

Junior Summer Reading 2010

***The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck,**

Brought to you by U.S. History

This year our summer reading program will be a little different. Each class will read a different book that relates to a grade level theme. Juniors will read *The Grapes of Wrath* and keeping a reading journal. This novel covers an important American story. When school starts in the fall you will be turning in your reading journal and creating a One-Pager assignment. Both of these are described below. Also included below is a listing of the plot, the themes of the novel, the characters, ideas for focus questions, a reading calendar and a map of the Joad's trip. You can purchase this novel at the Barnes and Noble book fair, check it out from your local library, or download a version through *Libraries 2Go*: <http://library2go.lib.overdrive.com>.

The Story of The Grapes of Wrath:

Plot: The novel is set in Oklahoma and California during the 1930s and depicts the struggles of the Joad family as they become part of the great migration of farmers who left their homes in the middle west in search of work during the Depression. The novel contains three major divisions: the first section deals with the Joads and their life as sharecroppers in Oklahoma; the second depicts their journey from Oklahoma to California; the third covers their experiences as migrant workers in California. As the novel begins, Tom Joad, recently released from prison, meets Jim Casy, a former preacher, on the road to his home in Oklahoma. Casy has fallen away from the Christian faith, believing instead that the greatest good a person can do involves self-sacrifice and caring for one's fellow beings. Tom is a young man whose lack of sensitivity and insight is reflected in his vivid contrast to the character of Casy. When the two arrive at the Joad family farm, they find it vacant; the family has been evicted from their land after the drought had ruined their crops.

Tom and Casey find the family on their way to California, the land of promise, where they believe they will find wealth and happiness. Many life changing events occur along the trip including the loss of family members. When they finally reach California, disappointments continue.

California is not the "land of milk and honey," as they'd dreamed; instead, they are ostracized as outsiders and face a bleak reality: the farms are controlled by property owners who destroy crops to drive prices up and who pit the itinerant workers against one another to avoid paying decent wages. The one hopeful prospect in their new life occurs when they come to live in the Weedpatch, a government camp. Here they discover that they are more than an isolated family and that they are

part of the community of migrant workers who care for and share with one another. Casy becomes a labor organizer to better the plight of the workers, but is killed. Tom kills Casy's murderer to avenge his death. The family flees to protect Tom, who, during his period of hiding, undergoes a transformation. Inspired by the life and philosophy of Casy, he is now determined to devote his life to helping his fellow man.

The reader is left with their own feelings about the future for the family.

The Themes behind *The Grapes of Wrath*:

One of Steinbeck's central themes is the disintegration of the family, and the Joad's journey is marred by its tragic evidence: both grandparents die along the way, and both their son, Noah, and the husband of their pregnant daughter Rose of Sharon, desert the family. The Joad's sense of identity and pride is very much tied to their sense of family, and Ma Joad is a fierce defender of the American family.

Another theme is that of personal growth. As Steinbeck describes it, theirs is a voyage of self-knowledge, for they have traveled from an isolated, self-centered existence to an awareness of the plight they share in common with so many others.

The Joad's individual family saga is interwoven with chapters on a variety of topics that relate thematically to the main narrative, covering such areas as the history of farm ownership in California and the conditions of life for the migrant workers. In this way, Steinbeck provides both a big picture of the history of our nation and the plight of farm workers during the Depression. The author illuminates the social and economic problems of many people and their affect on one particular family. The Joads are shown to be uneducated, crude, and coarse, but also as human beings who deserve to be treated with dignity. Their journey is described in epic terms and provides a vision of the unity of all people.

Stylistically, Steinbeck employs a variety of narrative methods including simple, unadorned prose, documentary, and lush description of nature. *The Grapes of Wrath*, for which Steinbeck was awarded the Pulitzer Prize, is considered a modern masterpiece for its powerful expositions, vivid portraiture, and lasting themes.

"Plot Summary: *The Grapes of Wrath*." *DISCovering Authors*. Online ed. Detroit: Gale, 2003. *Discovering Collection*. Gale. Web. 23 May 2010. <<http://find.galegroup.com>>.

Background and Links:

Discovering Collection Database: Background on the novel and the author

National Endowment of the Arts: The Big Read ~

<http://www.neabigread.org/books/grapgesofwrath/>

Library of Congress: *The Grapes of Wrath* Exhibit ~

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/trm143.html>

Characters: In order of appearance

Tom Joad is the second son of the Joad family. At the beginning of the novel he is wary, insensitive, skeptical, matter-of-fact, and confident. He undergoes a transformation throughout the course of the novel, and at the end believes in the potential of humanity's perfection and universality of spirit.

Jim Casy is a talkative, mild former preacher who has dedicated to helping people like the Joads and travels with them to California. He is honest, compassionate and courageous. His initials (J.C.) have been cited as evidence of his character as a symbol of Jesus Christ. His words and actions in the novel parallel those of Jesus Christ.

Ma Joad is the foundation of the Joad family. Ma is brave and intelligent. She is an example of the indestructible woman who at times is ignorant, wary, and suspicious of strangers, but has much family pride and is assertive on behalf of her family.

Pa Joad or Tom Joad is the father and before the Joad family leaves Oklahoma, is seen as the head of the clan, but as the family travels he loses his authority. Throughout the novel, Pa's common sense and dependability and steadfastness contrast with Uncle John's melancholy and Connie's immaturity.

Rose of Sharon, also known as Rosasharn Joad Rivers is the eldest Joad daughter. Still a teen, she is already married and pregnant. Throughout most of the novel, she thinks only of herself and her unborn child. She is depicted as a sheltered and thoughtless teenager, intensely preoccupied with herself. Yet Rose of Sharon undergoes a transformation during her pregnancy, which coincides with the difficult **John Joad**, Pa's brother, is also known as **Uncle John**. He carries a lot of guilt over his wife's death causing him to go on wild drinking binges to escape this perceived sin.

Al Joad is the third Joad son; he is younger than Noah and Tom, to whom he looks for guidance. Al is fond of cars and girls. He wants to leave the family and go on his own, but duty and love force him to stay.

Gramma Joad is deeply religious and energetic. She gives up and dies as the family crosses the Mojave Desert, and her burial in a pauper's grave violates her wishes. Her death outweighs the achievement of finally reaching California and foreshadows the reality to come.

Grampa Joad, also known as William James Joad, is rowdy and vigorous and refuses to leave the family's farm in Oklahoma. He has to be drugged so that the family can begin their journey. He dies on the first night of the trip. Both Granma and Grampa are torn up by their roots, and both of them die because they are incapable of absorbing a new, difficult

experience.

Noah Joad is the eldest Joad child. Slow, deliberate, and never angry, he is often mistaken as mentally deficient. Midway through the journey to California, Noah gives up the struggle to survive the arduous trip and when he finds a peaceful spot alongside a river, he leaves the family.

Connie Rivers is Rose of Sharon's nineteen-year-old husband who is "frightened and bewildered" by the changes his wife's pregnancy has brought to her. He constantly talks of educating himself by correspondence in order to get a good job, but never follows through and eventually deserts Rose of Sharon because he has no faith in the family's struggle to find a better life in California.

Muley Graves is a classic example of the stubborn man who refuses to leave Oklahoma.

Ivy and Sairy Wilson are a husband and wife that the Joads meet on the first night of their journey and travel with the family to the Mojave desert where they turn back because of Sairy's sickness.

Ruthie Joad, 12, is the youngest daughter of the Joads. She is a childishly selfish individual who reveals to another child that Tom has killed a man forcing him to flee the family. Her childish behavior shows how poverty can make even an innocent person harsh.

Winfield Joad, 10 is the youngest child of the Joad family. He is treated cruelly by his sister Ruthie, yet retains his innocence.

Floyd Knowles is a man the Joads meet in the Hooverville (towns built by homeless displaced people named after President Hoover) outside of Bakersfield. He tries to tell Al and the other men about the difficulties they face in California. He helps the family find work.

Jim Rawley is a friendly man who manages the government camp and allows the poor their dignity.

Focus and Discussion Questions: What you should be thinking about while you are reading and what you should be able to discuss in the Fall.

Chapters 1 ~ 11: The Land

Keep track of the characters, how they are described and how they change. (There is a character chart included.)

What does the setting of the opening scene suggest?

Animals play an important symbolic role throughout the novel. What qualities does the turtle and the displaced families share?

What role does the bank or corporate America play in the novel?

How does each member of the family feel about leaving their home for California?

Chapters 12 ~ 18: The Migration

Keep track of the events that happen on the trip and what they might mean.

Keep track of the changes in relationships between the family members because of the dangers and events of the trip.

What is the symbolic value of the desert and the first views of California?

Chapters 19 ~ 30: The Promised Land

What are the difficulties (employment, prejudice, hostility) the family faces when they reach California?

How are the government camps different from the Hoovervilles?

What do the events of Chapter 22 say about charity, religion and hard work?

Do you think the family will survive?

What do you think the ending of the book means for the family and for humanity?

Large "1 Pager" for *Grapes of Wrath* Summer Reading Assessment (50 points)

Purpose: Summer reading is critical for continuing to develop vocabulary. *The Grapes of Wrath* is an excellent novel to introduce the experiences of farmers and migrant workers during the Dust Bowl Era (1930s.) By creating a "1 Pager" you will be interacting with the characters in *The Grapes of Wrath* and developing skills for US History as well as beginning to understand the effects of the Great Depression on many Americans.

The Assignment: While you are reading *The Grapes of Wrath* you will be keeping Journal Pages to assist you in creating a "1 Pager." Your journal entries should be focused on the three focus subject areas. ***Focus Subjects Areas are: The Land, The Migration, and The Promise Land.** You will be required to turn in the completed Journal Pages on the first day of class: **Tuesday August 31.** Your 1-Pager will be due the following Tuesday.

What is a 1 Pager? "A 1 Pager is a single-page response to the reading. (This will be created on 20" x 24" poster paper.) It is a way of making your own pattern of your unique understanding. It is a way to be creative and experiment. It is a way to respond imaginatively and honestly. It is a way to be brief and compressed in a world drowning in paper. A 1 Pager is a valuable way to own what you are reading. We learn best when we can create our own patterns."

Requirements	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations	Not Present
Quotations Include page number with quote.	More than 8 quotations that will enhance the vocabulary, questions, or personal statement	Pull out 6-8 quotations and write them on the page with page numbers	Fewer than 6 quotations; missing page numbers	No quotations
Exploration of quotations	Rich provoking thoughts that	Explore what you think about	Exploring fewer than 6	No exploration of quotations

	have connections to your own life/ focus questions or exploring more than 8 quotations	the 6-8 quotations by writing your thoughts, ideas, or what you wonder	quotations; incomplete thoughts or ideas	
Visual/ picture	Pictures (taken with a camera) or a series of drawings to express main idea(s)	Draw a picture to place at the center of the page that is a major idea of the book	Picture or image taken from the internet	No picture or visual
Vocabulary/ Characters	Cluster more than 7 vocabulary, names, ideas, feelings, or thoughts around the picture AND definitions in your own words No more than 2 characters	Cluster 5-7 vocabulary, names, ideas, feelings, or thoughts around the picture No more than 2 characters	Fewer than 5; not clustered around the picture All characters	No vocabulary or no characters
Questions & Answers	Create 4-6 questions in which all are Level II or Level III questions and all are answered	Create 4-6 questions and answer them. Half are Level I and the other half are Level II or III questions.	Create fewer than 4 questions and answers; more than half are Level I questions	No questions and/or answers
Personal Statement	More than 6 paragraphs typed reflection/ synthesis of the book that includes addressing two of the focus subjects*	4-6 paragraphs typed reflection of the book; combination of summary and synthesis that includes addressing one of the focus subjects*	Fewer than 4 paragraphs; not typed; summary only; vaguely addresses the focus subjects*	No personal statement and/or does not address the focus subjects*
Paper & color	Use unlined and solid colored paper; colors work well together and are easy to read	Use unlined and solid colored paper; use color-crayons, pencils, markers, stickers...	Lined paper; lacking in color or ink	Ripped paper or pieces taped together
Grammar, spelling, neatness, & organization	No grammatical or spelling errors; well organized paragraphs	Very few grammatical or spelling errors; organized with an easy flow to follow; neat with no mess	Many grammatical and/or spelling errors; poorly organized paragraphs	Unorganized, illegible, and numerous grammatical errors

Double Entry Journal

Record page numbers and quotations from the book in the left column, and your comments, predictions, or questions in the right of your reading journal. You can use the focus questions as a guide for commentary.

You should have at least one entry per chapter. Be prepared to turn your journal on the first day of school.

Recreate this format onto other sheets of paper, into a spiral notebook, or a Word document.

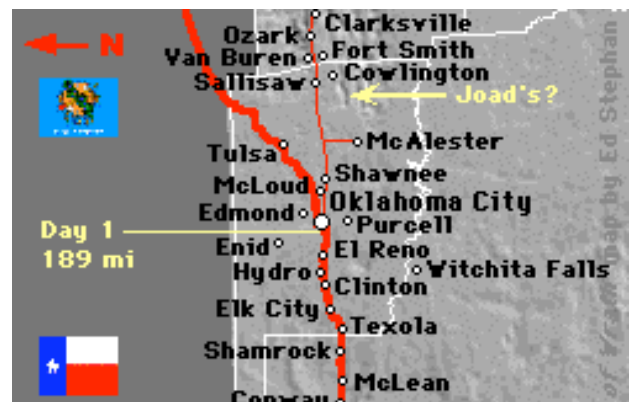
Here is an example of an entry in a double-entry reading journal:

<p>Page 2. “The dawn came, but no day. In the gray sky a red sun appeared, a dim red circle that gave a little light, like dusk; and as that day advanced, the dusk slipped back toward darkness, and the wind cried and whimpered over the fallen corn.”</p>	<p>This sounds like the end of a way of life; almost like the end of the world. There is no hope here.</p>

Summer Reading Calendar - page goals
Joad's trip west

6/13	6/14	6/15	6/16	6/17	6/18	6/19
6/2029	6/21	6/22	6/23	6/24	6/25	6/26

Map of the



6/27	6/28	6/29	6/30	7/1	7/2	7/3
7/4	7/5	7/6	7/7	7/8	7/9	7/10
7/11	7/12	7/13	7/14	7/15	7/16	7/17
7/18	7/19	7/20	7/21	7/22	7/23	7/24
7/25	7/26	7/27	7/28	7/29	7/30	7/31
8/1	8/2	8/3	8/4	8/5	8/6	8/7
8/8	8/9	8/10	8/11	8/12	8/13	8/14
8/15	8/16	8/17	8/18	8/19	8/20	8/21
8/22	8/23	8/24	8/25	8/26	8/27	8/28