

The *Of Mice and Men* Essay:

SAMPLE THESIS OUTLINE

To organize your argument, you should create an outline following this format, indicating your THESIS and your SUBTHESIS statements, using roman numerals:

THESIS: Candy's dog is the most responsible for Lennie's death because he teaches the ranch members that useless people should be eliminated and because he teaches George how to kill someone he loves.

- I. The destruction of Candy's dog and the lack of repercussions from his death demonstrate to the ranch hands that it is perfectly justifiable, even necessary, to kill a living being if that being is worthless.
 - A. Carlson complains that "we can't sleep with him stinkin' around in here" (47) and uses that smell as a rationale for putting the useless dog out of its misery.
 - B. Even Slim does not step in defend Candy's dog as he knows the death is necessary, as Slim even offers a puppy to suggest the dog is replaceable.
- II. Carlson's killing of Candy's dog is a model for George's later behavior, as this killing teaches George how he should kill Lennie, and may even have given George the idea.
 - A. After the death of his dog, Candy realizes that he "ought to of shot that dog myself" (61), demonstrating that it is George's responsibility to shoot Lennie before Curley can.
 - B. Just as Carlson shoots the dog in the back of its head "so he wouldn't even quiver," George shoots Lennie in the back of his head to make sure Curley will not get the chance to shoot Lennie "in the guts" (96).

Note: We will use this same form for outlines throughout the year, so follow this same form whenever you are asked to write a thesis outline! ☺