

Dear Freshman Parents,

I hope this letter finds you, your family, and friends safe and feeling well. I know we are all busier than we've ever been and suddenly we are in the home stretch of the school year. I feel it important to inform you of the details of our final unit and ending the school year positive and strong. Please take the time to read this information.

ABOUT THE NOVEL:

As you know, we have begun the *Of Mice and Men* novel unit. Sometimes classic literature is a gamble and now it is a gamble *and* a challenge. It pains me to "teach" one of my favorite novels from a distance. A big part of teaching is performance and I love every word of this novel. As a matter of fact, every single word in this novel is significant and necessary. My saving grace is that this novel epitomizes classic literature because it remains relative to social, personal, and relationship issues in every era. The central idea of hope is our primary focus. Hope gives people the ability to persevere, especially when shared among a group. How much more relative to our current situation could this be?

I would love for the freshman to have the same fondness that my past students had for these characters. This novel often becomes a favorite reading for freshman due to the empathy it invokes. The students become reflective of people they may know who suffer hardship and bias. Ask the older siblings, I bet they will remember their love and compassion for our Lennie Small. But don't let them spoil the ending!

One Caveat:

As a courtesy, I would like you to know that the topics are not always pleasant and there is one very short section with some VERY strong and offensive language. Steinbeck did not do this to hurt his readers. He did it to make the readers feel the wrongness of these obscenities. As uncomfortable as it is for me to read this part in class each year, the students' reactions are admirable and never disappoint. I am going to miss this teachable moment with them.

Unit Options:

I have had many students convey feeling overwhelmed and uncertain and I'm sure we can all relate to that. For this reason, I would like to give the students full control over their assignment and reading schedule. I have kept the list of remaining assignments to a minimum. I have posted all of the assignments with due dates and students will be able to plan their schedule at a pace that suits them. Students have the option of following the schedule I have set, complete it in chunks, read the entire novel and complete assignments after, or plow through everything in one weekend. I have included (below) the suggested schedule sent to students.

The Favorite Film:

The 1992 film version starring Gary Sinise and John Malkovich is part of the curriculum and would be shown in class as part of the unit. Students are encouraged to watch the film because it is such a great film and it *does capture the essence of the characters and themes*.

Students must be aware there are 15 differences between novel and film. Students **CANNOT** rely solely on the film for elements of the novel. The film is **NOT** a replacement for the novel. The film does **NOT** follow the plot sequence of the novel and it omits at least two major sections of the novel.

Viewing Options

● **HBO GO** The film is available free on **HBO GO**. It is not free on *HBO ON Demand*.

*If HBO is part of your cable/satellite subscription...you can get HBO GO...just download the HBO GO app on laptop, iPad, or any device and login with your *Optimum Id* and *password*.

● **Optimum Subscribers!** Set your DVR for Ch 302 6:05-8:00 AM on May 28th for a one time showing.

● **Video Clips** (10 clips) with written commentary linked in a PowerPoint and Posted on my website and on Teams.

● **Amazon Prime Video** offers a \$3.99 rental (Available for 48 hours once you begin watching)

● **Redbox** offers a \$2.99 streaming rental.

*The film is *OPTIONAL*. I cannot require parents/students to pay for a subscription.

FAQ Answers:

- Starting this week I will hold "office hours" 11-12pm Mondays and Fridays for extra help or discussion.
- Students must check Teams or SchoolTool for *Turned In* or *Missing Assignments*
- SchoolTool uses a 0 as a placeholder for an unentered grade. I never give zeroes. I only assign M for missing.
- If students have an issue opening or editing a doc on Teams, they MUST go my website for backup copies.
- **DO NOT** submit **photo/jpgs** of assignments. Teams cannot expand images large enough to grade them.
 - *Please use a free scanner app such as <https://www.camscanner.com/> Save as pdf and attach to assignment.
- If an assignment is turned in **more than 5 days late**, students MUST message me with assignment name on Teams after it is completed. *Teams does NOT notify teachers of newly turned in assignments.
- Please visit my <https://www.englishbyfrench.net/of-mice-and-men> for all of the resources including full text of the novel, assignments, and audiobook links by chapter.

Yours truly,

Mrs. French

Suggested Reading & Assignment Schedule

All **Chapters**, **Questions**, and **Audio** mentions are linked to [EnglishByFrench.net](https://www.englishbyfrench.net)

MAY 2020				
<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>
	19 Read Chapter 1 Pages 2-9 Audio: 28:19 min. Chapter 1 Questions	20	21 Read Chapter 2 Pages 10-19 Audio: 34:58 min. Chapter 2 Questions	<u>22</u>
<u>25</u>	26 Read Chapter 3 Pages 20-32 Audio: 48:34 min. Chapter 3 Questions	27	28 Turn In Chapters 1-3 Questions Due by 11:59 PM	<u>29</u>
JUNE 1st	2 Castle Learning Chapters 1-3 Test	3	4 Read Chapter 4 Pages 33-41 Audio: 33:00 min. Chapter 4 Questions	<u>5</u>
<u>8</u>	9 Read Chapter 5 Pages 42-48 Audio: 29:25 min. Chapter 5 Questions	10	11 Read Chapter 6 Pages 49-53 Audio: 16:28 min. Chapter 6 Questions	<u>12</u>
<u>15</u>	16 CATCH UP DAY Or Begin OPTIONAL Extra Credit	17	18 Turn In Chapters 4-6 Questions Due by 11:59 PM	<u>19</u>
22	23 Castle Learning Chapters 4-6 Test	24	25 ALL OPTIONAL Extra Credit Due by 12 Noon	26 *Last Day of Classes As of 5/19/20

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