

Handout #2 – Recording Important Setting from a Selected Chapter

In the initial reading of Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*, most readers do not pay much attention to setting details. In this second reading (just one chapter, not the entire book), your eye should be attuned to the setting and its influence on the story. You may be surprised how much you more you see in the chapter in this second read.

Directions:

1. Before you begin, review the chapter and list the major conflicts and events of the chapter *in chronological order* on the reverse side of this sheet.
2. Reread the assigned chapter and write down actual quotes (partial quotes are fine) that describe important setting details. You do not need to write down every reference to place. Write down these quotes on the reverse side of this sheet. Notice as you read how the setting prepares the reader for the conflicts and events that occur.
3. When you have completed steps 1 and 2, discuss your findings and questions with your group members. Be sure to discuss any symbolism or patterns. Highlight what you consider to be the most important or significant setting descriptions.

Student Task #2 – page 2

Chapter _____

Major Conflicts/Events:

Setting Descriptions:

Example of Student Task #2 (Steps 1 and 2)

Chapter 1:

Main conflicts/events:

George and Lennie find a place to rest
Some tension between George and Lennie over the problems Lennie causes
Hope in the dream

Setting Quotes from Chapter 1:

The Salinas River drops in close to the hillside bank and runs deep and green. The water is warm too for it has slipped twinkling over the yellow sands in the sunlight before reaching the narrow pool.

golden foothill slopes curve up to the ... the valley side the water is lined with trees—willows fresh and green with every spring

on the sandy bank under the trees the leaves lie deep and so crisp that a lizard makes a great skittering as he runs among them. Rabbits come out of the brush to sit on the sand in the evening...[animals] that come to drink in the dark

path through the willows and among the sycamores, a path beaten hard by boys [...]to swim in the deep pool, and beaten hard by tramps who come wearily down from the high way in the evening to jungle-up near water.

Ash pile made by many fires
Limb worn smooth by men who have sat on it

Shade climbed up the hills toward the top

[on page 2 – George and Lennie interrupt this serenity “”Sound of footsteps on crisp sycamore leaves. The rabbits hurried noiselessly for cover”

The day was going fast now. Only the tops of the Gabilan mountains flamed with the light of the sun that had gone from the valley.

The flame of the sunset lifted from the mountaintops and dusk came into the valley, and a half darkness came in among the willows and the sycamores. A big carp rose to the surface of the pool, gulped air and then sank mysteriously into the dark water again

Dove’s wings whistled over the water
Flame cracked up among the twigs and fell to work

It was quite dark now, but the fire lighted the trunks of the trees and the curving branches overhead.

They made their beds on the sand, and as the blaze dropped from the fire the sphere of light grew smaller, the curling branches disappeared and only a faint glimmer showed where the tree trunks were.

Red light dimmed on the coals