

Of Mice and Men Pre-Reading Activity

Background: *Of Mice and Men* is a novella by American writer John Steinbeck. It is set in the 1930s, during the Great Depression, and tells the stories of two migrant workers who dream of having their own small piece of land. There are many issues in *Of Mice and Men* that require some background knowledge to help you through the novel.

Directions: In groups, for your topic, answer the questions below. It is up to your group how you organize and present this information, but it must include a visual presentation with photographs, illustrations, and/or video to help your audience understand your material.

John Steinbeck	Basic biographical information, childhood and personal life, his written works, topics he was interested in, his awards/recognitions, his themes.
Migrant Workers	What is the Dust Bowl? Where in CA did migrant workers find jobs? What is their typical day? Typical salaries, benefits, and working conditions.
Developmental Delays	Symptoms, causes. How were people with developmental delays treated during the 1900-50s? NOTE: While “developmental delay” is the preferred term, you might find information under “mental retardation,” which was the term of the time and is still used by medical professionals, but is offensive in conversation.
The Great Depression	Definition of The Great Depression, the time period, causes (economic/agriculture), worker life during the depression. What were some of the issues for farmers during the Depression, especially the American west (California)?
Censorship	Define censorship. How does censorship apply to daily life, especially for schools/ students? Why has the novella been challenged (include multiple cases)? What was the result of said cases?

Rubric

	Points Available
Visual Presentation Quality: Design, Photos, Art, Coherence	5
Text: Concise, Note Form, No evidence of lengthy text	5
MLA Form: Works Cited Page, Parenthetical Citations	5
Presentation Skills: All members participate, professional, engaging	5
Completeness: All questions answered, complete information, able to answer questions.	10
Total Points (Quiz Score)	30