



**STUDENT PACKET**

**GRADES 9-12**

# The Good Earth

Pearl S. Buck

**READ, WRITE, THINK, DISCUSS AND CONNECT**

# The Good Earth

Pearl S. Buck

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**NOTE:**

The trade book edition of the novel used to prepare this guide is found in the Novel Units catalog and on the Novel Units website. Using other editions may have varied page references.

Please note: We have assigned Interest Levels based on our knowledge of the themes and ideas of the books included in the Novel Units sets, however, please assess the appropriateness of this novel or trade book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading with them. You know your students best!

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

### Prereading Knowledge Chart

**Directions:** In the space provided, mark each statement true or false based on what you think now. Read the book to see if you are correct. Each question relates to China at the beginning of the twentieth century.

- \_\_\_ 1. The feet of small girls were bound to correct deformed feet.
- \_\_\_ 2. Marriages were arranged by the father or oldest male member of a family.
- \_\_\_ 3. Girl babies were treasured more than boy babies.
- \_\_\_ 4. Selling girls into slavery was a relatively common practice.
- \_\_\_ 5. Husband and wife shared equally in household and field duty.
- \_\_\_ 6. Having a concubine was culturally acceptable during this era.
- \_\_\_ 7. Prostitution was illegal in China during this era.
- \_\_\_ 8. Famine, starvation, and death were rampant, especially among peasant farmers.
- \_\_\_ 9. Infanticide was an accepted practice.
- \_\_\_ 10. Most elderly people had to be cared for by the government.
- \_\_\_ 11. In large cities, rich people often lived behind almost impenetrable walls.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

*The Good Earth*  
Study Questions  
Use During Reading

**Directions:** Write an answer to each question on separate paper. Thought or opinion questions are starred. Use your answers during class discussion, for writing assignments, or to review for tests.

**Chapter 1, pp. 1-24**

1. Identify Wang Lung and O-lan.
2. \*Summarize Wang Lung's wedding day. Will O-lan find her life pleasing?

**Chapters 2 & 3, pp. 25-38**

1. \*How does Wang Lung know O-lan likes him? What reveals his pleasure in her?
2. \*How does O-lan react when Wang Lung mentions the great house? What does this imply?
3. What does O-lan ask of Wang Lung and why?

**Chapters 4 & 5, pp. 39-53**

1. What does Wang Lung do in honor of his son's birth? What frightens him and how does he react?
2. \*Contrast O-lan and the wife of Wang Lung's uncle. Do you know women who fit both descriptions? Without identifying individuals, explain your answer.
3. Why do Wang Lung and his family stay at home instead of visiting people like others in the village?

**Chapters 6 & 7, pp. 54-66**

1. Explain Wang Lung's mixed feelings about buying land from the House of Hwang. What does he determine to do?
2. \*How does Wang Lung initially react to O-lan's second pregnancy? Why do you think he reacts this way?
3. Explain the events surrounding the birth of the second child.
4. How does the wife of Wang Lung's uncle manipulate Wang Lung?

**Chapter 8, pp. 67-75**

1. Explain what is happening in the House of Hwang.
2. Explain the effects of the drought on Wang Lung's family and others.
3. What do the villagers attempt to do? Why? What stops them?

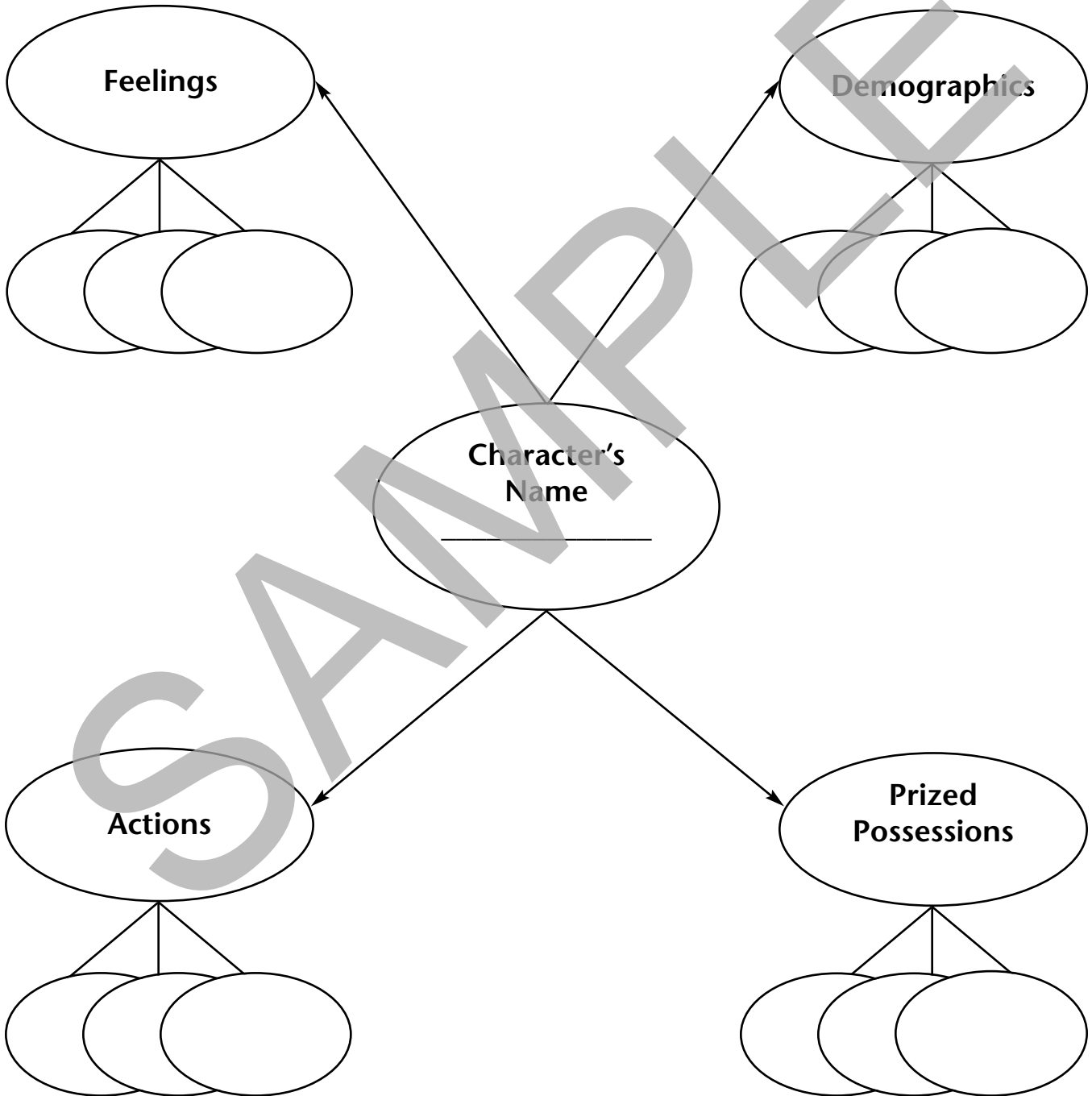
**Chapters 9 & 10, pp. 76-92**

1. \*How does Wang Lung react toward his father during the famine? What is your reaction to this type of family structure?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### Attribute Web

**Directions:** Place O-lan's name in the center oval. Fill in the surrounding ovals to indicate what the author has revealed about her.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

### Characterization

**Directions:** Place Wang Lung's name in the center circle. Write a word or phrase describing him in each surrounding oval. Describe a behavior (action demonstrating that trait) in each rectangle.

