

NAME: Sample Student **BLOCK:** XX **DATE:** XX/XX/XXX

INDEPENDENT READING ASSESSMENT

TITLE	<u>Of Mice and Men</u>
AUTHOR	John Steinbeck
GENRE	<u>FICTION</u> NONFICTION POETRY DRAMA
TYPE	<u>CLASSIC</u> CHOICE
TOTAL PAGES	150
FINISHED?	<u>YES</u> NO IF NO, PAGES READ: FROM ___ TO ___
VOCAB DIFFICULTY	<u>EASY (0)</u> MEDIUM (1-2) DIFFICULT (3-4) EXTREME (5+)
VERIFICATION	I HAVE NOT READ THIS BOOK BEFORE.
	<u>Sample Student</u>
	STUDENT SIGNATURE

PART A: RESPONSE

Create something that demonstrates what this book means to you. Please use an 8.5 x 11" format and staple it to this page. No covers please. (1.6, 2.4)

Please note that this response does not have to be a drawing.

PART B: QUESTIONS

Compare and contrast the ideas, information, and/or writing style in this book with other texts that you've read, viewed, or studied before. If possible, use appropriate literary terms. (1.1, 2.1-2.2)

Of Mice and Men reminds me of other texts in many ways, but it is also very unique. The style that Steinbeck uses reminds me a lot of Mark Twain's works. The two authors will often spell words in dialogue the way they would sound if they were being said by the character instead of using the "correct" spelling. The rural settings and simple characters and plots also resemble each other. However, Of Mice and Men is different than Mark Twain's works by its very deep theme and more somber mood. I am also reminded of the movie, The Green Mile, in which a man who seems to be a simpleton is accused of murder. Only one prison guard has any sympathy for the man in the beginning, similar to George's understanding of Lennie in Of Mice and Men. In the end, the accused man died, as did Lennie, although the character from The Green Mile was innocent of any crime. Lennie was not – he did commit murder. I identify the central theme of both Of Mice and Men and The Green Mile with the debate of personal responsibility, and the question of whether or not mentally deficient people can be held accountable for their actions.

What have you gained from your reading of this book? (1.7, 2.5)

Reading Of Mice and Men has given me more perspective on the human experience and mindset. Lennie's death by the hand of his best friend was a strong message; mankind struggles to do what is right and humane. George convinced himself that Lennie would be better off shot than jailed or hanged. After he shot Lennie, he was filled with remorse and sorrow. Slim tried to convince him that it was his only option. I also found deep meaning in this, because to me, Slim seemed to be a representation of the human conscience, telling George that what was hardest was the right thing to do. Although George had convinced himself that he was doing it for Lennie, it was also to end his obligation to care for Lennie. To me, Of Mice and Men is basically about what we do, why we do it, and how we feel when it is done.

PART C: ANALYSIS

Choose two passages from the book that you find significant. Giving page numbers, please cite each passage and then describe, using appropriate literary terms in 50-100 words, what that passage means to the work as a whole. What does it show? Why did the author include it? (prep for 1.2-1.5 and 6.2)

PASSAGE	MEANING
<p>1 S'pose you didn't have nobody. S'pose you couldn't go in the bunk house and play rummy 'cause you was black. How'd you like that? S'pose you had to sit out here and read books. Sure you could play horseshoes till it got dark, but then you got to read books. Books ain't no good. A guy needs somebody to be near him.</p>	<p>Steinbeck included this passage because it exhibits human emotions and it foreshadows George's feelings in the conclusion. It is a major contribution to the work as a whole because it explains why George has travelled all over the country with cumbersome Lennie. His inability to have an intelligent conversation with Lennie did not bother him because he needed Lennie's companionship. He had grown fond of Lennie without realizing it because they had know each other for so long. George often spoke of how carefree he would have been without having to look after Lennie. When he shot Lennie, it was because George did not want him to be hanged, but it was also because he was tired of protecting Lennie. When Lennie was dead, George was filled with shock and sorrow because he had lost a friend, when he had only planned to lose a burden. (words = 146)</p>
<p>PAGE(S): 107-108</p>	
<p>2 Carlson was not be put off. "Look, Candy. This ol' dog jus' suffers hisself all the time. If you was to take him out and shoot him right in the back of the head" – he leaned over and pointed, "right there, why he'd never know what hit him."</p> <p>Candy looked about unhappily. "No," he said softly. "No, I couldn't do that. I had him too long."</p>	<p>This passage shows the popular belief that when a creature is in pain, it would be better off dead. Steinbeck used this passage to foreshadow Lennie's death and also as a representation of George's reasons for killing him. Many people are familiar with "putting it down" when an animal is old or sick. This passage takes that familiar and common concept and applies it to a person who seems to hurt others without meaning to. The idea introduced in this passage lays the foundation for the theme of the work by making it abstract in its application to a human. It is our first glimpse of how seemingly horrendous acts are justified by the people who commit them. This passage is the unveiling of one of the central themes of this work: the best human intentions can beget sorrow and regret. (words = 141)</p>
<p>PAGE(S): 43</p>	