

## Unit: Y9 Of Mice and Men

### Why?

This unit will focus on ideas around oppression of minority groups and open your eyes to the responsibility to denounce discriminatory views of all kinds. You will evaluate your own opinions and the opinions of others using a wide range of texts to draw on as well as analysing Steinbeck’s authorial intent in his characterisation of the like of Crooks and Curley’s Wife.

### Characters

#### George Milton

A small, wiry, quick-witted man who travels with, and cares for, Lennie.

#### Lennie Small

A large, gentle-hearted migrant worker who relies heavily on George, due to his intellectual disability.

#### Curley’s wife

The only female character in the story, a young pretty woman whose name is never mentioned in the novella.

#### Candy

An aging ranch handyman who lost one of his hands years ago in an accident.

#### Crooks

Got his nickname because of his misshapen back, is a stable hand and the sole African American worker on the ranch.

#### Slim

A highly skilled mule driver and the acknowledged “prince” of the ranch, Slim is the only character who seems to be at peace with himself.

#### Curley

He is the aggressive, short-statured son of the ranch owner.

### Key Concepts:

Cyclical narrative – A story that ends in the same place that it starts.

Foreshadowing – hints, clues and indications of future events.

Motifs – a recurring symbol or idea in literature.

Establishing Setting – A setting can be a real time period and geographical location or a fictional world and unfamiliar time period. Setting also includes the physical landscape, climate, weather, and the societal and cultural surroundings that serve as a backdrop for the action.

### Context

- Set during the Great Depression, a period of significant poverty and unemployment across the USA following the **Wall Street Crash** in 1929. The Great Depression took place following the Wall Street Crash in October 1929 and affected the world’s economy.
- Farmers were usually less affected than the rest of the population during depressions because they were able to grow their own food; however, during the Great Depression, there was also the Dust Bowl – drought and dust storms swept across several states in mid-west America.
- This meant that itinerant workers needed to travel to the coasts where the land was still green to take up work on the farms.

### Vocabulary

<b>Ostracise</b>	To exclude from a society or group. (v)
<b>Marginalised</b>	A person, group, or concept treated as insignificant or peripheral. (adj)
<b>Belligerent</b>	To be hostile and aggressive. (adj)
<b>Parochial</b>	Having a limited or narrow outlook or scope. (adj)
<b>Camaraderie</b>	Mutual trust and friendship among people who spend a lot of time together. (n)
<b>Misogyny</b>	A dislike of, contempt for, or ingrained prejudice against women. (n)