

*Of Mice and Men*  
Socratic Seminar

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Socratic Seminar is a method of student discussion where you and other classmates will sit in a circle discussing the novel *Of Mice and Men*. A question will be posed, and students will respond by agreeing or disagreeing with thoughtful opinion and textual evidence. Follow the directions carefully to prepare for this task. Grades will be based on the number of times (no fewer than three) you respond during the discussion, on the quality of your responses and on written preparation.

Tasks:

1. **Answer FOUR of the discussion questions.** (On the back.) Find at least one quotation per question in the text to support your answers. Your answer should be about a paragraph in length. Make sure you label your responses.
2. **Wild Card Question:** Create ONE burning question you have about the text. This question must **not** be a “yes or no” question, but one that prompts a plethora of answers, opinions and point of views. You should attempt to answer your own question with thoughtful opinion and evidence from the text (Yes, that means use quotes).

Grading:

Written Preparation-(#1 and #2 above): **20 points**

Spoken Portion-You must speak at least 3 times: **25 points**

Socratic Seminar Grading Rubric

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Comment 1	Comment 2	Comment 3	Questions	Wild Card

✓ + = 20 points

✓ = 17 points

✓ - = 10 points

\* = 0 points

Thoughtful Comment with quotes

Thoughtful Comment, no quote

Repetitive or obvious statement

No Comment

## *Of Mice and Men* Socratic Seminar Questions

1. What is the meaning of the novella's title? Relate to poem the book is based on ("To a Mouse" – by Robert Burns)
2. Why does the book begin and end at the pond? Why does Steinbeck set the death of Lennie in the same location as the opening scene? What does this setting represent to Lennie and George and why is then ironic that Lennie meets his death here? What does that suggest in a larger sense about society?
3. Did George do the right thing by shooting Lennie? Why or why not?
4. At one point George imagines what life would be like without Lennie. Why do you think he stays with Lennie instead of going on alone?
5. What is your opinion of Curly's wife? How did it change throughout the book?
6. Discuss how a character in the novella struggles to free himself or herself from the power of others or seeks to gain power over others. Be sure to demonstrate in your response how Steinbeck uses this power struggle to enhance the meaning of the work.
7. Explain how the alienation of one or more of the characters featured in chapter four illuminates the meaning of the work as a whole.
8. What extent can Lennie's death be considered symbolic? What "dies" with Lennie? What values did Lennie represent that are arguably "lost" with his life?
9. How does placing the dream directly prior to the shooting of Lennie affect our perceptions of the dream, or rather the possibility of the dream's realization?
10. Explain the meaning of the closing lines of the story. What do the lines reveal about Curley and Carlson?