

Common Assessment: A Steinbeck-Inspired Narrative

Assignment:

Your assignment is to create a narrative that emulates (imitates) Steinbeck's style. However, you will write your own original story.

Steps:

1. Use an invention strategy (brainstorming, clustering, free-writing, looping, pointing, etc.) to explore ideas for your narrative.
2. “*Dance with a Master*”: Conduct a close reading of a literary work that is inspirational to you for its style and content (a chapter of *Of Mice and Men*, for example). As you read think about how your story will be told. This is a lot like listening to music that inspires you to sing or looking at art that inspires you to draw.
3. Write a quick first draft. Share to get feedback on:
 - accuracy / **originality**
 - proper flow of ideas
 - plot
 - characterization
4. Use a graphic organizer (narrative structure) to plot your draft. **Identify missing or weak areas for further development.**
5. Review notes on Steinbeck's style for establishing setting: **detail, symbolic elements of the setting, foreshadowing**. Brainstorm ideas to develop your setting in a way that emulates Steinbeck's style. **The setting should ¹⁾ begin your story and ²⁾ make connections to the end of the original text.**
6. Revise your draft (again) to incorporate additional narrative structure, setting, and characterization.
7. Review notes on Steinbeck's style of characterization (direct and/or indirect). Mimic his style to further develop your characters. Make sure you cover how your character **looks, speaks, and thinks**.
8. Review Steinbeck's use of dialogue. Revise (again) to incorporate action and thoughts via character's dialogue. Use your notes to ensure proper **dialogue conventions**.
9. Meet in writing groups to share drafts and give/get feedback on the writer's ability to remain true to Steinbeck's style. Revise for VOICE, including:
 - Diction (narration & dialogue)
 - Setting (symbolism, detail, foreshadowing)
 - characterization (including various perspectives)
 - dialogue (including dialect and interior monologue)
 - narrative structure (including pacing and flow of events in the story)
10. Meet in writing groups for final revisions and editing to create a publishable document!

Scoring Criteria

- Organizational Structure (plot)
- Characterization (point of view, voice, direct/indirect)
- Setting (detail)
- Conventions (dialogue)

SCORING GUIDE FOR STEINBECK-INSPIRED NARRATIVE

Criteria	Exemplary	Accomplished	Promising	Developing
Organizational Structure	The plot is cohesive and contains all needed elements of narrative structure.	The plot is cohesive and contains elements of narrative structure.	The structure of the plot is not cohesive. It may be missing key narrative elements that create gaps in the story.	The structure of the plot is incomplete. Several key narrative elements are missing or inadequate, causing confusion to the reader.
Setting	The text opens and closes to exhibit vivid detail, imagery and symbolic elements of nature, foreshadowing events within the plot or creating parallels to the character(s).	The text opens and/or closes with setting that exhibits use of specific details, imagery, and elements of nature. The setting is true to Steinbeck's style.	The text contains an indefinite setting. Imagery is limited. Elements of nature may be missing or inadequate.	The text does not contain a clear setting. Details (if any) are vague. Elements of nature are missing. The style is not consistent with Steinbeck's.
Characterization	The text introduces at least one thoroughly developed, believable character, through skillful use of dynamic characterization. The voice remains faithful to Steinbeck's style, and the character contributes significantly to the movement of the plot.	The text introduces a believable character through basic direct and/or indirect characterization. The character is developed adequately, using Steinbeck's style of voice and point of view.	The text makes reference to a character through inadequate characterization (if any) and is not consistent with Steinbeck's style of voice and point of view.	The new character receives little (if any) direct or indirect characterization.
Conventions Dialogue Rules (particularly indentation, commas, capitalization)	The final draft is ready for publication and is a technically sound document.	The final draft contains a few errors; however, they do not cause confusion or distract the reader from the text.	The final draft contains several errors, causing confusion and distraction from the text.	The final draft is unfinished and/or does not adhere to an appropriate format. Frequent or severe errors interfere with comprehension.
Word Count	1500+	1200-1499	900-1199	up to 900