reasons past papers are moved to the [Secure Key Materials](#) of the AQA website after three years, with copyright extracts removed.

Please also note that the passages focused on in **Part (a)** of the practice questions below have not been reproduced, again for copyright reasons.

Section 1

Foundation

Read the following passage and then answer **Part (a)** and **Part (b)**.

Extract from p.2, 'For a moment the place was lifeless, and then two men emerged from the path and came into the opening by the pool ...' to p.3, 'The small man stepped nervously beside him.'

Part (a)

In this passage, how does Steinbeck present the two men and their situation? Refer closely to the passage in your answer.

and then Part (b)

In the novel how does Steinbeck show what working life was like for some men at that time?

In **Part (b)** you should write about:

- what the men say and do
- details of what the male characters' working lives are like
- the methods Steinbeck uses to present what working life was like for some men.

Higher

Read the following passage and then answer **Part (a)** and **Part (b)**.

Extract from p.2, 'Evening of a hot day ...' to 'His arms did not swing at his sides, but hung loosely and only moved because the heavy hands were pendula.'

Part (a)

In this passage, what methods does Steinbeck use to present George and Lennie and the scene around them? Refer closely to the passage in your answer.

and then Part (b)

In the rest of the novel how does Steinbeck use the relationship between George and Lennie to present what working life was like for some men at that time?

Section 2

For Section 2, it would be advisable to use the past papers:

Foundation

[January 2011](#), [January 2012](#), [June 2012](#) and [January 2013](#)

Higher

[January 2011](#), [January 2012](#), [June 2012](#) and [June 2013](#)

Section 3

For Section 3, it would be advisable to use the past papers:

Foundation

[June 2011](#), [June 2013](#).

Higher

[June 2011](#)

Section 4

Foundation Tier

Read the following passage and then answer **Part (a)** and **Part (b)**.

Extract from p. 74, 'Crooks leaned forward over the edge of the bunk ...' to p.75, "It's just being with another guy. That's all."

Part (a)

In this passage, what methods does Steinbeck use to present Crooks? Refer closely to the passage in your answer.

and then Part (b)



WANTED!



Task:

Design a 'wanted' poster for Lennie Small, issued by the Sheriff's office, in connection with his 'assault' on the woman in Weed.

What to

1. Re-read the opening passage where Lennie is introduced. Make some brief notes about his physical appearance. Find a selection of quotations to support your findings.
2. Consider Lennie's other distinguishing features, and again find quotations that show you these. You could look at the following:
 - the manner of his speech
 - his companion
 - his forgetfulness.
3. Write a sentence clearly explaining the offence that Lennie is wanted for.
4. Use details of Lennie's physical appearance from Chapter 1 to draw a sketch of him to include on your poster.
5. Now write a detailed paragraph explaining:
 - Lennie's physical appearance
 - other distinguishing features
 - why he is a 'wanted' man.

Remember to offer a reward for his arrest in US dollars.

Section 1 learning grid (22120)

Teaching notes

The Learning Grid concept is inspired by Stephen Bowkett who ran a course on this, which in turn featured in *Outstanding Teaching: Engaging Learners*. Learning grids are designed for students to work on in pairs, but could be completed as a team challenge or pairs of pairs who could compare their learning.

Students will need a die each (or per pair) and a learning grid (or you could project this on the whiteboard). Students use the die to determine which two cells in the grid they will talk about first. Each pair rolls a die once to determine the number of the row; they then roll the die again to determine the number of the column. For example, if they first roll a 3 then a 6, they would have landed on the image of vegetables. Their first task is to explain the relevance of that image (or word/s) to the first chapter of *Of Mice and Men*. Next, they should repeat the process and then explain any links between the two cells. So, for example, if they next roll a 2 then a 1, they would explain how vegetables connect with the men talking. In this case, they might comment that the vegetable patch forms part of the dream held by Lennie and George to be self-sufficient by living 'off the fatta the lan'.

You could set a time limit for students to work on this activity, or set a number of pairs of cells for them to link together. This resource is designed to be extremely flexible, so you could add an element of competition by pitting pairs of students against each other, or adapting the grid to suit your students. You could even set grids for Section Two as homework.

Pictures in the learning grid

1:2 A map of California

1:4 A bus ticket

2:1 Talking heads (to symbolise friendship).

2:3 'A stilted heron'

2:6 Dollars

3:1 A mouse

3:5 Sleeping under the stars

3:6 Vegetables

4:2 Ranch houses

4:5 A river with mountains in the background

4:6 A bear's paw (symbolising Lennie's hands)

5:1 Sunshine/heat


















5:3 A dove (one of the birds flying by, suggesting tranquillity)

5:5 A rabbit

6:2 A dress (to symbolise the girl in Weed ...)

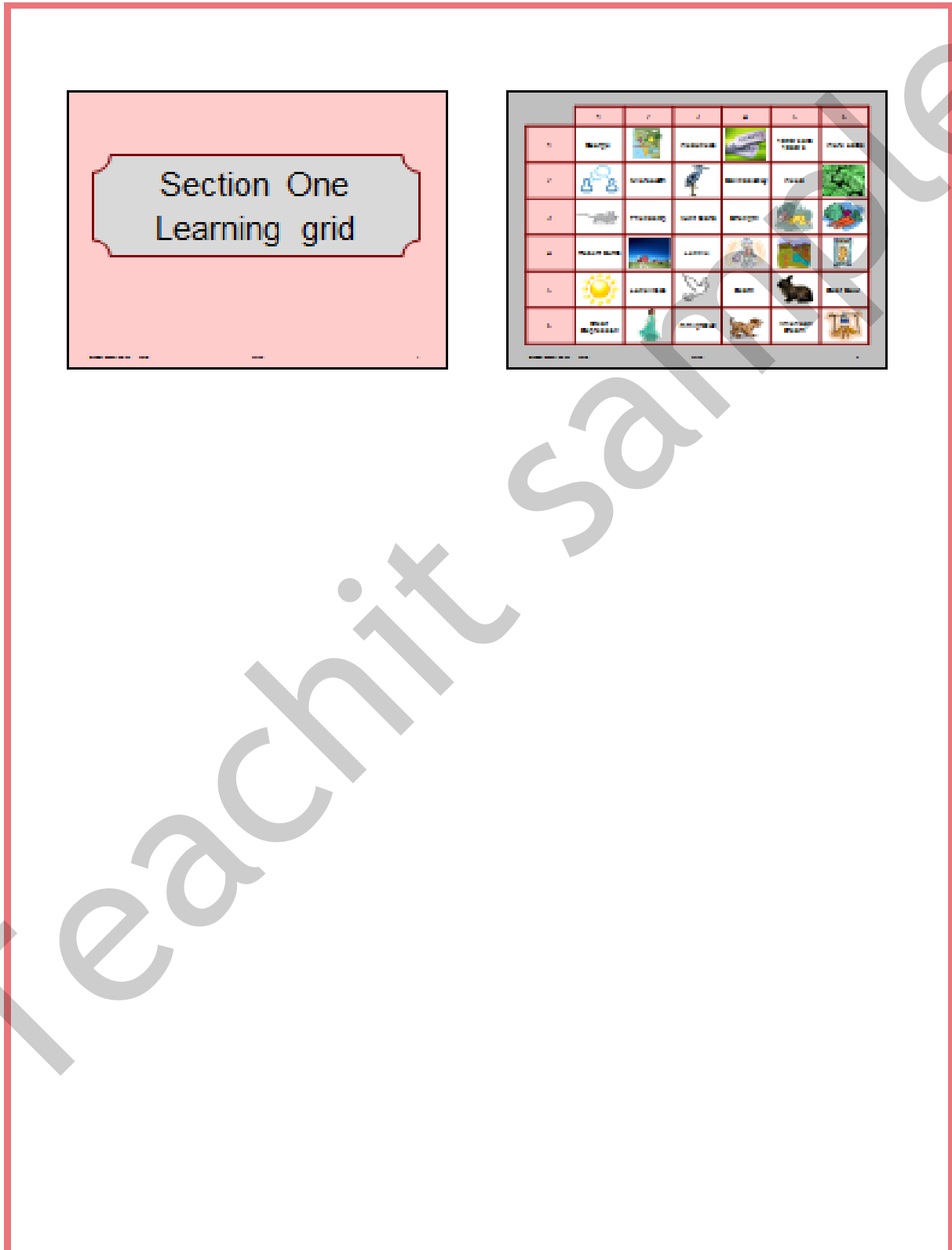
6:4 A puppy

6:6 Beans cooking over a fire

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	George		Weakness		1920's and 1930's	Work cards
2		Microcosm		Salinas Valley	Weed	
3		Friendship	Aunt Clara	Strength		
4	Robert Burns		Lennie	Nuts!		
5		Loneliness		Death		Dust Bowl
6	Great Depression		Immigration		American Dream	

Section One learning grid (22120) – PowerPoint version

We've included a screenshot of the PowerPoint here so you can see the resource. To use it as intended, please type 22120 into the Teachit search bar and click on the orange PPT icon.



Match the contextual information (8558)

The idea of the American Dream is that	the streets are paved with gold.
America has always been perceived as a place where	that it is something unrealistic and intangible.
During the 1920s and 1930s,	through a combination of hard work, courage and determination, prosperity can be achieved.
Some say the American Dream is impossible because	the Depression was a cause of major hardship.
The word 'dream' suggests	many trade union figures who were championing the rights of workers.
The American Dream does not take into account	the Robert Burns poem 'To a Mouse' about how things don't always go according to plan.
The area George and Lennie fled from was commonly referred to as the Dust Bowl	because a series of dust storms in the 1930s caused major damage to agricultural land in some states.
The novel is set in the Salinas valley	not everyone can gain prosperity through only hard work and determination.
Steinbeck was heavily influenced by	that family and wealth have a potential bearing on success.
The title of the novel is drawn from	where John Steinbeck was born, and a place of major immigration.

Answers

The idea of the American Dream is that	through a combination of hard work, courage and determination, prosperity can be achieved.
America has always been perceived as a place where	the streets are paved with gold.
During the 1920s and 1930s,	the Depression was a cause of major hardship.
Some say the American Dream is impossible because	not everyone can gain prosperity through only hard work and determination.
The word 'dream' suggests	that it is something unrealistic and intangible.
The American Dream does not take into account	that family and wealth have a potential bearing on success.
The area George and Lennie fled from was commonly referred to as the Dust Bowl	because a series of dust storms in the 1930s caused major damage to agricultural land in some states.
The novel is set in the Salinas valley	where John Steinbeck was born, and a place of major immigration.
Steinbeck was heavily influenced by	many trade union figures who were championing the rights of workers.
The title of the novel is drawn from	the Robert Burns poem 'To a Mouse' about how things don't always go according to plan.

Match the contextual information (8558) – Whizzy activity

We've included a screenshot of the interactive version here so you can see the resource. To use it as intended, please type 8558 into the Teachit search bar and select the yellow star.

'Of Mice and Men' - Finish these sentences.

The idea of the American Dream is that	that it is something unrealistic and intangible
America has always been perceived as a place where	not everyone can gain prosperity through only hard work and determination
During the 1920s and 1930s,	through a combination of hard work, courage and determination, prosperity can be achieved
Some say the American Dream is impossible because	the streets are paved with gold
The word 'dream' suggests	that family and wealth have a potential bearing on success
The American Dream does not take into account	where John Steinbeck was born, and a place of major immigration
The area George and Lenny fled from was commonly referred to as the Dust Bowl	the Robert Burns poem 'To a Mouse' about how things don't always go according to plan
The novel is set in the Salinas valley	many trade union figures who were championing the rights of workers
Steinbeck was heavily influenced by	because a series of dust storms in the 1930s caused major damage to agricultural land in some states
The title of the novel is drawn from	the Depression was a cause of major hardship

Evaluating a PEE paragraph (21741)

Use the table to help evaluate a classmate's use of PEE paragraphs. When you get your own evaluation back, re-write your essay according to the advice you've been given.

Consider:	Yes? No? Partly?	Constructive advice on how to improve
Have they given all references to the title of the text capital letters and inverted commas?		
Have they given all names capital letters?		
Have they written in sentences using capital letters and full stops?		
Have they made a clear point?		
Have they provided evidence to back up the point?		
Is the evidence relevant?		
Are any quotations embedded inside a sentence?		
Does the quotation make sense? Is it complete?		
Has the student thoroughly explained the point?		
Are the point, example and explanation all linked?		
Has the student used literary and/or linguistic terminology?		