

Of Mice & Men



pre-reading resources


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Pre-Reading Topics

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Pre-Reading Activities

Of Mice & Men 

"To a Mouse" Poem Analysis
Name: _____

Scots Version

Directions: Read the following poem by Robert Burns. In the space to the right, rewrite the poem in your own works (i.e. Modern English). Then, answer the questions that follow.

On Turning up in Her Nest with the Plough, November, 1785

Wee, sleeket, cowran, tim'rous beastie,
O, what a panic's in thy breastie!
Thou need na start awa sae hasty,
Wi' bickerin brattle!
I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee
Wi' murd'ring pattle!

→

I'm truly sorry Man's dominion
Has broken Nature's social union,
An' justifies that ill opinion,
Which makes thee startle,
At me, thy poor, earth-born companion,
An' fellow-mortal!

→

I doubt na, whyles, but thou may thieve;
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!
A daimen-icker in a thrave
'S a sma' request:
I'll get a blessin wi' the lave,
An' never miss 't!

→

Thy wee-bit housie, too, in ruin!
It's silly wa's the win's are strewin!
An' naething, now, to big a new ane,
O' foggage green!
An' bleak December's winds ensuin,
Baith snell an' keen!

→

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,
An' weary Winter comin fast,
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
Thou thought to dwell,
Till crash! the cruel coulter past
Out thro' thy cell.

→

That wee-bit heap o' leaves an' stibble
Has cost thee monie a weary nibble!
Now thou's turn'd out, for a' thy trouble,
But house or hald,
To thole the Winter's sleety dribble,
An' cranreuch cauld!

→

But Mousie, thou art no thy-lane,
In proving foresight may be vain:
The best laid schemes o' Mice an' Men
Gang aft agley,
An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain,
For promis'd joy!

→

Still, thou art blest, compar'd wi' me!
The present only toucheth thee:
But Och! I backward cast my e'e,
On prospects drear!
An' forward tho' I canna see,
I guess an' fear!

→

➤ 7 Activities to Build Background Knowledge

➤ Variety of Materials – Poem, Music, Images

➤ Nonfiction Readings with Questions

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Pre-Reading Activities

Of Mice & Men

Idioms of a 1930's Ranch
Name: _____

Directions: The characters in *Of Mice and Men* use words or phrases that may sound “old fashioned” or “odd” to us, especially since the novel takes place in the 1930's. We're going to preview these words or phrases that frequently show up in the novel, determine their meaning in the book, and see if we can make a connection to today!

- _____ = an expression or phrase that is not interpreted literally but has figurative sense. These can vary based on culture, country, or time period. Read the examples below and think about what the phrases *really* mean!
 - Example: It costs an arm and a leg. → It is expensive.
 - Example: Don't let the cat out of the bag. → Don't tell the secret.
 - Example: They always bite off more than they can chew. → It is too much to handle.

Sentence	Actual Meaning in Novel	Equivalent Today
"The hell with the rabbits." (6)		
"That means we'll be bucking grain bags, <u>bustin' a gut</u> ." (9)		
"You gonna give me that mouse or do I have <u>to sock you</u> ?" (10)		
"You keep me <u>in hot water</u> all the time." (12)		
"You ain't gonna <u>put nothing over on me</u> ."		
"They come to a ranch an' <u>work up a stake</u> ..." (15)		

➤ Flexible Implementation

➤ Can Be Used While Reading Novel

➤ Generate Excitement Prior to or While Reading

Pre-Reading Activities

Of Mice & Men

Great Depression Reading

Name: _____

The Great Depression

After World War I, the United States experienced a time of unprecedented economic growth and prosperity. The “Roaring Twenties” was a period when America’s wealth more than doubled. Almost anyone that had a penny to spare invested in the stock market. However, as the stock market grew, employment and production were declining. The country’s agriculture industry was suffering from drought and low food prices. Also, investments in the stock market became worthless as investors panicked and began selling off shares. Finally, the stock market crashed in October 1929, kicking off the Great Depression.



Unemployed men queued outside a soup kitchen opened in Chicago. Image used under license from shutterstock.com

With the collapse of the economy, people lost money, jobs, investments, and homes. Unemployment skyrocketed as businesses decreased production and had to fire workers. Suddenly, many people did not even have enough money to buy food. Homelessness and hunger were rampant. At its worst, unemployment reached 25%.

As the U.S. struggled to recover, Americans elected Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) president. FDR immediately took steps to address and resolve economic issues as well as ease the pain and suffering of the people. FDR passed new legislation that aimed to prevent such a disaster from ever happening again. He also worked to create programs that would create new jobs to greatly ease unemployment. Despite the government’s efforts to pull the economy out of the depression, it still faced many obstacles. The Great Depression effectively endured until the start of World War II in 1939, which instigated military mobilization. Industrial production of war materials increased and enlistment into the army decreased unemployment rates as the United States prepared for and entered the war in 1941.

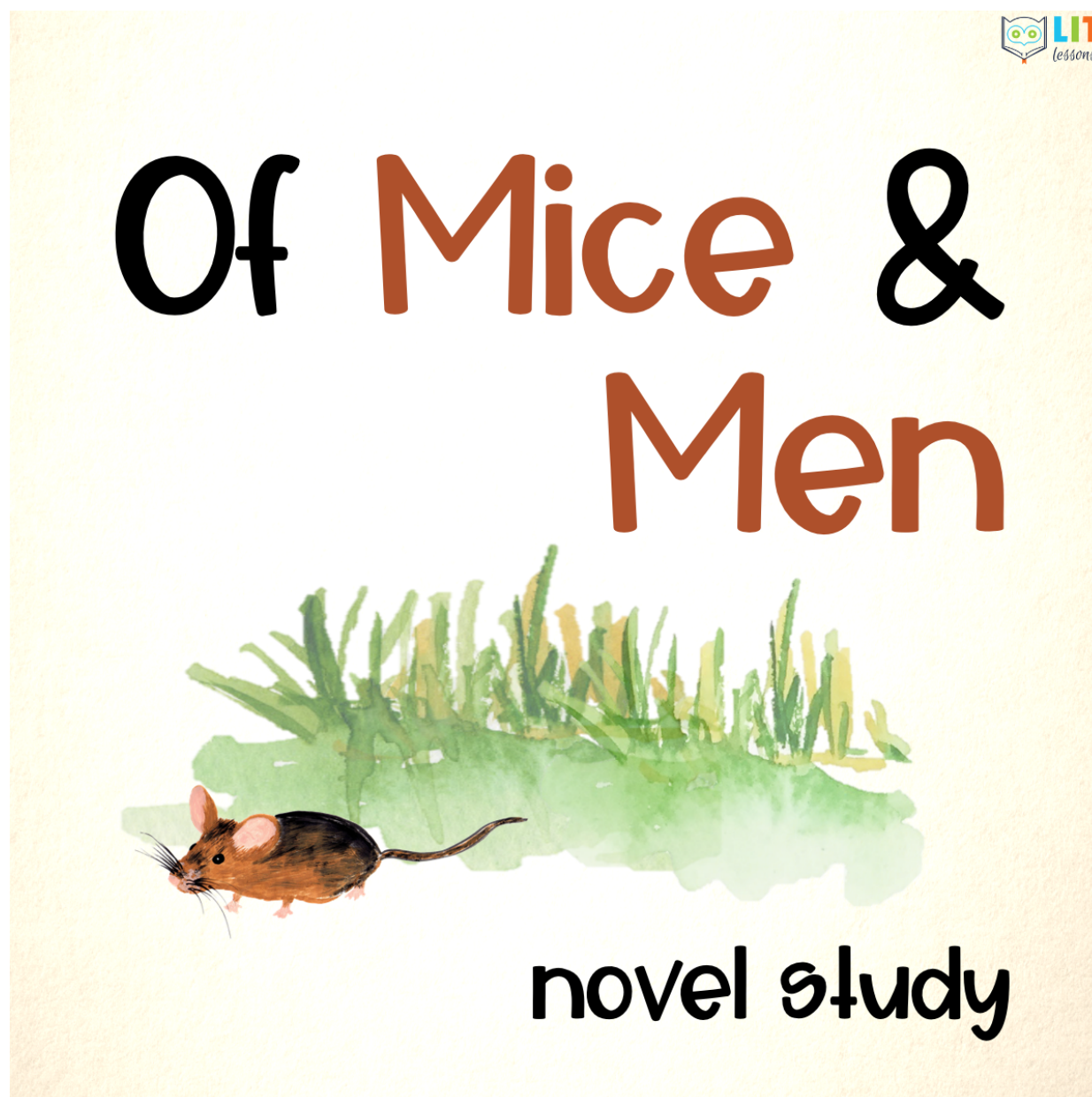
The United States was not the only country experiencing economic disaster during the 1930’s. Countries around the globe felt the effects of America’s economy’s collapse. Specifically, European countries underwent their own economic downturns as a result.

Germany faced a unique set of challenges during this time. As the Great Depression spread throughout Europe, the crisis weakened Germany’s economy because countries tried to collect debt payments owed from WWI reparations. With the economy faltering, the German people became increasingly dissatisfied with the government. Eventually this dissatisfaction manifested itself in the choice to back another leader, Adolf Hitler, a choice that led to a series of events culminating in the outbreak of World War II.

- Standards-aligned – Informational & History Texts
- Answer Key & Google Slides™ & Forms™ Links
- Make Connections Between Texts

BUNDLE & SAVE!

This resource is part of a comprehensive unit on *Of Mice and Men*! Click the cover below to preview all the resources available.



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