

Of Mice and Men
Function of Violence in the Novel

Steinbeck includes a number of instances of violence in *Of Mice and Men*. Authors have a purpose in mind whenever they use such events and descriptions. Fill in the chart below and then write a paragraph analyzing the function of one the violent scenes in the novel.

Scene	Details about the Scene	Time it Occurred in the Story	Function of the Scene
Lennie grabs the girl's dress in Weed			
Lennie accidentally kills the mouse and then the puppy			
Carlson shoots Candy's dog			
Lennie crushes Curley's hand			
Lennie kills Curley's wife			
George kills Lennie			

Example of Paragraph:

Steinbeck uses the scenes where Lennie accidentally kills the mouse and then the puppy to show Lennie's childlike state and lack of awareness of his own power. Lennie likes to pet soft, furry things, but has no sense of his awesome size and force. His intentions are kind. Thus, he wants to care for another living creature but simply cannot understand his actions and their consequences. Even when he has the chance to try again with the puppy, he cannot transfer lessons he has learned from the mouse and treat the puppy more carefully. Steinbeck shows us that Lennie's innocence, in combination with his strength, is a powerful fragility which cannot survive. Additionally, the accidental killings serve to foreshadow the eventual killing of Curley's wife. Thus, the violent scenes serve as both foreshadowing and as characterization.