

Of Mice and Men

by

John Steinbeck



Literary Analysis Essay

English 1/Schick

Name: _____

Period: _____

Background

As we have discussed extensively in class, John Steinbeck uses complex characters to develop multiple themes in his novel. We discovered his novel to be rich in imagery and strong in tone. To achieve this, we noted he utilized many literary devices, including symbolism, indirect/direct characterization, foreshadowing, irony, mood, metaphor, and simile.

Your Turn

You will be writing an essay that identifies and clearly conveys a major theme of the novel. You will choose the three characters you feel best demonstrate this theme. The body of your essay will be composed of three paragraphs, each explaining how an individual character exemplifies the theme. You should use your ideas (and our discussions) on the book itself, the activities we have completed, and the notes you have taken to respond to this prompt.

Your essay must be in the five-paragraph format:

Paragraph 1: Introduction - includes a hook to “catch” your reader, a bridge to connect your hook to the thesis, and a clear thesis statement

Paragraphs 2-4: Three body paragraphs - with two pieces of evidence and commentary supporting your thesis

Each piece of evidence needs in-depth commentary/explanation of why it proves your theme statement. In every body paragraph, there should be two pieces of cited evidence. Introduce each quotation and include citations (Steinbeck 54) for each quote.

Paragraph 5: Conclusion - includes re-statement of thesis in a new way, provides your insight to why the theme is important, and provides the reader with closure.

Grading

You will be graded with an emphasis on **ideas, organization, and conventions**.

Keep in mind this is a **formal essay**, and your **tone** should reflect the assignment.

Assignment breakdown

- Skeleton: 10 points
- Finding Evidence: 20 points
- Outline: 20 points
- First Draft: 20 points
- Final Draft: 60 points

TOTAL: 130 points

Finding Evidence



In order to determine which characters best demonstrate the theme you have chosen, you will need to start by examining the text to find examples. You should have some examples in your notes, but you should look in the book to find more.

Complete the table on the next page, writing down **at least six** phrases, passages, or sentences from the book. Aim to find two for each character.

Try to use the entire book – don't limit your quotations/evidence to only a couple of chapters.

LEFT COLUMN	RIGHT COLUMN
Record a notable direct quote from the text. You'll need to put forth effort into choosing your quotes—not all sentences in a text lend themselves to complex discussion. Finally, end each quote with the page number.	Next, write a response in which you respond to the passage that you noted. The response must be A MINIMUM OF THREE SENTENCES, BUT IT CAN ALSO BE LONGER. Your responses need to reflect ideas, insights, questions, personal reflections, or connections that indicate deeper thoughts (a.k.a.: depth) regarding the text.

Quote/Evidence (page number)	Commentary – 3+ sentences
for Topic Sentence. #1	
for T.S. #1	

for Topic Sentence. #2	
for T.S. #2	
for T.S. #3	
for T.S. #3	
One piece of additional evidence I might use:	

Quoting and Paraphrasing

EMBEDDED QUOTES: Introduce the passage with a sentence or a phrase and blend it into your own writing so that it flows smoothly together and makes sense.

The mercy killing of Candy's dog serves to isolate Candy even further. After allowing Carlson to take the dog outside to kill it, Candy refuses to join in the card game with the other men. He then physically distances himself from the others by lying down on his bunk. After they hear Carlson shoot the dog, Candy retreats even more when "he rolled slowly over and faced the wall and lay silent" (Steinbeck 49).

Note: The quoted material is integrated into the sentence. The citation (page number) comes after the quoted material but immediately BEFORE the period.

PARAPHRASED CITATIONS: This type of citation is used if you just tell what the writer said in your own words.

The mercy killing of Candy's dog also serves to isolate Candy from the other men. After allowing Carlson to take the dog outside to kill it, Candy refuses to join in the card game with the other men. He then physically distances himself from the others by lying down on his bunk. After they hear Carlson shoot the dog, Candy retreats even further by saying nothing. Instead he rolls over on his bed facing away from the other ranch workers (Steinbeck 49). Candy's reaction to the loss of his only friend is silent and detached. His physical reaction, turning away from the other men in the bunkhouse, further emphasizes his loneliness. It is even greater now that his dog is gone. Without his dog, Candy is alone on the ranch and in the world.

Remember – you should have a mix of quoting and paraphrasing in each of your body paragraphs.

Literary Analysis Essay Outline

Introduction:

Hook: _____

Bridge (connect hook to thesis): _____

Thesis Statement (Answer the question: What is the theme of the novel (include title and author) and which three characters best demonstrate this theme.) Remember, a theme should be universal (goes beyond this particular story and these particular characters).

Support Paragraph #1:

Topic Sentence (identify the first character and say why he/she demonstrates the theme):

Quote/evidence from book (include citation!):

Commentary on quote/paraphrased material:

Quote/evidence from book (include citation!):

Commentary on quote/paraphrased material:

Transition: _____

Support Paragraph #2:

Topic Sentence (identify the first character and say why he/she demonstrates the theme):

Quote/evidence from book (include citation!):

Commentary on quote/paraphrased material:

Quote/evidence from book (include citation!):

Commentary on quote/paraphrased material:

Transition: _____

Support Paragraph #3:

Topic Sentence (identify the first character and say why he/she demonstrates the theme):

Quote/evidence from book (include citation!):

Commentary on quote/paraphrased material:

Quote/evidence from book (include citation!):

Commentary on quote/paraphrased material:

Transition: _____

Conclusion:

Relate back to hook: _____

Restate *thesis* (in different words!): _____

Final closing thoughts (big idea/connection to why this matters outside of the novel):

