

## Of Mice and Men- Vocabulary Chapters 1-2

junction -the shape or manner in which things come together and a connection is made

EXAMPLE SENTENCE: *On one side of the river the golden foothill slopes curve up to the strong and rocky Gabilan Mountains, but on the valley side the water is lined with trees—willows fresh and green with every spring, carrying in their lower leaf **junctions** the debris of the winter's flooding*

recumbent -lying down; in a position of comfort or rest

EXAMPLE SENTENCE: *...and sycamores with mottled, white, **recumbent** limbs and branches that arch over the pool*

periscope -an optical instrument that provides a view of an otherwise obstructed field

EXAMPLE SENTENCE: *A water snake slipped along on the pool, its head held up like a little **periscope**.*

pantomime -a performance using gestures and body movements without words

NOTES: Compare with "mimic" in this list. Both words have the same etymological root: the Greek "mimos" which means "imitator, actor, buffoon." The prefix "pan" means "all" so one person who pantomimes can perform gestures that imitate many characters. As suggested by the example sentences, a pantomime is often seen as innocent and fun, while mimicry, with its additional use of words, is often meant to be funny in a mean way.

EXAMPLE SENTENCE: *But Lennie made an elaborate **pantomime** of innocence.*

contemplate -consider as a possibility

EXAMPLE SENTENCE: *Lennie hesitated, backed away, looked wildly at the brush line as though he **contemplated** running for his freedom.*

irrigation -supplying dry land with water by means of ditches etc

NOTES: Note that this kind of ditch is a very unpleasant one to stay in, which is George's point in the sentence, and this should lead the reader to grasp the intensity of the situation he is describing.

EXAMPLE SENTENCE: *She yells and we got to hide in a **irrigation** ditch all day with guys lookin' for us, and we got to sneak out in the dark and get outa the country.*

anguish -extreme mental distress

EXAMPLE SENTENCE: *He looked across the fire at Lennie's **anguished** face, and then he looked ashamedly at the flames.*

laden -filled with a great quantity

EXAMPLE SENTENCE: *At about ten o'clock in the morning the sun threw a bright dust- **laden** bar through one of the side windows, and in and out of the beam flies shot like rushing stars.*

mollify -cause to be more favorably inclined; gain the good will of

EXAMPLE SENTENCE: *"Damn right he don't," said George, slightly **mollified**, "not if he wants to stay workin' long."*

pugnacious -ready and able to resort to force or violence

EXAMPLE SENTENCE: *His glance was at once calculating and **pugnacious**.*

gingerly -with extreme care or delicacy

NOTES: Curley is a small man who's constantly trying to prove he's better than big men. So when he steps gingerly here, he is approaching Lennie with outward menace but hidden delicacy and care.

EXAMPLE SENTENCE: *Curley stepped **gingerly** close to him.*

ominous -threatening or foreshadowing evil or tragic developments

EXAMPLE SENTENCE: *He said ominously, "Well, he better watch out for Lennie. Lennie ain't no fighter, but Lennie's strong and quick and Lennie don't know no rules."*

derogatory -expressive of low opinion

EXAMPLE SENTENCE: *He had drawn a **derogatory** statement from George.*

plaintive -expressing sorrow

EXAMPLE SENTENCE: *"I don't want no trouble," he said plaintively.*

contort -twist and press out of shape

NOTES: The verb "contort" emphasizes that Lennie is more physical than thoughtful.

EXAMPLE SENTENCE: *His face **contorted** with thought.*

rouge -makeup consisting of a pink or red powder applied to the cheeks

EXAMPLE SENTENCE: *She had full, **rouged** lips and wide-spaced eyes, heavily made up.*

complacently -in a self-satisfied manner

EXAMPLE SENTENCE: *Lennie, who had been following the conversation back and forth with his eyes, smiled **complacently** at the compliment.*

muse -reflect deeply on a subject

EXAMPLE SENTENCE: *"Ain't many guys travel around together," he **mused**.*

dignity -the quality of being worthy of esteem or respect

EXAMPLE SENTENCE: *Slim stood up slowly and with **dignity**.*

precede -move ahead (of others) in time or space

EXAMPLE SENTENCE: *Carlson stepped back to let Slim **precede** him, and then the two of them went out the door.*