

John Steinbeck's style essay sample



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Steinbeck is recognized as one of the America's best short-story writers. Steinbeck wrote 32 books throughout his life. He is so famous and well-known they made a Museum after him, The National Steinbeck Center. He also won many awards from his works. Including, the Commonwealth of California Gold Medal for *Tortilla Flats* in 1935. This novel was his first widely known novel. In 1938 the book *Of Mice and Men*, was awarded the New York Drama Critics' Circle Award for the tale of two farm workers seeking land of their own. Also, Steinbeck's novels can be classified as social novels dealing with economic problems. Such as his book *Grapes of Wrath*, this book earned him the Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 1940. Steinbeck is noted for his sharp, forceful idiom, wry humor, and profound compassion for the poor, the inarticulate, and the politically oppressed. Another award that he earned was The Nobel Prize for Literature in 1962. Overall, Steinbeck has great novels and keeps the reader interested with the strong plots and complex characters.

One book that I read from John Steinbeck that was just recently was *Of Mice and Men*. The story was these two guys trying to succeed the American Dream. Their dream was to own land/farm. This shows symbolism in that the dream farm of George and Lennie could represent the American Dream and at the time this dream was disillusioned with the idea of the Great Depression and how many could not in fact achieve their dream. The reader knew that something would prevent the two men from obtaining their dream. Symbolism is a Literary Device that John uses in most of his books. Also to find Steinbeck in his book is how close the setting is from his real house. The book's setting was South of Soledad, California. Soledad is 30

miles away from Steinbeck's home place, Salinas, California. Steinbeck also uses foreshadowing throughout the story. An example is, when Lennie reveals he has a dead mouse in his pocket, George questions him. "Uh-uh. Jus' a dead mouse, George. I didn't kill it. Honest! I found it. I found it dead" (5) this foreshadows the death of Lennie's puppy and the death of Curley's wife. "The best-laid schemes of mice and men go oft awry" By Robert Burns means that even the best plans of mice and men could go wrong very easily. This means that George and Lennie's dream didn't go as planned.

Another book made by John Steinbeck was *The Red Pony*. The setting is a ranch in the California mountains; Salinas, California. The theme is Jody's coming-of-age, and also his changing relationship with his father, love, and loss of innocence. Jody receives a gift by his father that symbolizes love and responsibility. Jody named the horse Gabilan, for Steinbeck lived near the Gabilan Mountains so that helped him pick out the name of the horse. This book shows foreshadowing too. "Jody looked along the farm buildings. He felt an uncertainty in the air, a feeling of change and of loss and of the gain of new and unfamiliar things" (Steinbeck 4). This foreshadows the death of Gabilan and later (in "The Promise") the birth of a new colt. Another literary device used is Simile. "He [Jody] was only a little boy, ten years old, with hair like dusty yellow grass..." (Steinbeck 2). In the story Gabilan dies by catching a bad cold and the horse escapes the farm one night and dies. John Steinbeck had the idea to make him sick because of his mother which was dying of effects of a stroke.

One of the greatest books of John Steinbeck is *The Grapes of Wrath*. He wrote the book during the Great Depression. The book tells the truth about what

happens in the great depression. It shows how the tone is mournful, and sympathetic. The disastrous drought of the 1930s forces farmers to migrate west to California and Steinbeck uses realistic things in this novel such as Tom Joad's impulse to respond to hardship and disaster by focusing on one's own needs and the impulse to risk one's safety by working for a common good. Tom's impulse is to make life better and do what it takes to make it better.

Growers from the west accused Steinbeck of misrepresenting their attitude toward migrants. This book's use of profanity and the obscene ending was burned when it was first published. For example in a descriptive scene, a car hits and destroys Joads' dog (symbolic of the suffering that lies ahead for the family). A man bashes in Casy's head, and Tom avenges Casy by brutally beating the man. This all show some type of imagery because you picture what's happening in the book. John Steinbeck uses literary devices as simile, personification, and foreshadowing. " In the morning the dust hung like fog, and the sun was as red as ripe new blood" (p6) this is an example of a simile. For personification, " The fire leaped and threw shadows on the house" (p68) The family rescued by the benevolent stranger at the end of Chapter 9 foreshadows the " rescuing" of the Wilsons by the Joads in the next chapter. This book has so many realistic events that actually happened, but it's a fiction book.