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Period 7

4/15/13

Honors English 9

Mr. Stewart

Grapes of Wrath Study Guide Chapters 1-5

1) What is the protagonist's name? Describe him briefly: his face and hands; his clothes.

The protagonist's name is Tom Joad. His eyes are very dark, and his eyeballs have a small hint of brown pigment. He has very high and wide cheek bones, and his upper lip is quite long, which also stretches to cover his protruded teeth. Joad's hands are hard with calluses, and his broad fingers are covered with thick and ridged nails. His clothes are all cheap and new. All his clothes are still stiff, and some even have noticeable creases. Also, his coat is too big, and the trousers he wore are too short since he is very tall.

2) Where is he coming from? Going to?

Joad is just coming from out of jail for committing homicide. He was there for four years and now, he is

headed to his old man's place so he does not "have to lie to get a job" (18).

3) On page 10 the truck driver pays his bill and puts his change in a slot machine. Explain what this indicates about him.

This passage shows that even though the man knew he had little chance of winning, he thinks he can get lucky and maybe win. The truck driver says, "they fix 'em so you can't win nothing," (10) yet he still wasted his two nickel's to try and win. He knew the slot machine was rigged, but he was hoping for a miracle.

4) The waitress does something to indicate the same thing about herself- what does she do (or rather, what doesn't she do?)

The waitress does not discourage the man from wasting his change on the slot machine. If it was her own machine and she got to keep the money put in by other customers, she definitely would have let the man put his money in. However, even though someone else will benefit from his two nickels, the waitress still sits back while he tries the slot machine. This shows how she does not want to get his hopes down, even though she also knows he has little chance of winning.

5) What do #'s 3 and 4 indicate about Steinbeck's view of society?

Both the truck driver and the waitress are characters that Steinbeck uses to get his view of society across. I think Steinbeck believes that even though the world can be a negative place, there are some people who just keep on thinking good things can happen. Both these characters knew that the man had a small chance of winning the slot machine, but the man put his money in anyway and the waitress did not try to stop him or tell him he shouldn't waste his money. They both hoped that a miracle would happen.

6) How does Tom "trap" the driver into giving him a ride?

Joad tells the driver that "sometimes a guy'll be a good guy if some rich bastard makes him carry a sticker" (11). The driver believes that if he refuses to give Joad a lift, he was a bad person who was pushed around by their boss. He figures that if he agrees to help the guy out, he will be a good person, but also it will show that he was not anyone that could be kicked around.

7) On pages 13-14 Tom gives us his philosophy at the beginning of the novel- what is it?

Joad's philosophy is that he is "just tryin' to get along without shovin' nobody around" (13-14). He does not want to be in anybody's way or be a burden for them. Also, Tom mainly lives and focuses just on the present moment. He does not think too much about the future, and just gets along day by day.

8) In chapter 3 what is being used as a symbol- and a symbol of what?

The turtle who attempted to cross the road is being used as a symbol. The turtle symbolizes those who keep trying even with the hardest tasks at hand. With the difficult environment, the turtle tried numerous times to climb up the embankment and avoid the cars in the road. This turtle can be compared to some humans who always try their hardest and strive for the best even though times can be hard or those who never give up when they are at a disadvantage.

9) Who is Casy, i.e., what had he been? Describe him. (What might the description of his forehead indicate about him?)

Casy used to be a preacher. He has a long head that is bony, and his neck is as stringy as a celery stalk. He has very large protruding eyeballs that are covered with raw, red lids. He also has brown, shiny, hairless cheeks, and his mouth is humorous. His skin is so tight everywhere along his face. Also, his forehead is abnormally high and is lined with delicate blue veins. This might indicate that he has a large brain, therefore being very wise and has acquired a lot of knowledge.

10) What does Tom say he maybe “should have been”?

Tom thinks he maybe should have been a preacher. He says that it has been quite a while since he has had a girl.

11) According to Casy, on pages 32-33, what might the “Holy Spirit” be?

The “Holy Sperit” might be the human spirit. Casy says he does not love Jesus because he only loves people. While he thinks he is a bad preacher for thinking this, he also figures that maybe it is just “all men an’ all women we love” (32) and that “all men got one big soul ever’body’s a part of” (33).

12) In what POV is the novel told?

The novel is told from the third person omniscient perspective. Steinbeck uses this POV so the reader has a reliable narrator to understand how each character is and what they do, without the situation just being looked at by one, biased character.

13) In chapter 5 the narrator explains the setting for the novel’s conflict. “And all of them were caught in something larger than themselves” (42). What is the word the narrator uses for this “something larger”? In your own words explain what Steinbeck is trying to say here.

The “something larger” is the bank or the company, which is portrayed as being a monster. Steinbeck is trying to say that there is really nothing that one can do about someone or something that is at a higher level than another person is. This “something larger” can also just be related to the way of life. The people from the bank had to do what they did because it was their job, and the people who were kicked off their land had to leave because they had no other choice. The bankers were good people who hated what they had to do, but they had to escape their thoughts and feelings to do their job. This seems unfair,

but it is also how society works. Also, none of the bankers or the people who own the land are identified by name. They only serve as objects who are in the way of each other from being productive in life.

14) Explain the tractor driver's psychology of why he is willing to help drive people off their homes.

The tractor driver helps drive people off their homes because the company pays him three dollars per day for doing so. With those three dollars, the man is able to support his family. He has no time to think about the other families he may be hurting by doing his job because he can only think about feeding his own family. He looks out for only himself and will do anything to benefit himself and give he and his family a better life.

15) Why doesn't the tenant just go to the bank and shoot the banker?

The tenant does not go to the bank and shoot the banker because it is not really just the banker who is taking away people's land. The problem "isn't men at all" (52). The problem is that everyone who works at the bank hates what they do, but it happens anyway. They are not able to control it. For this reason, there is no one single person who makes the decisions. The tenant cannot shoot who is in charge because no one is actually in charge. The bank has just become a huge, evil force that has been made by men.

