

Name: _____

Teacher: _____

Class: _____

Date: _____

OF MICE AND MEN

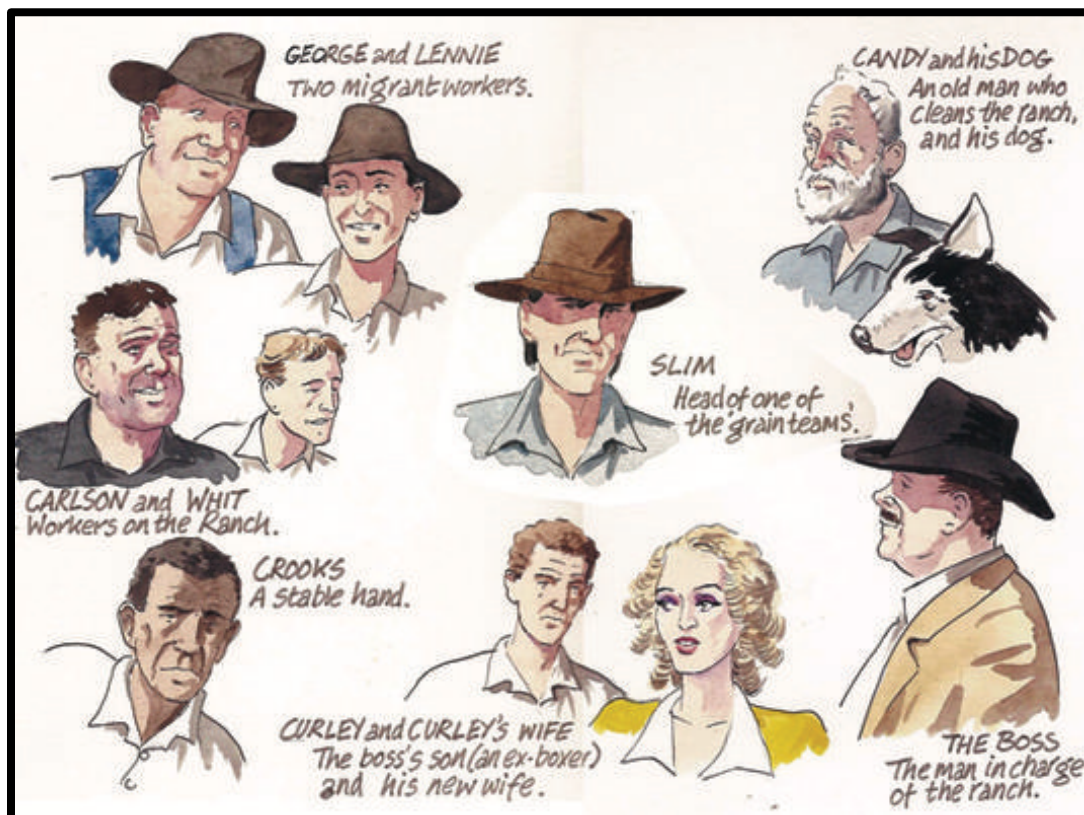
character STUDY

"I wonder how many people I've looked at all my life and never seen." - John Steinbeck

In the spirit of truly "seeing" the characters in the novel *Of Mice and Men*, you will be participating in a Character Study. For this assignment, each group will be assigned a character from the novel to write about in a Literary Analysis paragraph. Each group member will be analyzing a specific aspect of the character (see details on next page). Use your Characterization Packet + your Annotations to help in your analysis. Please note that Slim has been used as example, so he will not be assigned to a group.

Learning Target I will be able to _____
(those with _____), from the novel *Of Mice and Men*,
_____ over the course of the text, _____ with other characters,
_____, and _____.

Character _____



Specifications – All findings must be **typed, 12 pt. font, double-spaced**, and written in **paragraph format** (see below). Paragraphs should include **at least two quotes of support from the novel** and must include proper **MLA formatting**.

Paragraph Format – 8 sentences minimum

1. **Topic sentence** – Title of Book + Author's name + Topic of paragraph
2. **Supporting Evidence** – Transition starter + Lead in + Quote from novel + MLA Citation
3. **Elaboration / Opinion** – 2 sentences of analysis about Quote
4. **Supporting Evidence** – Transition starter + Lead in + Quote from the novel + MLA Citation
5. **Elaboration / Opinion** – 2 sentences of analysis about Quote
6. **Concluding Sentence** – Transition starter + round off paragraph

Topics

1. **Essential Traits:** Provide one quote that describes **physical traits** of your character and one quote that demonstrates a **personality trait** of your character. After each quote, provide analysis - what does the quote reveal about your character and their importance in the novel?



Example: In the novel, *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck, Slim, a jerkline skinner, is described as being one of the most respected men on the ranch. When he is first introduced, Slim is said to move around with **"a majesty only achieved by royalty and master craftsmen" (Steinbeck 33)**. Slim is considered the "prince of the ranch" because the men look to him as a leader. He is authoritative and people listen to him because, unlike Curley, the boss's son, Slim doesn't demand respect, he earns it by working hard and caring for the other ranch hands. Later on in the story, after George makes the difficult decision to kill Lennie, Slim comforts him by saying, **"Never you mind...A guy got to sometimes" (Steinbeck 104)**. Slim is understanding of George's feelings and tries to ease his sadness by sitting beside him and listening. He empathizes with George because he knows that Lennie was his best friend. In the end, Slim is a beloved character who is there for the other workers when they need him the most.

2. **Theme:** Describe a **theme** that your character learns or helps teach to another character through the course of the novel.



Example: In the novel, *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck, Slim learns the valuable lesson that sometimes the right decisions are not the easy ones to make. When Carlson wants to kill Candy's dog because it's old and useless, Slim explains, **"Carl's right, Candy. That dog ain't no good to himself. I wisht somebody'd shoot me if I got old an' a cripple" (Steinbeck 45)**. Slim understands how difficult this decision is for Candy because he has had the dog since it was a puppy and it is his best friend. Candy looks to Slim to reverse the decision, but Slim knows it is what is best for the dog so that it doesn't suffer any longer. Later on in the story, when Lennie gets into trouble with Curley for killing his wife, Slim applies the same thoughtful reasoning to help George with his decision about how to handle the situation. George suggests that they bring Lennie in and lock him up, but Slim argues, **"But Curley's gonna want to shoot 'im. Curley's still made about his hand. An' s'pose they lock him up an' strap him down and put him in a cage. That ain't no good, George" (Steinbeck 94)**. George knows that despite his best efforts, Lennie is not going to be able to change his uncontrollable ways and that he will continue to hurt others. Running away with Lennie is not an option this time, so George makes the ultimate decision to end his best friend's life. Slim's wisdom and guidance helps the men on the ranch face the tough decisions they have to make.

3. **Conflict:** Name at least two complications or struggles that your character faces in the novel. What is revealed about him/her through each **conflict**? What does he/she learn through each struggle?

Example: In the novel, *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck, Slim plays a minor role in a couple of the story's main conflicts. When he is first described by Candy to George and Lennie, Candy says, "I seen her (Curley's wife) give Slim the eye" (Steinbeck 28). Candy is describing Curley's wife as flirting with Slim and later on in the story Curley accuses Slim of knowing where his wife is when he is looking for her in the barn. Slim doesn't appreciate his character being questioned by Curley. He angrily denies the accusation and tells Curley to lay off. Right after this confrontation, Curley goes after Lennie and begins to beat him up because he believes Lennie is laughing at him. When Slim sees this happening, he jumps up and cries, "The dirty little rat...I'll get 'um myself" (Steinbeck 62). Slim is disgusted by Curley bullying Lennie, an innocent bystander. He desires to take care of Lennie, but George stops him when Lennie stands up for himself and crushes Curley's hand. All in all, Slim does not cause the conflicts in the story, but he is willing to stand up for what is right.



4. **Motivations:** Describe two of your character's **motivations** in the novel. What drives your character's actions?

Example: In the novel, *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck, Slim is motivated by the respect that the other men give him and by the leadership role that he has on the ranch. When Slim is first introduced in the book, his authority is described as being "so great that his word was taken on any subject, be it politics or love" (Steinbeck 33). The men value Slim's opinion and his word is law on the ranch. No matter what the problem is, be it work related or personal, Slim's input is sought after. Later on in the story, when Carlson wants to kill Candy's dog, he goes to Slim for his approval "...for Slim's opinions were law" (Steinbeck 45). When Slim decides that Carlson's arguments are valid and that the dog's life should be terminated, everyone, even Candy, complies. Slim's leadership was respected by all of the men, so they didn't argue or object to his decisions. In conclusion, Slim's actions in the book are driven by the two things that motivate him the most, respect and leadership.



5. **Symbolism:** Choose two **symbols** that are representative of your character. Provide an explanation about how each object is **symbolic** of your character or why each **symbol** is an important part of their role in the novel.



Example: In the novel, *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck, Slim is represented by two symbols, a bull whip and an ear. When Slim is first introduced, he is described as being "...capable of killing a fly on the wheeler's butt with a bull whip without touching the mule" (Steinbeck 33). Slim is a charismatic leader who is admired by the men on the ranch. The whip symbolizes Slim because he has the ability to rule not only the cattle, but all of the workers as well because he has earned their respect. It is also said that Slim's "...ear heard more than was said to him, and his slow speech had overtones not of thought, but of understanding beyond thought" (Steinbeck 33). Not only is Slim wise, but he's understanding. He lends a listening ear to the other ranch hands and then he comforts the men when they are experiencing pain, like when he offers Candy a pup after his dog is killed and when he offers George a calming presence after he shoots Lennie. Slim is truly the "prince of the ranch" because he is the man all of the men look up to and revere.

6. **Role:** Analyze your character's **role**/involvement in two important plot events from the novel. How did each event affect the plot? Describe your character's importance to the story.

Example: In the novel, *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck, Slim plays a role in two important plot events, Curley's fight with Lennie and Lennie's death. After Lennie defends himself and crushes Curley's hand, he becomes concerned that he will get into trouble. Slim eases Lennie's worries by saying, "It ain't your fault... This punk sure had it comin' to him" (Steinbeck 63). Slim not only helps to calm Lennie down, he makes sure that George and Lennie won't get fired by the boss's son. By threatening to tell everyone that Lennie beat him up, Slim makes sure that George and Lennie will no longer have any problems with Curley. At the end of the story, after George shoots his best friend, Slim can tell that he is distraught. Because of this, Slim sits down very close beside George and says comfortingly, "You hadda, George. I swear you hadda" (Steinbeck 104). Slim is the only worker that empathizes with George's situation and tries to see things from his perspective. He understands how difficult it was for George to kill his best friend. Slim's true role on the ranch is that of an ally to those in need.



RUBRIC		8 ABOVE	7 AT	6 APPROACHING	5 BELOW
Paperwork: Rough Draft					
Opening/Closing: Begins with a paragraph starter (Title of the novel + Author's Name + topic of the paragraph) and ends with a concluding sentence that effectively wraps up the paragraph.					
Descriptive Details: At least 2 Details of supporting evidence from the story with effective transition starters .					
Insightful Interpretations: At least 2 sentences of Elaboration/Opinion per Detail (4 sentences minimum)					
MLA Formatting: Typed, 12pt. font, Creative Title, Double-spaced, Indented Paragraph, Proper Heading + Header + MLA formatted Citations (Author's Last Name + Page #).					
Conventions: Spelling, Punctuation, Capitalization, Missing words, no Repetitions of "key" words/phrases, Title of Story italicized.					

Total Points /48

OF MICE AND MEN



Literary Analysis

STEP 1

Write a **1 sentence** that begins with the **Title** of the novel + the **Author's Name** + the **Topic** of the paragraph

STEP 2

Add a **transition starter** + a **Lead in** (gives context to the quote) + a **Quote** of supporting evidence. Make sure to include a correct **MLA Citation** at the end of your quote. Make sure **Verbs** are in **present tense**.

Transition Starters: After...When...Even though...For example...For instance...In the beginning...Despite...In spite of...At first...

STEP 3

Write at least **two sentences** of **Elaboration/Opinion** analyzing the **Quote** from **Step 2**. Do **NOT** use, "This shows that" or personal pronouns (I, me, we, us, our, myself, you, yourself)

STEP 4

Add a **transition starter** + a **Lead in** (gives context to the quote) + a second **Quote** of supporting evidence. Make sure to include a correct **MLA Citation** at the end of your quote. Make sure **Verbs** are in **present tense**.

Transition Starters: After...When...Even though...For example..
For instance...In the beginning...Despite...In spite of...At first...

STEP 5

Write at least **two sentences** of **Elaboration/Opinion** analyzing the **Quote** from **Step 4**.
Do **NOT** use, "This shows that" or personal pronouns (I, me, we, us, our, myself, you, yourself)

STEP 6

Now it is time to wrap up your piece of writing with a **Concluding Sentence**. You may use a **transition starter** if you so choose, but you do not have to. Make sure to **Round Off** the paragraph. **Don't repeat anything you've already said.**

Transition Starters: As a result...In conclusion...In the end...
After all that happened... Finally...