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Of Mice and Men Pre-reading Research Project

In order to truly appreciate *Of Mice and Men*, John Steinbeck's classic novella, it is important to establish some general background regarding Steinbeck's life and times. In addition, it is also crucial to understand a few of the basic components of the story, such as the Dustbowl Years, the Great Depression, the life of migrant workers, and mental retardation.

The Project For this project, you will be responsible for collecting research in the library on one of the topics below. Since you will be collecting information as a group, your first task will be to give each person a different **research question** on the same large topic. **After I approve each person's research question, you should research your topic using each of the following sources: encyclopedia, non-fiction book, and website.** Remember to gather the bibliographical information for each source using **MLA documentation**. A **sources page** is required for credit from each student as an individual grade. As a result of your research, you should create a **group poster display**, which should contain not only the vital information you are sharing, but also some type of visual (pictures, clip art, relevant quotations, timeline, charts, data, etc.). We will discuss this in more depth after research is complete. You will be given a rubric at that time as well.

Research Topics Rank your preferences below from 1-6.

____ **John Steinbeck and His Life and Times** Research his life and times, including his "country," Salinas, California.

____ **Migrant Workers:** Research migrant farm workers and design a timeline depicting the history of migrant workers in America from the 1920s to the present.

____ **Mental Retardation:** Research mental retardation and create a poster showing the changes in society and various institutions that describe how mentally retarded people are treated today versus the ways they were treated in the past.

____ **The Dustbowl Years:** Research what the Dust Bowl Years were, how they impacted society, and why there was a great migration during this time period.

____ **The Great Depression:** Research the Great Depression and create a timeline showing when it occurred, what may have caused it to occur, and how society was affected during this time.

____ **African Americans and Women during the 1930's:** Research the lives of African Americans and women during the Great Depression and how society was affected during this time.