

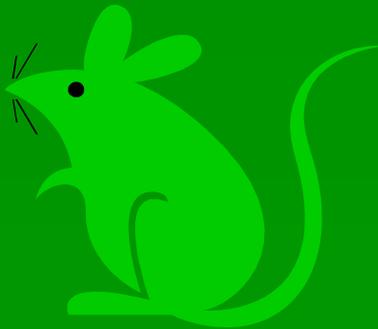
Of Mice and Men

Notes



The Depression

- The **Great Depression** was a period of economic decline and high unemployment in America.
- The Depression began in the **middle of the 1930s.**



The Depression



- As people lost their jobs in the cities, they often hit the road looking for **jobs doing manual labor.**
- Many of these wandering workers were **all alone** with **nothing but the clothes on their backs.**

John Steinbeck

- John Steinbeck was born in **1902** in **Salinas, California**. He graduated from Salinas High School in 1919.
- Most of the books he wrote were about **social problems** of the time and **issues** that were affecting the world around him.

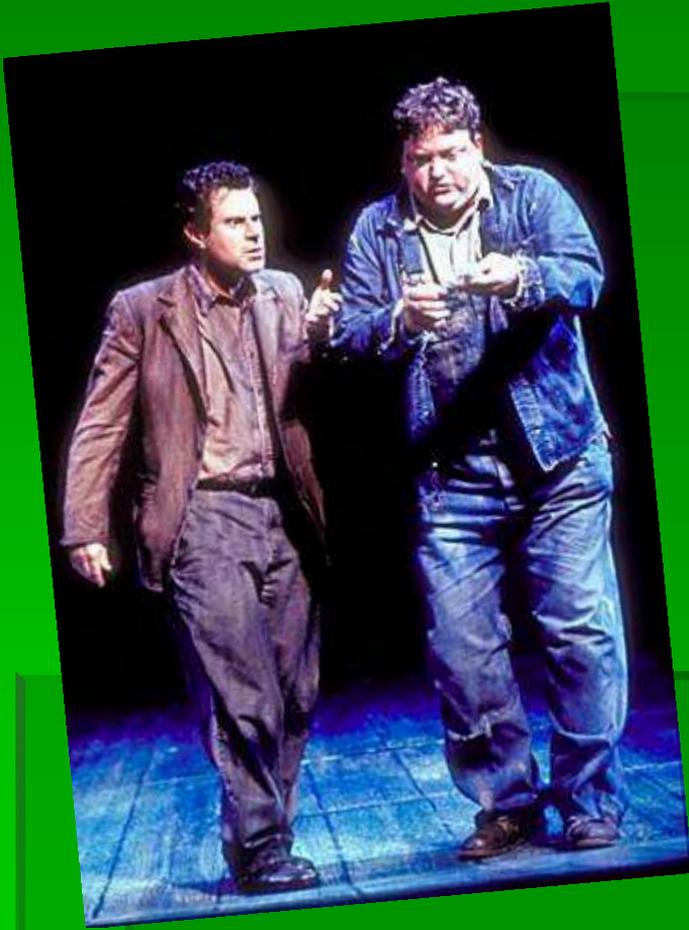


John Steinbeck



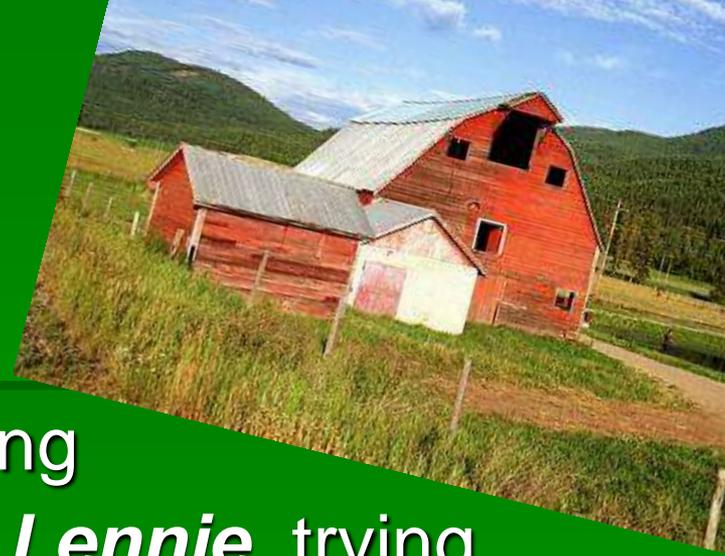
- Steinbeck was married three times and had two children.
- He won both the *Pulitzer Prize* and the *Nobel Prize for Literature*.
- When he was younger, Steinbeck was briefly a ranch hand, just like the two main characters in *Of Mice and Men*.

Of Mice and Men



- Of Mice and Men is a short work of fiction, often called a *novella*.
- It is **set in California** during the early to mid **1930s**.
- The novella shows how **hard** life was for **poor**, unskilled workers who lost their jobs because of the **Depression**.

Of Mice and Men



- The **plot** is about two traveling ranch workers, **George** and **Lennie**, trying to work up enough money to buy their own ranch (farm).
- It is written in a way that it can easily be made into a **play** without many changes.
- Of Mice and Men came out in 1937.

Of Mice and Men

- Its *title* came from a poem by Robert Burns called "To a Mouse, on Turning up Her Nest"

*The best-laid schemes o' mice and men
Often go wrong
And leave us nought but grief and pain
For promised joy*



Jargon and Dialect

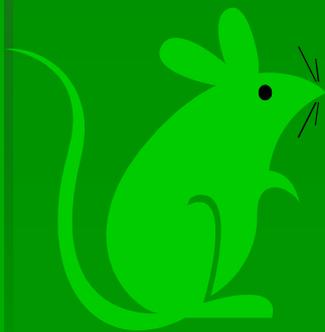


- tart or tramp - a woman of loose morals; one who is prone to be sexually unfaithful
- jack – money in the bank, savings
- bucks – dollars
- bum or stiff – a jobless, homeless person
- crack or flop – sex
- greybacks or pants rabbits - lice

Jargon and Dialect



- hoosegow - prison
- jail-bait – woman who will get a man in trouble
- lynched – hung by a bunch of people without getting a trial
- punk – unreliable, no-good young person
- whing-ding – a good time; a fun trip
- swamper – janitor, cleaning man



Themes ...

- the importance of friendship
- the pain and problems inequality causes
- how to handle broken dreams
- what loneliness does to people

