

STARTER – This STARTER has 3 PARTS – a, b & c.

a

Match these essay questions to the introductory paragraphs that follow. Write the number of the question next to the correct paragraph

1

How far do you think that Steinbeck presents dreams as futile in *Of Mice and Men*?

2

How does Steinbeck present loneliness and isolation in the novel?

3

Choose two characters from *Of Mice and Men*, say why you think they are important in the novel and how Steinbeck presents them.

4

“I never seen no piece of jail bait worse than her” (George). What is the reader supposed to think about Curley’s wife?

5

Hopes and Dreams are important in ‘Of Mice and Men’ – discuss.

6

Many readers find that *Of Mice and Men* is a sad book. How far do you agree?

A
B
C

Two characters that are important in *Of Mice and Men* are Curley's Wife and Crooks. Steinbeck uses these characters to communicate how American society in the 1930s was sexist and racist. From His presentation of Curley's Wife and Crooks, through what they say and do and what other characters say about them, Steinbeck shows that he did not share society's prejudices and we see how hard life was for women and black people.

Of Mice and Men is a novel that celebrates friendship and the power of dreams; it is also a novel that ends with the tragic deaths of Curley's Wife and Lennie. It is easy to understand therefore why some readers find the novel hopeful while others find it sad; I think that ultimately the novel is optimistic because both deaths bring peace and an end to the characters' suffering.

Of Mice and Men is a novel that has loneliness and isolation as a major theme. Steinbeck communicates this theme in a variety of ways including through the setting, through the characters and through the action.

The American Dream is central to the novel *Of Mice and Men*. George and Lennie dream of having their own house and a patch of land while Curley's Wife dreams of being an actress in Hollywood. These characters' dreams are central to the novel and communicate Steinbeck's main idea that human beings need dreams in order to survive.

The fact the Curley's Wife and Lennie dreams end with their deaths makes some readers view Steinbeck as presenting dreams as futile. I believe Steinbeck presents dreams as the opposite. Throughout the novel dreams give characters a reason for existing and provide them with hope. I think that *Of Mice and Men* is a novel that presents dreams as being crucial to human survival.

Steinbeck presents Curley's wife through what the other characters say about her and through his own description of her behaviour. From the other characters' we get a very negative view of Curley's wife and of women in general and this reflects the time in which the novel was written. Moreover, the way she behaves towards some characters might make some readers dislike her intensely. However, Steinbeck encourages us not to judge Curley's Wife and to ultimately have sympathy for her.

b

Underline the words in each paragraph that show it is relevant and answering the question. The first one has been done for you.

c

Write A, B, C etc in the margin next to the paragraph to show the main points that will form the ESSAY STRUCTURE. The first one has been done for you.