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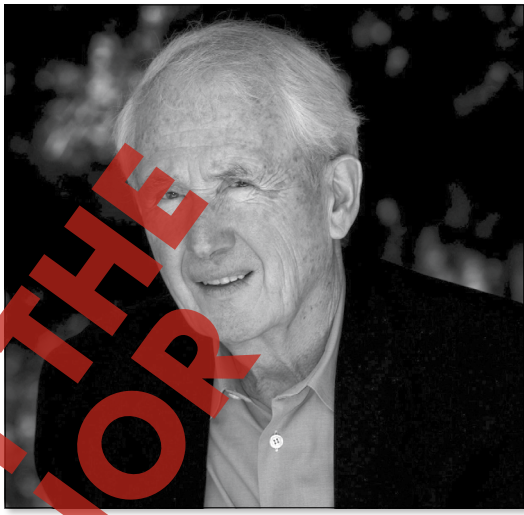


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# Frank McCourt

**F**rank McCourt was born in Brooklyn, New York on August 19, 1930 to Irish immigrant parents. When Frank's sister died, his father was unable to find work during the depression, so the family returned to Ireland. Frank's father was an alcoholic and was often unemployed. When he did work, he had a tendency to drink away his wages and lose his job for missing work the next day.



When they returned to Ireland, the McCourt family lived in horrific conditions. One house they lived in had one bathroom for the entire block, and the ground floor was constantly flooded in the winter. The family often had no money for food and his mother was forced to beg for food and accept charity. The lack of food and poor living conditions contributed to the deaths of two more of Frank's siblings. McCourt nearly died himself of typhoid fever when he was 11 years old. To help feed his family, Frank took a job at the Post Office.

After retiring from teaching, Frank and his brother — Malachy — performed their two-man musical show, "A Couple of Blaguards," which highlights their childhoods in Ireland. In his review, Albert Williams described it as "the absurdities of growing up under the thumb of the maternal trinity — Mother McCourt, Mother Church and Mother Ireland." Following the success of the show, Frank decided to write his memoirs, describing his upbringing in Limerick. Frank McCourt died on July 19, 2009 at the age of 78.

When Frank was 19, he set sail for America. Frank moved to New York City where he worked at various jobs until he was drafted into the United States Army. Frank fought in the Korean War and then qualified as a teacher upon his return home. Frank became a very successful teacher and taught at some of New York's most prestigious schools.

### Did You Know?

• Other than his job at the Post Office, Frank also delivered the *Irish Times* and had part-time work writing threatening letters for a local money lender.

- The musical show Frank performed with his brother was originally to be a two-week stint, but turned into an eight-month performance.
- The novel *Angela's Ashes* was followed by *'Tis*, which starts where the previous novel left off, and *Teacher Man*, which chronicles his time as a teacher.



# Chapters Nine to Ten

Answer the questions in complete sentences.

1. There are many dangers in Frank's life. In the last chapter we saw rats, flies and fleas all cause concern. How can Frank protect himself from these and the other dangers, which are present in his life?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Think of a time that you were aware of some dangers. What did you do to protect yourself?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Vocabulary

Complete each sentence with a word from the list.

munitions	blasphemy	contraption	cherished
ailments	sallow	notorious	sauntered

1. There was lots of work for both men and women in the \_\_\_\_\_ factory.
2. The waiting room was full with people complaining about their \_\_\_\_\_.
3. To take the Lord's name in vain is known as \_\_\_\_\_.
4. His father is \_\_\_\_\_ for drinking away his wages.
5. The criminal \_\_\_\_\_ down the street, trying to look innocent.
6. The pram was quite the \_\_\_\_\_. Its front wheels were taken from another broken pram.
7. The babies were \_\_\_\_\_ by the family.
8. His skin had the \_\_\_\_\_ look of a man who spent too much time indoors.



# Chapters Nine to Ten

1. Circle **T** if the statement is TRUE or **F** if it is FALSE

- T F a) Mam says you can tell the neighbors aren't used to having anything because they brag about everything they have.
- T F b) When they go to see off Dad, all of the prams have one baby in each of them.
- T F c) The men do not drink before the journey to England.
- T F d) The women laugh at Mr. Kane's and Mr. Coffey's jokes because if they don't, they may not get the assistance they need.
- T F e) Malachy gets into trouble in England because he insults the royal family.
- T F f) The first thing Frank steals is bread.
- T F g) It's Guard Dennehy's job to see that all the boys attend school.

2. Number the events from 1 to 8 in the order they occurred in these chapters.

- a) Malachy goes to work in England.
- b) The family go to stay with Aunt Aggie.
- c) The neighbors brag about the food they have.
- d) Frank steals the bread and lemonade.
- e) Angela has to go to the Dispensary for public assistance.
- f) The children go begging for coal.
- g) The guard sends Frank to get Grandma and Aunt Aggie.
- h) Frank sees his mother begging.



# Chapters Nine to Ten

Answer each question with a complete sentence.

1. What is the cause of the wealth in Ireland?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. According to Frank, if heaven had a taste what would it be?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Why does Angela say their troubles are over?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Explain the meaning of the following phrase "better an English accent than an empty belly."  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What do you think is going through Angela's mind as she stares into the ashes?  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Why doesn't Mrs. Meagher go to mass on a Sunday?  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Who is Frank reunited with at the hospital?  
\_\_\_\_\_



What is the most embarrassing thing you have had happen in relation to your family? In your journal entry, describe a time when your family was embarrassed, or when your family embarrassed you. If you can't think of anything, make up an embarrassing scenario.



## Chapters 12 to 17

### Comic Strip

Choose a scene from the book and produce a comic strip. The storyboard should be at least 12 frames long. Write a short summary of the scene and explain why this scene is significant. Now produce a second storyboard of the same scene only with a different outcome. How would this change the course of the novel?



## Chapters 18 to 19

### Choose an Ending

At the end of the novel Frank says "I'm sure I'm in a film, that it will end and the lights will come up in the Lyric Cinema." Frank is of course beginning a new chapter in his life. Write the next chapter of Frank's life. What do you think will happen to him? Are there any clues at the end of the book?



## Word Search Puzzle

Find the following words from the story. The words are written horizontally, vertically, diagonally, and some are written backwards.

loquacious	barracks	catechism	virgin	pox
pious	dotes	dignity	pithy	pram
bronchial	trollop	hearth	heathen	quivers
croaks	slathered	martyr	idle	cavorting
galore	stranded	ledger	expire	rue
piety	perfidy	glen	revile	gallivanting
dervish	gob	stern	boozing	repentance

a	n	r	e	t	s	u	o	i	p	s	u	o	c	a	u	q	o	l		
e	o	t	a	e	j	a	y	a	o	k	p	o	n	o	v	e	n	a		
c	o	r	t	h	o	u	s	e	m	a	r	i	e	t	y	n	f	i		
n	z	o	n	f	f	a	g	o	p	o	x	a	u	h	e	a	r	t	h	
a	i	l	o	p	o	g	a	l	b	o	r	e	h	e	a	t	e	r	s	c
t	n	l	o	p	e	e	p	i	u	e	h	a	y	l	e	y	m	y	n	
n	g	o	p	d	e	r	v	i	l	h	l	o	v	e	e	r	s	t	o	
e	o	p	d	i	d	h	f	w	s	o	q	a	e	a	s	w	e	a	r	
p	x	x	a	z	o	o	l	i	k	g	d	u	r	n	e	l	g	o	b	
e	v	i	y	t	i	n	g	i	d	v	n	e	i	v	t	a	s	g	f	
r	e	v	i	l	e	u	a	u	a	y	m	i	r	v	x	l	o	n	q	
p	r	l	k	a	r	t	w	f	h	d	b	s	t	e	e	m	v	z	a	
q	i	b	s	e	r	z	r	r	k	l	e	a	i	r	h	r	d	d	p	
u	p	o	g	r	i	s	h	f	r	n	u	d	r	h	o	t	s	u	u	
i	x	d	u	c	s	l	s	a	i	l	a	a	n	r	c	v	a	y	t	
h	e	a	t	h	e	n	p	g	g	j	t	e	i	a	a	e	a	l	o	
l	u	l	w	l	p	o	r	e	b	y	x	u	o	l	r	c	t	c	s	
s	t	m	d	o	p	i	t	h	y	m	a	r	t	y	r	t	k	a	z	
g	a	l	l	i	v	a	n	t	i	n	g	m	d	o	t	e	s	s	c	



## Comprehension Quiz

Answer each question in a complete sentence.

- Why does Frank love his father?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Name four of the jobs that Frank had.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What causes Frank to wish that Mrs. Leibowitz and Minnie were his mothers?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What does Mr. Haggerty mean when he says "we're not handing out money to support the Guinness family"?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Why does the McCourt family feel rich when they move to the new place on Roden Lane?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Why isn't Frank allowed at Arthur's Quay?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Explain the meaning of the following phrase "better an English accent than an empty belly."  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What evidence is there that Mr. Hammond is a positive man?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- The novel offers a ray of hope in a scene of misery. What is this ray of hope and how does it come about?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

SUBTOTAL: /16

## Character Development

The narrator — Frank — grows and learns a lot over the course of the novel. For example, he struggles with his role as a Catholic and how to fit into his expected role as an Irish man. Describe some of the major events and instances that cause him to change and how they shaped him.

Event	Outcome

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

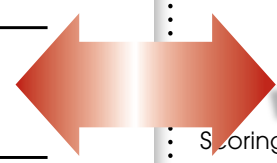
After You Read 



# Chapters Eleven to Twelve

Answer each question with a complete sentence.

- Why doesn't Mikey have fits anymore?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Why won't Peter let Mikey have lots of pints?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- The novel offers a ray of hope in a scene of misery. What is this ray of hope and how does it come about?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What simple, yet sublime pleasure does Frank experience?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What advice does Mr. Hammond give Frank?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- How is Frank's shirt a symbol of poverty?  
\_\_\_\_\_



# EASY MARKING ANSWER KEY



**Journaling Prompt**

Frank scores the winning goal in a game and experiences pure joy. Have you ever had a moment of accomplishment when you felt a surreal pleasure? In your journal entry, describe the event and the moment in which you felt accomplishment. Use very creative and descriptive vocabulary.

**1.**  
He fell off a drainpipe.

**2.**  
He doesn't want him to be turned off the pints.

**3.**  
Peter deciding that everything has it's opposite and that he is going to become the champion of non-drinkers.

**4.**  
Scoring the winning goal.

**5.**  
Concentrate on his schooling and get out of Limerick.

**6.**  
It's his only shirt and when he gets a new one, it becomes a towel.

**1.**  
Answers will vary.

**2.**  
Answers will vary.

**Vocabulary**  
Answers will vary.

- 1.**  
a) Friday night  
b) drinking c) dinner  
d) overcoat  
e) blood f) stout  
g) Mam  
h) overcoat  
i) chin  
j) hands  
k) great bloody steak l) sin  
m) float

**2.**  
a)  C b)  D

c)  D d)  D

e)  C f)  D

**1.**  
By emptying Laman's chamber pot.

**2.**  
Answers will vary.

**3.**  
Because she is impressed with Frank.

**4.**  
Because Ireland is throwing its talented children on the dung heap.

**5.**  
Answers will vary.

**6.**  
Due to the great distance to the post office.



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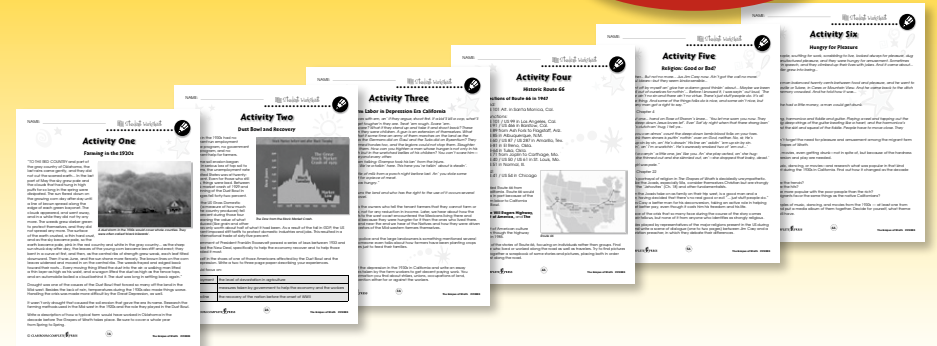
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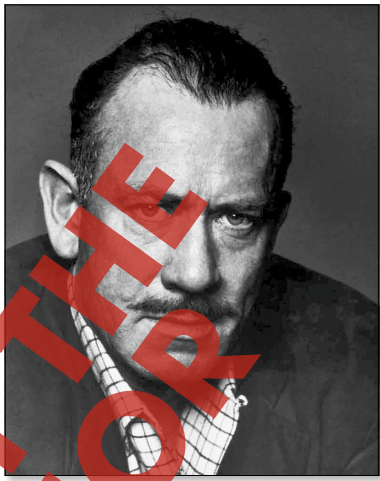
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# John Steinbeck

**J**ohn Steinbeck (1902–1968), was born to a family of modest means in Salinas, California. He attended Stanford University, though he never received a degree. Beginning in 1925, John tried to earn a living as a freelance writer in New York. After failing to do so, he returned to California where he wrote and published his first novels and short stories. It was a collection of comedic short stories about Monterey paisanos, *Tortilla Flat* (1935) that first gained him some degree of recognition.



For the most part, Steinbeck wrote social novels that dealt with rural labor and the economic problems that go along with it. It has been noted that his works also express a reverence for the soil and the people who work it that is sometimes at odds with the sociological bent of his books as a whole. After the coarse humor of his first hit novel, Steinbeck wrote something a good deal more serious. *In Dubious Battle* (1936) was an aggressively critical social novel dealing with migratory fruit pickers on California plantations and their strikes for better conditions and wages. After this, he wrote *Of Mice and Men* (1937), which told the tale of Lennie, a very large man who was an imbecile. Next was *The Long Valley* (1938), a series of excellent short stories. *The Grapes of Wrath*, published in 1939, is widely considered to be his best work. It is the story of

tenant farmers in Oklahoma who, after being forced from their land that is becoming infertile, migrate, along with hundreds of thousands of others to California to get work.

Steinbeck wrote several good novels in his later years, the most outstanding of which are *East of Eden* (1952), *The Winter of Our Discontent* (1961), and *Travels with Charley* (1962). The latter is an account of Steinbeck's travels in a truck through forty U.S. states over a three month period. He died in 1968 in New York City.

### Did You Know?

• Steinbeck was the most popular deceased American writer in the mid-1990s; his works sold 750,000 annually.

• American literary critics thought he was undeserving of the Nobel Prize for Literature that he won in 1962.

• For most of his life, Steinbeck would draw a pig with wings after his signature. He named it Pigasus. Pigasus symbolized Steinbeck as "earthbound but aspiring.... A lumbering soul but trying to fly... (with)... not enough wingspread but plenty of intention."



# Chapters Fourteen to Sixteen

Answer the questions in complete sentences.

1. With several hundred thousand people streaming into California looking for work, how do you think the people living there, especially the landowners, will react?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What do you think the Joads will do if they can't find work in California? What should they do?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Vocabulary

Complete each sentence with a word from the list.

bewildered	streamlined	corrugated	gasket
proprietor	dungarees	contractor	coroner

1. Mike's mom scolded him for wearing his good pants on the playground, telling him he should have worn his old \_\_\_\_\_ instead.

2. The drainage culverts were made of concrete rather than the \_\_\_\_\_ iron he had expected.

3. The doctor assured the family that the death was from natural causes and therefore a \_\_\_\_\_ would not be required.

4. The homeowners did much of the work themselves but had a \_\_\_\_\_ build the deck.

5. Jim's car probably would get much better gas mileage if it were better \_\_\_\_\_.

6. The purple top that her mom was wearing while she cooked dinner had Janine completely \_\_\_\_\_.

7. The puddle of soup in the vegetable crisper indicated to David that the \_\_\_\_\_ on the Mason jar was missing—again.

8. Jim's complaints got him no satisfaction for, as the mechanic explained, the garage's \_\_\_\_\_ was out of town on vacation.



# Chapters Fourteen to Sixteen

Fill in each blank with the correct word from the chapters.

- a) This you may say of man—when theories change and crash, when schools, \_\_\_\_\_, when narrow dark alleys of thought, national, religious, economic, grow and disintegrate, man reaches, stumbles forward, painfully, mistakenly sometimes.
- b) Worried because \_\_\_\_\_ do not work out; hungry for security and yet sensing its disappearance from the earth.
- c) And her plump face was tight against the movement, and her head \_\_\_\_\_ sharply because her neck muscles were tight.
- d) She dropped her weapon on the ground, and Tom, with \_\_\_\_\_ care, picked it up and put it back in the car.
- e) The \_\_\_\_\_ man rubbed his forehead with a knuckle, and a line of dirt peeled off.

2. Complete each sentence with a word from the list.

spatula	buzzard	flush	piston	clod
---------	---------	-------	--------	------

- a) A pie lifter won't do it; you're going to need a proper \_\_\_\_\_.
- b) Jeremy spotted the book his sister had been reading because it was not \_\_\_\_\_ with the other books on the shelf.
- c) The truck's rear wheels spun, throwing up dirt, one \_\_\_\_\_ of which struck a second floor window.
- d) The \_\_\_\_\_ peeking in at her through her window hinted to Beverly that it might be time to clean out the fridge.
- e) The loud banging from the engine seemed to Susan must be a \_\_\_\_\_ misfiring.



# Chapters Fourteen to Sixteen

Answer each question with a complete sentence.

1. Western land owners are fighting the widening government, labor unity and strikes. What's the real problem?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. After protesting to Al about selling a whole loaf of bread for ten cents, Mae sells two nickel-a-piece candies for a penny. Why do you think she did that?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Why did Casy say he had been so quiet?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Tom isn't thinking about anything but the task immediately in front of him. Why?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Why did Ma want the family to camp where there was shade and water?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. When Tom was told he'd have to pay another fifty cents to stay at the campground, what did he decide to do?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



### Journaling Prompt

You are a cook in a diner along Route 66. You know from people returning from California just how bad the job situation is. Write a journal entry in which you try to convince a family heading west, to change their plans and look for work somewhere else.



## Chapters 18 to 25

### Characterizing the Land

The land in Oklahoma was worked steadily and lovingly by farmers who didn't own it. Despite that, it became less and less fertile, largely because mistakes were made in what was grown and how.

In contrast, the land in California is rich and the crops grown there thrive. There are scientists who make sure that the soil stays rich and that the crops themselves stay healthy and free from parasites. Yet the land is worked by people who do not care for it.

Steinbeck's philosophy concerns the tragedy of the commercialization of farming. The soil, the land in *The Grapes of Wrath* is almost a character in itself.

Write an essay, describing the land as if it were a person. What does it look like, act like? What would it say for itself? How does this change over the course of the story? How would it feel about its treatment by the various groups in the story?



## Chapters 26 to 27

### A Police Report

The workers striking at the orchard when the Joads show up are angry because they were expected to work for less than what would feed them and their families.

This anger and the determination of the landowners and the police to prevent group action led to the murder of two men: Jim Casy and Casy's killer.

Imagine that you are a police officer who was not present for any of the events, but now has to investigate what happened. Write up a police report about the incident. Provide as much detail about what happened, beginning with the original unrest and ending with the return to the wage that caused the upset in the beginning.



## Word Search Puzzle

Find the following words from the story. The words are written horizontally, vertically, diagonally, and some are written backwards.

panoramicly	headband	heifer	splitting
puckering	fistfuls	lusterless	paling
degenerate	drone	anlage	babbitt
bristled	cannery	tannic	shear
exhortation	vagrant	truculent	boxcar

d	j	e	l	g	h	d	s	r	b	i	o	h	b	s	r	a	w	a	v	w	a	
f	f	g	r	b	t	a	s	f	y	s	q	d	w	a	m	c	i	s	b	z	l	
h	v	h	f	f	g	b	e	b	g	d	x	s	r	v	p	f	l	f	p	a	o	
y	o	j	i	w	i	j	l	s	q	v	q	e	t	y	v	r	i	g	i	f	i	
w	i	e	u	h	u	y	r	h	u	g	e	f	s	n	h	q	k	t	k	t	k	
j	j	d	g	y	a	w	e	i	p	l	t	b	h	k	b	b	h	n	h	h	u	
u	h	u	p	p	l	n	t	r	u	c	u	l	e	n	t	v	b	x	j	f	j	
e	r	h	o	a	k	k	s	l	u	a	b	c	a	b	e	a	q	i	t	f	h	
a	r	i	e	l	h	i	u	d	l	a	c	s	f	v	q	m	w	j	g	j	b	
f	e	b	r	i	s	t	l	e	d	b	a	e	i	g	s	i	f	o	q	h	g	
g	y	a	i	n	f	p	d	g	a	h	x	d	o	v	i	f	v	a	e	d	g	
r	h	c	u	g	a	e	a	e	x	h	o	r	t	a	t	i	o	n	z	a	r	
o	a	s	j	a	t	h	r	n	l	t	q	o	a	g	y	s	t	l	h	k	e	
u	b	c	t	g	j	f	n	e	o	f	e	n	n	r	m	t	c	a	e	s	s	
g	t	n	x	k	t	t	l	p	r	r	e	n	a	q	f	a	g	a	a	z		
m	a	b	w	o	g	n	l	a	o	o	a	o	i	n	r	u	n	e	d	x	c	
k	w	c	b	a	b	b	i	t	t	n	g	m	c	t	y	l	n	l	b	b	g	
s	r	o	b	g	a	b	o	k	e	y	f	s	r	i	a	h	s	e	a	a	t	j
t	y	l	y	f	s	l	n	s	c	a	l	p	u	c	k	e	r	i	n	g	m	
w	u	h	r	s	a	t	y	a	s	v	l	s	l	v	a	u	y	v	d	j	l	
r	q	u	d	h	g	g	d	h	d	h	y	c	g	a	a	l	l	n	q	d	o	
v	e	m	g	k	n	s	h	v	g	t	n	b	b	y	t	n	l	i	r	q	i	
e	e	s	u	o	f	e	l	n	m	w	v	h	i	b	p	t	j	y	i	a	u	
s	u	q	j	u	u	v	i	j	k	h	w	u	a	n	u	k	e	l	l	f	h	
d	u	f	u	b	h	n	u	i	g	s	e	k	a	j	n	l	u	r	k	j	y	
u	h	u	e	f	e	h	u	y	a	f	o	g	i	b	e	q	u	i	i	e		
l	r	k	y	k	d	d	g	e	u	v	o	l	r	f	r	a	a	e	q	n	d	
i	d	l	h	n	l	a	r	d	h	m	i	a	e	g	q	p	w	d	a	l	g	



## Comprehension Quiz

Answer each question in a complete sentence.

- What was Jim Casy doing when we first met him in the novel? 2
- When the company men are evicting the farmers, what reason do they give? 2
- Why does Jim Casy say he wants to go West with the Joads? 2
- Why do the Joads decide to help the Wilsons with their car? 2
- After Al told Mae to give the man a whole loaf of bread, what did she do? 2
- How did Tom stop the bleeding on his hand when he cut it? 2
- What advice did Tom give to the one-eyed man? 3

SUBTOTAL: /15

## Themes

Discuss the themes of the novel — in particular how they are manifested in the story and their applicability to society today.

The love of the soil; something that runs through most of Steinbeck's works.

The cruelty of the treatment of the tenant farmers by the landowners and the subsequent cruelty migrant workers faced during the migration to California and while trying to work in the state.

Strength in unity—of the family, the community, with one's fellow workers.

The importance of adaptability to change in survival.

The virtue of anger as an antidote to the dehumanizing of the poor and indigent.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

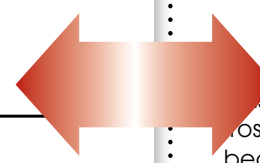
After You Read 



# Chapters Ten to Thirteen

Answer each question with a complete sentence.

1. What did the family do to save money on food for the first part of their journey?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Why did Muley really stop by just before the Joads left for California?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Who came to visit the houses of the farmers after they left?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What part of the trip was Al most worried about? Why?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Why wasn't Tom worried about breaking his parole by crossing state lines?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. According to Casy, why did Grampa Joad die?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



**1.**  
The Joad men kill, butcher and salt two pigs.

**2.**  
If they should ever meet his folks, Muley wanted the Joads to tell them he was alright.

**3.**  
First came boys from the town, and then came cats, then bats, mice, weasels and finally owls.

**4.**  
Al is most worried about crossing the mountains because the car was overloaded and the engine might burn out.

**5.**  
Tom wasn't worried because no one would know he'd left the state if he didn't commit any crimes.

**6.**  
Grampa Joad died because he couldn't leave the land he was born and raised on.

**1.**  
Answers will vary.

**2.**  
Answers will vary.

### Vocabulary

1. dungarees
2. corrugated
3. coroner
4. contractor
5. streamlined
6. bewildered
7. gasket
8. proprietor

**1.**  
a) philosophies

b) formulas

c) jiggled

d) elaborate

e) one-eyed

**2.**  
a) spatula

b) flush

c) clod

d) buzzard

e) piston

**1.**  
The real problem is the hunger of hundreds of thousands of former farmers and their families who no longer have work or homes.

**2.**  
Answers will vary.

**3.**  
Casy was quiet because he was lusting after flesh and thinking that, if he weren't a preacher any more, he should get married.

**4.**  
Answers may vary, but should mention that Tom is worried about what might happen in California, considering how many people are moving west looking for work.

**5.**  
Ma wanted to camp where there was water and shade because of Grampa, who has been ranting at Grampa, who died a few days previous.

**6.**  
Tom decided that he, Casy and Uncle John would take the car down the road and wait for the others to come by in the morning.



# EASY MARKING ANSWER KEY



### Journaling Prompt

If you were left behind after everyone in your neighborhood left, what would you do to survive? Write a journal entry telling about your first day on your own.



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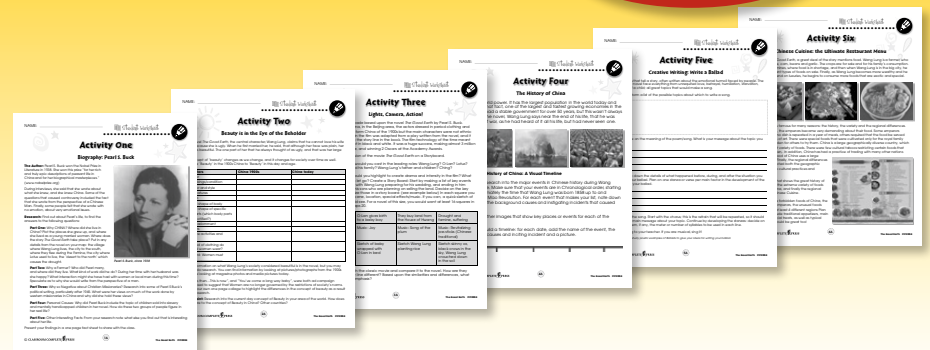


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# Pearl S. Buck

**T**o most of North America, **Pearl S. Buck** lived an exotic and fascinating life. She was born Pearl Comfort Sydenstricker on June 26, 1892 in Hillsboro, West Virginia. Her parents were missionaries and so she lived in China for most of her life until 1934. She moved to Anhui Province, the setting for most of *The Good Earth* with her first husband, John Lossing Buck.

In the early 1900s, life in China was largely a mystery to much of the rest of the world. Pearl Buck wrote about China in many of her novels, because it was what she knew, but also because one of her life goals was to dispel myths about Asia. She wanted to have the world see them as humans sharing the same qualities, strengths and weaknesses, even though their lifestyle and customs were so very different.

She wrote many novels about China, and later other Asian nations. *The Good Earth* is the first and most popular of the trilogy based on the Wang family. *The Good Earth* was written in 1931, followed by *Sons* in 1932, and finally *A House Divided* in 1935.



### Did You Know?

- Her Chinese name is Sai Zhenzhu.
- Pearl Buck set up an adoption agency called *Welcome House Inc.* for adopting Asian-American children. Pearl and her husband John had adopted a daughter.
- She wrote *The Child Who Never Grew* in 1950, which highlighted her active interest in the care of mentally handicapped children. Her own daughter had been born with a disease (PKU) that had caused her to be mentally handicapped, which may have sparked her interest.



# Chapters Seven to Nine

Answer the questions in complete sentences.

1. Infanticide is the murder of a newly-born child, or infant, usually by a parent. Do some research and investigate why a parent in China would want to kill their own child. Are there any other places where this occurs?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What is 'destiny'? How does destiny affect the actions of the characters in the novel? How would it affect your own actions?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. From what you have read so far in the novel, write one sentence that describes the role women play during this time period in China. How does this differ from your own modern society?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Vocabulary

Circle the correct word or definition that matches the meaning of the underlined word.

1. Acrid a) dry b) bitter c) putrid d) fragrant
2. Allayed a) relieved b) prayed c) disfigured d) soil tested for minerals
3. Barren a) sterile or infertile b) give birth c) wide open d) flat dusty land
4. Berate a) evaluate b) a rake c) sift d) scold or criticize
5. Essayed a) a written exam b) annex c) tried d) educated
6. Unctuous a) serpent like b) righteous c) rolling d) excessively flattering
7. Parched a) extremely dry b) a fresh fish c) alleged d) paper thin



# Chapters Seven to Nine

1. Put a check mark (✓) next to the answer that is most correct.

- a) Wang Lung was determined to buy more of the land from the House of Hwang, but after the first harvest he could not. Why?
  - A There was a drought and he didn't make enough money.
  - B He loaned money to his Uncle.
  - C The villagers broke into his house and stole his silver.
  - D The noble family would not sell to him.
- b) During the Famine in Chapter 8 and 9, which of the following was not eaten by Wang Lung?
  - A corn cobs
  - B the ox
  - C dirt
  - D locust
- c) As the drought started, Wang Lung secretly bought another field. At the end of Chapter 8, why is Wang Lung happy that he had bought the land?
  - A It can't be stolen.
  - B It can be sold.
  - C It seems like he is getting richer.
  - D He can farm it for food.

2. Circle T if the statement is TRUE or F if it is FALSE.

- T F a) Wang Lung's cousin gets married because Wang Lung gives his uncle the money for a dowry.
- T F b) Wang Lung's uncle has an 'evil destiny' to blame for his bad luck.
- T F c) Wang Lung's daughter can't walk because they are binding her feet.
- T F d) Wang Lung sells his land to get money for food.
- T F e) The villagers attack Wang Lung's house looking for food and money.
- T F f) Wang Lung is furious with his uncle because he convinced the villagers to steal from him.
- T F g) The villagers felt justified in taking anything they found because Wang Lung had been greedy.
- T F h) O-Lan sells the last of their belongings for 2 pieces of silver.



# Chapters Seven to Nine

Answer each question with a complete sentence.

1. What motivates Wang Lung to approach his aunt and demand she control her daughter?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Wang Lung felt it was a bad omen when his wife gave birth to a girl, yet he forms a special attachment to his little girl. Why?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Analyze the actions of Wang Lung's uncle to describe clearly his true character.

Actions:	What it says about his true character:
Uncle blames his dirty house, poorly behaving children and low crop yield on his 'evil destiny'.	
Uncle pressures Wang Lung for money to use as a dowry for his oldest child, Wang Lung suspects that he will gamble it away.	
Uncle tells villagers that his nephew has food and money hidden away in his house, while others starve.	
Uncle takes money from opportunistic merchants and brings men to Wang Lung's house to convince him to sell his lands.	

4. Foreshadowing occurs when an author writes elements into the story that hint at future events in the story. Predict what may happen with the House of Hwang during The Famine, based upon foreshadowing that appears in the text. Use evidence from the chapters.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Based on Wang Lung's Uncle and his family's behaviors in these chapters, can you predict what problems they may cause for Wang Lung in the future?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Journaling Prompt

In turn of the century China, elder males were given great respect and honor. Wang Lung must not be rude to his uncle and must share his money with him. Wang Lung also makes sure that his father has food, even if he himself, nor his children and wife have any. How is this different from your society today? Who is respected in your society? Is this good or bad? Explain.



## Chapters 1 to 10

### Demonstrate Your Style

Take the topic of 'the land' in the novel, and write 4 paragraphs, one for each of the following:

- Narrative
- Expository
- Persuasive
- Descriptive

A narrative paragraph would tell a story related to the farming land. An expository paragraph would teach someone how to farm the land. A persuasive paragraph would convince someone to farm the land, and a descriptive paragraph would describe the land using as many senses as possible.

All paragraphs start with a strong topic sentence, a couple body sentences full of information to support the topic, and finish with a closing or concluding sentence that sums up or helps the reader have a more profound understanding of the topic of the paragraph.



## Chapters 11 to 13

### Newspaper Article

Take one event in the novel and write it up as if it were the feature story on the cover of a local newspaper. Study newspaper style writing, recognizing the need to keep your sentences fact-filled, unbiased, and to the point.

The first paragraph should give the most important information right away, and each subsequent paragraph fills in the Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How, with more and more background information. Your feature story should have a photo and a headline to catch the reader's attention.

Examples of events to cover for the newspaper article could be:

- the Famine
- the locust
- the bandit's attack on the House of Hwang
- or choose one of your own



## Word Search Puzzle

Find the following words from the story. The words are written horizontally, vertically, diagonally, and some are written backwards.

unseemly	destiny	harlot	winnow	quiescent
haranguing	merit	husbanded	sundered	remorse
serf	mar	dallied	yoke	steward
omen	flail	lotus	gilt	garner
chaff	relish	opium	impudent	taoist

I	D	E	D	N	A	B	S	U	H	F	B	R
M	U	I	P	O	C	H	A	F	E	R	P	N
P	A	S	U	N	D	E	R	E	D	E	O	I
U	E	R	E	M	O	R	S	E	L	S	T	U
D	S	E	W	U	D	A	L	L	I	E	D	Y
E	C	L	A	H	E	Q	S	O	A	K	E	T
N	G	I	L	T	S	M	Y	T	L	O	R	F
T	O	S	U	K	T	E	L	U	F	Y	E	G
T	A	H	K	L	I	R	M	S	R	Z	P	N
N	S	O	M	E	N	I	E	E	T	W	N	U
E	I	T	I	P	Y	T	E	Y	W	N	U	J
C	R	A	E	S	L	Y	S	O	T	T	S	Y
S	E	K	W	T	P	N	K	H	O	B	G	
E	N	U	G	N	A	N	U	E	C	L	X	C
I	R	Q	R	U	I	R	O	B	W	R	L	E
U	A	Y	E	W	S	M	D	X	T	A	M	T
Q	G	N	I	U	G	N	A	R	A	H	T	U



## Comprehension Quiz

Answer each question in a complete sentence.

- List 3 reasons why Wang Lung's father suggested that a slave from the great House of Hwang would make a good wife for him. 3
- Although she was a good wife, what did Wang Lung always dislike about O-Lan? 1
- Compare Wang Lung to his Uncle in 3 ways: work habits, their actions during the Famine, and handling of money. 3
- In many ways, O-Lan was stronger than Wang Lung. Explain one way that O-Lan's actions demonstrate her physical strength, and one way that demonstrates her emotional strength. 2
- According to Wang Lung, why is the Hwang family failing? 1
- After his neighbors attacked his farm and stole what they could find, why did Wang Lung say he was glad that he had used all his money to buy land before the drought? 2
- How does the second daughter die? Why? 2

SUBTOTAL: /14

## Character Sketch

Gather information on one of the main characters in each chapter to complete the character sketch.

**A typical quote** from the character (with citation):

**Character's Thoughts** (with citation):

**Biceps** - strengths of the character:

**Left Hand** - What weapons does this character have (real or metaphorical)?

**Right Hand** - What does the character own or cherish?

**What/who is a pain in the neck** for this character?

**What/who does the character love?**

**Front Leg** - Where is the character going (real journey or metaphorical)?

**Back Leg** - Where did the character come from?

**Back Ankle** - Weaknesses of the character:

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_



# Chapters Seven to Nine

Answer each question with a complete sentence.

1. What motivates Wang Lung to approach his aunt and demand she control her daughter?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Wang Lung felt it was a bad omen when his wife gave birth to a girl, yet he forms a special attachment to his little girl. Why?  
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\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



### Journaling Prompt

In turn of the century China, elder males were given great respect and honor. Wang Lung must not be rude to his uncle and must share his money with him. Wang Lung also makes sure that his father has food, even if he himself, nor his children and wife have any. How is this different from your society today? Who is respected in your society? Is this good or bad? Explain.

1. Family honor.

2. She smiles when she looks at him.

3. Answers will vary, but may include: Lazy, foolish and selfish, jealous and vindictive, opportunistic and amoral.

4. Answers will vary, but may include: House of Hwang will sell more land; they are already broke and spending too much money; it will be attacked and ransacked just as the villagers crazed with hunger attacked Wang Lung; people at the gate of the house have lost respect for them and are cursing the House of Hwang.

5. Answers will vary, but should include that his Uncle's family would continue to extort or expect money and/or food from Wang Lung. Also, that the Uncle's children will not behave according to Wang Lung's moral code.

1. Answers will vary, but may include: hardworking, determined, resourceful, thrifty, frugal.

2. Answers will vary.

### Vocabulary

Reasons will vary.

1. c

2. d

3. b

4. c

5. c

1. a) train

b) mats; wall; remember

c) beg; ashamed; 8; 13; money

d) rickshaw

e) public kitchens; cauldrons; stampede

f) 4; beg; girl

g) second; pork; thieves

h) O-Lan; meat

a) the firewagon (train)

b) the mat huts build along the grey wall

c) Wang Lung pulling the rickshaw for the first time

d) the poor people

e) the hairy white foreigner who gave him a gospel tract



O-Lan lived through a famine when she was young, and knew to preserve food if possible, even the cobs of corn could be eaten. She learned to build mat huts, beg, scavenge and steal when her family had fled to the south. She listens to what is happening around her and takes advantage when the great house is broken open. When she was a slave, she had learned that people with treasure will have a hiding place often in the walls; this helped her find a treasure to get them back home.

This is hinting that when people are young enough to still have hope, they will become unhappy and perhaps rebel, foreshadowing the invasion of the wealthy house, and perhaps other actions in the future.

This statement tells us that O-Lan was very poorly treated as a slave in the House of Hwang, and it also tells us that she loves her husband, that she would consider selling a child into slavery just so he can get home to his lands.

O-Lan says "If it were only I, she would be killed before she was sold... the slave of slaves was I! But a dead girl brings nothing. I would sell this girl for you-to take you back to the land."

He was afraid of being 'shanghaied' (meaning abducted by soldiers to work for them in the upcoming war). The soldiers were combing the city and taking any able bodied man with them.

## Historical Stories Lit Kit Set – Gr. 9-12

---

- **RSL.9-10.1** Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- **RSL.9-10.2** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.
- **RSL.9-10.3** Analyze how complex characters develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.
- **RSL.9-10.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone.
- **RSL.9-10.7** Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment.
- **RSL.9-10.10** By the end of grade 9 read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 9–10 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of the grades 9–10 text complexity band independently and proficiently.
- **RSL.11-12.1** Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
- **RSL.11-12.2** Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.
- **RSL.11-12.3** Analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama.
- **RSL.11-12.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful.
- **RSL.11-12.7** Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem, evaluating how each version interprets the source text.
- **RSL.11-12.10** By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 11–CCR text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of the grades 11–CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.
- **WS.9-10.1** Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- **WS.9-10.2** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- **WS.9-10.3** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
- **WS.9-10.4** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- **WS.9-10.7** Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- **WS.9-10.8** Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
- **WS.9-10.9** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
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