



Incoming 10th Grade Summer Reading

Be sure to read this document in its entirety.

Summer reading serves multiple purposes:

1. Reading helps build confidence as you learn to read more difficult and complex texts.
2. It provides an immediate foundation to discuss literature as a class when you return to school.
3. It will provide a basis of comparison to other works you will be studying throughout the school year.
4. Reading various forms of literature will help prepare you for your studies at college.
5. Reading is good for your brain!

A word about shortcuts to the summer reading:

1. You are to read the assigned book cover to cover.
2. Do not depend on any cliff notes, spark notes or any other shortcuts.
3. When you return to school, you will be participating in additional activities that will indicate whether you read the book.

All 10th Grade English Students:

Assignment: Read *Of Mice and Men* (0140177396) by John Steinbeck, annotate the book according to the “Annotation Guide” below, and complete the attached chapter questions.

- ❖ Read *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck, annotate the novel according to the “Annotation Guide” provided below, and complete the Discussion Questions, also found below. You will need your own copy of the book.
- ❖ Complete the attached Discussion Questions using complete and thoughtful sentences. For any quotes, please indicate the page number in parentheses.
- ❖ Be prepared for a thorough discussion (a Socratic Seminar, debate, discussion, etc.) on the book when you return to school. It will be clear during the discussion activity whether you read the book or not. A grade will be assigned to this assessment.
- ❖ The Discussion Questions and annotated book are due the first full day back at school. Your responses should be handwritten.
- ❖ Work received after the first full day of school will receive 50% credit.
- ❖ Expect an assessment on the book the first or second week of school.

Annotation Guide

For each of the literary texts that you have been assigned to read during the summer, please make sure that you are annotating the text. Texts should be brought to class the first day that you return to school. During the first two weeks of class, you will be taking tests regarding the “Summer Reading” and the only resource you will be allowed to use is the corresponding text(s).

Note-Taking vs. Annotation:

Most serious readers take notes of some kind when they are carefully considering a text, but many readers are too casual about their note-taking. Later they realize they have taken notes that are incomplete or too

random, and then they laboriously start over, re-notating an earlier reading. Others take notes only when cramming for a test, which is often merely "better than nothing." Students can easily improve the depth of their reading and extend their understanding over long periods of time by developing a systematic form of annotating. Such a system is not necessarily difficult and can be completely personal and exceptionally useful.

First, what is the difference between annotating and "taking notes"? For some people, the difference is nonexistent or negligible, but in this instance, I am referring to a way of making notes directly onto a text such as a book, a handout, or another type of publication. The advantage of having one annotated text instead of a set of note papers plus a text should be clear enough: all the information is together and inseparable, with notes very close to the text for easier understanding, and with fewer pieces to keep organized. Think of annotations as "showing your work" while you read just as you sometimes show your work in a math problem. You are showing what you are thinking while you read and analyze—and thinking is a word-based activity, not just a nebulous puff of energy. If you can't articulate your thoughts, then you have to question if you know what you're thinking. Thinking is how you connect to the text. This, of course, requires ACTIVE participation with the text, engaging your mind while you read, not skimming the page. Listening to your music or the TV can split your focus so that you don't have as much of a connection with the text. Marking important sections can also be helpful in locating them quickly in discussions.

What the reader gets from annotating is a deeper initial reading and an understanding of the text that lasts. You can deliberately engage the author in conversation and questions, maybe stopping to argue, pay a compliment, or clarify an important issue—much like having a teacher or storyteller with you in the room. If and when you come back to the book, that initial interchange is recorded for you, making an excellent and entirely personal study tool.

Criteria for Successful Annotation:

Studies show that using your annotated copy of the book six weeks after your first reading, you can recall the key information in the book with reasonable thoroughness in a 15- to 30-minute review of your notes and the text.

Why Annotate? Annotate any text that you must know well, in detail, and from which you might need to produce evidence that supports your knowledge or reading, such as a book on which you will be tested (tests will occur during the first two weeks of class). Don't assume that you must annotate when you read for pleasure; if you're relaxing with a book, well, relax. Still, some people—let's call them "not-abnormal"—actually annotate for pleasure. Don't annotate other people's property, which is almost always selfish, often destructive, rude, and possibly illegal. For a book that doesn't belong to you, use adhesive notes for your comments, removing them before you return the text. Don't annotate your own book if it has intrinsic value as an art object or a rarity. Consider doing what teachers do: buy an inexpensive/used copy of the text (thriftbooks.com) for class.

Tools: Highlighter, Pencil, and Your Own Text

1. Yellow Highlighter: A yellow highlighter allows you to mark exactly what you are interested in. Equally important, the yellow line emphasizes without interfering. Some people underline, but underlining is laborious and often distracting. Highlighters in blue and pink and fluorescent colors are even more distracting. The idea is to see the important text more clearly, not give your eyes a psychedelic exercise. While you read, highlight whatever seems to be key information. At first, you will probably highlight too little or too much; with experience, you will choose more effectively which material to highlight.

2. Pencil: A pencil is better than a pen because you can make changes. Even geniuses make mistakes, temporary comments, and incomplete notes. While you read, use marginalia—marginal notes—to mark key material. Marginalia can include check marks, question marks, stars, arrows, brackets, and written words, abbreviations, and phrases.

Use the following format:

Inside Front Cover:

Major character list with small space for character summary and for page references for key scenes or moments of character development, etc.

Inside Back Cover:

Build a list of themes, allusions, images, motifs, key scenes, plot line, epiphanies, etc. as you read. Add page references and/or notes as well as you read. Make a list of vocabulary words on a back page or the inside back cover, if there's still room. Possible ideas for lists include the author's special jargon and new, unknown, or otherwise interesting words.

Beginning of Each Chapter:

Provide a quick summary of what happens in the chapter. Title each chapter or section as soon as you finish it, especially if the text does not provide headings for chapters or sections.

Top margins:

Provide plot notes—a quick few words or phrases that summarize what happens here. Go back after a chapter, scene, or assignment and then mark it carefully. (Useful for quick location of passages in discussion and for writing assignments).

Bottom and Side Page Margins:

Interpretive notes (see list below), questions, and/or remarks that refer to meaning of the page. Markings or notes to tie in with notes on the inside back cover.

Interpretive Notes and Symbols to be used are:

- Underline or **highlight** key words, phrases, or sentences that are important to understanding the work.
- Write questions or comments in the margins—your thoughts or “conversation” with the text.
- {Bracket} important ideas or passages.
- Use vertical lines at the margin: to emphasize a statement already underlined or bracketed
- Connect ideas with lines or arrows.
- Use numbers in the margin: to indicate the sequence of points the author makes in developing a single argument.
- Use a star, asterisk, or other “doo-dad” at the margin (use a consistent symbol): to be used sparingly, to emphasize the ten or twenty most important statements in the book.
- Use ??? for sections or ideas you don't understand.
- Circle words you don't know. Define them in the margins.
- A check mark means “I understand”.
- Use !!! when you come across something new, interesting, or surprising. And other literary devices (see below).

Some of the things you may want to mark as you notice them are:

- Use an **S** for Symbols: A symbol is a literal thing that also stands for something else, like a flag, or a cross, or fire. Symbols help to discover new layers of meaning.
- Use an **I** for Imagery: Imagery includes words that appeal to one or more of the five senses. Close attention to imagery is important in understanding an author's message and attitude toward a subject.
- Use an **F** for Figurative Language: Figurative language includes things like similes, metaphors, and personification. Figurative language often reveals deeper layers of meaning.
- Use a **T** for Tone: Tone is the overall mood of a piece of literature. Tone can carry as much meaning to the story as the plot does.

- Use a **Th** – Theme: In literature, a theme is a broad idea in a story, or a message or lesson conveyed by a work. This message is usually about life, society or human nature. Themes explore timeless and universal ideas. Most themes are implied rather than explicitly stated.
- Plot elements (setting, mood, conflict, etc.)
- Diction (effective or unusual word choice)

As you mark, you begin to notice patterns the author has or where he or she deviates from a pattern and much of the work of a critical or analytical reader is noticing these patterns and variations. Notice that annotations are meant to be more than a “scavenger hunt” for literary techniques and rhetorical devices. Along with marking these you should comment on the effectiveness or significance of the device. It’s great if you can detect alliteration in a passage, but that in and of itself is useless unless you can tell that this alliteration demonstrates the mental breakdown of the character, for example. It’s amazing if you recognize the hubris of a character, but how does this instance differ from those occurring previously in the novel?

3. Your Text

Inside the front cover of your book, keep an orderly, legible list of "key information" with page references. Key information in a novel might include themes; passages that relate to the book's title; characters' names; salient quotes; important scenes, passages, and chapters; and maybe key definitions or vocabulary. Remember that key information will vary according to genre and the reader's purpose, so make your own good plan.

(Adapted from “An Annotation Guide: How and Why to Annotate a Book” by Nick Otten)

Discussion Questions

MLA Heading:

Of Mice and Men Discussion Questions

Directions: Please answer each question in complete, well-written sentences. This assignment is to be hand-written; however, please feel free to attach paper if needed. At the end of each answer, the page number where the information was found must be stated as well.

Chapter One

1. Look back at the first paragraph. In your own words, describe the setting.

2. Using a minimum of three traits, physically describe Lennie and George. What is interesting about this contrast?

3. What is the name of the town where George and Lennie last worked? Specifically explain what happened that caused the two men to run away from this town?

4. How are George and Lennie different than other ranch workers? Cite a line of text from the chapter that supports your statement. (Yes, this means I want you to write down the entire sentence from the chapter.)

5. Why did Aunt Clara give Lennie a rubber mouse? Why didn't he like it?

6. Describe at least two activities that show George acting as Lennie's parent/guardian.

7. Describe at least two activities that show Lennie behaving as an animal.

8. George gets frustrated and yells at Lennie, saying, "...if I was alone I could live so easy. I could go get a job an' work, an' no trouble." Why, do you think, George has not left Lennie? Explain your answer.

9. Specifically explain the dream George describes for Lennie. Do you think it is realistic? Why or why not?

10. What instructions does George give to Lennie prior to entering the new work camp?

Why do you think these instructions are given?

Chapter 2

1. When George and Lennie are shown their quarters, the old man tells them that the boss is angry at them? Why is the boss angry?

2. When the boss is talking to George about work, George speaks for both he and Lennie.

What does the boss suspect is going on between George and Lennie? What is George's response?

3. What does the reader learn about Curley's wife? Why might this be important to the story?

4. What does George warn Lennie about and why? Where does George tell Lennie to go?

5. After Curley's wife comes to the barn looking for Curley, why does George get angry at Lennie?

6. Describe Slim by using specific references from the novel. Specifically, what do the descriptions of Slim indicate about his character?

7. What happens to Slim's dog and her puppies? What does this tell you about survival as a migrant worker?

8. What type of man is Carlson? How is he different from Slim? Cite specific examples from the text.

Chapter 3

1. Why does Slim think George and Lennie traveling together is funny?

2. What two major stories does George confess to Slim? Why does George tell Slim?

3. What does George think happens to people who are alone? Why would he think this?

4. Why does Carlson want to shoot Candy's dog? Why does Candy refuse? Why does Candy eventually concede?

5. How does the author, John Steinbeck, maintain tension and suspense in the scene?
(HINT: look for a repeated word)

6. After George retells the story about their future ranch, why is George "entranced with his own picture"? What is the significance of the ranch to George?

7. Why does Candy ask to be included in George and Lennie's dream? What is George's initial reaction? Why does George eventually agree?

8. Why does Candy say he should have shot his dog himself?

9. Why does Curley start a fight with Lennie? At this point in the novel, has Lennie done anything that should have upset Curley?

10. What does Slim tell Curley to say? Why?

Chapter 4

1. Who is Crooks? Where is his bunk? Why does he live separate from the other men?

2. Why does Crooks not want Lennie in his room? What is this significance?

3. What does Lennie admit to Crooks? Why?

4. What does Crooks tell Lennie about George? Why does this upset Lennie?

5. What do Candy, Lennie, and Crooks discuss? What does Crooks think about the idea?
Explain how Crooks discourages the men.

6. What did Curley's wife call the men when she came looking for Curley?

7. What happened when she asked how Curley's hand got broken?

8. When Lennie became nervous, what did he tell Curley's wife?

9. What did Candy tell Curley's wife to do? Why?

10. What did Curley's wife confront Lennie with? What was his answer? How did she feel about what happened to Curley?

Chapter 5

1. How have Curley's wife's dreams for her life changed or been lost?

2. Why does Curley's wife tell Lennie about "the letter"? What do you think the letter symbolizes?

3. How does Lennie's killing of the puppy parallel his killing of Curley's wife and the mice?

4. How does Candy react to the death of Curley's wife?

5. What options do George and Candy discuss after the discovery of the body?

Chapter 6

1. What is the significance of the rabbit appearing at the end of the book?

2. As Lennie is hiding in the brush waiting for George, he has two hallucinations. Describe the two separate hallucinations and explain how each are meaningful to Lennie and the reader.

3. Look carefully at the dialogue between George and Lennie right before the shooting. What is interesting about the way George is talking?

4. Slim says, “You hadda, George...I swear you hadda.” Is this true? What would have happened if George had waited another five minutes?

5. Why did George shoot Lennie? Do you think he was justified in his action? Why or why not?

6. Explain what happens to “the dream” at the end of the novel for both Lennie and George.

what way does Slim show understanding for George's decision? Why does Carlson ask the last question?

Optional Books to Read for Enjoyment and Enrichment

It is the parent's responsibility to help their child research the books and choose those that are appropriate for their child in both content and level of difficulty. There is a wide variety of levels below to accommodate all readers. More information on these books can be found at amazon.com or commonsensemedia.org. Many of the books below can be accessed for free through the Overdrive app.

A Tree Grows in Brooklyn by Betty Smith

Rebecca by Daphne Du Maurier

Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte

Kidnapped by Robert Louis Stevenson

Murder on the Orient Express by Agatha Christie

A Lesson Before Dying by Ernest Gaines

A Farewell to Arms by Ernest Hemingway
The Bell Jar by Sylvia Plath
The Count of Monte Cristo by Alexandre Dumas
East of Eden by John Steinbeck
A Thousand Splendid Suns by Khalid Hosseini
A Prayer for Owen Meany by John Irving
Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen
The Screwtape Letters by C.S. Lewis
The Joyluck Club by Amy Tan
Dune by Frank Herbert
Evil under the Sun by Agatha Christie
The Alchemist by Paul Coelho
The Book Thief by Markus Zusak
The Poisonwood Bible by Barbara Kingsolver
The Things They Carried by Tim O'Brien
Their Eyes Were Watching God by Zora Neale Hurston
Speak by Laurie Halse Anderson
Aurora Rising by Amie Kaufman and Jay Kristoff
The Grace Year by Kim Liggett
The Bone Houses by Emily Lloyd-Jones
Killing November by Adriana Mather
Crown of Coral and Pearl by Mara Rutherford
The Perfect Blindside by Leslea Wahl
Rightfully Ours by Carolyn Astfalk
A Single Bead by Stephanie Engelman
7 Riddles to Nowhere by A.J. Cattapan

