

Teacher Guide

Grades 9–12

# The Grapes of Wrath

John Steinbeck

NOVEL UNITS<sup>®</sup>



NEW WAYS TO TEACH READING,  
WRITING, & CRITICAL THINKING



## **Novel Units® Single-Classroom User Agreement for Non-Reproducible Material**

With the purchase of electronic materials (such as ebooks and print-on-demand teaching activities) from a Novel Units, Inc. (Novel Units) Web site, or that of a Novel Units authorized dealer's Web site, the customer (the purchaser or person for whom this product was purchased) is granted a single-classroom user license, which entitles the customer to use these materials for a single classroom (or home) only.

**Sharing the digital files or reproduction of any part of this publication in any way or by any means for additional classrooms (or homes), an entire school, or a school system; by for-profit institutions and tutoring centers; or for commercial sale is strictly prohibited.**

**Reproduction of any part of this Teacher Guide is strictly prohibited.**

Use of the materials for anything other than classroom instruction is a violation of Novel Units intellectual property rights. Novel Units retains full intellectual property rights on all proprietary products, and these rights extend to electronic editions of print books or materials, excerpts of print books or materials, and individual teaching activities offered for sale in digital format.

To obtain more information, or, if you would like to use Novel Units products for additional purposes not outlined in the single-classroom license (described above), please contact [customer@ecslearningsystems.com](mailto:customer@ecslearningsystems.com).

**[ebooks.ecslearningsystems.com](http://ebooks.ecslearningsystems.com)**

---

# THE GRAPES OF WRATH

by  
John Steinbeck

## Teacher Guide

Written by  
Mary Lovejoy Dennis

### Note

The Penguin Books paperback edition, © 1939 John Steinbeck, was used to prepare this guide. The page references may differ in other editions.

**Please note:** Please assess the appropriateness of this book for the age level and maturity of your students prior to reading and discussing it with your class.

---

ISBN 978-1-60878-415-8

### Copyright infringement is a violation of Federal Law.

© 2010 by Novel Units, Inc., Bulverde, Texas. All rights reserved. Reproduction of any part of this product is strictly prohibited. No part of this publication may be translated, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted or shared in any way or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise) without prior written permission from Novel Units, Inc. Reproduction of any part of this publication for multiple school terms, an entire school or for a school system, by for-profit institutions and tutoring centers, or for commercial sale is strictly prohibited.

Novel Units is a registered trademark of Novel Units, Inc.

### Publisher Information

For a complete catalog, contact—

Novel Units, Inc.  
P.O. Box 97  
Bulverde, TX 78163-0097

Web site: [novelunits.com](http://novelunits.com)

For more digital resources, visit:  
[ebooks.ecslarningsystems.com](http://ebooks.ecslarningsystems.com)

# Table of Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| <b>Background Information</b> .....                                | 3  |
| <b>Summary of the Novel</b> .....                                  | 3  |
| <b>About the Guide</b> .....                                       | 5  |
| <b>Pre-Reading Discussion</b> .....                                | 5  |
| <b>Vocabulary, Discussion Questions, Writing Ideas, Activities</b> |    |
| Chapters 1 and 2.....  | 8  |
| Chapters 3 and 4.....  | 9  |
| Chapters 5 and 6.....  | 10 |
| Chapters 7 and 8.....  | 13 |
| Chapters 9 and 10 .....  | 14 |
| Chapters 11 and 12 .....   | 15 |
| Chapters 13 and 14 .....   | 18 |
| Chapters 15 and 16 .....   | 19 |
| Chapters 17 and 18 .....   | 20 |
| Chapters 19 and 20 .....   | 21 |
| Chapters 21 and 22 .....   | 23 |
| Chapters 23 and 24 .....   | 24 |
| Chapters 25 and 26 .....   | 30 |
| Chapters 27 and 28 .....   | 31 |
| Chapters 29 and 30 .....   | 32 |
| <b>Project Ideas</b> .....   | 35 |
| <b>Essay Topics</b> .....  | 36 |
| <b>Bibliography</b> .....  | 37 |
| <b>Rubric for Essay-Writing</b> .....                              | 38 |
| <b>Notes</b> .....   | 39 |

## Writing Assignment

Making men hate, fear, and suspect each other is often called the theory of “divide and conquer.” It has often been used to control large groups of people. Think of an example from history or from your own experience and write about it.

## Chapters 15 and 16

### Level I

1. Why does Mae hate the rich people? *(they're snobs and leave poor folks)*
2. How does the behavior of the man with the two little boys compare to the way the Westerners think the migrant ought to act? *(He's polite and humble; wants to buy just a few cents worth of the loaf and doesn't want charity. He's also kind-hearted, wanting the children to have a treat.)*
3. In what order did the Joads and Wilsons adjust to life on the road? *(from youngest to oldest)*
4. What is Rose of Sharon's main concern? *(that something will hurt the babies)* What do she and Connie plan? *(to live in town, and for Connie to study radio)*
5. Why doesn't Tom want to tell Al about jail? *(When he was there, he was never sure if he was crazy or not.)*
6. Describe the man in the junkyard. *(He had only one eye, and the socket of the other was exposed. He was covered with grease and felt very sorry for himself.)*
7. What was Al worried about? *(that the boys will think he caused the car trouble by saying it was "wrong")*

### Level II

1. Both Chapter 15 and Chapter 2 are about hamburger joints on the road. How are they different in point-of-view?
2. How are Mae, Al, and the truck drivers sympathetic toward those who have less than they do?
3. Give an example of Al's accepted “justified thievery.”
4. Do you think it would really cost Connie nothing to end up in town?
5. Why does Ma react so violently to Tom's idea of the boys staying ahead while the car is being fixed?
6. What did Pa lose by giving in to Ma?
7. When Al and Tom went to town for a car part, how did Tom behave more responsibly than Al?

8. Do you think Tom's remarks to the junk yard man were unkind?
9. Why do you think Al tried to hit the cat on the road? Would Tom have done it? How do you know?

### Vocabulary

|                     |                |                     |
|---------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| vivaciousness (197) | morosely (211) | querulously (247)   |
| quoit (198)         | relapsed (227) | derelicts (228)     |
| languid (198)       | lank (235)     | accouterments (198) |
| vagrants (240)      |                |                     |

### Speech Assignment

Check your family's mail, the newspaper, and television ads. Find an example of misleading advertising that sounds as if you will get something for free. Prepare a brief oral report explaining what the company is really trying to get from the consumer.

## Chapters 17 and 18

### Level I

1. Why did the people go to the tent huddle together at night? (*They were comforted by having so much companionship.*)
2. What "code" developed in the camps. (*See page 230.*) What were the punishments for breaking it? (*a fight or ostracism*)
3. What did the men talk about? (*the men talked about their tragedies, their futures.*)
4. On a map, find the New Mexico-Arizona border and locate the Painted Desert.
5. What was good about the arrival in California? (*the cool river*) What was bad? (*Granma was getting worse; the police told them to leave and treated her badly.*)
6. What does "Okie" mean? (*It originally meant someone from Oklahoma, but the Westeners used it in a derogatory way to describe all of the migrants.*)
7. What did Noah do in Needles, California? (*He decided to stay by the river and simply walked away.*)
8. How did Sairy Wilson describe herself? (*"pain covered it like skin"*)

### Level II

1. Discuss: "...the songs, which were all of the people, were sung in the nights."
2. Why did the people need to "build a fire" at night?

### Activity

Discuss with the students the differences between necessities and luxuries, and how different people perceive them. You might compare a primitive tribe's necessities with those of a wealthy family. Then have the students make their own "Needs and Wants" charts like the one below. Have them consider categories like housing, a place to sleep, food, entertainment, clothing, and education.

| My Family    | The Joad Family |
|--------------|-----------------|
| Necessities: | Necessities:    |
| Luxuries:    | Luxuries:       |

## Attribute Web

The attribute web below is designed to help you gather clues the author provides about what a character is like. Fill in the blanks with words and phrases which tell how the character acts and looks, as well as what the character says and what others say about him or her.

**Acts**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Feels**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Character**

**Looks**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Says**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_