

Of Mice and Men  
Higher Tier

The purpose of this pack is to provide centres with the question paper, mark scheme and a set of exemplar materials with commentaries.

The individual documents can be found on our website at [www.edexcel.com](http://www.edexcel.com)

Included in this pack:

- Question and extract from Summer 2012 Paper
- Marked scripts with the mark and band
- Examiner commentary and mark scheme

## Of Mice and Men – Higher Tier

\*14 What is the significance of the dream George and Lennie share in the novel?

You **must** consider the context of the novel.

Use **evidence** to support your answer.

(Total for Question 14 = 40 marks)

### Script 1

22 marks

AO1 – Band 3 – 9 marks

AO4 – Band 3 – 13 marks

I believe Lennie and George's dream is. Now is a really significant part. They dream of a place. "ten acres" "got a little windmill got a little shack on it and a chicken run. Got a kitchen, orchard" and Lennie later joins in saying "and rabbits George". The fact they have it all planned out down to the last detail. What it looks like how big it is, what there is there and what animals they are going to have show they obviously have thought about it so much and clearly over a long time this in an on running dream they are striving to achieve and this shows how much it means to them and it's the one thing they can hold onto through the bad stuff. Candy joins in the conversation talking about the money he has saved up and how he "ain't much good with the only one hand" and then says to George and Lennie

"S'pose I went in with you guys" because he want somewhere where knows he can relax more in his old age and not loose a job. Candy offers them a lot of ~~at~~ money towards the property, but at first George says "I gotta think about that. We was always gonna do it by ourselves." shows that because he has this perfect idea in his head and he has done for so long, that he is finding it hard to accept any change to it. And turning down that much money towards his dream at first shows how significant and important it to him to achieve how he wanted.

They then come to a realisation that with Curley's money and George and Lennie's money they could get their dream ranch soon. It says "they looked at one another amazed. This thing they had never really ~~believed~~ believed in was coming true." And I think this shows Lennie and George's dream is significant because it shows how much happiness can be brought to someone having their dream in their grasp after so long. It also can show the readers of the novel, if you strive hard enough anything is possible. I think this is important and is a reason why dreams are such a big theme in this book whether the character feels positive or negative about it.

A little bit further on in the novel it says "Lennie was still smiling with delight at the memory of the ranch." This makes him happy after being through a lot of trouble. Although now this can cause him trouble as because of this smiling ~~Ken~~ Curley says "what the hell you laughin' at?" and this evolves into a big

height and it shows that unless it's your <sup>dream</sup> ~~idea~~ then you can't understand the true significance.

I think the main thing after this whole fight <sup>showing</sup> ~~shows~~ the significance of the dream to George and Lennie is, is when Lennie goes "I can still tend the rabbits, George?" after all this he is most bothered about his rabbits and this comes up again and again throughout the novel after he thinks he does anything wrong because this means a lot to him and he doesn't want to run anything for him and George.

I think this dream also shows their friendship although they have a few arguments they always tell it together and both have the same exact idea of what the ranch will look like. Lennie says "Come on, George. Tell me like you done before" and George says "You got a a bick cutta that, don't you?" The language suggests they do it often and it's their little thing just between them and it think this shows as well as making people happy it can build and strengthen friendship especially for George and Lennie and that's why I think their dream is quite significant.

#### Examiner summary:

*This is a sustained response to the dream George and Lennie share. Although the clear focus is not fully maintained, the response overall shows a thorough understanding of the theme and the context of the novel; these are supported with relevant textual detail.*

**Band this response achieves in the mark schemes:**

#### AO1

|   |      |   |
|---|------|---|
| 3 | 8-10 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sustained responses to text supported by relevant textual reference.</li><li>• Selection and evaluation of textual detail show thorough understanding of theme/ideas.</li></ul> |
|---|------|---|

#### AO4

|   |       |  |
|---|-------|--|
| 3 | 11-15 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sustained reference to context supported by relevant textual reference.</li><li>• Explanation of importance of theme/idea shows thorough understanding.</li></ul> <p>*Sentences are appropriately structured, with sustained control of expression and meaning with thorough control of the full range of punctuation devices. Spelling is almost always accurate, with occasional errors.</p> |
|---|-------|--|

**To move up to the next bands:** This response needs to maintain a clear focus on the theme throughout the answer.

## Script 2

33 marks

AO1 – Band 4 – 13 marks

AO4 – Band 4 – 20 marks

John Steinbeck's 'Of mice and men' is set in 1930's America during the height of the Great Depression which was brought on by the wall Street crash. America's economy was fragile and mass unemployment spread across the country. The migrant movement was common across America, as many men had no choice but to travel the country, finding any work they could find. George and Lennie, ~~the~~ ~~the~~ the two protagonists of the novel, are migrant workers. Their travelling, grueling work and minimum pay is spurred on by a dream they share. It is a dream they share with millions of unemployed men across the country, the 'American Dream'. It is not a selfish dream, they only wish to escape the hardship of being a migrant worker and own their own piece of land and money to be self-sufficient.

Their dream has held George and Lennie together as they travel the country searching for work, their dream seeming a little more likely due to their partnership amongst a world of lonely men. The dream represents hope in the novel, and it is set in different times, the dream is an escape from those times and a goal for the duo to work towards, so in their minds they are working for more than just to survive.

For George and Lennie their dream is a little more realistic than other men's, for most the dream ~~of~~ self-supplying is fictitious, George and Lennie are in fact in contact with an old couple who wish to sell a small piece of land. The vivid description of this land is significant throughout and mainly at the end of the novel. It brings great pleasure to George and especially Lennie to recite a description of this land and it becomes ritualistic for the pair to do so. Throughout the novel the complexion of their dream becomes more realistic when Candy gets involved. Initially when Candy explains about this kind they know of George is dismissive 'I suppose I do... what's that to you?' George is more protective of their own personal dream and is sceptical to believe anything. However as they speak more and Candy reveals he has a decent bit

George knows what he must do and he also accepts there dream is his now, for without himme it doesn't seem right to go through with it. It was their dream together, and now their friendship was over so clearly the dream was over. The dream is very significant throughout the novel as it represents hope in a time of great sorrow throughout America. It is also the great driving force of George and Lennie's relationship, and their relationship is crucially important in such a lonely time. The 'American Dream' is one of John Steinbeck's main underlying themes accompanied with friendship it is an even powerful aspect of 'Of mice & Men'.

#### Examiner summary:

*This is an assured response to the dream George and Lennie share in the novel. The candidate supports the pertinent points about the theme and the context with relevant textual reference.*

**Band this response achieves in the mark schemes:**

#### AO1

|   |       |   |
|---|-------|---|
| 4 | 11-13 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pertinent responses to text supported by relevant textual reference.</li> <li>Selection and evaluation of textual detail show assured understanding of theme/ideas.</li> </ul> |
|---|-------|---|

#### AO4

|   |       |   |
|---|-------|---|
| 4 | 16-20 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pertinent reference to context supported by relevant textual reference.</li> <li>Explanation of importance of theme/idea shows assured understanding.</li> </ul> <p>*Sentences are purposefully structured, with assured control of expression and meaning with assured control of the full range of punctuation devices. Spelling is almost always accurate, with minimal errors.</p> |
|---|-------|---|

**To move up to the next bands:** this response needs to avoid too much contextual detail which is not directly responding to the question and use evidence from the novel to support the points made.

### Script 3

40 marks

AO1 – Band 5 – 16 marks

AO4 – Band 5 – 24 marks

The significance of the dream in "Of Mice and Men" is to present the apparent American dream and then for Steinbeck to show its flaws and how it only leads to tragedy.

George and Lennie ~~rely~~ rely on the dream for comfort. It keeps them going as migrant workers they have few prospects. Steinbeck writes about the lives of the male working class who live in poverty and cannot improve their lives due to a lack of education. Therefore George and Lennie keep the dream to give them some hope for their future. In a life where they do not have to work for anyone but themselves and are able to live off the fatta the lan'.

The American dream for them is a humble one, merely a plot of land. The dream seems more real to them because they have each other.



company. Though Lennie cannot see further past the ability to keep his own rabbits cropped than mice, George sees the dream as a whole new life.

It was a universal quest to be your own boss to work hard but for yourself.

The American dream of land and freedom to George and Lennie becomes their creed Lennie says to get told it almost constantly. Though George feigns irritation at being asked he ~~then~~ comes to hear it for himself.

'George's voice became deeper, he repeated the words rhythmically as though he had said them many times before'. To Lennie and George the dream is the most important thing in their lives though others like Crooks respond to it in disdain ~~the prospect~~ 'no body never gets to heaven and no body gets no land' - this is the voice of a defeated, bitter, resigned man' and Lennie and Old Candy's insistence of his view persuade him of its possibility. The prospect is so attractive to not be fired so easily, indeed, to not have to go to a brother down the road for the only show of human presence or artificial affection.

The American dream is a way out of forced poverty. George says about prisons 'like they were when I was a kid' this brings in the idea of the dream reminding him of his childhood, a happier time

where there was liberty and happiness.

However there is also present in of mine and then the impossibility of the dream. Lennie threatens 'the future cats which might come to disturb the future rabbits' this suggests that they are too drawn into the dream, a dream which they will not reach because of the obstacles they face in the novel.

~~They~~ 'Each mind was popped into the future when this lovely thing should come about' even here ~~is present~~ (as George and Lennie have told Candy of their dream) the reader is aware of the oddity of it and the impossibility. Because of the Holodomor present during this time, it was unusual for such camaraderie to take place and the reader is suspicious of it foreshadowing that the dream will not work out.

The presence of the American dream in the novel also presents the selfishness and cruelty of others, which prevents the happy ending the reader wants for George and Lennie.

It is the ~~dehumanizing~~ <sup>dehumanizing</sup> the men against Curley's wife <sup>dehumanizing</sup>.  
'You don't know that we got our own ranch to go to!'  
their procremiers and exaggeration while George is not their shows us that they will never find the dream.

The significance of the dream of George and Lennie is to show that it brings people together but as individuals

can make mistakes or be wrong this can ruin the group's

vision.

Lennie and George tell the dream at the start of the novel and it is abruptly ended as George is shot by the river.

This is significant because Steinbeck wants to show that

in a matter of days dreams can be shattered and essentially a dream is possible only where two or more people can come together, ~~to work together~~.

It all feels so possible in Crooks' room until Curley's wife enters.

'I think I knowed from the very first I think I knowed we'd never do her' George is resigned in the end to know that he will never ~~his~~ obtain the dream without Lennie because part of that dream was the presence of friends.

Migrant workers in J. Mice are never free it difficult to create relationships because they are 'working for a month' and then quitting so often. This creates the overriding theme of loneliness.

Poor men without an education had no prospects other than to work doing menial jobs until the day they died.

There was obviously desperation for the dream as the only hope in their lives.

**Examiner summary:**

*This is a convincing and perceptive response which is maturely expressed. There is perceptive understanding of both the theme and the context of the novel. The points are supported with sustained, relevant textual reference.*

**Band this response achieves in the mark schemes:**

**AO1**

|   |       |  |
|---|-------|--|
| 5 | 14-16 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Convincing responses to text supported by sustained relevant textual reference.</li><li>• Selection and evaluation of textual detail show perceptive understanding of theme/ideas.</li></ul> |
|---|-------|--|

**AO4**

|   |       |  |
|---|-------|--|
| 5 | 21-24 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Convincing reference to context supported by sustained relevant textual reference.</li><li>• Explanation of importance of theme/idea shows perceptive understanding.</li></ul> <p>*Sentences are convincingly structured, with sophisticated control of expression and meaning with precise control of the full range of punctuation devices. Spelling is consistently accurate.</p> |
|---|-------|--|

This response receives full marks.