

LEAD-INS TO LITERATURE



# Of Mice and Men

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by John Steinbeck



PRESTWICK HOUSE, INC.





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## PART ONE

■ Socio-Historical Context of the Novel

5





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### *Some Facts and Statistics about the Great Depression:*

The “Dust Bowl” that swept across the American Plains during the 1920s and early 1930s was a result of bad farming practices, excessive borrowing, corporate greed, and incessant droughts.








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Approximately 89 million acres of farmland were left unusable for crops in the country's food-producing regions. Experts estimate that 850,000,000 tons of topsoil blew away from the Southern Plains in 1935.

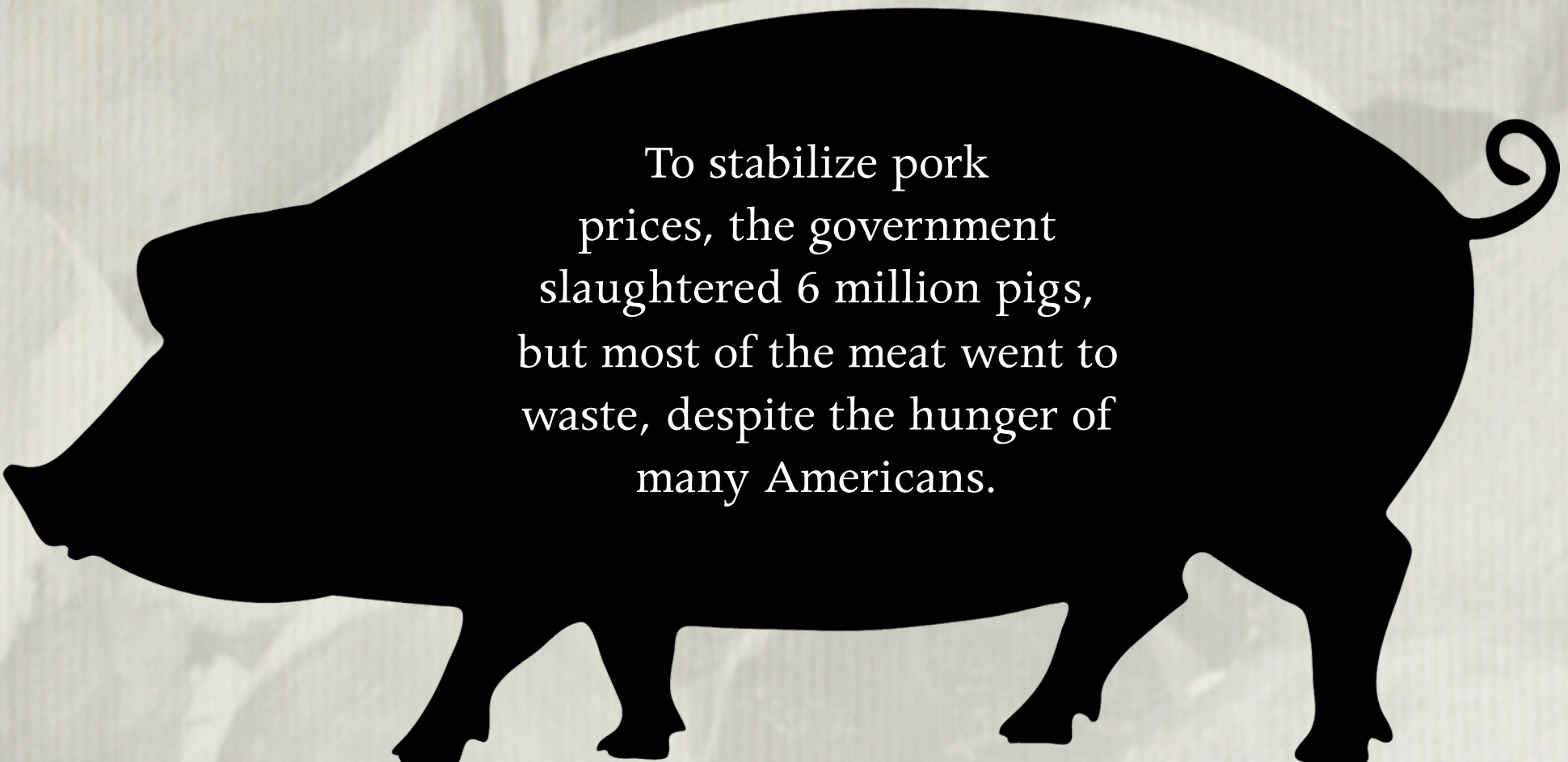






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To stabilize pork  
prices, the government  
slaughtered 6 million pigs,  
but most of the meat went to  
waste, despite the hunger of  
many Americans.





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Depositors in banks had lost over \$140 billion by 1933, and 24.9% of eligible workers were unemployed.

Approximately 45% of all U.S. banks failed in the 1930s, as people clamored to withdraw their savings in what were called “bank runs.”



A crowd at New York's American Union Bank during a bank run early in the Great Depression.





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Full-time workers' salaries averaged only fifty cents an hour, but pay for migrant workers, like those depicted in *Of Mice and Men*, ranged from .75¢ to \$1.25 *a day*.

