

## Of Mice and Men Study Guide

### CHAPTER 1

#### Vocabulary

**Bundle** – a pack

**Brusquely** – gruffly

**Contemplated** – thought about

**Debris** – leftovers, garbage

**Dejectedly** – sadly

**Imperiously** – like a dictator, arrogantly

**Junctures** – joints

**Lumbered** – moved heavily

**Morosely** – glumly, gloomily

**Mottled** – spotted

**Quivered** – shook, trembled

**Recumbent** – reclining, drooping

**Resignedly** – in a surrendering manner

**Skittering** – moving rapidly; skipping

1. The beginning of the novel begins with a rich description of the physical setting. Cite examples of three uses of descriptive language. Explain the effect on the mood of the novel by beginning the narrative with this description. What is Steinbeck trying to suggest about the area by the Salinas River?

*Answers will vary. Examples:*

*"The water is warm too, for it has slipped twinkling over the yellow sands in the sunlight before reaching the narrow pool." (Pg. 1)*

*"On the sandy bank under the trees the leaves lie deep and so crisp that a lizard makes a great skittering if he runs among them." (Pg. 1)*

*"There is a path through the willows and among the sycamores, a path beaten hard by boys coming down from the ranches to swim in the deep pool, and beaten hard by tramps who come wearily down from the highway in the evening to jungle-up near water." (Pages 1-2)*

2. The imagery at the beginning of the book suggests that the area is a place of peace and rest. The specific colors, foliage, and animals that are mentioned create a respite, even for those boys and men who beat paths to find solace under the giant sycamores. The idea that men and boys seek this place for comfort suggests that the Salinas River is a sanctuary.

*"Jungle-up" is an idiom used in the following sentence: "... and beaten hard by tramps who come wearily down from the highway in the evening to jungle-up near water." (Pg.2) Example the meaning of the idiom.*

3. Of Mice and Men is set during the Great Depression; During the this era, hobos traveled across the United States, and in the evening, the hobos would settle in camps that were referred to as "Hobo Jungles." To "jungle-up" is to camp in an area that other men had used or are using for the evening. Compare and contrast the two men who come into the clearing by the river. Why do you think Steinbeck introduces the men by describing their physical features, highlighting the fact that one is small and one is huge? What can the reader infer about the two men based on their descriptions?

*The two men who come into the clearing are similar in the way in which they are dressed and what they carry with them. For example, the two men are "dressed in denim trousers and in denim coats with brass buttons." (Pg. 2) They also both carry blanket rolls with them. Physically, the men are very different. One man is "small and quick, dark of face, with restless eyes and sharp, strong features." (Pg.2) The other man is huge and fair-skinned.*

*Answers will vary. By using the descriptions provided in the chapter, the reader is able to infer who the leader is between the two men and who is the follower. Steinbeck begins the description by stating that the men are dressed the same, going in the same direction, and yet, they are two very different men. The smaller man is the leader. Because he is described as "small and quick" with*

# Of Mice And Men Reading Study Guide

**Martin Stephen**



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