

Study Questions for *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck

The following 20 questions can be used for discussion prompts, essay topics, exam questions, or as study guide material for John Steinbeck's novel *Of Mice and Men*.

1. *Of Mice and Men* was written as a hybrid form, utilizing elements of dramatic form and prose fiction. Where is this stylistic choice clearest in the book?
2. How do the moments of direct exposition of characters' thoughts affect the success of this hybrid form?
3. What is the significance of the fact that George, Lenny, Candy and Crooks are each drawn by the appeal to a dream of land ownership?
4. What values/ethics do the farm hands have in common?
5. What needs do the farm hands have in common?
6. How does Slim figure into the "society" of the novel?
7. What is the significance of Curley's wife remaining nameless?
8. Is Curley's wife responsible for her own death?

9. Is Lenny responsible for the death of Curley's wife?
10. Is Lenny responsible for his own death?
11. How does the ranch owner's attitude relate to the shared dream of George and Lenny?
12. What is the significance of the repetition of the shared dream and "how it's going to be"?
13. Where does Steinbeck offer/utilize direct character exposition?
14. Which characters are able to articulate his/her feelings and thoughts? Which characters are not?
15. Considering the notion of "inhibition": Which characters are inhibited and how?
16. How does inhibition figure into the narrative and the characterization of the people in the novel?
17. Is George justified in killing Lenny?
18. Is Lenny's death inevitable?

19. What is the “pecking order” among the characters in the story?

20. Where does Curley figure into the hierarchy of the “society” of the ranch?