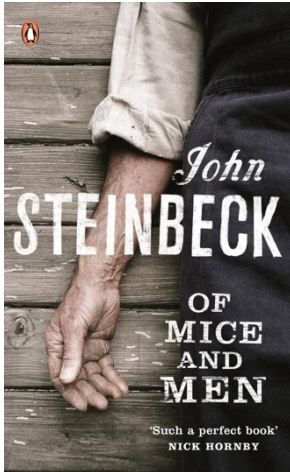


Of Mice and Men

By John Steinbeck



Streetwise George and his big childlike friend Lennie are drifters, searching for work in California during the Great Depression. They hope one day to be able to buy some land and give up their nomadic existence. But gentle giant Lennie doesn't know his own strength, and when they find work on a ranch he gets into trouble with the boss's daughter. Trouble so bad even his protector George might not be able to save him...

About the author

John Steinbeck was born in 1902 in California and wrote prolifically. *Of Mice and Men* and *The Grapes of Wrath* are probably his two best known novels. In 1962 he won the Nobel Prize for literature.

Discussion Questions

1. There's a lot of repetition in the story. Lennie loves for George to recite the 'dream' of the homestead and the rabbits and '*livin' offa the fatta the land*'. Do you think the repetition serves a purpose? What does it say about the characters' lives?

2. Is it significant that we never learn the name of Curley's wife? The men call her a tramp or 'trouble' for her seemingly flirtatious visits to the hired hands' quarters. Is there any other way her actions and her motives can be characterised?

3. Language is used in the book that would seem in our times to be both extremely racist and misogynistic. Do you think either Steinbeck or his characters are racist or misogynistic? Or is it the society at large in those times that the characters are merely reflecting?

4. Was George and Lennie's dream ever real? Was it 'the American dream'?

5. Was George's action at the end of the book an act of kindness or love to Lennie? How would you characterise it?

6. How important is Slim to the story?