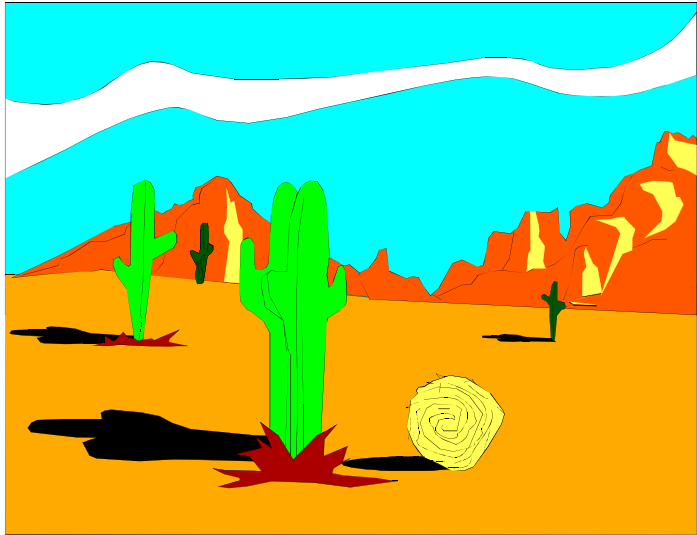


NAME: _____



THE GRAPES OF WRATH

INSTRUCTIONS: Please read these carefully and fill in this sheet while watching *The Grapes of Wrath*. All of the quotations below are taken from John Steinbeck's novel rather than the movie; many of the lines in the movie are quite different.

1. The movie begins with a script explaining the time period and the nature of the strife faced by the people. What does it say about the economic forces which are the heart of the problem?

2. "Could ya give me a lift, mister?" "Didn't you see the NO RIDERS sticker on the win'shield?" "Sure--I seen it. But sometimes a guy'll be a good guy even if some rich bastard makes him carry a sticker."

How does this early scene illustrate the economic forces problem which you identified above?

3. "The hell with it! There ain't no sin and there ain't no virtue. There's just stuff people do. It's all part of the same thing. And some of the things ks do is nice, and some ain't nice, but that's as far as any man got a right to say."

Please identify the speaker of the above quotation and, after watching the entire movie, discuss its significance to the central message of the novel.

4. "I figgered about the Holy Sperit and the Jesus road. I figgered, 'Why do we got to hang it on God or Jesus? Maybe,' I figgered, 'maybe it's all men an' all women we love; maybe that's the Holy Sperit--the human sperit--the whole shebang. Maybe all men got one big soul ever'body's a part of.'"

Please identify the speaker of the above quotation and, based upon your knowledgained in English class or elsewhere, identify the religious (or epistemological¹) orientation the speaker has adopted.

5. "An' I got thinkin', on'y it wasn't thinkin', it was deeper down than thinkin', I got thinkin' how we was holy when we was one thing, an' mankin' was holy when it was one thing. An' it on'y got unholdy when one mis'able little fella got the bit in his teeth an' run off his own way, kickin' an' draggin' an' fightin'. Fella like that bust the holiness. But when they're all workin' together, not one fella for another fella, but one fella kind of harnessed to the whole shebang--that's right, that's holy. An' then I got thinkin' I don't even know what I mean by holy."

What does Casey mean by "holy?" What type of economic philosophy is suggested by the quotation above?

¹ e-pis-te-mol-o-gy (î-pîs 'te-mòl'e-jê) noun

The branch of philosophy that studies the nature of knowledge, its presuppositions and foundations, and its extent and validity.

6.

"And at last the owner men came to the point. The tenant system won't work any more. One man on a tractor can take the place of twelve or fourteen families. Pay him a wage and take all the crop. We have to do it. We don't like to do it. But the monster's sick. Something's happened to the monster." "We know that--all that. It's not us, it's the bank. The bank isn't like a man. Or an owner with fifty thousand acres, he isn't like a man either. That's the monster."

Identify the monster and the sickness. Justify your answers.

7. The following lines are found in the novel after Casey "says grace" over the meal.

"I ain't sayin' I'm like Jesus," the preacher went on. But I got tired like Him, an' I got mixed up like Him, an' I went into the wilderness like Him, without no campin' stuff."

Why do you think Steinbeck included these lines?

8. Steinbeck ends chapter 12 of the novel, when the Joads are meeting people along Route 66, with the words below.

"The people in flight from the terror behind--strange things happen to them, some bitterly cruel and some so beautiful that the faith is refired forever."

(a) Give an example of a "beautiful thing" which happens to the Joads along the way.

(b) What "faith is refired?" That is, faith in what?

9.

"The great owners, nervous, sensing a change, knowing nothing of the nature of the change. The great owners, striking at the immediate thing, the widening government, the growing labor unity; striking at new taxes, at plans; not knowing these things are results, not causes. Results, not causes; results, not causes. The causes lie deep and simple--the causes are a hunger in a stomach, multiplied a million times; a hunger in a single soul, hunger for joy and some security, multiplied a million times; muscles and mind aching to grow, to work, to create, multiplied a million times."

Please identify the economic cause and the political result. How is the economic cause related to the point you noted in #1?

How is the political result related to the philosophical shift seen in items #3 & 4?

10.

"Here is the node, you who hate change and fear revolution. Keep these two squatting men apart; make them hate, fear, suspect each other. Here is the

anlage² of the thing you fear. This is the zygote. For here 'I lost my land' is changed; a cell is split and from its splitting grows the thing you hate--'We lost our land.'"

What is the revolutionary change that the defenders of the status quo should fear?

Is this a warning or a prediction?

11. The novel emphasizes the contrast between the richness of the California produce and the poverty of the people.

"The decay spreads over the state, and the sweet smell is a great sorrow on the land. Men who can graft the trees and make the seed fertile and big can find no way to let the hungry people eat their produce. Men who have created new fruits in the world cannot create a system whereby their fruits may be eaten."

[Steinbeck describes the destruction of crops and animals to keep them off the market, reduce supply, and drive the prices up.]

"And the smell of rot fills the country. "And there is a crime here that goes beyond denunciation.... The fertile earth, the straight tree rows, the sturdy trunks, and the ripe fruit. And the children dying of pellagra must die because a profit cannot be taken from an orange. And coroners must fill in the certificate - died of malnutrition - because the food must rot, must be forced to rot. "... and in the eyes of the people there is a failure; and in the eyes of the hungry there is a growing wrath. In the souls of the people the grapes of wrath are filling and growing heavy, growing heavy for the vintage."

(a) What literary technique is Steinbeck using in the first paragraph?

(b) Explain what Steinbeck must mean by "the vintage."

12.

"Well, for Christ's sake! Why ain't they more places like this? "'The watchman looked sullen. "You'll have to find that out yourself. Go get some sleep."

Using the concept of OPPORTUNITY COST, explain why there aren't more places like the Wheatpatch Camp? [Note: Steinbeck called it the "Weedpatch Camp."] Assume, against the weight of the evidence, that the answer is primarily economic rather than political.

13.

"This here unit's suffered a shame 'bout that toilet paper.'" "All week, Mis' Bullitt. We couldn' he'p it. You know I got five girls.'" "What they been a'doin' with it?" Jessie demanded ominously. "Jes' usin' it. Hones', jes' usin' it." "They ain't got the right! Four-five sheets is enough. What's the matter'th them?" "The confessor bleated, "Skitters. All five of 'em. We been low on money. They et green grapes. They all five got the howlin' skitters. Run out ever' ten minutes." She defended them, "But they ain't stealin' it." Jessie sighed, "You should a tol'," she said. "You got to tell. Here's Unit Four sufferin' shame 'cause you never tol'. Anybody can git the skitters." "The meek voice whined, "jes' can't keep 'em from eatin' them green grapes. An' they're a-gettin' worse all a time." Ella Summers burst out, "The Aid. She oughta git

² an·la·ge also An·la·ge (än'lä´ge) noun plural an·la·ges or an·la·gen (-gen)

1. Biology. The initial clustering of embryonic cells from which a part or an organ develops; primordium.
2. A fundamental principle; the foundation for a future development.

the Aid." "Ella Summers," Jessie said, "I'm a-tellin' you for the las' time, you ain't the Chair." She turned back to the raddled little woman. "Ain't you got no money, Mis' Joyce?" She looked ashamedly down. "No, but we might git work any time." "Now you hol' up your head," Jessie said. "That ain't no crime. You jes' waltz right over t' the Weedpatch store an' git you some groceries. The camp got twenty dollars' credit there. You git yourself fi' dollars' worth. An' you kin pay it back to the Central Committee when you git work. Mis' Joyce, you knowed that," she said sternly. "How come you let your girls git hungry?" "We ain't never took no charity," Mrs. Joyce said. "This ain't charity, an' you know it," Jessie raged. "We had all that out. They ain't no charity in this here camp. We won't have no charity. Now you waltz right over an' git you some groceries, an' you bring the slip to me." Mrs. Joyce said timidly, "S'pose we can't never pay? We ain't had work for a long time." "You'll pay if you can. If you can't, that ain't none of our business, an' it ain't your business. One fella went away, an' two months later he sent back the money. You ain't got the right to let your girls git hungry in this here camp." [several paragraphs later:] "We don't allow nobody to give nothing to another person. They can give it to the camp, an' the camp can pass it out. We won't have no charity!"

What attitude does the above passage portray toward "charity?" What attitude does the above passage portray toward "the aid?" Explain the difference in attitude toward "charity" and "the aid."

"You ain't got the right to let your girls git hungry in this here camp."

Whose girls are they?

What consequences have the ideas manifested in the long passage above had for American society in the twentieth century?

14. The speech which Ma Joad gives at the end of the movie is given, in part, to Tom in the novel. But she ends with these words. **"Don' you fret none, Tom. A different time's comin'."** Why is Ma Joad the only character in the movie who is unflaggingly optimistic that a better time is coming? Why, then, is it ironic that Ma is the one to know that "a different time's comin'?"

15. Steinbeck ends the novel with Rose of Sharon, after her baby dies, feeding a starving man with the milk of her breast. Why does he end the novel this way?