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 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
- **wing-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