



**Literacy Design
Collaborative**

Friendship and Of Mice and Men

★ TASK

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This 2-3 day mini-module is designed to engage students in an important theme of John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* before reading the entire novel. By having students think about types of friendship before beginning the novel, students acquire an analytical lens for evaluating the relationship between the two main characters as they read the novel. After reading an informational text about types of friendship, students read an excerpt from the novel to help them start thinking about the friendship between George and Lennie and then write about that relationship in an informal essay.

Since students read and take notes on both an informational and a literary text, different reading strategies are used for each text. This provides an opportunity for discussing the differences in how we read, analyze, and take notes on these two distinct forms of writing.

GRADES

9 - 12

DISCIPLINE

 **ELA**

COURSE

Any

PACING

 **N/A**

Section 1: What Task?

Teaching Task

Task Template 6 - Argumentation

After reading "Friendship in an Age of Economics" and an excerpt from Of Mice and Men , write a short essay in which you discuss the types of friendship described by Todd May and Aristotle and evaluate which type of friendship is best demonstrated by the characters in the excerpt from Of Mice and Men. Support your position with evidence from the text(s).

Standards

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

RI.11-12.1

Focus

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

RI.11-12.2

Focus

Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.

RI.11-12.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10).

RI.11-12.10

By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 11—CCR text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 11—CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently.

W.11-12.1

Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

W.11-12.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

W.11-12.5

Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

W.11-12.9

Focus

Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

W.11-12.10

Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Texts

🔗 **"Friendship in an Age of Economics" full text**

📄 **Excerpts from Todd May article and Steinbeck novel**

Student Work Rubric - Argumentation Task - Grades 9-12

	Emerging	Approaches Expectations	Meets Expectations	Advanced
	1	2	3	4
Controlling Idea	Makes a general claim with an unclear focus.	Establishes a clear claim that addresses the prompt , with an uneven focus .	Establishes and maintains a clear, specific, and credible claim that addresses all aspects of the prompt.	Establishes and maintains a precise, substantive claim that addresses all aspects of the prompt. Acknowledges limitations and/or the complexity of the issue or topic .
Selection & Citation of Evidence	Includes minimal details from sources. Sources are used without citation.	Includes details, examples, and/or quotations from sources that are relevant to the claim . Inconsistently cites sources.	Includes details, examples, and/or quotations from sources that support the claim and supporting ideas . Consistently cites sources with minor formatting errors .	Includes well-chosen details, examples, and/or quotations from sources that fully support the claim and supporting ideas. Consistently cites sources using appropriate format .
Development / Explanation of Sources	Explanation of ideas and source material is irrelevant, incomplete, or inaccurate.	Explains ideas and source material to support the argument , with some incomplete reasoning or explanations .	Accurately explains ideas and source material and how they support the argument.	Thoroughly and accurately explains ideas and source material, using logical reasoning to support and develop the argument.
Organization	Lacks an evident structure. Makes unclear connections among claims, reasons, and/or evidence.	Groups ideas and uses transitions to develop the argument, with some lapses in coherence or organization .	Groups and sequences ideas to develop a cohesive argument . Uses transitions to clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence .	Groups and sequences ideas in a logical progression in which ideas build to create a unified whole . Uses varied transitions to clarify the precise relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence.
Conventions	Major errors in standard English conventions interfere with the clarity of the writing. Language or tone is inappropriate.	Errors in standard English conventions sometimes interfere with the clarity of the writing. Uses language and tone that are sometimes inappropriate for the audience and purpose.	Consistently applies standard English conventions; minor errors , while noticeable, do not interfere with the clarity of the writing. Uses language and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose .	Consistently applies standard English conventions, with few errors . Demonstrates varied syntax and precise word choice . Consistently uses language and tone appropriate to the audience and purpose.
Content Understanding (Generic)	Attempts to include disciplinary content in explanation or argument but understanding of content is weak; content is irrelevant, inappropriate, or inaccurate.	Briefly notes disciplinary content relevant to the prompt; shows basic or uneven understanding of content; minor errors in explanation.	Accurately presents disciplinary content relevant to the prompt with sufficient explanations that demonstrate understanding.	Integrates relevant and accurate disciplinary content with thorough explanations that demonstrate in-depth understanding.

Background for Students

This module is designed to introduce an important theme from *Of Mice and Men* to students by having students think about friendships in the modern world.

Extension

This module could be used before students read the entire novel to introduce an important theme of the novel. Students could then trace the development of the friendship between the characters over the course of the novel and come to conclusions about how Steinbeck views friendship.

Section 2: What Skills?

Preparing for the Task

BRIDGING CONVERSATION > TASK ENGAGEMENT: Ability to connect the task and new content to existing knowledge, skills, experiences, interests, and concerns.

TASK AND RUBRIC ANALYSIS > TASK ANALYSIS: Ability to understand and explain the task's prompt and rubric.

Reading Process

ACTIVE READING > NOTE-TAKING: Ability to select important facts and passages for use in one's own writing.



POST-READING > ENHANCING COMPREHENSION: Ability to synthesize information and write text-based definitions with a group

ACTIVE READING > ANNOTATION: Ability to read and annotate important parts of a text

Writing Process

DEVELOPMENT > BODY PARAGRAPHS: Ability to combine notes and quick writes into an informal essay that consolidates information relevant to the Teaching Task

Section 3: What Instruction?

PACING	SKILL AND DEFINITION	PRODUCT AND PROMPT	SCORING GUIDE	INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES
Preparing for the Task				
15 mins	BRIDGING CONVERSATION > TASK ENGAGEMENT: Ability to connect the task and new content to existing knowledge, skills, experiences, interests, and concerns.	QUICK WRITE In a quick write, tell me about how different types of friendships are important in your life. Describe at least two different types of friendships.	Students should include at least two types of friendships.	Give students 10 minutes to write; then ask them to share some of the different types of friendships they have described. Create a class list of types of friends described.
10 mins	TASK AND RUBRIC ANALYSIS > TASK ANALYSIS: Ability to understand and explain the task's prompt and rubric.	CLASS LIST What does this prompt ask you to do? What must you do to complete this task?	Not Provided	List features shared by students, making sure students understand all requirements of the Teaching Task.
Reading Process				
30 mins	ACTIVE READING > NOTE-TAKING: Ability to select important facts and passages for use in one's own writing.	NOTES Read the first two paragraphs of Todd May's "Friendship in an Age of Economics" and complete your Note-Taking guide with information about Aristotle's ideas about friendship. Then read the rest of the article, taking notes on Todd May's ideas about friendship.	Note-taking guide is completed with relevant definitions and responses.	While students are reading, check to make sure they are distinguishing between Aristotle's definitions (quoted in the first two paragraphs of the text) and Todd May's definitions of friendship. Teachers may want to guide students through the first two paragraphs, discussing Aristotle's criteria for the three types of friendship and helping students write paraphrased definitions for each.
Additional Attachments:  Teaching Task and excerpts for reading  Note-Taking Guide				
25 mins	POST-READING > ENHANCING COMPREHENSION: Ability to synthesize information and write text-based definitions with a group	DEFINITION With your team, discuss one type of friendship described in the article and create a group definition that includes at least one example to illustrate your definition.	Each group should produce a definition that captures the author's view of friendship.	Place students in groups, and assign each group one of the four types of friendship described in the article. Give students 15 minutes to discuss the parts of the text that apply to that type of friendship and to write a definition. Give each group a large sticky sheet or piece of butcher paper to write their definition and example. Have groups share the work so students hear explanations for all types of friendship described in the article.
25 mins	ACTIVE READING > ANNOTATION: Ability to read and annotate	ANNOLIGHTED TEXT AND QUICK WRITE As you read the excerpt	Students use at least one definition of friendship to	Instructional Strategies: Check that students are highlighting parts of the text that illustrate the relationship between Lennie and George. Read

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	important parts of a text	from John Steinbeck's <i>Of Mice and Men</i> , annolight parts of the text that help you understand the relationship between George and Lennie. After reading, write a response to the text in which you describe the friendship between George and Lennie and determine which definition best fits this friendship.	analyze the friendship between George and Lennie.	annotations and ask students for clarifications if necessary.
Writing Process				
25 mins	DEVELOPMENT > BODY PARAGRAPHS: Ability to combine notes and quick writes into an informal essay that consolidates information relevant to the Teaching Task	INFORMAL SHORT ESSAY Using your notes from the first article and your response to the novel excerpt, write a response to the Teaching Task. Give credit to Todd May and Aristotle for ideas about friendship that you use in your essay and include specific details from the literary text to support your argument about the type of friendship exemplified between George and Lennie.	Students should respond to all demands of the Teaching Task using evidence from both texts read.	Before students begin writing, review the Teaching Task and requirements for a good response listed on Day 1.

Instructional Resources

No resources specified

Section 4: What Results?

Student Work Samples

No resources specified

Teacher Reflection

Not provided

All Attachments

🔗 "Friendship in an Age of Economics" full text : <https://s ldc.org/u/eej7tdwkgysrfel1he369ydml>

📄 Excerpts from Todd May article and Steinbeck novel :
<https://s ldc.org/u/85g292l6b182d4kbkbze30nql>