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the readers. this is
because



" But you're a kinda nice fella. jus' like a big baby"(Steinbeck 129), said Curley's wife. John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* is the story of Lennie and George, two migrant workers who cannot keep a job. George is the caregiver for Lennie, who is mentally disabled but is an undaunted worker. George and Lennie finally secure a job working at a ranch in Northern California. Lennie's preoccupation with one of the worker's wife gets him and his sidekicker George in a heap of trouble.

In John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*, Lennie is portrayed as a sympathetic character when Lennie is shown to be mentally disabled, when Lennie does not discern his own strength, and when he is shown to have a unsullied character. The first example of Lennie being portrayed as a sympathetic character is when he is clearly shown to have a mental disability. In the beginning of the novel, Lennie is shown to have a mental disability and also have a speech impediment. This is evident when Slim says " He's jes' like a kid, ain't he"(Steinbeck 79). When Slim said this, he was clearly saying this in correspondence to Lennie's mental disability. By having Lennie characterized as a child and by his mannerisms being like a young child, it consequently generates sympathy for the character from the readers. This is because it is always easy for a reader to feel sympathetic towards a person with mental difficulties as you can fathom the difficulty of their situation. Another example of Lennie being portrayed as a sympathetic character is when he cannot discern his own strength.

This is evident after the fight between Curley and Lennie, when Lennie is crouched against the wall and dolefully says " I didn't wanta hurt him"(Steinbeck 102). Since hurting someone can be seen as unacceptable,

the reader may feel enraged towards Lennie's action, until they see Lennie's penitence in the quote above. Lennie's remorse for his actions truly reflects Lennie's inability to discern his own strength. Finally, another example of Lennie being portrayed as a sympathetic character is when he is shown to have a unsullied character. This is evident in Lennie's innocent aspirations. Lennie's innocence causes him to forget about major occurrences just by assuring Lennie that his dreams and aspirations will happen.

An example of this is after the fight between Lennie and Curley and after being reassured by George when Lennie says "' I can still tend the rabbits George'" (Steinbeck 103)? This is an example of how easily pleased Lennie is and also how easy it is for him to forget major circumstances and move on. To conclude, in *Of Mice and Men*, Lennie is portrayed as a sympathetic character when Lennie is shown to be mentally disabled, when Lennie does not realize his own strength, and when he is shown to have an innocent character. Throughout *Of Mice and Men*, these examples are clearly evident.

John Steinbeck's portrayal of Lennie makes reading *Of Mice and Men* an awe-inspiring experience.