Of Mice and Men

WebQuest Description: This Webquest will help students build background knowledge prior to reading in order to fully appreciate the setting of the novella by John Steinbeck.

Grade Level: 9-12
Curriculum: English / Language Arts
Keywords: Dust Bowl, migrant farm workers, friendship
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Introduction

John Steinbeck (1902-1968) was born in Salinas, California. He worked as a farm laborer while in college. He never graduated from college, but his time as working on farms influenced his writing. Steinbeck was able to make a living at writing with the publication of his novel Tortilla Flats in 1935. Steinbeck's novels were a reflection of the times in which he lived. In the novella Of Mice and Men (1937) two life-long friends, Lennie and George, must move from farm to farm to find work. Lennie is described as being mentally challenged and George looks after him. The entire country has been impacted by the Great Depression and the ensuing Dust Bowl. The impact of these events on the nation was devastating. People were unable to afford the most basic necessities. You are a newspaper editor from the 1930's. You are to create the front page of a newspaper using the information you learn about The Dust Bowl, The Great Depression and migrant farm workers from this Webquest. What was life like during the 1930's? How did this impact people and the world? What were the politics of the time? What is a true friend? What are the boundaries of friendship?

Tasks

You are a newspaper editor in the 1930's. Using Microsoft Publisher you are to create the front page of a newspaper to include: An editorial on a social issue from the 1930's Write two news articles from the following topics: Either world news or politics, and radio, film, etc. Two advertisements on items from the 1930's Two pictures that relate to other content in the newspaper. You will be provided two class periods for background research and two class periods to work on the newspaper.

Process

As you read or view each of these links, take notes to be used in writing your articles. Read the PBS article on The Great Depression View Chapter 3 of Surviving the Dust Bowl Read the timeline of The Great Depression Read the Introduction & all parts of Eyewitness to History by moving your mouse over the picture & clicking on the color images. Choose two topics to write an article about & read the corresponding website. 1. Select either world news, or politics 2. Select one - radio, film, or fashion Create two advertisements from that would have appeared in a 1930's newspaper. You will need to locate these on your own using the website credibility criteria you learned in the library.

Evaluation

The newspaper will be graded using the rubric below. To calculate your score based on a 100% multiply the total score by 6.25. For example a total score of 14 multiplied by 6.25 is an 87.5%. Rubric adapted from the 6+1 Writing Rubric.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category and Score</th>
<th>Beginning</th>
<th>Developing</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Editorial</td>
<td>Somewhat unclear or vague main idea with insufficient details. The article addresses a social issue of the 1930's.</td>
<td>The main idea is clear, but the writing may be simplistic or overly broad. The article addresses a social issue of the 1930's.</td>
<td>Writing is clear, focused &amp; interesting, but not exceptional. The article addresses a social issue of the 1930's.</td>
<td>Exceptionally clear article which holds the reader's attention &amp; addresses a social issue of the 1930's</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 News Articles</td>
<td>Somewhat unclear or vague main idea with insufficient details. The articles address one topic from each category politics or world news &amp; fashion, music or films.</td>
<td>The main idea is clear, but the writing may be simplistic or overly broad. The articles address one topic from each category politics or world news &amp; fashion, music or films.</td>
<td>Writing is clear, focused &amp; interesting, but not exceptional. The articles address one topic from each category politics or world news &amp; fashion, music or films.</td>
<td>Exceptionally clear articles which hold the reader's attention &amp; address one topic from each category politics or world news &amp; fashion, music or films</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Now you have a clear understanding of the social, political and economic climate of the United States during the 1930's. As you read Of Mice and Men consider the information you have learned about The Dust Bowl, The Great Depression and migrant farm workers. Read the poem below "To a Mouse" by Robert Burns and consider its impact on the title of Steinbeck's novella-Of Mice and Men.

References
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Conclusion

Standards
Credits
Other