

English 2: 2018 Summer Reading Assignment

Of Mice and Men by John Steinbeck

Each student is expected to read the novel thoroughly over the course of the summer. Before beginning the reading, it may be worthwhile to first consider [how to read a novel](#) and [how to annotate a text](#). The student is expected to consistently track and thoroughly understand two major themes or concepts from the text (see list below).

After selecting two specific topics, the student should draw quotes and evidence from throughout the novel, and take notes that begin to analyze the separate *and* comparable significance(s) of these topics. In the first week, each instructor will check your texts and notes for textual evidence (specific quotes) and notations. This annotative work should serve as the basis for the assessment portion of the summer reading assignment.

All students should be prepared for a long quiz/short test on the second and third days of classes: on the second day of classes, the first portion of the quiz will address reading comprehension in an objective format; on the third day of classes, the second portion will require the student to craft a cohesive, analytical essay based on the topics prepared by the student. The student's analytical notes and evidence from the text should be thorough enough to provide a solid foundation for the written work. Additionally, the students will be expected to craft a thesis-driven essay in the early weeks of the course based on their preparations.

List of Themes and Topics:

- The Role of Nature/Environment
- The Function of Racial or Gender Dynamics (Male/Female, Masculine/Feminine)
- The Structures of Power (Economic and Social)
- The Role of Violence
- Collective Action v. Individual Action
- Tone and Mood: Optimistic or Pessimistic?
- The Notion of the Family and Family Dynamics
- The Function of Agency/Autonomy (Free Will v. Determinism)
- Romantic/Hopeful v. Realistic
- Imagination v. Reality
- “Judgement” of Characters by Author and/or Reader
- Human Beings ← → Environment
- The Role of Poverty
- The Role of Labor
- The Function of Youth and Youth Imagery