OF MICE AND MEN
BY JOHN STEINBECK
PLAY GUIDE
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**2010 - 2011 Season**

*Hay Fever*  
by Noël Coward  
October 1, 2010 - December 4, 2010

*Of Mice and Men*  
by John Steinbeck  
October 22, 2010 - February 5, 2011

*Richard III*  
by William Shakespeare  
November 19, 2010 - February 25, 2011

*The Misanthrope*  
by Jean-Baptiste Molière  
January 28, 2011 - March 5, 2011

*The Cider House Rules Part I*  
by John Irving  
adapted for the stage by Peter Parnell  
March 31, 2011 - April 30, 2011

*The Cider House Rules Part II*  
by John Irving  
adapted for the stage by Peter Parnell  
April 1, 2011 - May 13, 2011

*The Full Monty*  
by Terrence McNally and David Yazbek  
April 15, 2011 - April 24, 2011

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**Wayne State University**

Department of Theatre  
4841 Cass Avenue, Suite 3225  
Detroit, Michigan 48202

Box Office (313) 577-2960  
Marketing/Public Relations (313) 577-3010

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The 2010- 2011 Playguide was created by Rebecca Lustig, Kelly O’Connor and Jillian Zylinski.
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 straightforwardly 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.

Steinbeck drew his inspiration for the work from his experience living and working as a “bindlestiff” - 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. as Lennie and Burgess Merideth as George. Most recently the novel was adapted in 1992, with Gary Sinise playing George and John Malkovich in the role of Lennie. This version was well received by critics and regularly supplements high school English class units on the novel.
The novel, which takes place during the Great Depression, begins beside the Salinas River near Soledad, California, where two migrant workers, Lennie Small and George Milton, are walking on their way to a nearby ranch. They have recently escaped from a farm near Weed where Lennie, a mentally deficient yet gentle man, was wrongly accused of rape when he touched a woman to feel her soft dress.

As they walk along, George scolds Lennie for playing with a dead mouse and warns him not to speak when they arrive at their new place of employment. When Lennie complains about not having ketchup for the beans they eat for dinner, George becomes angry, telling Lennie that he would be better off if he didn’t have to take care of him. After they make up, George repeats to Lennie the details of their dream - that he and Lennie will raise enough money to buy a patch of land, where they will have a small farm with a vegetable patch and a rabbit hutch. The rabbit hutch is the only detail of the plan that Lennie consistently remembers. George tells Lennie that, if he gets into trouble as he did in Weed, he should return to the brush near the river and wait for George to find him.

When George and Lennie reach the bunkhouse at the farm where they will work, an old man named Candy shows them their beds and tells them that the boss was angry that they didn’t show up the night before. Soon, the boss questions George and Lennie. He discovers Lennie’s mental impairment and cannot understand why George would travel with him until George lies and says that Lennie is his cousin. After the boss leaves, his son, Curley, enters the bunkhouse. Curley is a short man who hates larger men out of jealousy and insecurity; he has a new wife whom everyone suspects is unfaithful. His wife visits the bunkhouse later that night searching for Curley and flirts with the other men. Later, Curley returns looking for his wife and attempts to start a fight with George.

After a day of work, the men return to the bunkhouse. Slim, whose dog had a new litter of puppies, gives Lennie one of them. George admits to Slim that he and Lennie escaped lynching when Lennie was accused of rape. Carlson complains about Candy’s dog, a decrepit and stinking creature. He offers to shoot the dog, and after repeated complaints, Candy relents, despite his obvious wish to keep the dog. George complains about “tarts” such as Curley’s wife. When George again tells Lennie the story about the house that they will have, Candy overhears. Candy offers to pool his money with theirs if they’d let him work on their farm. A bit later, Curley searches for his wife once more; he attacks Lennie when he suspects that Lennie is laughing at him. Curley punches Lennie several times, but Lennie does not fight back until George gives him permission, at which point Lennie crushes Curley’s hand.

While the other men are gone, Lennie visits Crooks, the black stable buck. Crooks is rude and contemptuous toward Lennie until he realizes that Lennie has no ill intent.

The next morning, Lennie accidentally kills his new puppy when he bounces it too hard. Curley’s wife finds him in the barn with the dead puppy. She pities him and allows him to feel how soft her hair is. When he handles her too forcefully, she screams. Lennie covers her mouth and accidentally snaps her neck. After this killing, Lennie flees from the ranch. Candy and George find the body and infer Lennie’s guilt. Candy alerts the other men, and Curley forms a party to search for Lennie and kill him. In the interim, George steals Carlson’s gun, leading the other men to think that Lennie took it before he escaped.

George, who points Curley and the other men in the wrong direction, finds Lennie in the brush where he told him to return at the beginning of the novel. Lennie has been having hallucinations of a giant rabbit and his Aunt Clara; they warn Lennie that George will be angry at him for killing Curley’s wife and that he has lost the possibility of having a house with a rabbit hutch. George reassures Lennie that they will have the rabbit hutch after all, meanwhile preparing to shoot his friend with Carlson’s gun. Upon hearing the shot, the other men find George and Lennie. George tells them that Lennie had stolen the gun and that he shot Lennie after the gun got loose in a struggle.
Character List

**George**  George Milton. A migrant worker who travels from farm to farm with his mentally impaired friend Lennie during the Depression. The two dream of earning enough money to buy a small farm where George can live independently and Lennie can tend rabbits.

**Lennie**  Lennie Small. A gigantic, mentally disabled man, Lennie is simplistic and docile.

**Candy**  An old, crippled man who has lost his hand, Candy is the swamper at the ranch.

**Curley**  The son of the ranch owner, Curley is a man of short stature who is nevertheless a formidable boxer.

**Curley’s wife**  Generally considered to be a tramp by the men at the ranch, Curley’s wife is the only major character in *Of Mice and Men* whom Steinbeck does not give a name. She dislikes her husband and feels desperately lonely at the ranch, for she is the only woman and feels isolated from the other men, who openly scorn her.

**Crooks**  The stable buck at the ranch, Crooks is also the only black man in the novel. A proud and bitter man, Crooks has a cynical intelligence and a contemptuous demeanor that he uses to prevent others from inevitably excluding him because of his race.

**Carlson**  A large, big-stomached man who works at the ranch.

**Slim**  The jerkline skinner at the ranch, Slim is a seemingly ageless man who carries himself with great gravity.

**Whit**  He is one of the workers at the ranch, a young man who shows Carlson the magazine with the letter from William Tenner.

**The Boss**  The boss of the ranch is Curley’s father. He acts suspiciously of George and Lennie when they arrive, thinking that there’s something odd about the two mismatched companions.

**Aunt Clara**  The woman who raised Lennie. Though deceased, she appears to Lennie in a hallucination when he hides in the brush in Chapter Six. In this hallucination, she appears as a short but hefty woman who berates Lennie for his stupidity.

**William Tenner**  A former worker at the ranch who drove a cultivator, Whit shows Carlson a magazine that has a letter to the editor that Bill Tenner has written.

**Andy Cushman**  An acquaintance from grammar school, George tells Lennie that he is now in jail in San Quentin “- on account of a tart.”

**Al Wilts**  The deputy sheriff of Soledad. Curley sends Whit to find him when his wife is murdered.
John Steinbeck was born in Salinas, California in 1902, and spent most of his life in Monterey County, the setting of much of his fiction. He attended Stanford University intermittently between 1920 and 1926. Steinbeck did not graduate from Stanford, but instead chose to support himself through manual labor while writing. His experiences among the working classes in California lent authenticity to his depiction of the lives of the workers, who remain the central characters of his most important novels.

Steinbeck’s first novel, *Cup of Gold*, was published in 1929, and was followed by *The Pastures of Heaven* and, in 1933, *To a God Unknown*. However, his first three novels were unsuccessful both critically and commercially. Steinbeck had his first success with *Tortilla Flat* (1935), an affectionate and gently humorous story about Mexican-Americans. Nevertheless, his subsequent novel, *In Dubious Battle* (1936) was notable for its markedly grim outlook. This novel is a classic account of a strike by agricultural laborers and the pair of Marxist labor organizers who engineer it, and is the first Steinbeck novel to encompass the striking social commentary that characterizes his most notable works. Steinbeck received even greater acclaim for the novella *Of Mice and Men* (1937), a tragic story about the strange, complex bond between two migrant laborers. His crowning achievement, *The Grapes of Wrath*, won Steinbeck a Pulitzer Prize and a National Book Award. It was also adapted into a classic film directed by John Ford that was named one of the American Film Institute’s one hundred greatest films. The novel describes the migration of a dispossessed family from the Oklahoma Dust Bowl to California and critiques their subsequent exploitation by a ruthless system of agricultural economics.

After the best-selling success of *The Grapes of Wrath*, Steinbeck went to Mexico to collect marine life with the freelance biologist Edward F. Ricketts, and the two men collaborated on *Sea of Cortez* (1941), a study of the fauna of the Gulf of California. During World War II, Steinbeck wrote some effective pieces of government propaganda, among them *The Moon Is Down* (1942), a novel about Norwegians under the Nazis. He also served as a war correspondent. With the end of World War II and the move from the Great Depression to economic prosperity Steinbeck’s work softened somewhat. While still containing the elements of social criticism that marked his earlier work, the three novels Steinbeck published immediately following the war, *Cannery Row* (1945), *The Pearl*, and *The Bus* (both 1947) were more sentimental and relaxed. Steinbeck also contributed to several
screenplays. He wrote the original stories for several films, including *Lifeboat* (1944), directed by Alfred Hitchcock, and *A Medal for Benny*, and wrote the screenplay for Elia Kazan’s *Viva Zapata*, a biographical film about Emiliano Zapata, the Mexican peasant who rose to the presidency.

Steinbeck married Carol Henning in 1930 and lived with her in Pacific Grove, California. He spent much of his time in Monterey with his friend, Ricketts, at his Cannery Row laboratory, an experience which inspired his popular 1945 novel, *Cannery Row*. In 1943, Steinbeck married his second wife, Gwyndolyn Conger, with whom he had two children. 1948 was a particularly bad year for Steinbeck: Ricketts died, and Gwyndolyn left him. However, he found happiness in his 1950 marriage to Elaine Scott, with whom he lived in New York City. Two years later, he published the highly controversial *East of Eden*, the novel he called “the big one,” set in the California Salinas Valley.

Steinbeck’s later writings were comparatively slight works, but he did make several notable attempts to reassert his stature as a major novelist: *Burning Bright* (1950), *East of Eden* (1952), and *The Winter of Our Discontent* (1961). However, none of these works equaled the critical reputation of his earlier novels. Steinbeck’s reputation is dependent primarily on the naturalistic, proletarian-themed novels that he wrote during the Depression. It is in these works that Steinbeck is most effective at building rich, symbolic structures and conveying the archetypal qualities of his characters. Steinbeck received the Nobel Prize for literature in 1962, and died in New York City in 1968.
## Glossary of Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>“An’ I bet he’s eatin’ raw eggs and writin’ to the patent medicine houses”</strong></td>
<td>A reference to common aphrodisiacs of the time; George sarcastically expresses his disgust at Curley’s ostentatious sex life.</td>
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<td><strong>“S’pose he took a powder”</strong></td>
<td>“Suppose he got fed up and left”</td>
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<td><strong>“two shots of corn”</strong></td>
<td>two glasses of corn whiskey</td>
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<td><strong>“You’re yella as a frog belly”</strong></td>
<td>“You’re a coward.”</td>
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<td><strong>bundle</strong></td>
<td>a load carried on one’s back, a bundle</td>
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<td><strong>candy wagon</strong></td>
<td>a bus or truck</td>
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<td><strong>dugs</strong></td>
<td>teats or udders, used in reference to animals</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>flop</strong></td>
<td>sexual intercourse</td>
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<td><strong>gingham</strong></td>
<td>a durable cotton material used for aprons</td>
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<td><strong>goo-goo</strong></td>
<td>a derogatory term for a reformer, short for “good government” clubbers</td>
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<td><strong>graybacks</strong></td>
<td>lice</td>
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<td><strong>hame</strong></td>
<td>a sidepiece of a horse’s harness</td>
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<td><strong>hoosegow</strong></td>
<td>prison</td>
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<td><strong>jack-pin</strong></td>
<td>a metal pin used to tie down ropes on ships</td>
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<td><strong>jackson fork</strong></td>
<td>a mechanical hay fork</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>jail baits</strong></td>
<td>underage women</td>
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<td><strong>jungle-up</strong></td>
<td>to camp outside</td>
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<td><strong>kewpie doll lamp</strong></td>
<td>a lamp with a base made from a children’s toy</td>
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<td><strong>liniment</strong></td>
<td>a soothing or pain-killing liquid used on sore body parts</td>
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<td><strong>looloo</strong></td>
<td>an attractive woman</td>
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<td><strong>Luger</strong></td>
<td>A pistol popularly associated with use by German forces in the First and Second World Wars.</td>
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<td><strong>ringer</strong></td>
<td>in horseshoes, a throw that “rings” (or encircles) the target</td>
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<td><strong>skinner, or muleskinner</strong></td>
<td>a worker who drives mules with a whip</td>
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<td><strong>slang</strong></td>
<td>gave birth to</td>
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<td><strong>slough</strong></td>
<td>to skin</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>snooker</strong></td>
<td>a type of billiards</td>
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<td><strong>swamper</strong></td>
<td>a helper, so named because he mops the floors</td>
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<td><strong>twict</strong></td>
<td>a jab</td>
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<td><strong>welter</strong></td>
<td>welterweight, a boxing category</td>
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Character Web Activity-
Describing the characters in Steinbeck’s *Of Mice and Men* ~

**Overview**
This lesson is intended to get students out of their seats and bring some variety and color into the classroom. Upon completing the novel, students will describe the major and minor characters in *Of Mice and Men*. Students will complete this activity by individually giving a one-word description of a character and then throwing a ball of yarn across the room to another student who has a different word to describe that same character. This will not only create a unique design, but it will also foster participation, creativity and classroom community.

**Goals/Objectives**
* The students will accurately describe Steinbeck’s characters from *Of Mice and Men*.
* The students will use creativity and originality to think of different descriptive words.
* Through the incorporation of the web, all students will have a chance to voice their opinion of a character and be able to defend their one-word description. As a result, the students will see that characters have many traits and can be perceived in many different ways.
* The students will value, appreciate and learn from the different perspectives/opinions of their peers while building community in the classroom.

**Materials/Resources**
Steinbeck’s *Of Mice and Men*
Ball of colored yarn (consider bringing extra yarn depending on class size)
Music (optional; can be playing in the background)

**Activities/Procedures**
All the students will be instructed to make a huge circle around the edges of the classroom. Starting with the teacher (modeling), each person will give a one-word description for George. After each description, the person will throw the ball of string, while hanging on to one end, to another student. That student will give a different one-word description of the same character and hold one end of the string and throw the rest of the yarn to another who has not spoken. The same process will continue until all students have had a chance. Periodically, the teacher will intervene and ask the students why they chose a certain word or what made them describe the character from the book the way they did. Other characters can be described such as: Lennie, Aunt Clara, Candy, Curley, Curley’s wife, Slim, Carlson, boss, etc. After each character web, discussion will follow suggesting that characters are many sided and no one answer or description of the characters is right or wrong (Reader-Response). The teacher will conclude the activity by mentioning how much the class can learn from one another and how readers bring things to the text.

**Accommodation**
This lesson/activity will accommodate the diversity of the class by encouraging everyone to voice their own unique opinion. No two people see things the same way. The web visually illustrates this. All of the students (either gifted, ESL, or students with disabilities) can share and learn with each other. Participation is the key. There is no one answer, so students should not be worried about their word being right or wrong, as long as it can be supported.

**Assessment**
Since this is not a graded activity, the only form of assessment will come by participation. It will be easy for the teacher to tell who has not participated, because they will not hold a part of the web. If further assessment is needed, students could be instructed to write in their journals about this experience, about why they chose the words they did, or if they agreed with all the descriptions.

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http://homepages.wmich.edu/~s0reifsc/lesson_plans.htm
Reader’s Theatre Activity-
Different Endings, Different Twists ~
Of Mice and Men

Overview
This lesson is intended to allow students to use their creativity and originality to dramatically act out an alternative final scene with George and Lennie. These scenes will answer the questions, “What would happen if George did not shoot Lennie?” or “What happens to George after Steinbeck ends his novel?” Students will work in groups of four and make a script of an alternative Chapter 6. This activity is designed to visually show the characters, actions and emotions, thus assisting students who are confused by the chapter. Assessment will be based on student participation and on their journal response.

Goals/Objectives
* The students will accurately act out and respond to Steinbeck’s characters from Of Mice and Men while working with other students.
* The students will use creativity and originality to predict what could happen.
* The students will see the action, relate to the characters, elaborate on the story world and as a result, connect their literature to life.
* The students will be able to write about this experience in their journal and include reactions to other students’ performances.

Materials/Resources
Steinbeck’s Of Mice and Men
Props such as old clothes, a water gun, a stuffed bunny, etc.

Activities/Procedures
After a short question/answer period by the students, the students will be instructed to form groups of four for an activity. They will be told that the activity will be something they will be assigned to write about in their journals, so they might want to take notes. Students will be informed that they will be using drama to answer the questions, “What would happen if George did not shoot Lennie?” or “What happens to George after Steinbeck ends his novel?” Choosing one of the questions, the students will prepare a dramatic scene in which they act out their answer to the question. Each group will have 20 minutes to prepare and 5 minutes to act out their scene. The teacher will circle around to groups to get a sense of participation and answer any potential questions that could arise.

Accommodation
This lesson/activity will accommodate the diversity of the class by encouraging everyone to cooperate with one another in order, either by helping to write the script or acting the script out. Students will not be required to act in a scene, provided they played a major part in the writing of the script. All of the students (either gifted, ESL, or students with disabilities) can share and learn with each other. Participation is the key. Since there is not a correct answer to these hypothetical questions, students will be free to go wherever their creativity takes them.

Assessment
The dramatic scenes will be assessed based on student participation. The teacher will have a good understanding of how involved a student is based on their participation in the writing, collaboration on the script and their overall involvement in the drama. At the end of class, the students will be assigned to write about their experiences in their journals, which will be turned in the next day. It is here where they can write about other performances and things they enjoyed, disliked or learned.

http://homepages.wmich.edu/~s0reifsc/lessonPlans.htm
Class Discussion-
Discussing Of Mice and Men ~ Chapter 6 and the book as a whole

Overview
This lesson is intended to get students to talk about the events of chapter six and the significance of Steinbeck’s novel as a whole. Through the use of clear, purposeful, brief, natural and thought-provoking questions, the students will think about the aspects of the novel and discuss the following questions as a group. Since class discussions can wander off track at times, the following lesson plan contains discussion questions that are focused and will serve to strengthen and make visible the major themes of the novel, while allowing for class input. One question involving an alternative name for the book and cover design will be completed in groups of four during the last 30 minutes of class.

Goals/Objectives
* The students will discuss Chapter 6 of Steinbeck’s Of Mice and Men.
* The students will explore their understanding of characters, show connections of the novel to everyday life, consider the novel’s significance and interpret and identify literary conventions through their discussion in class.
* All students will participate with one another in order to obtain an understanding of the book.
* Students will illustrate examples of symbolism in the novel.
* Students will be encouraged to use their creativity and engage in group activities while learning to see one another as valuable resources.

Materials/Resources
Steinbeck’s Of Mice and Men
Different symbols (American flag, McDonald’s “Arches,” Chevrolet’s bowtie, White Picket Fence)
Big sheets of paper, colored pencils, markers, crayons, scissors, etc.

Activities/Procedures
The students will engage in a discussion based on the following questions (see attachment). (This will take approximately 30 minutes.) After a comprehensive discussion, in which all the students are engaged participants, the students will be put into groups of four. In these groups they will be instructed to use their artistic talents and their ability to image the story world, to design, draw and color a new cover for the book. They will also give the book an original title and be able to explain why and how they chose their unique title and cover design. The teacher will circulate around the room to monitor students’ progress and participation.

Accommodation
This lesson/activity will accommodate the diversity of the class by encouraging everyone to become engaged and experience the text. Many of the questions provide room for many different kinds of thinking. Some questions deal with the evocative cognitive dimension, others with the connective and reflective. Students will be encouraged to voice their own unique opinion. All of the students (either gifted, ESL, or students with disabilities) can share and learn with each other. Participation is the key in this activity. By taking the conversation one step further, students will be allowed a creative outlet to express the book. Students will learn to use each other as resources when collaborating in a group.

Assessment
This activity will be assessed on the basis of student participation. It will be relatively easy for the teacher to tell who was engaged in the conversation, who contributed and who participated in the group setting. If further assessment is desired, the students could be instructed to write in their journals about a new thought that was introduced by the conversation, another theme in the novel or something they particularly agreed or disagreed with.

http://homepages.wmich.edu/~sbreifsc/lesson_plans.htm
Discussion Questions for Chapter 6 - Completion of Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*

**Chapter 6 Questions**

What is the purpose of George making Lennie think about their “paradise” before he is shot?

Does Lennie realize he has done something wrong?

Is George being selfish by shooting Lennie? Why or why not?

Why does George claim he acted in self-defense?

What would have happened if George did not shoot Lennie?

What could have happened if George and Lennie ran away together?

What does this book say about getting away with things?

**Novel Questions-Symbolism**

(Discuss symbol and symbolism with the students, and introduce this by displaying several symbols to the students such as an American Flag, the McDonald’s arches and a white picket fence. Ask the students what these icons mean and they will make a connection. Ask the students what symbols are present in the book and what they represent.)

Some symbols: Rabbit, Mouse, Paradise, The old dog and Lennie, Curley’s wife

How does this book represent a cycle?

Why is the book titled *Of Mice and Men*?

**THEMES**

(If time does not allow, this section can be postponed to the following class period, or given as an assignment for the students to do individually at home.)

What are some prevalent themes in *Of Mice and Men*?

The class upon making a list will work in groups of four to find evidence to support the recurring themes. Each group will find one piece of evidence for each of the themes. The following is a list of possible themes throughout the book.

**Animals** (Lennie Described as an Animal)

“...and he walked heavily, dragging his feet a little, the way a bear drags his paws.” Chapter 1, pg. 2.

“You’d drink out of a gutter if you was thirsty.” Chapter 1, pg. 3.

“Slowly, like a terrier who doesn’t want to bring a ball to its master, Lennie approached, drew back, approached again.” Chapter 1, pg. 9.

“Lennie covered his face with huge paws and bleated with terror.” Chapter 3, pg. 63.

“Want me to tell ya what’ll happen? They’ll take ya to the booby hatch. They’ll tie ya up with a collar, like a dog.” Chapter 4, pg. 72.

“He pawed up the hay until it partly covered her.” Chapter 5, pg. 92.

**Dreams**

They want to be self-reliant: “‘Well,’ said George, ‘we’ll have a big vegetable patch and a rabbit hutch and chickens. And when it rains in the winter, we’ll just say the hell with goin’ to work, and we’ll build up a fire in the stove and set around it an’ listen to the rain comin’ down on the roof...’” Chapter 1, pg. 14-15.

Whit brings the letter written by Bill Tenner and everyone is impressed but unsure as to whether or not he really wrote it. It would be something if a worker could do this. Some of these men could only dream such a thing. “We could live offa the fatta the lan’.” Chapter 3, pg. 57.

“I could build a smoke house like the one gran’pa had...” Chapter 3, pg. 57.

“An’ we’d keep a few pigeons to go flyin’ around the win’mill like they done when I was a kid.” Chapter 3, pg. 58.

Childhood is reflected by George and Crooks. Curley’s wife’s dream of being an actress George must live life without Lennie, still trying to fulfill their dreams.
Landscape
Descriptions of nature along the Salinas River begin and end the text. It does not change even though the lives of these two characters change dramatically.

“Evening of a hot day started the little wind to moving among the leaves. The shade climbed up the hills toward the top. On the sand banks the rabbits sat as quietly as little gray, sculptured stones.” Chapter 1, pg. 2.

The bunkhouse contrasts the beautiful scenery and description of the outside landscape. “At about ten o’clock in the morning the sun threw a bright dust-laden bar through one of the side windows, and in and out of the beam flies shot like rushing stars.” Chapter 2, pg. 17 - 18.

“Although there was evening brightness showing through the windows of the bunk house, inside it was dusk.” Chapter 3, pg. 38.

“As happens sometimes, a moment settled and hovered and remained for much more than a moment. And sound stopped and movement stopped for much, much more than a moment.” Chapter 5, pg. 93.

“Already the sun had left the valley to go climbing up the slopes of the Gabilan mountains, and the hilltops were rosy in the sun.” Chapter 6, pg. 99.

“The crash of the shot rolled up the hills and rolled down again.” Chapter 6, pg. 106.

Quotes taken from bookrags.com.
WEB RESOURCES:
http://www.gradesaver.com/author/john-steinbeck/

The National Steinbeck Center

Center for Steinbeck Studies
A very useful source for thinking about Of Mice and Men within the context of Steinbeck’s other works. Especially helpful when examining Steinbeck’s genesis as a writer for America’s poor, as the site tracks the evolution of Steinbeck’s ideas and writing. http://www.shmoop.com/of-mice-and-men/botw/resources?d=http://as.sjsu.edu/steinbeck/

OF MICE AND MEN ON FILM, VIDEO, AND DVD:
Movie or TV Productions
1939 Movie Film starring Burgess Meredith and Lon Chaney, Jr., directed by Lewis Milestone
1981 Movie Film for TV starring Robert Blake and Randy Quaid, directed by Reza Badiyi
1992 Movie Film starring John Malkovich and Gary Sinise

Audio
“To A Mouse”
Listen to Robert Burns’s poem, the source of the title of Of Mice and Men
Photos & Pics

MORE TO EXPLORE:
Historical Background on the Depression Era
A collection of links giving background on Depression-era America, including the plight of migrant workers and the exodus from the plains. Includes some of Steinbeck’s own story, and links to some helpful sights evaluating his work. http://www.shmoop.com/of-mice-and-men/botw/resources?d=http://bluedandelion.net/english/writers.htm#steinbeck

“To A Mouse”

Black and White
The History of the Hilberry Theatre

The Hilberry Theatre is a unique open-stage performance center for the nation’s first and only graduate repertory company, which presents six plays in rotating repertory from October to mid-May.

Created in 1963 with the belief that repertory theatre is the best possible training ground for careers in the theatre, the Hilberry was the brainchild of the late Leonard Leone. Clarence B. Hilberry, the president of Wayne State University, personally took responsibility for raising the funds to convert the First Church of Christ Scientist in Detroit into an open-stage theatre, which now stands as a memorial to his leadership. Following the theatre’s opening, he invited a group of community leaders to form a women’s committee to ensure the continuity of the growing company. “The Understudies,” as the group became known, has solicited funds for 45 years, primarily from individual donors, to provide essential support for the artists of the Hilberry company.

Celebrating its 48th season, the 39-member company is composed of actors, costume, lighting, and scenic designer-technicians, as well as stage managers and theatre managers, who work under the direction of the professional staff. The members of the company, chosen in nationwide auditions and interviews, receive training leading to advanced degrees in acting, directing, design, or management.

The heart of the program is a rotating repertory of outstanding classic and modern plays. Widely known for the high quality of its productions, the Hilberry has received numerous honors. It has been selected to perform at Ford’s Theatre and The Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., the Far East for the USO and most recently for the Moscow Theatre Festival. Over the years, Hilberry actors have been honored with awards by all of Detroit’s major newspapers, including “Best Female Performer in a Local Professional Production - Drama,” and “Best Male Performer in a Local Production - Comedy,” “Best Director” and “Best Play.”

Thanks to the continuing support of the university and the community, the Hilberry Theatre remains a strong and flourishing cultural gem.
Before Arriving at the Theatre

Thank you for participating in the 2010-2011 season at the Hilberry

1. Audience members are to remain seated, keeping aisles free, as actors sometimes enter and exit through the audience. Students need to be instructed to remain in their seats during the acts, as leaving the theatre during the performance could interfere with the show.

2. Teachers are to remain in the theatre during the entire show, seated among their students, to help the theatre staff control any problems that may arise during the performance.

3. Please keep lunches on the bus and all food, drink, candy and gum out of the theatre. If lunches cannot be left on the bus, make sure they are well marked. We will provide a space until the conclusion of the performance. Please notify us in advance if you will be needing this service. Also please remind students to dispose of chewing gum prior to entering the theatre.

4. Keep in mind that the actors can see and hear the audience members. It takes a tremendous amount of concentration to perform in front of a live audience. Live theatre is different from television and movies. Talking directly to the actors or each other while the show is in progress could prevent the actors from doing their best job for you.

5. Please let your students and chaperones know that copyright laws prohibit photographs of the stage or actors anytime during your theatre experience. Flashes during the performance also create a disruption for both the actors and other audience members.

6. Electronic devices such as CD or MP3 players, cell phones, pagers and laser pointers should not be brought into the theatre. The noises and sound waves of these types of devices can interfere with the headsets the stage manager and crew use during the performance. If these devices cannot be left on the bus, ushers will provide a safe place for them to be stored during the performance. If ushers find people using these devices during the performance, they will be confiscated until the conclusion of the show.

7. Please educate all students and chaperones that the stage is a creation by our design team that is to be viewed by the audience. Actors and stage hands are the only people allowed to walk or sit on the stage.

8. Students should be encouraged to listen carefully, respond to the story (laugh, applaud, etc.) and quiet down quickly to listen again. When they are actually playing an active part in the performance, they discover the true excitement of the theatre.

Here are some ways that you can help us run the student matinees in a more efficient and time-saving manner:

1. Plan to arrive at the theatre by 9:30 a.m. as the show is scheduled to begin promptly at 10 a.m. If you will be late due to bus arrival, traffic, etc., please contact the Hilberry Box Office at 313-577-2972.

2. Once you arrive at the theatre, please pick up your seating card at the box office before bringing the students off the bus. Have the students enter the theatre in an orderly fashion and we will direct them to their seats as quickly as possible.

3. If your group has to wait in the lobby before being seated, please help in keeping the noise level down to assist in communication and more timely seating.

Bus Instructions for Attending Student Matinees

While attending the Hilberry Theatre, buses should park by the “No Standing” signs along the streets. There are usually several places along Cass Avenue. Please do not park directly in front of the theatre or the lots surrounding the theatre. Those lots do not belong to the theatre. Please be patient and considerate during this potentially stressful time and always put the safety of the students first.

Ticket Exchanges

To change your number of tickets, please call the box office at least two weeks in advance. Once the group leader has confirmed the number of tickets reserved, the number cannot be reduced.

Talkbacks

Your group is invited to join us for a 10-15 minute Talkback immediately following the student matinee performance. A Talkback is a question-and-answer session with the actors and crew. This discussion is a great opportunity for students to ask questions concerning the development of a theatre performance. Students are encouraged to use this time to analyze the script and language. This optional session is a great way to meet many of the Michigan Arts Education and Language Arts curriculum guidelines by discussion. If you have any questions regarding the Talkbacks, please contact Group Sales and Services at (313) 577-0852.
### Directions to the Hilberry Theatre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coming from the</th>
<th>VIA</th>
<th>Directions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WEST</td>
<td>I-94</td>
<td>To Lodge 10, SOUTH. Take to 1st exit, which is Forest/Warren. Turn LEFT on Forest at top of ramp. Go to 4th stoplight, Cass. Turn LEFT. Go 1 block to Hancock.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAST</td>
<td>I-94</td>
<td>To Woodward exit, SOUTH. Go to 4th stoplight, Woodward. Turn LEFT. Take to Hancock, which is 1 block south of Warren. Turn RIGHT on Hancock. Go one (1) block to Cass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTH</td>
<td>I-75</td>
<td>To Lodge (M-10), NORTH. Take Forest exit. Turn RIGHT on Forest. Go to third stoplight, Cass. Turn LEFT on Cass. Go one (1) block to Hancock.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NORTH</td>
<td>I-75</td>
<td>To Warren exit. Turn RIGHT on Warren. Go to third stoplight, Cass. Turn LEFT. Go one (1) block to Hancock.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NORTH</td>
<td>Lodge (M-10)</td>
<td>To Forest/Warren exit. Turn LEFT on Forest. Go to fourth stoplight, Cass. Turn LEFT. Go one (1) block to Hancock.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEST</td>
<td>I-96</td>
<td>Take to I-94 exit, EAST (toward Port Huron). See directions coming from WEST I-94.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Hilberry Theatre is located at 4743 Cass Ave. at the corner of Cass and West Hancock. To reach Group Sales and Services, call 313-577-0852.