

KS3 English Curriculum

Year 9: Freedom and Equality

Of Mice and Men by John Steinbeck
Selected Poetry from 20th Century
American Literature



Parental Guide

Our intent through this topic:

To introduce students to the importance of inequality in the study of English Literature and to celebrate the work of American culture. Students will understand that themes are timeless and literature is used as a tool to explore societal issues.

English Key Concepts

Content	Of Mice and Men by John Steinbeck Poem 'We As Women' by Charlotte Perkins Gilman Poem 'Sympathy' by Paul Dunbar Poem 'Strange Fruit' by Abel Meeropol
Context	Role of Women and Gender Expectations Great Depression Jim Crow Laws Racial Discrimination Prejudice Dust Bowl American Dream Racism Understanding of Perception of Learning Difficulties, Disability and Old Age in 1930's America
Universal Suffering and the Human Condition	Inequality Toxic Masculinity Loneliness and Isolation Friendship Duty Gender Expectations Sexism Prejudice Racism
Methods have Meaning	Metaphor Irony Setting Symbolism Motif Nouns (use of Curley's Wife as opposed to a name)
Criticism and Critical Interpretation	Toxic Masculinity Gender Expectations and the Role of Women including Objectification Perception of Race through time.
Mastery of SPAG	Comma used to indicate a subordinate clause in complex sentences. Comma used to show appositives linked to power and hierarchy

Creative Writing	Sentence Types: Almost, almost, when Without, without Last Word; first word Non-Fiction Opinion Writing
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Students will know:

- What a patriarchal society is and how this links to a 1930s American society
- How hierarchy and social class are presented in the novella
- How Curley's wife is presented as a tragic femme fatale
- How the novella is a microcosm of American society
- The concept of gender roles and expectations
- How to explain what toxic masculinity is
- The role of hierarchy in society and in the novella
- The role of power and prejudice
- How to explain migration by identifying its causes and consequences
- How the ranch is a microcosm of American society in the 1930's

Students will be able to:

- Compare the similarities and differences between hierarchy and prejudice as explored in other forms of literature at KS3
- Explain how context influences writer's intention
- Identify and explain the impact of symbolism
- Explain how and why Steinbeck uses a microcosm of society in the novella
- Identify different word classes used for the description of Curley's wife and Crooks and the significance of the words chosen
- Use excellent epithets to write thesis statements
- Use thesis statements to write three topic sentences
- Embed textual detail to support arguments
- Analyse a writer's methods
- Use a range of complex sentence types to create effects
- Respond to themes of the novella through non-fiction writing

Revision questions to help support your child:

Encourage your child to speak through their subject knowledge. By taking on the role of the student, ask your child to explain a topic from one of their subjects. Listen carefully and don't be afraid to ask them a question if you do not fully understand what they are saying. This will help them to understand the topic themselves through the process of telling you what they know and help with the transferal of knowledge from their short term to long term memory.

- Who was John Steinbeck?
- What was his background?

- What is a novella? How is this different from any other text you have studied in KS3 so far?
- What does the word critique mean?
- Who are the main characters in the novella *Of Mice and Men*?
- What can we learn from this type of narrative?
- What is the hierarchy on the ranch? What determines where each character is in the hierarchy?
- How is patriarchy presented through the characters in the novella?
- How do you think a 21st century reader would react to some of the characters in the novella?
- What are your first impressions of Lennie and George?
- Who is Curley's Wife? What happened to her?
- What is the form, audience and purpose of this text?
- What do these words mean:

Inequality	Toxic Masculinity	Loneliness	Isolation
Friendship	Duty	Gender Expectations	
Sexism	Prejudice	Racism	

- Can you give me an example of each of the above linked to the characters in the novella?
- What is a microcosm?
- What were the conditions like in 1920's America for men?
- What was The Great Depression and the Dust Bowl?
- In a metaphor, what is the tenor, vehicle and ground?
- How do you structure a thesis statement?
- How do you turn a thesis statement into a topic sentence?
- How do you analyse language? What is meant by the 'connotations' of a word?
- How do you embed a quotation in a sentence?
- Can you tell me about the plot of the novella you have been reading?
- Who do you have empathy for in the novella?
- What do you think Steinbeck was trying to tell his reader?
- What message did Steinbeck want to give to the American public?

For further support, please contact Mrs A Vukasovic at amy.vukasovic@georgesalter.com (Head of English)

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