



TEACHER'S PET PUBLICATIONS

LITPLAN TEACHER PACK™

for

The Red Pony

based on the book by

John Steinbeck

Written by

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A FEW NOTES ABOUT THE AUTHOR
JOHN STEINBECK

STEINBECK, John (1902-68). Winner of the 1962 Nobel prize for literature, the American author John Steinbeck is best remembered for his novel 'The Grapes of Wrath'. Steinbeck's story of a family of farm workers migrating from Oklahoma to California describes the hopelessness of the Great Depression era.

John Ernst Steinbeck was born on Feb. 27, 1902, in Salinas, Calif. He took classes at Stanford University for several years but left without a degree. He worked as a laborer to support himself while he wrote. Steinbeck's first novel was published in 1929, but it was not until the publication of 'Tortilla Flat' in 1935 that he attained critical and popular acclaim.

He followed this success with 'In Dubious Battle' (1936) and 'Of Mice and Men' (1937). 'The Grapes of Wrath' (1939) earned for Steinbeck a Pulitzer prize. In these works Steinbeck's proletarian themes are expressed through his portrayal of the inarticulate, dispossessed laborers who populate his American landscape. Both 'Of Mice and Men' and 'The Grapes of Wrath' were made into motion pictures.

In 1943 Steinbeck traveled to North Africa and Italy as a war correspondent. Some of his later works include 'Cannery Row' (1945), 'The Red Pony' (1947), 'East of Eden' (1952), 'The Winter of Our Discontent' (1961), and 'Travels with Charley' (1962). He also wrote several motion-picture scripts, including adaptations of two of his shorter works-'The Pearl' and 'The Red Pony'. Steinbeck died in New York City on Dec. 20, 1968.

--- Courtesy of Compton's Learning Company

INTRODUCTION - *The Red Pony*

This unit has been designed to develop students' reading, writing, thinking, and language skills through exercises and activities related to *The Red Pony* by John Steinbeck. It includes sixteen lessons, supported by extra resource materials.

The **introductory lesson** introduces students to one main theme of the novel through a writing assignment. Following the introductory activity, students are given a transition to explain how the activity relates to the book they are about to read. Following the transition, students are given the materials they will be using during the unit. At the end of the lesson, students begin the pre-reading work for the first reading assignment.

The **reading assignments** are approximately thirty pages each; some are a little shorter while others are a little longer. Students have approximately 15 minutes of pre-reading work to do prior to each reading assignment. This pre-reading work involves reviewing the study questions for the assignment and doing some vocabulary work for 8 to 10 vocabulary words they will encounter in their reading.

The **study guide questions** are fact-based questions; students can find the answers to these questions right in the text. These questions come in two formats: short answer required or multiple choice-matching-true/false. The best use of these materials is probably to use the short answer version of the questions as study guides for students (since answers will be more complete), and to use the multiple choice version for occasional quizzes. It might be a good idea to make transparencies of your answer keys for the overhead projector.

The **vocabulary work** is intended to enrich students' vocabularies as well as to aid in the students' understanding of the book. Prior to each reading assignment, students will complete a two-part worksheet for approximately 8 to 10 vocabulary words in the upcoming reading assignment. Part I focuses on students' use of general knowledge and contextual clues by giving the sentence in which the word appears in the text. Students are then to write down what they think the words mean based on the words' usage. Part II nails down the definitions of the words by giving students dictionary definitions of the words and having students match the words to the correct definitions based on the words' contextual usage. Students should then have an understanding of the words when they meet them in the text.

After each reading assignment, students will go back and formulate answers for the study guide questions. Discussion of these questions serves as a **review** of the most important events and ideas presented in the reading assignments.

After students complete reading the work, a lesson is devoted to the **extra discussion questions/writing assignments**. These questions focus on interpretation, critical analysis and personal response, employing a variety of thinking skills and adding to the students' understanding of the novel.

Following the discussion session, there is a **vocabulary review** lesson which pulls together all of the fragmented vocabulary lists for the reading assignments and gives students a review of all of the words they have studied.

There is a **group unit project**. Students are divided into four groups: gifts, mountains, promises, and leaders. Each group researches its topic and prepares a fifteen minute presentation.

There is a **group activity** which has students working in small groups to discuss the main themes of the novel. Using the information they have acquired so far through individual work and class discussions, students get together to further examine the text and to brainstorm ideas relating to the themes of the novel.

The group activity is followed by a **reports and discussion** session in which the groups share their ideas about the themes with the entire class; thus, the entire class is exposed to information about all of the themes and the entire class can discuss each theme based on the nucleus of information brought forth by each of the groups.

There are three **writing assignments** in this unit, each with the purpose of informing, persuading, or having students express personal opinions. The first assignment is to express personal opinions: students write a composition in which they tell about something they have wanted very much. The second assignment is to inform: students write a composition in which they explain what they will do for their group presentations. The third assignment is to persuade: students write a letter persuading someone to let them do something they want to do or let them have something they want to have.

There is a **nonfiction reading assignment**. Students are required to read a piece of nonfiction related in some way to *The Red Pony*. Most students will accomplish this while doing their group unit project. After reading their nonfiction pieces, students will fill out a worksheet on which they answer questions regarding facts, interpretation, criticism, and personal opinions. During one class period, students make **oral presentations** about the nonfiction pieces they have read. This not only exposes all students to a wealth of information, it also gives students the opportunity to practice **public speaking**.

The **review lesson** pulls together all of the aspects of the unit. The teacher is given four or five choices of activities or games to use which all serve the same basic function of reviewing all of the information presented in the unit.

The **unit test** comes in two formats: all multiple choice-matching-true/false or with a mixture of matching, short answer, multiple choice, and composition. As a convenience, two different tests for each format have been included.

There are additional **support materials** included with this unit. The **unit resource** section includes suggestions for an in-class library, crossword and word search puzzles related to the novel, and extra vocabulary worksheets. There is a list of **bulletin board ideas** which gives the teacher suggestions for bulletin boards to go along with this unit. In addition, there is a list of **extra class activities** the teacher could choose from to enhance the unit or as a substitution for an exercise the teacher might feel is inappropriate for his/her class. **Answer keys** are located directly after the **reproducible student materials** throughout the unit. The student materials may be reproduced for use in the teacher's classroom without infringement of copyrights. No other portion of this unit may be reproduced without the written consent of Teacher's Pet Publications, Inc.

UNIT OBJECTIVES - *The Red Pony*

1. Through reading John Steinbeck's *The Red Pony*, students will gain a better understanding of the "coming of age" theme as they are exposed to the main character's growth to maturity..
2. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the text on four levels: factual, interpretive, critical and personal.
3. Students will be exposed to a variety of ideas and information regarding gifts, mountains, promises, and leaders.
4. Students will be given the opportunity to practice reading aloud and silently to improve their skills in each area.
5. Students will answer questions to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the main events and characters in *The Red Pony* as they relate to the author's theme development.
6. Students will enrich their vocabularies and improve their understanding of the novel through the vocabulary lessons prepared for use in conjunction with the novel.
7. The writing assignments in this unit are geared to several purposes:
 - a. To have students demonstrate their abilities to inform, to persuade, or to express their own personal ideas
Note: Students will demonstrate ability to write effectively to inform by developing and organizing facts to convey information. Students will demonstrate the ability to write effectively to persuade by selecting and organizing relevant information, establishing an argumentative purpose, and by designing an appropriate strategy for an identified audience. Students will demonstrate the ability to write effectively to express personal ideas by selecting a form and its appropriate elements.
 - b. To check the students' reading comprehension
 - c. To make students think about the ideas presented by the novel
 - d. To encourage logical thinking
 - e. To provide an opportunity to practice good grammar and improve students' use of the English language.
8. Students will read aloud, report, and participate in large and small group discussions to improve their public speaking and personal interaction skills.

READING ASSIGNMENT SHEET - *The Red Pony*

Date Assigned	Reading Assignment	Completion Date
	The Gift	
	The Great Mountains	
	The Promise	
	The Leader of the People	

UNIT OUTLINE - *The Red Pony*

1	2	3	4	5
Introduction Writing Asst. 1 PV Gift	Read Gift	Study ?s Gift PVR Mountains	Study?s Mountains Group Project Assignment PVR Promise	Library
6	7	8	9	10
Study?s Promise Group Work	Writing Assignment 2 PVR Leader	Study ?s Leader Extra ?s	Vocabulary	Reports
11	12	13	14	15
Reports	Group Activity (Themes)	Reports & Discussion	Writing Assignment 3	Review
16				
Test				

Key: P = Preview Study Questions V = Vocabulary Work R = Read

LESSON ONE

Objectives

1. To introduce *The Red Pony* unit.
2. To distribute books and other related materials
3. To preview the study questions for The Gift
4. To familiarize students with the vocabulary for The Gift
5. To give students the opportunity to practice writing to express their own opinions
6. To give the teacher the opportunity to evaluate students' writing skills

Activity #1

Distribute Writing Assignment #1. Discuss the directions in detail and give students about 3/4 of your class period to work on it. Tell students when the assignments should be handed in for grading.

TRANSITION: Tell students that in the story they are about to read, there is something the main character really wants -- a horse of his own.

Activity #2

Distribute the materials students will use in this unit. Explain in detail how students are to use these materials.

Study Guides Students should read the study guide questions for each reading assignment prior to beginning the reading assignment to get a feeling for what events and ideas are important in the section they are about to read. After reading the section, students will (as a class or individually) answer the questions to review the important events and ideas from that section of the book. Students should keep the study guides as study materials for the unit test.

Vocabulary Prior to reading a reading assignment, students will do vocabulary work related to the section of the book they are about to read. Following the completion of the reading of the book, there will be a vocabulary review of all the words used in the vocabulary assignments. Students should keep their vocabulary work as study materials for the unit test.

Reading Assignment Sheet You need to fill in the reading assignment sheet to let students know by when their reading has to be completed. You can either write the assignment sheet up on a side blackboard or Bulletin board and leave it there for students to see each day, or you can "ditto" copies for each student to have. In either case, you should advise students to become very familiar with the reading assignments so they know what is expected of them.

WRITING ASSIGNMENT #1 - *The Red Pony*

PROMPT

At some point in our lives, most of us have a special something we *really want* more than anything else in the world. It could be an object we want to have, something we wish would happen, or perhaps something we wish we could do.

Sometimes when what we most want comes true, we are overjoyed. Oddly enough, sometimes we are disappointed; it didn't turn out to be as great or as fulfilling as we had hoped.

Your assignment is to write a composition in which you tell about something you really want(ed). If you actually got what you wanted, tell also about how you felt after you got it. If you have not yet obtained that precious thing you want, tell how you think you will feel after you get it.

PREWRITING

What is it you want(ed)? Jot down what *it* is. Write out some things that describe it. Jot down some reasons why you want(ed) it. If you have received it, jot down a few notes about how you felt after you got it. If you have not received it yet, jot down a few notes about how you think you will feel after you get it.

DRAFTING

Write a paragraph in which you introduce what it is you want(ed). One way to do this is to tell about how you discovered you wanted it in the first place.

In the body of your paper, write one paragraph in which you describe *it*. Write one paragraph in which you give your reasons for wanting it.

Write one concluding paragraph in which you tell how you felt after you got it (or how you think you will feel after you get it.)

NOTE: This is not the only possible organization for your composition. If what you want to say fits better organized differently, feel free to do so. Just make sure you have an introduction, a body and a conclusion to your composition.)

PROMPT

When you finish the rough draft of your paper, ask a student who sits near you to read it. After reading your rough draft, he/she should tell you what he/she liked best about your work, which parts were difficult to understand, and ways in which your work could be improved. Reread your paper considering your critic's comments, and make the corrections you think are necessary.

PROOFREADING

Do a final proofreading of your paper double-checking your grammar, spelling, organization, and the clarity of your ideas.