

Of Mice and Men by John Steinbeck

Using Quotation And Writing About Characters: The Relationship Between George And Lennie Chapter One by Jenny Hastings, Greenwood Dale Technology School, Nottingham

Good points but not properly expressed.

We can tell that Lennie is like a child because he is always doing the same thing that George is doing like on page 4 where it says 'Lennie who had been watching and imitating George exactly' this shows that George is a role model for Lennie.

Same points but better expressed.

We can tell that Lennie is like a child because he is always doing the same thing that George is doing. For example, when Lennie and George were sitting around the pool at the beginning of Chapter One, Lennie had been watching closely and 'imitated George exactly'. This shows that George is a role model for Lennie, even for the simplest of things.

Using point/quote/discuss properly and 'embedding' quotes into sentences.

We can tell that George is important to Lennie. He looks up to him and models his behaviour on Georges' actions. For example, when they were sitting round the pool at the beginning of Chapter One Lennie had been watching him closely and 'imitated George exactly.' When George, feeling angry and frustrated, 'explodes' at him, 'God amighty, if I was alone I could live so easy' Lennie's face is 'drawn with terror' – he cannot bear George to be angry with him.

The relationship is not one sided, however, as George, even though often frustrated at being tied to Lennie, cares about him and does not want to hurt his feelings. He is pleased with Lennie when he does something right, calling him 'Good boy' when he remembers what he has to say to the ranch boss. He 'put his hand on Lennie's shoulder', after he threw the dead mouse away and made Lennie cry, and told him he would get him another, 'fresh' one. He is also ashamed after he has shouted at Lennie and then sees his 'anguished' face.

Other points you could make:

George is like a parent to Lennie (takes away the dead mouse)

Lennie seeks his approval ('Look George. Look what I done' when making ripples in the water)

Lennie acts like a child who does not know the right way to behave as a man (eg snorting water in the pool)

Lennie has a child's mind in an immensely strong man's body. This means that his mind has never learnt to control his body and he does 'bad things' without meaning to. In Weed, trying to stroke a girl's dress, he frightens her and they have to flee the town. His innocence and vulnerability makes the reader, and George, feel sympathy for him. It is understandable why George, despite his frustration, keeps helping him and feels affection for him, especially when he knows how much Lennie depends on him, emotionally as well as physically.

Lennie is described by Steinbeck as a child or an animal, rather than a grown man. They both share a 'dream', the '**American Dream**', where they will save up enough money to buy their own small farm but it has a different importance for each of them. For Lennie his dream is to look after rabbits of his own, but for George the 'dream' offer him a future where he can be his own man, working for himself and being independent. Lennie believes the dream will come true, but does George, really?

Lennie and George, even though they are so different, **need each other**. George says to Lennie, 'Guys like us, that work on ranches, are the loneliest guys in the world..... With us it ain't like that. We got a future. We got somebody to talk to that gives a damn about us.'

Points to remember about using quotes:

1. Always use quote marks around the words you take from the text.
2. Short quotes fitted into your sentence are usually better than long chunks (see examples above).

Themes in Chapter One

Loneliness
Dreams and reality

Style

Warm colours are used to describe the scenery. Soft sounds describing nature and the movement of many animals build up an atmosphere of calm and peace.

Lennie is described using animal imagery.

Dialogue is used to tell us what Lennie and George are thinking. Steinbeck does not tell us this apart from describing **how** they say something: George 'exploded'.

Please note the time in the novel: Chapter One starts on Thursday evening