Name:

Of Mice and Men Questions

Pay attention to how many of the following questions need to be answered for credit. Staple these questions in your journal and answer them as you read the story. For extra help, an extra challenge, or extra credit, answer all the questions below.

A. What were your first impressions of Lennie and George?

B. Choose 1 of the following foreshadowing questions:

1. In the beginning of the story, what kind of animal did Lennie keep accidently killing? How does that foreshadow later events in the story?
2. How does the fate of Candy's dog end up foreshadowing what will happen to Lennie? Do you think the situation is the same or different? Why?

C. Choose 2 of the following characterization questions:

1. George keeps calling Lennie "crazy" in the story, but what does Steinbeck imply is really going on that makes Lennie forgetful?
2. Would you say that there is a kind of manipulation in George and Lennie's relationship? If so, how? Is it good or bad?
3. What are the similarities between Candy and his dog, other than both being older? Do you think that Steinbeck did this on purpose? Explain.

D. Choose 1 of the following theme questions:

1. What dream are George and Lennie working toward? Why do you think it is so important to them?
2. When Crooks says that he sees hundreds of men pass through the ranch with the same idea as George and Lennie in their heads, what is he talking about?

E. Choose 1 of the following inferential questions:

1. Why does George say that Curley should watch out if he gets into a fight with Lennie? Did it turn out to be a valid warning?
2. When George said that he and Lennie travelled together and Curley answered, "Oh, so it is that way?" what do you think he was implying?

F. Choose 1 of the following historical context questions:

1. Why do George and Lennie feel so lucky to have one another? What kind of life did a ranch hand usually have?
2. Why do you think that many men did not travel around together like Lennie and George in the story? Did it take Lennie needing protection to create such a close friendship?

G. Choose 1 of the following inferential questions:

1. What does it mean when the workers say that Curley's wife has "the eye"? Why do you think that she has "the eye" after only being married for a few weeks?
2. Why does Curley get suspicious every time Slim is not with the other men? Do you think that his suspicions are valid? Why or why not?

H. Choose 1 of the following opinion questions:

1. Do you think that it was right for Carlson to pressure Candy into euthanizing his dog? Why or why not?
2. Even if George and Lennie were able to get a piece of land and try to live off of it, do you think they would be successful? Or, do you think that they need to have structure imposed by someone else? Explain.

I. Infer: Why do you think that Lennie hallucinates at the end of the story? What is the significance of the hallucination?

J. Look at your response in A. Did your impressions of Lennie and George turn out to be correct? Why or why not?

Test questions

1. Besides being a place to live, how does the little piece of land that George and Lennie want to own represent freedom to them? Even though they have the freedom to work where they choose, do you think that they are really free? Explain.
2. How does Steinbeck construct loneliness in the story? Despite living in close proximity, all of the characters seem to be lonely. Do you think that loneliness is caused by socially imposed barriers, personal choice, or both? Explain.
3. Why did Crooks say that he did not want to join Candy, George, and Lennie after all? What is Steinbeck saying about the constraints of race during the time period of the story?
4. Considering the fate of Crooks, Candy, Lennie, and Curley's wife, what statement do you think the novel makes about those who are considered outcasts by society?
5. Had the unfortunate murder of Curley's wife's not occurred, do you think it would be possible for George and Lennie to attain their goals? What does the killing of Lennie and Curley's wife ultimately imply about the American Dream in the novel?
6. Though Curley's wife's death was purely accidental, can it be considered a mercy killing, like George's killing of Lennie, or Carlson's killing of Candy's dog? What might Curley's wife's life have been like had she lived?