

English 2: 2019 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. The student is expected to track consistently and understand thoroughly two major themes or concepts from the text.

Each student is to have his own individual hard copy of the text in the specified edition (ISBN: 978-0140177398). No online editions can be substituted. The student's name must be written on the inside cover and on the sides of the pages along the top and side of the book in permanent marker. Before beginning the reading, the student must review strategies and techniques for reading novels and annotating texts by carefully reviewing the following resources:

How to read a novel: <http://goo.gl/PP9Z8>

How to annotate a text: <https://www.genevaschool.org/wp-content/uploads/11th-Gr-How-to-Annotate-a-Text.pdf>

After selecting *two* specific topics from the list below, the student **must select two topics from the list below** and draw quotations and evidence for each from throughout the novel, taking notes that begin to analyze the separate *and* comparable significance(s) of these topics. **Students will list both chosen topics in the inside cover or on the first page of the book.** Each instructor will check students' texts and notes for textual evidence (specific quotations) and notations, and students should be prepared to have their work checked by the beginning of the first day of class. This annotative work should serve as the basis for the assessment portion of the summer reading assignment.

All students should be prepared for a test on the second and third days of classes: on the second day of classes, **the first portion of the test 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 essay. Additionally, 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 and the 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 vs. 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 vs. Reality
- "Judgment" of Characters by Author and/or Reader
- The Relationship between Human Beings and the Environment
- The Role of Poverty
- The Role of Labor
- The Function of Youth and Youth Imagery