

Name: _____ Class: _____

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Activity #1: *The Things They Carried* Text Connections

Often while reading, we are reminded of experiences in our own lives that are similar to those experienced by characters in the text. Other times, a passage can remind us of a current issue, societal problem, or historical event. All of these connections allow readers to engage more fully with the reading and therefore think more critically about it.

Directions: Choose a passage that makes you think of a memory, experience, emotion, societal issue, or historical event. Then follow steps A, B, & C...(B & C must be in complete sentences!)

- 1) **Passage:** Record the quote or passage that you've chosen with page citation.
- 2) **Context:** Explain what is happening in this passage.
- 3) **Text Connection:** Identify what kind of connection you made with this passage. Was it personal, social, historical? In three or four thoughtful sentences, explain this connection, giving details and comparisons that show significance. How does your connection give you an even deeper understanding of or insight into the passage?

Example Text Connection

- A. **Passage:** “ ‘ Of course Lennie’s a Goddamn nuisance most of the time,’ said George, ‘but you get used to goin’ around with a guy, and you can’t get rid of him’ ” (41).
- B. **Context:** In this passage, George is trying to explain to Slim why he sticks with Lennie even though he understands Lennie has special needs and is often a burden to him.
- C. **Text Connection:** This quote reminded me of a friend I had in 4th grade named Monica . Nobody liked her because she was a little bossy, a little strange, and she was also a bookworm. I got to know her on the bus one day, and she latched on to me, I think because she was pretty lonely for friends. Turns out, she was actually really friendly and loyal, just like Lenny was to George. At times, she was also a burden to me because she was unpopular, which everyone who’s ever been in fourth grade knows, made me unpopular for hanging out with her. But I just couldn’t hurt her feelings and make fun of her like everyone else or leave her all alone to face her tormentors. Thinking back on all this and making this connection to the reading has given me more insight into why George didn’t just abandon Lenny. At a certain point, you just start to care more about another person’s well-being than your own popularity or image.

A. **Passage from Chapter** _____ (include page number in parentheses at the end): _____

B. **Context:** _____

C. **Text Connection:** _____

Date: _____

Activity #2: *The Things They Carried* Quotation Analysis

Objective & Explanation: The purpose of this activity is to interact with the text by analyzing significant quotes in order to explore the author's development of theme.

Directions: As you are reading, keep track of what you feel are important or meaningful quotes from the text. Choose a quote that you feel is most significant to the theme you chose to analyze.

Then:

- 1) Write the quote down (*include page and proper quotation punctuation*);
- 2) Establish the context for your quote in 1-2 sentences (*who is talking to whom? When and where in the story does this quote occur? What is being discussed prior to the quote?*)
- 3) Explain the quote and analyze its significance in 1-2 sentences (*Why is this quote important? What is really going on here?*)

Example of Quote Analysis:

- A. **Quote supporting the theme** of friendship: "Guys like us, that work on ranches, are the loneliest guys in the world. They got no family. They don't belong no place. . . . With us it ain't like that. We got a future" (17).
- B. **Context:** In this passage George is speaking to Lennie. Before George and Lennie reach the ranch, they camp for the night in a beautiful clearing and George assures Lennie of their special friendship.
- C. **Analysis:** This shows that George and Lennie have each other; their place in the world is with each other, unlike other men like them who work and travel alone.

A. **Quote supporting the theme** of _____ **from Chapter** _____

(include page number in parentheses at the end): _____

B. **Context:** _____

C. **Analysis:** _____

Date: _____

Activity #3: *The Things They Carried* Literary Device Breakdown

Directions: While reading, keep an eye out for the author’s use of literary devices (metaphor, simile, imagery, personification, foreshadowing, repetition, flashback, etc.). Choose one literary device that you wish to investigate further and then discuss it using the following format:

1. **Definition:** Record the literary device you’ll be using and define it.
2. **Example:** Record the quote or passage that exemplifies your device. Be sure to give the context of the quote and a page number citation.
3. **Function:** In three or four thoughtful sentences, explain how your chosen example illustrates your literary device and give analysis. Why does the author use this device here? What is the significance? What is the impact on the reader? How does this relate to the text as a whole?

Example Literary Device Breakdown:

- A. **Definition:** *Foreshadowing* - the author’s presentation of events and scenes in a work of fiction or drama so that the reader is prepared to some degree for what occurs later in the work. This can be part of the general atmosphere of the work, or it can be a specific scene or object that
- B. **Example:** An example of foreshadowing is present in the opening paragraph of the final chapter of *Mice and Men*, where George realizes he is going to have to kill Lennie in order to keep Curly killing him: “A water snake glided smoothly up the pool, twisting its periscope head side-to-side...a silent head and beak lanced down and plucked it out by the head...” (99).
- C. **Function:** Steinbeck’s poetic description of an unaware snake being killed by a bird foreshadows that, Lennie will be killed by George, innocent and unaware of the danger surrounding him. Just as the snake is naturally going about his routine, Lennie simply cannot help being what he was naturally born to be. But in nature, the weaker are inevitably destroyed; perhaps Steinbeck is suggesting here that humanity is no different. Lennie is eventually shot in the head by his friend, just like the snake who was “plucked out by the head.” The foreshadowing here serves as a reminder to the reader that humanity is still part of the world’s natural order: Lennie is vulnerable and defenseless, and thus doesn’t stand a chance of surviving in such a cruel world.

A. **Literary Device:** _____ **Definition:** _____

B. **Example (Quote)** (include page number in parentheses at the end):

C. **Function:** _____
