

NAME: _____



Activity One

Board Game



There were many pitfalls in the isolated world that was the west during the Dust Bowl. Gambling, drinking, and encounters with violence were as common as a sandy breeze.

Whether a person would have enough food, money or shelter to make it through the hard times was about as random as a roll of the dice. With that in mind, your task is to take the ideas, themes, motifs, and settings presented in *Of Mice and Men* and translate them into a board game.

It could be a strategic game or a trivia game using information from the story. The type of board game is entirely up to you. Be creative.

Get together in groups of three or four and brainstorm a plan for your game. Together, draft a set of rules, design, and build a game board or whatever else your game requires.

Be creative, but be sure to include characters, themes, and settings from the book in some way. Once you've finished creating your game, switch with another group and play each other's games.



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Activity Two

Switching Roles



"Lennie knelt and looked over the fire at the angry George. And Lennie's face was drawn with terror.

'An' whatta I got,' George went on furiously. 'I got you. You can't keep a job and you lose ever' job I get. Jus' keep me shovin' all over the country all the time. An' that ain't the worst. You get in trouble. You do bad things and I got to get you out.'"

"Curley's fist was swinging when Lennie reached for it. The next minute Curley was flopping like a fish on a line and his closed fist was lost in Lennie's big hand."

Despite sometimes showing contempt for Lennie, George is always there for him. Conversely, Lennie may not be smart, but he's big and strong. Imagine now that Lennie and George have switched minds. George is now a small, unintelligent man, while Lennie is his big, strong protector.

Using this concept, rewrite a scene from the book with George and Lennie in their new roles. Write the scene so that the characters—small, unintelligent George, and big, strong Lennie—react as though they've switched places. The scene should be an important one that shows the dynamic between George and Lennie.

When you're finished, write about 200 words explaining how the characters' thoughts and actions changed as a result of the switch.



Gary Sinise and John Malkovich from Of Mice and Men (1992)

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Activity Three

Mind Map

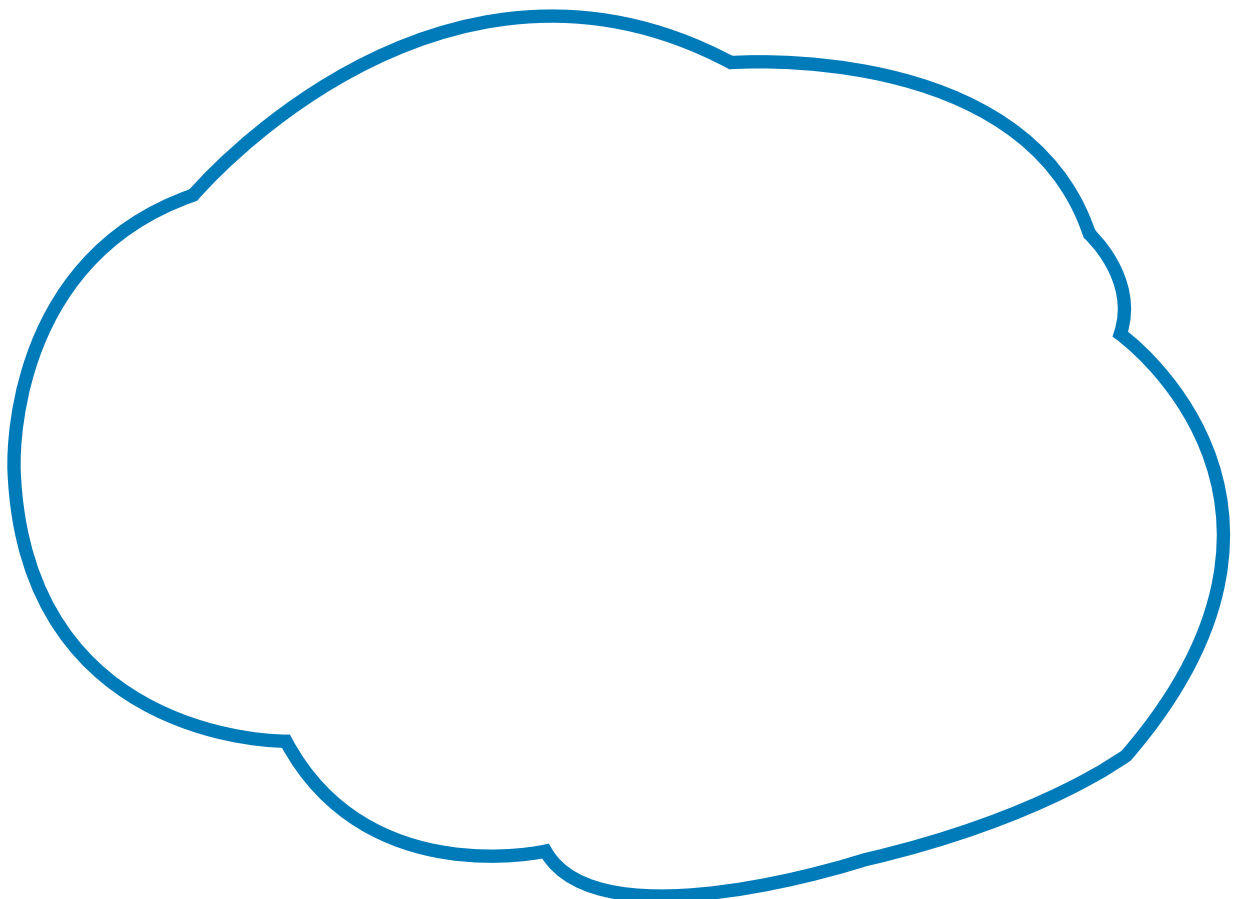


George is small and wiry. Lennie is large and lumbering. These physical descriptions help the reader understand the reasoning behind some of the thoughts and actions characters take in the story. However, physical appearance doesn't give the full picture of these characters.

Choose one of your favorite characters from the book and really try to understand that character. Use their comments, actions, and any other information offered in the story by the author to map the mind of your chosen character.

Use the blank brain image below. You will use this space to write all of your character's traits to accurately describe your character.

Personality traits that are more prevalent will be represented by larger words. Less important traits should be smaller. The final product should resemble a word cloud with your character's personality as the subject.



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Activity Four

Screenplay

"Curley stepped gingerly close to him.

'You the new guys the old man was waitin' for?'

'We just come in,' said George.

'Let the big guy talk.'

Lennie twisted with embarrassment.

George said, 's'pose he don't want to talk?'

Curley lashed his body around.

'By Christ, he's gotta talk when he's spoken to. What the hell are you getting' into it for?'

'We travel together,' said George coldly.

'Oh, so it's that way.'

George was tense, and motionless.

'Yeah, it's that way.'"

Choose an exciting scene from the book and then envision it on the big screen. You're tasked with writing the screenplay for the new film version of *Of Mice and Men*.

Research and execute the proper screenplay format. You may want to be a bit creative. You can add "Director's Notes" highlighted in red, to signal the actor to move or to speak in a specific way. For example:

Curley steps gingerly (**Director's Note: almost sauntering**)
close to Lennie.

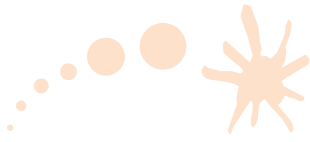
CURLEY

You the new guys the old man was waiting for?

GEORGE

We just come in.

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Activity Five

Research Report



Of Mice and Men is a compelling story of life during the Dust Bowl. George and Lennie are migrant workers with no family, no home, and make just enough money through odd jobs to scrape by. They have one dream: to own a piece of land for themselves.

While the story is certainly enthralling, the question you have to answer is whether the story is accurate. Research life during the Dust Bowl. Was it common for men to travel across the country for work? Were the types of jobs and money offered for George and Lennie's services really what one could expect from life during the Great Depression?

Research the Dust Bowl, its causes and its impacts on the country. What factors played into the crisis? Were those causes natural or man-made? Are those causes reflected accurately in the story?

Your report should be clear and concise and answer all of the questions posed above.

In your opening statement, say whether you believe the story is accurate in its depiction of life during that time and the conditions for people like George and Lennie.

In your closing statement, reiterate your stance along with a summation of the reasoning for your opinion. The finished product should be at least three typed, double-spaced pages.





Activity Six

Dreams of a Better Life



Dreams and aspirations play almost as large a role in *Of Mice and Men* as do loneliness and isolation. How are these two concepts connected in the story?

Make a chart. There should be three rows and four columns. Pick three characters from the story—other than George and Lennie. Describe who they are, including a short description of their physical appearance and personality in the first column.

In the second column, detail that character’s comments about their dreams and aspirations. In this column, also list any instances where the character has expressed feelings of loneliness or isolation. Be sure to use quotes and evidence from the book.

In the third column, discuss how each of your chosen characters’ loneliness is connected to those dreams and aspirations. This connection should be based on evidence, but also include connections based on your own perceptions of the character.

In the final column, compare that connection of loneliness and dreams with the dynamic between George and Lennie and their dream of owning the piece of land.

Once you’re finished, share your findings as a class.

Characters	Appearance & Personality	Dreams & Aspirations	Loneliness Connection	Comparison with George & Lennie
1.				
2.				
3.				