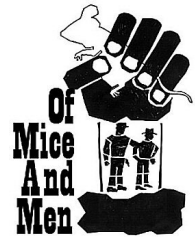




Of Mice and Men

CHARACTER PROFILES



George Milton

Migrant Laborer

Small
Quick
Small, strong Hands
Slender Arms
Sharp, strong features
Dark of Face
Restless Eyes
Thin & bony nose

Protagonist (1 of 2)

Most Complex	Good Man
Mouse like	Compassionate
Has Brains	Loyal
A Survivor	Pure of Heart
Adaptable	High Moral Character
Quick-witted	Need for Companionship
Ambition	Lennie's Caretaker
Short-tempered	

He is like a mouse: "small & quick, dark of face, with restless eyes & sharp strong features. Every part of him was defined: small, strong hands, slender arms, a thin & bony nose."

Most complex of the characters b/c he has not accepted his present lot in life.

→ **DREAM:** Has a dream to save money, buy a small farm, & be his own boss
With the destruction of his **dream**, George loses the chance to become a better man.

George does progress as the story progresses. (Unlike Lennie)

Takes responsibility for not only Lennie's life but also his death.

Weakness: He yells at Lennie from time to time.

Weakness: Needs to feel better about his own ordinariness.

Lennie Small

Migrant Laborer

Protagonist (2 of 2)

The source of the novel's conflict

CRIPPLE: Mentally handicapped (lack of adult intelligence)

Static character - throughout, relying on George to fuel his hope & save him from trouble

Huge man (Tall)
Wide, rounded Shoulders
Large, strong Hands (paws)
Heavy Walk
Drags his feet
Shapeless Face
Large, pale eyes
Arms hang loosely at his sides & do not swing.

Least Dynamic	Gentle
Flat Character	Kind
Mild Mental Disability	Simplistic
Good Worker	Totally dependent on George
Enthusiastic	Innocent
Childlike	Pure Goodness

Last name vs. Stature = OPPOSITE

Lennie does NOT progress with the story.

Animal Imagery

Bear
Bear PAWS
Horse
Terrier
Dogs
Rabbits
Mice

Associated with Animals

He is often compared to a BEAR with his huge size & strength.

His hands are described as PAWS.

Snorts like a HORSE at the stream.

Circles like a TERRIER when he does not want to bring George the dead mouse.

His loyalty to George is frequently described like that of a DOG (Terrier).

Always associated with RABBITS & MICE.

Does not understand his own strength; Is not violent by nature but has the potential for violence.
His love of petting soft things, such as small animals, dresses, & people's hair, leads to disaster.

→ **DREAM:** He & George share a dream

It is his **innocence** that keeps the **dream** alive throughout the novel until his death.

His **weakness** dooms the **dream** of the farm.



Of Mice and Men

CHARACTER PROFILES



Slim

MASTER Skinner or Mule Driver of the Ranch

Is the really heroic man in the novel

Tall
Long Black Hair
"God-like eyes"
35 or 50 years old.

Respected by all	Master of his Trade
Perceptive	Superior workman
Quiet	"Doer" not a "Dreamer"
Serious Demeanor	
Not flashy (BOOTS)	
Kind	
Insightful	

Slim is the only character who seems to be at peace with himself

Slim does not feel the need to wear high-heeled boots! (**Unlike Curley**)

Slim is the consummate example of understanding & gentleness beneath a wise & experienced exterior.

Emphasis is placed on Slim's skill & craftsmanship;

Slim has moral authority over the other men.

Slim invites confidence by accepting people as they are.

Slim respects Lennie's hard work & consoles George when Lennie dies.

Serves as the fearless, decision-maker

Described as something of a living legend: **"he moved with a majesty only achieved by royalty & master craftsmen"**.

He alone realizes, at the end of the novel, the reason for George's decision

"His ear heard more than was said to him, and his slow speech had overtones not of thought, but of understanding beyond thought."

Candy

Ranch Handyman

"the swamper"

CRIPPLE: Lost his hand in a ranch accident

Old

Fearful	Humble
Regretful	Weary
Hopeful	Passive

Candy, represents a segment of American society because of old age & physical handicap.

Worries about his future on the ranch.

Fears that his age is making him useless,

1st to befriend George & Lennie at Soledad.

→ **DREAM:** Offers to contribute his savings of \$350 to buy the farm.

DREAM: He is sweetly hopeful of joining Lennie & George on their dream farm.

He lets the secret slip to both Crooks & Curley's wife.

His old sheep dog will become a symbol of Lennie before the novel ends.



Of Mice and Men

CHARACTER PROFILES



Crooks

Stable Hand

Cares for the horses

CRIPPLE: Has a crooked spine

Negro

Wise	Aloof
Caustically funny	Bitter
Observant	Lonely
Proud	Despairing
Longs to be apart	Negative
Craves someone to talk to	Ostracized
Defensive manner	Angry
Inferior to Whites	Indignant

Represents a segment of American society that is discriminated against because of race.

Steinbeck does not develop Crooks until the **4th chapter**.

The only black

Called "Crooks" because of a crooked spine

His spine has been left crooked from a horse's kick, & he rubs liniment on his painful back.

He lives in isolation in the Harness Room.

Keeps his distance & demands other people keep theirs.

Ultimately frustrated by his helplessness as a black man in a racist culture

He is excluded from the other ranch hands, except at Christmas when the boss brings in a gallon of whiskey for the entire crew.

His only recreations are an occasional game of Horseshoes with other men, but most of the time he spends by himself **READING**.

- He listens with longing to Lennie tell of his **dream** ranch & he yearns to be part of it.
Crooks tells them they will never attain their **dream**.

Carlson

Mechanic at the Ranch

Skilled worker

Large man
Big-bellied

Cold practicality	Brutal
Down to earth in his world	Violent
Arrogant	Fanatical
Insensitive	Destructive
Driven	Callous

Perfect example of a selfish oaf:

- 1) Interested only in his creature comforts;
- 2) Oblivious to any one else's feelings.

Owns & Provides the Luger that kills both Curly's wife & Lennie.

He focuses on actions & does not notice people's feelings.

He assumes an arrogance forbidden the others.

Carlson orders Candy's dog to be put to death.

Carlson has NO feelings about the animal & NO concept that anyone else might care about the old creature.

His callousness is especially evident at the end of the novel.

Upon seeing Slim & George sadly walk off for a drink after George has shot Lennie, Carlson says, "**Now what the hell y suppose is eatin' them two guys?**"



Of Mice and Men

CHARACTER PROFILES



Curley

Son of the Ranch Owner

ANTAGONIST

CRIPPLE: Acquires a mangled hand during the novel.

Little Man
Young
Brown Face
Brown Eyes
Tightly curled hair

Little Man Syndrome	Confrontational
Coward	Boastful
Cocky	Volatile Temper
Aggressive	Extremely Insecure
Angry	Jealous
Mean-spirited	Out of Control
Hot-Headed	SHOW OFF

The pugnacious Curley is the little guy who loves to flaunt his power & status.

Married within the previous 2 weeks, he spends much of his time looking for his pretty wife.

Wears high-heeled boots to distinguish himself from the field hands. **(Unlike Slim)**

A small man, his is always looking for a fight, especially with men who are bigger than he.

He prides himself on having been a welterweight boxer.

Rumored to be a champion prizefighter

Eager to fight anyone he perceives as a threat to his self-image

Tendency to provoke conflict,

Insecure of his size

Seeks to compensate for his small stature by picking fights with larger men

Lennie stands up to Curley & crushes his hand in his own grip.

Later Curley organizes the posse to find Lennie after he has killed Curley's wife.

Curley's wife

Curley's wife

VICTIM

She represents the temptation of female sexuality in a male-dominated world.

Only female in the novel.

Only character in the novel who is given NO name.

Steinbeck depicts Curley's wife as a victim not as a villain.

Pretty
Red lips
Red Fingernails
Heavy make-up
Hair hangs in tight sausage curls
Red shoes w/ Ostrich feathers

Flirtatious	Craves someone to talk to
Viewed as a Troublemaker	Unhappy
Full of self-pity	
Pathetically Lonely	
No Friends	
Craves attention	

Married Curley a couple of weeks ago.

She knows her husband Curley is mean & she does not like him.

She is said by the men to give them "the eye,"

The men brand her as a "tramp" ("**tart**" & a "**looloo**")

She is stereotyped as a "**tart**".

Indeed, she plays the vamp, which enrages her husband Curley.

George tells Lennie to avoid her, calling her "**poison**" & "**jailbait**".

She wanders around the ranch searching for some human contact.

She taunts & provokes the ranch hands into talking with her.

→ **DREAM:** Like the ranch-hands, she is desperately lonely & has broken dreams of a better life. She once had dreams of being a movie star.