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Information for Instructors

The activities in this Unit are designed to help students increase their vocabulary by studying the meanings of words selected from John Steinbeck's novel *Of Mice and Men*. All definitions provided in these activities are based on the contexts in which the vocabulary words appear, which may not always convey the words' conventional usage.

It is the goal of this Unit to familiarize students with vocabulary words that they will re-encounter in life and other readings. The words are carefully selected to meet this goal.

Rather than matching *Of Mice and Men* chapter-for-chapter, we have divided the book into segments depending on the number of vocabulary words from each chapter. While all of the activities may be completed by students individually, we have had the best results when students worked on them in pairs or small groups. The following activities are provided for each segment.

While the words in this reproducible do represent those necessary for a better understanding of the text, our primary concern is that we select words not only pertinent to the literature, but also useful in other aspects of the students' lives.

All page references come from the Penguin edition of *Of Mice and Men*, copyright 1937.

**Activity I**

Objective: Finding and interpreting definitions

**Activity II**

Objective: Deciphering the meaning of vocabulary words using context clues
Replacing the vocabulary word with appropriate synonym(s) and definition(s)

**Activity III**

Objective: Writing definitions, synonyms, and sentences based on context clues

**Activity IV**

Objective: Demonstrating an understanding of a word's meaning by completing sentences
Students will be able to explain their sentence completions by referring to passages in which the word is used.

**Activity V**

Objective: Recognizing commonly used prefixes and roots
Understanding how prefixes and roots offer vocabulary clues

**Activity VI**

Objective: Using vocabulary words to complete a crossword puzzle

**Test**

A twenty question multiple choice test with answer key is provided.
Activity I
Matching Definitions
Chapter 1

Directions: Match each of the words below with its definition based on the context in which the word appears in the book. Use the page numbers in parentheses to locate the word. If answered incorrectly use a dictionary to make any corrections.

junctures (1)   heron (2)   mimicking (11)   debris (1)
mottled (1)     stake (13)   droned (6)     carp (10)
sycamores (1)   morosely (4) pantomime (8)   resignedly (6)
recumbent (1)   scowled (4)

1. ________________ spoke in a monotonous tone
2. ________________ blotchy or spotted in color; marbled
3. ________________ a freshwater fish frequently found in ponds and lakes
4. ________________ two things that come together; joined
5. ________________ copying or imitating closely
6. ________________ an amount of money
7. ________________ remains of something broken or destroyed
8. ________________ a bird with a long neck, bill, and legs
9. ________________ a facial expression used in showing anger or disapproval
10. ________________ in a sad or gloomy manner
11. ________________ communication without words through gestures and expressions
12. ________________ a way of resisting acceptance or submission to the inevitable
13. ________________ types of trees similar to the maple
14. ________________ lying down; resting; idle
Activity IV
Completing Sentences
Chapter 1

Directions: The following sentences each contain a vocabulary word from the text. Complete each sentence in a way that shows you understand the meaning of the highlighted vocabulary word. A dictionary or a thesaurus may be used to help with the meaning.

Example:

Sentence Starter Containing Vocabulary Word

Timothy loved to torment his younger sister by mimicking her while she had her singing lesson.

1. Mr. Jackson's stilted legs caused ____________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________________________

2. Emily, hearing a commotion, emerged from ________________________________
   _______________________________________________________________________

3. The submarine’s periscope gave the men on board __________________________
   _______________________________________________________________________

4. The workers were bucking bales of hay from ________________________________
   _______________________________________________________________________

5. The children were whisked away by their grandmother who __________________
   _______________________________________________________________________

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Activity V
Roots and Prefixes
Chapter 1

Directions: The Latin servare means “to keep, to save.” Combine each prefix in the chart below with the serv root to make a new word. Then define the word. Use a dictionary if you need help.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PREFIX</th>
<th>+ serv</th>
<th>NEW WORD/DEFINITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. re: back</td>
<td>+ serv</td>
<td>(adj.)________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. con: very much</td>
<td>+ serv</td>
<td>(adj.)________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. pre: beforehand</td>
<td>+ serv</td>
<td>(v.)__________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. pre: beforehand</td>
<td>+ serv</td>
<td>(n.)__________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. ob: over</td>
<td>+ serv</td>
<td>(v.)__________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. re: back</td>
<td>+ serv</td>
<td>(n.)__________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. re: back</td>
<td>+ serv</td>
<td>(n.)__________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. con: very</td>
<td>+ serv</td>
<td>(n.)__________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>