

CANNERY ROW

JOHN STEINBECK

LIVING LITERATURE SERIES

A PERMA-BOUND PRODUCTION

TEACHER'S GUIDE

GUIDE WRITTEN BY MARY ELLEN SNODGRASS

SYNOPSIS

"Cannery Row in Monterey in California is a poem, a stink, a grating noise, a quality of light, a tone, a habit, a nostalgia, a dream." So begins Steinbeck's account of the people and events that shape a poor fishing community on the western coast of the United States. He opens his gallery of characters with Lee Chong, grocery owner, and Dora, madam at the local brothel whimsically and inaccurately named the Bear Flag Restaurant.

Stabilizer of community life is Doc, a biologist who operates a supply house, the Western Biological Laboratory, which ships cats, starfish, frogs, and other fresh-caught fauna for scientific experimentation and examination. Yet, to Cannery Row, Doc represents much more. When influenza ravages the poverty-stricken residents and diplomaed doctors are reluctant to treat non-paying clients, Doc organizes the girls at Dora's establishment and provides home health care and hot meals for the suffering. Likewise he serves as counselor and therapist for Frankie, an emotionally handicapped child; veterinarian for Darling, a pointer who contracts a debilitating disease; and father confessor for Mack and his buddies at the Palace Flophouse and Grill.

It is Mack's attempts to express his appreciation that complicate affairs in Cannery Row. Having established his unemployed and/or partially employed buddies in Lee Chong's vacant warehouse, Mack organizes an expedition to catch frogs, sell them to Doc, and use the money for a party in Doc's honor. Unfortunately, Lee Chong's ancient truck, head mechanic Gay's arrest, and their unquenchable thirst for a "short one" from Eddie's jug leads them to a brief rest on posted land along the Carmel River, where they cook a tough chicken and share a few more rounds of whiskey.

The owner orders them to leave. Mack worms his way into the man's regard by calling the man "captain" and lying that the frogs they plan to net will be used in cancer research. Following up his appeal to pride and sentiment, Mack offers to treat the man's pointer for a tick bite, which has inflamed her shoulder. The man helps Mack and his gang corral a load of frogs, then invites them to his house. Mack applies an epsom salts poultice to the dog's wound while the captain shares a five-gallon oak keg of aged whiskey. The men depart after the captain passes out. Mack selects a pointer pup from the dog's litter and names it Darling.

Back in Cannery Row, Mack's calculations are off a bit. Doc does not return that evening. The gang, congratulating themselves for a job well done, trade their frogs to Lee

Chong for steaks, party favors, and more whiskey. They commandeer Doc's laboratory, celebrate into the night, break glass, destroy Doc's phonograph records, and depart before dawn. When Doc arrives, he punches Mack in the mouth, breaking teeth and splitting his lip.

A pall settles over Cannery Row. Nothing seems to go right. Doc's girl meets Henri and abandons Doc. Mack and his boys are labeled social outcasts. Lee Chong suffers the loss of the frogs, which fled during the melee. Yet, Doc maintains his belief in the boys, whom he dubs "your true philosophers." More trouble oppresses the fragile happiness of Cannery Row: high-minded town ladies close Dora's establishment. Doc has to borrow money to cover his losses. The crisis comes when Darling gets distemper.

Forgiveness saves the day. Doc prescribes a diet of soup, eggs, and cod liver oil to cure Darling. Lee Chong writes off the frog debt and takes a pint of "Old Tennis Shoes" as a token of good will. Doc becomes more successful with a "series of lady visitors." With Dora's help, Mack determines to give Doc a real party—one that he will attend.

The plans for the party hinge on Doc's birthday, which Mack ascertains by discussing horoscopes and casually asking the date of Doc's birth. With October 27 as the target date, the community swings into action. Not only will there be food, music and drink, there will be presents, including a patchwork quilt made by Dora's girls, a giant pin cushion from Henri, a 25-foot string of firecrackers and a bag of China lily bulbs from Lee Chong, an antique piston from Sam Malloy, and 25 tomcats from Mack and the boys.

Fortunately, Doc is aware of Mack's plan. Doc hides his breakables and buys plenty of food and extra wine. Frankie, the demented child who dogs Doc's steps, is arrested when he breaks the window in Jacob's Jewelry Store and steals an ornate onyx clock as a gift for Doc. When Doc comes to rescue the neglected boy, Frankie's only explanation is "I love you."

On the day of the party, Dora dresses in her best and assigns a skeleton staff to run the Bear Flag Restaurant in her absence. The girls take turns serving customers and attending the party. Doc graciously pretends surprise, welcomes his guests, and fills three skilletts with steak to feed the growing crowd. Before the evening is over, people arrive from all quarters of Cannery Row. Doc plays opera records and recites a moving love poem. The party winds down to a pleasant glow when a chance arrival starts a fracas. By the time the police arrive, Doc and his friends are hidden behind closed doors in the darkened laboratory.

The police join the party. A fishing crew from San Pedro tuna boat arrives. Doc perches on a table in the midst of his admirers and watches Mack and Phyllis Mae Indian wrestle

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on the floor. Someone lights the string of firecrackers. By morning, the people are gone, leaving behind the debris of their celebration and community equilibrium restored.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

The sixth American to receive the Nobel Prize for Literature (1962), John Ernst Steinbeck is best remembered for his novels about poor, socially oppressed laborers and farmers, including *Of Mice and Men* (1937) and his Pulitzer Prize winning saga of migrant workers, *The Grapes of Wrath* (1940). Born in Salinas, California, in 1902, he published his first fiction in 1929 and continued writing short stories and novels until his death in 1968, although his peak years extended only from 1932-1945. The publication of *Tortilla Flat* (1935) produced the first serious critical attention to his works, which have since elevated him to the status of a major American author.

CRITIC'S CORNER

Cannery Row, published in 1945, shortly after his marriage to Gwendolen Conger Verdon and the birth of his son, Thomas, rounds out the early period of Steinbeck's writing in which he steep himself in the simple life around Monterey, California, and draws heavily on his training as a marine biologist and his rambles with Ed Ricketts. Somewhat sentimental and idealized, the novel reveals what Alfred Kazin calls "not so much a literary resource as a distinctively harmonious and pacific view of life Steinbeck had picked up a refreshing belief in human fellowship and courage: he had learned to accept the rhythm of life."

Steinbeck's Nobel Prize was greeted with some derision. He himself stated publicly that he didn't feel he deserved it. Critic Edmund Wilson disagrees: "There remains behind the journalism, the theatricalism and the tricks, a mind which does seem first-rate in its unpanicky scrutiny of life." Wilson describes Steinbeck's earthy characterizations as "stage Americans and cartooned folk." In his later works, Steinbeck tried, with less success, to depict the complexities of the world beyond the picket fence of his hometown memories.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

1. To comprehend Steinbeck's method of presentation
2. To perceive the importance of intercalary chapters
3. To connect setting with community economics
4. To analyze social levels among the characters
5. To place the novel in Steinbeck's canon
6. To contrast whimsy with realism
7. To understand tolerance as a major theme
8. To compare down-and-out characters with those in Steinbeck's other works

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To describe Doc's place in the community
2. To explain Doc's forbearance with Mack's shortcomings
3. To analyze the economic state of Cannery Row
4. To note the community's resilience during hard times
5. To differentiate true victims from n'er-do-wells
6. To explain the importance of the party
7. To analyze factors that isolate Doc from the other citizens
8. To debate community standards of morality

MEANING STUDY

Below are words, phrases, or sentences that have a particular meaning in the story. Explain the meaning each has in this novel. Page numbers are provided so that you can re-read the passages from which the item is taken.

1. Perhaps he is evil balanced and held suspended by good—an Asiatic planet held to its orbit by the pull of Lao Tze and held away from Lao Tze by the centrifugality of abacus and cash register. . . . (p. 8)
(Steinbeck describes Lee Chong as the antithesis of Lao Tze, founder of Taoism, a philosophy based on selflessness. Lee Chong, because of his dependence upon financial security, forces himself to the far extreme of Taoist belief.)
2. What can it profit a man to gain the whole world and to come to his property with a gastric ulcer, a blown prostate, and bifocals? (p. 9)
(Steinbeck paraphrases Christ's words about self-denial which are found in Matthew 16:26—"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Two similar statements exist in Mark 8:36-37 and Luke 25:25, all of which point to the folly of wasting life in pursuit of short-term goals. Steinbeck concludes Chapter II with a restatement of the first verse of the Lord's Prayer, which Christ gave as a model to his followers in his Sermon on the Mount.)
3. In the laboratory the girls from Dora's heard the Plain Songs and Gregorian music for the first time. Lee Chong listened while Li Po was read to him in English. Henri the painter heard for the first time the Book of the Dead. (p. 17)
(Doc becomes the local dispenser of culture, sharing sixth century liturgical music with prostitutes, eighth century Chinese poetry with the grocer, and to Henri, the ancient Egyptian prayers and chants that assisted souls of the departed on their journey to the afterlife. On page 62, Doc soothes his loneliness with

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selects one of the finest pieces from his personal collection—"the connecting rod and piston from a 1916 Chalmers." To embellish it, Sam "rubbed and polished this beauty until it gleamed like a piece of ancient armor." Then he adds the finishing touch, a little box lined with black cloth. Mrs. Malloy, equally creative, crochets "six doilies for Doc's beer glasses."

Mack and the boys bring 25 tom cats, freshly collected from "their trap under the cypress tree at the top of the vacant lot." Henri revives the art of pin-cushion making from the 1890's and creates an "intricate and provocative design in green, yellow, and blue pins, all cool colors, and its title was Pre-Cambrian Memory." His friend Eric brings a "rowing machine he had got at the bankruptcy proceedings of a client with a three-year barber bill."

Unfortunately, Frankie, in his eagerness to please Doc, becomes enamored of a black onyx clock in Jacob's Jewelry Store window. Enacted on the objet d'art is St. George in combat with the dragon, which is "on his back with his claws in the air and in his breast was St. George's spear. However, the main draw of the clock is not combat, but the likeness between St. George and Doc, both of whom wear pointed beards. Frankie makes the effort to present the clock to his hero, but is apprehended and jailed for theft. Not totally defeated, he gives Doc his all, a straight-forward "I love you.")

3. Describe the laboratory after the second party.

(Just like the first party, celebration leaves litter in its wake. Doc awakens slowly, "like a fat man getting out of a swimming pool." This time he is prepared for spilled wine, broken glass, "little bits of curled red paper all over the place and the sharp smell of firecrackers." Without stirring, he peers over his new quilt at "steak plates stacked high and the skillets deep in grease." in addition there are hairpins and cigarette butts on the floor and the close, stale odor of "wine and whiskey and perfume.")

He heats water, bathes, and dresses for action. Fortified with cold beer and a peanut butter sandwich, Doc sudses his glassware in hot water, blessed by a "Pater Noster and Agnus Dei," which he extracts from the safety of a locked back room. In contrast to the chaotic aftermath of the first party, Doc combats litter in leisurely fashion, still warmed by the gesture of the birthday party. He halts work at the end of the record, picks up the book of poetry that he read from the evening before, and savors a few more verses aloud. The beauty of it all brings tears to his eyes.)

4. Describe Doc's response to the flu epidemic.

(After flu breaks out in Cannery Row, a little later than it does in Monterey, residents suffer from a lack of medical care. The situation worsens as schools close and children fall prey to the disease, which tends to

"go into the mastoids." The doctors, who have plenty to do in Monterey, are reluctant to overextend themselves, particularly to patients who cannot pay.

Doc, who "had no right to practice medicine," responds to the people who come to him for advice. He spends days on end "running from shanty to shanty taking temperatures, giving physics, borrowing and delivering blankets and even taking food from house to house where mothers looked at him with inflamed eyes from their beds, and thanked him and put the full responsibility for their children's recovery on him." When a case exceeds his skill, he phones for a doctor.

Sleepless and undernourished, Doc accepts Dora's offer to help. He suggests that she and the girls sit with frightened patients. Dora mobilizes for action, distributes soup, and consults with Doc on treatment. Mercifully, the siege comes to an end.)

5. Explain Doc's work habits.

(In Steinbeck's words, "In spite of his friendliness and his friends Doc was a lonely and a set-apart man." Even when surrounded by others, "Doc seemed always alone." Mack senses that, even with a girl, Doc is still lonely. He works at night, as the lights and phonograph music indicate.

Doc collects at a steady pace, following the tides along the coast to sea rocks and beaches. He knows where each species can be found, "sea cradles here, octopi here, tube worms in another place, sea pansies in another." He watches the changes in the tide, loads up his tools, packs his jars, bottles, plates, and preservatives, and journeys to the "beach or reef or rock ledge where the animals he needed were stored."

For an order of octopi, he travels five hundred miles to La Jolla to the "boulder-strewn inter-tidal zone," which is at low tide at 5:17 A.M. Thursday. He considers taking a companion, but everyone has something else to do. He packs meticulously—personal items in one satchel, instruments and syringes in another. He trims his beard, places pencils and magnifying glass in easy reach, and loads the trunk of his car.

Doc times his work by an instinctive feel for the tide. In the pools left by retreating depths, Doc finds the "incredible refuse of the sea, shells broken and chipped and bits of skeleton, claws, the whole sea bottom a fantastic cemetery on which the living scamper and scramble. In rubber boots and rain hat, he turns over boulders with his crowbar, grabs octopi, and drops them into jars of sea water. Into his wooden bucket he deposits "several hundred sea cradles.")

Questions 6-8 Interpretive Level

6. Explain how Mack charms the captain.

(While camped on posted land, the boys encounter a

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recordings of Gregorian chant, which sounds like the "diamond-true child voices of the Sistine Choir.")

4. More recently in Carmel there have been a great number of literary men about, but there is not the old flavor, the old dignity of the true belles-lettres. (p. 43)
(Steinbeck enjoys an inside joke when he indicates that Carmel lacks the finer expressions of literature. The macabre story of the interment of Josh Billings (1818-1885), American humorist and forerunner of Mark Twain, after his death at the Hotel del Monte ends with the note: "Monterey was not a town to let dishonor come to a literary man.")
5. He had badges that said "Remember the Maine" (p. 76)
(Lee Chong's stock of patriotic and holiday decorations includes badges with political slogans that recall the destruction of an American battleship in Havana harbor on February 15, 1898.)
6. . . . the infinitely sad and resigned mourning of Petrarch for Laura. (p. 81)
(Doc, who often turns to music for solace, mentally plays the melancholy opening lines of a work by Monteverdi in his head after hitting Mack in the mouth. The music captures the mood of Francesco Petrarch (1304-1374) after the death of his lover, Laura, the idealized woman who dominates his sonnet series. Doc glances at the album and remembers that his phonograph was broken during the party.)
7. Feverishly he followed in periodicals the Dadaist movements and schisms, the strangely feminine jealousies and religiousness, the obscurantisms of the forming and breaking schools. (p. 83)
(Henri, whom Hazel says "changed his—his med—medium" (p. 21), follows an art form originated in the 1920's. The nihilistic approach, named for French baby talk by its leader, Tristan Tzara, emphasizes fantasy, abstraction, and incongruity in its rejection of accepted art conventions.)
8. On top was a bronze group—St. George killing the dragon. (p. 108)
(The onyx clock that rivets Frankie's attention to Jacob's Jewelry Store window features the hero of Christian legends who charms a dragon with the sign of the cross in order to free a Libyan princess from certain death. To Frankie, the "wonderful thing was that he wore a pointed beard and he looked a little like Doc.")
9. He played the Pavane to a Dead Princess and felt sentimental and a little sad. And because of his feeling he went on with Daphnis and Chloë. (p. 113)
(Before the party, Doc anticipates the evening by playing a slow, stately piece followed by a musical version of the Greek poem by Longus from the third century A.D. According to the romance, Daphnis and

Chloë are two foundlings who are brought up by shepherds. They grow up in simple love and trust, discover the identity of their real parents, and eventually marry.)

10. Then he unlocked the door of the back room and brought out one of his albums of Gregorian music and he put a Pater Noster and Agnus Dei on the turntable and started it going. (p. 122)
(Doc savors the afterglow of the party by playing religious music while he washes soiled glasses. He chooses a version of the Lord's Prayer and another Christian work based on the words, "Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.")

COMPREHENSION STUDY

Answer the following questions in your own words. There is not always a right answer. Your judgment is important and you should be ready to defend your answers by referring to passages in the book.

Questions 1-5 Literal Level

1. Describe Doc's activities at the Great Tide Pool.
*(At the "Great Tide Pool on the tip of the Peninsula," Doc collects marine animals: "It is a fabulous place: when the tide is in, a wave-churned basin, creamy with foam, whipped by the combers that roll in from the whistling buoy on the reef." Because the sea is clear, Doc and his helper, twenty-six-year-old Hazel, can see crabs among the fronds of algae, starfish among mussels and limpets, nudibranchs, eels, shrimps, anemones, octopi, barnacles, and abalones.
As they work, Hazel provokes conversation about the destination of their catch because he "simply wanted to hear talk." Doc explains that the starfish are going to Northwestern University. Their conversation turns to the mundane events of Cannery Row before reverting to nature. In answer to Hazel's query about the posture of stink bugs, Doc injects a philosophical comment: ". . . the really incredibly remarkable thing is that we find it remarkable. We can only use ourselves as yardsticks.")*
2. What gifts does Doc receive at his birthday party?
*(The gifts are characteristic of the givers. Dora's girls replace Doc's "old faded red blanket full of fox tails and burrs and sand" with a patchwork quilt made of silk from their "underclothing and evening dresses." The colors reflect the taste of their trade—"flesh pink and orchid and pale yellow and cerise." They so enjoy their work on the quilt that they cease "those fights and ill feelings that always are present in a whore house."
From Lee Chong comes another appropriate gift—25 feet of firecrackers and a bag of China lily bulbs. Sam Malloy, an appreciator of antiques,*

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surly man with a shotgun over his arm and a pointer at his heels. At first, he demands that the interlopers "just pack up and put that fire out and get off this land." Mack works his magic on the man by calling him "Captain." Employing reverse psychology, Mack compliments the slouching figure on his military bearing. The man demonstrates Mack's persuasiveness by straightening his posture.

The captain's command changes to explanation, "I don't allow fires on my place . . ." Mack jumps in with an outrageous lie about the frogs he and the boys plan to collect so scientists can use them to cure cancer. The land owner hesitates. Again, Mack flatters him by complimenting his dog, a dragged-down female still nursing a litter of pups and suffering a severe tick bite on her shoulder. When Mack declares that she resembles "Nola that [won] the field trials in Virginia last year," he has the captain in his power.

From this point on, Mack and the captain communicate as fellow dog lovers. Mack examines the bite and suggests an epsom salts poultice. He shows sympathy for the pups, who would not survive if the mother dog died. After he offers to treat the wound himself, the man opens the way to his frog pond. Mack is careful not to push his luck and orders the boys to put out the fire and clean up the mess.)

7. Why is Lee Chong an important member of the community?

(Despite his competition, the Thrift Market, Lee Chong supplies most of the wants of Cannery Row—"clothes, food, both fresh and canned, liquor, tobacco, fishing equipment, machinery, boats, cordage, caps, pork chops . . . a pair of slippers, a silk kimono, a quarter pint of whiskey and a cigar. His hours are generous, from dawn "until the last wandering vagrant dime has been spent or retired for the night."

Lee Chong is not greedy, just available: "Over the course of the years everyone in Cannery Row owed him money." He does not press for payment, but, when the bill gets too large, he cuts off credit. Clients, faced with a walk into town, "usually paid or tried to."

Lee is courteous, unpretentious, and respectable. Even when he makes business errors, he turns them to his advantage "in good will if in no other way." He smiles, works math problems on his abacus with "his little restless sausage fingers," and maintains a cheerful atmosphere which shoppers enjoy frequenting.)

8. What is the secret of Doc's success with people?

(Doc wins trust and earns love because he tolerates others. No paragon of virtue himself, Doc works hard, minds his own business, and extends what kindness he can to his neighbors. During the low period that follows the first party, Doc observes to Richard Frost on the subject of Mack and the boys: "There are your

true philosophers . . . I think they survive in this particular world better than other people . . . they are relaxed."

Doc is able to extract human behavior and to examine it as though under his magnifying glass. Generalizing to the human condition, he summarizes: "The things we admire in men, kindness and generosity, openness, honesty, understanding and feeling are the concomitants of failure in our system. And those traits we detest, sharpness, greed, acquisitiveness, meanness, egotism and self-interest are the traits of success." Such appreciation for character endears Doc to his fellow residents of Cannery Row.)

Questions 9 and 10 Critical level

9. What do Steinbeck's intercalary chapters add to the novel?

(Far from the digressions that they at first appear to be, the intercalary chapters, which are a major accomplishment in *The Grapes of Wrath*, steady the pace of *Cannery Row* and add important information about residents and lifestyles. For example, Mary Talbot in Chapter XXIV exemplifies the party spirit that pervades Cannery Row as Mack prepares a second party in honor of Doc. Despite her poverty, Mary finds reasons to celebrate life. At times she recedes into fantasy, a "kind of play she enjoyed very much—a kind of satiric game and it covered and concealed from Mary the fact that she didn't have very nice clothes and the Talbots didn't have any money."

But Mary's tea parties are an affirmation of joy. When pleurisy, unpaid rent and utilities, and rejection notices threaten, Mary rouses Tom from his depression with a "little bouquet of candy tuft in a collar of paper lace." Undaunted by his refusal to follow her mood, Mary sets a small table on a footstool and goes out in the yard to entertain Kitty Randolph and Kitty Casini.

Tom runs to Mary's rescue when Kitty Casini disgusts Mary by menacing a fresh-caught mouse. Eager to soothe his wife, Tom joins in her party spirit and relaxes a bit. Later that year, Mary entertains with a pregnancy party. The neighborhood anticipates that "A kid of hers is going to have fun."

In like fashion, Chapter XXVI points out cruelty close to the surface of everyday life. Willard harasses Joey with rude questions about Joey's father's suicide from rat poisoning. Joey's memories are vivid: "He was sick all day . . . He didn't die 'til the middle of the night. It hurt him." Willard, keen on taunting Joey, remarks, "I guess he just figured he was a rat.")

10. Explain the inclusion of "Black Marigolds."

(Doc shares with his guests an oral reading of verses from Sanskrit. The lines express his conscious and

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subconscious longings, the hunger that drives him to late hours of work and reverie. He prefaces the reading with "Ardo and the Amor from an album of Monteverdi." The guests lack Doc's education, but appreciate the recitation nonetheless.

Doc's mood is a "golden pleasant sadness" as he reads of "my girl with lotus eyes." Each line that details her shimmery loveliness deepens the ache of unrequited love, which is echoed by the gopher's plaintive squeaks in Chapter XXXI. In verse three, Doc reads, "Even now if I saw her . . . then would my love for her be ropes of flowers, and night a black-haired lover on the breasts of day." The lover's eyes turn inward, "painting, painting faces of my lost girl."

The poet describes greed: ". . . small men that buy and sell for silver being slaves crinkle the fat about their eyes." His longing becomes pain in the last verse as the speaker compares the oneness of his love to "the priestesses of Rati" who make love and then "lie down carelessly anywhere to sleep." The party, moved to tears by the imagery, feels "a little world sadness had slipped over all of them." Even Hazel, unable to reason, absorbs the sounds of the words.

The next morning, Doc is still a prisoner of the poet. Retrieving the open book from the edge of the bed, he turns to more verses and steep himself in the natural beauty of Cannery Row, where sea waves splash the pilings. Aloud he quotes words that live in his heart: "Even now I know that I have savored the hot taste of life . . . the whitest pouring of eternal light—")

Question 11 Creative Level

11. Read some verses from the *Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyam. Compare his philosophy with that of "Black Marigolds." What insights do the lines inspire? Read aloud stanzas that characterize Doc's melancholy moods. Record your performance with appropriate background music, such as the sound of the sitar.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

1. Draw a mural of Cannery Row activities, including Doc's collecting trips, children peeking through the laboratory window, Mr. Malloy's boiler, Dora's customers arriving at the Bear Flag Restaurant, Lee Chong examining his warehouse, the cannery in full operation, a tuna boat docking, and the boys gathered outside the Palace Flophouse and Grill for a pint of Old Tennis Shoes.
2. Make a colorful wall chart of flora and fauna common to Monterey, California. Label each animal and plant with its common and scientific name.
3. Listen to music which Doc finds relaxing, such as the *Brandenburg Concertos*, *Clair de Lune*, the *Moonlight Sonata*, Gregorian chant, plainsong, *Daphnis and Chloë*, or works by Monteverdi. Record your response to each piece in free-form verse or personal essay.
4. Draw a cover illustration featuring Mack, the boys, and Darling inside the Palace Flophouse and Grill. Emphasize Mack's eclectic taste in furniture.
5. Summarize Steinbeck's philosophy of life as exemplified by the interpersonal relationship on Cannery Row.
6. Read the first ten chapters of *The Grapes of Wrath*. Contrast the Joads with Doc and his friends. What values do they share? How would you characterize their attitudes toward neighbors?
7. Complete your reading of *The Grapes of Wrath*. Explain how the scope of the novel differs from *Cannery Row*. Include information about the Depression and the migration of Oakies to California.
8. Sample some of Steinbeck's shorter works, such as *The Pearl* and *Of Mice and Men*. What is his standard response to poverty and deprivation? What forms of unfairness bring suffering to innocent people?
9. Read the section of *Travels with Charley* which deals with Steinbeck's return to the Salinas Valley. Why does he maintain that "you can't go home again?"
10. Write a feature for a magazine which describes Doc's neighborly good deeds and his attempt to share good music with others. Suggest photographs for the art department to assign.

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VOCABULARY TEST

A. Find nouns from the list below that are synonyms for the words that follow. Place your answers in the blanks.

crescendo, despondency, reprisal, schism, vogue, iridescence, eyrie, mastoid, Carborundum, disarray, convexity, poultice, adobe, vintage, armature, philanthropy, warp, whimsy, infirmity, predecessor, centrifugality, tibia, femur, clavicle, abacus.

- | | | | | | |
|-------|--------------|-------|-------------|-------|--------------|
| _____ | 1. confusion | _____ | 6. fancy | _____ | 11. thigh |
| _____ | 2. fashion | _____ | 7. nest | _____ | 12. split |
| _____ | 3. increase | _____ | 8. ancestor | _____ | 13. abrasive |
| _____ | 4. type | _____ | 9. revenge | _____ | 14. bulge |
| _____ | 5. sadness | _____ | 10. sheen | _____ | 15. clay |

B. Find verbs from the list below that are synonyms for the words that follow. Place your answers in the blanks.

shroud, coagulate, perorate, wane, mull, sidle, replenish, scrabble, spar, sear, emit, taunt, fondle, exploit.

- | | | | | | |
|-------|-------------|-------|-------------|-------|----------|
| _____ | 1. conclude | _____ | 5. box | _____ | 8. lapse |
| _____ | 2. caress | _____ | 6. consider | _____ | 9. paw |
| _____ | 3. scorn | _____ | 7. fill | _____ | 10. clot |
| _____ | 4. wrap | | | | |

C. Find adjectives from the list below that are synonyms for the words that follow. Place your answers in the blanks.

wanton, frowzy, Pre-Cambrian, benignant, swarthy, morose, cosmic, precocious, laudable, inevitable, inviolable, avaricious, imperceptible, arch, wry, surly, benevolent, judicious, magnanimous, fiscal, decrepit, crotchety, sullen, senile, jovial, dispirited, calcareous, caustic, sepia, concupiscent, acetic, pungent, lascivious

- | | | | | | |
|-------|------------|-------|--------------|-------|-------------|
| _____ | 1. greedy | _____ | 6. financial | _____ | 11. brown |
| _____ | 2. aged | _____ | 7. kind | _____ | 12. darkish |
| _____ | 3. sulky | _____ | 8. lustful | _____ | 13. loose |
| _____ | 4. vast | _____ | 9. safe | _____ | 14. harsh |
| _____ | 5. certain | _____ | 10. sad | _____ | 15. untidy |

CANNERY ROW

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Character Identification (20 points)

Name the characters described below

- _____ 1. is injured in a fistfight by a tooth that becomes imbedded in her hand
- _____ 2. has power over Cannery Row because he can cut off credit
- _____ 3. has no bathroom to offer girl friends who come to stay at his boat
- _____ 4. eventually house trains herself
- _____ 5. escapes pursuing police until he runs into a blind street
- _____ 6. rents out pipes in his boiler as sleeping quarters
- _____ 7. scrapes the points and adjusts the gap in Lee Chong's truck
- _____ 8. must be charitable and twice as law abiding as anyone else
- _____ 9. flatters the captain that his dog looks like Nola, a champion Virginia dog
- _____ 10. feels ill after finding a drowned girl

Part II: Matching (20 points)

Name the speaker of each of the following quotations with an answer from the list that follows. Place the letter of your response in the blank provided at left.

- _____ 1. I'm over it Let's forget it.
- _____ 2. It don't do no good to say I'm sorry. I been sorry all my life.
- _____ 3. I love you
- _____ 4. We go see flog
- _____ 5. The starfish What do the guys do with 'em? You can't eat 'em.
- _____ 6. You know, I've got a pond up by the house that's so full of frogs I can't sleep nights.
- _____ 7. An' I don't know, Dora—I kind of lost my nerve since I bust that guy's back.
- _____ 8. It was just as simple as that. Now there is one hell of a woman.
- _____ 9. My husband and I are going to the Boomer League Centennial Reception at the Hotel.
- _____ 10. Why don't you give him a party he does get to?

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| A. Alfred | F. Hazel |
| B. the captain | G. Henri |
| C. Doc | H. Lee Chong |
| D. Dora | I. Mack |
| E. Frankie | J. Mary Talbot |

CANNERY ROW

Part III: True/False (30 points)

Mark the following statements either **T** for true or **F** if any part is false.

- _____ 1. To fill an order, Doc travels into the hills of Carmel Valley in search of tomcats.
- _____ 2. While helping Doc, Hazel likes to ask questions in order to prolong conversation.
- _____ 3. William, Dora's watchman, falls into depression and plunges an ice pick into his heart.
- _____ 4. Frankie learned very little at school and even less in reform school.
- _____ 5. During the flu epidemic, Mrs. Malloy joins forces with Dora to provide hot meals for sick people.
- _____ 6. When Doc arrives at the laboratory and finds the mess and the broken phonograph, he goes into a rage.
- _____ 7. On October 27, Doc is aware that he is being watched.
- _____ 8. By the time Lee Chong buys the truck, it has been through several owners.
- _____ 9. Gay steals dry cells to power the truck for the frog hunt and is caught by the local sheriff.
- _____ 10. The best way to hunt frogs is to stalk them along the seashore and catch them in gunny sacks.
- _____ 11. Because Doc went to college and plays church music, Mack believes that poor quality whiskey will not please him.
- _____ 12. Hazel gets Doc in trouble by collecting abalones without a permit.
- _____ 13. Gay moves in with the gang because his wife keeps hitting him while he sleeps.
- _____ 14. Eric, a learned barber, gives Doc a cake from the Thrift Market because Darling ate the homemade one.
- _____ 15. Lee Chong makes up with the boys by giving them a pint of Old Tennis Shoes.

Part IV: Essay Questions (30 points)

- 1. Describe Mrs. Malloy's idea of a cozy home.

- 2. Contrast good and bad times at Cannery Row.

CANNERY ROW

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Matching (40 points)

Match the following situations with locations from the list below. Place the letter of your response in the blank provided at left.

- _____ 1. an abacus sits beside a cash register
- _____ 2. rattlesnakes stare out of their cage with dusky eyelids
- _____ 3. Horace shoots himself on a heap of fish meal
- _____ 4. Dora allows no loud or vulgar talk
- _____ 5. Doc and Hazel collect starfish
- _____ 6. a bundle of gilded cattails, a sheaf of peacock feathers, and a grandfather clock serve as decoration
- _____ 7. Eddie fills a jug with leftover liquor, beer, and wine
- _____ 8. a boiler blows a tube
- _____ 9. Gay backs Lee Chong's Model T Ford truck past Jack's Peak road
- _____ 10. Mack selects a female pointer puppy and calls her "darling."
- _____ 11. the Greek cook makes a ten-gallon cauldron of soup
- _____ 12. Henri skates on a little round platform
- _____ 13. Doc buys a beer milkshake
- _____ 14. a girl's face looks up through the water at Doc
- _____ 15. Henri dreams of a devilish young man who cuts a baby's throat
- _____ 16. Lee Chong's competitor
- _____ 17. Dora pours herself a snort in private
- _____ 18. Mack and the boys cook a chicken
- _____ 19. a dog drags yards of intestine with a stomach dangling at one end
- _____ 20. a watchman orders two soldiers and their girls off private property

- A. Bear Flag Restaurant
- B. captain's house
- C. Carmel Hill
- D. Carmel River
- E. Great Tide Pool
- F. Hediondo Cannery
- G. Henri's boat
- H. Holman's Department Store
- I. Hopkins Marine Station
- J. La Ida
- K. La Jolla
- L. Lee Chong's grocery
- M. Monterey
- N. Palace Flophouse and Grill
- O. Abbeville building
- P. Thrift Market
- Q. Ventura
- R. Western Biological Laboratory

CANNERY ROW

Part II: Short Answer (20 points)

Supply a word or phrase in answer to each of the following questions. Place your response in the blank provided at left.

- _____ 1. What interest keeps the captain's wife away from home?
- _____ 2. Who injects color into the starfish's veins?
- _____ 3. What gift do Dora's girls bring to the party?
- _____ 4. What heroic figure is depicted on the stolen onyx clock?
- _____ 5. Who threatens to have Doc arrested?
- _____ 6. Who writes a paper transferring the frogs to Lee?
- _____ 7. Whose great-great-great-great-great grandmother was burned as a witch?
- _____ 8. What disease are the frogs reported to be infected with?
- _____ 9. What is Doc's standard pay per frog?
- _____ 10. Who clips Frankie's hair and rids him of lice?

Part III: Essay Questions (40 points)

1. Apply this quotation to Doc: "Even now I know that I have savored the hot taste of life lifting green cups and gold at the great feast."

2. Discuss the various social ills that plague the people of Cannery Row, such as abuse, neglect, disease, suicide, crime, ignorance, poverty, and prejudice.

CANNERY ROW

VOCABULARY TEST ANSWER KEY

Part A

- | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. disarray | 6. whimsy | 11. femur |
| 2. vogue | 7. eyrie | 12. schism |
| 3. crescendo | 8. predecessor | 13. Carborundum |
| 4. vintage | 9. reprisal | 14. convexity |
| 5. despondency | 10. iridescence | 15. adobe |

Part B

- | | |
|-------------|---------------|
| 1. perorate | 6. mull |
| 2. fondle | 7. replenish |
| 3. taunt | 8. wane |
| 4. shroud | 9. scrabble |
| 5. spar | 10. coagulate |

Part C

- | | | |
|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| 1. avaricious | 6. fiscal | 11. sepia |
| 2. senile | 7. benignant | 12. swarthy |
| 3. sullen | 8. lascivious | 13. wanton |
| 4. cosmic | 9. inviolable | 14. caustic |
| 5. inevitable | 10. morose | 15. frowzy |

COMPREHENSION TEST A ANSWER KEY

Part I: Character Identification (20 points)

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1. Phyllis Mae | 6. Mr. Malloy |
| 2. Lee Chong | 7. Gay |
| 3. Henri | 8. Dora |
| 4. Darling | 9. Mack |
| 5. Frankie | 10. Doc |

Part II: Matching (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. C | 6. B |
| 2. I | 7. A |
| 3. E | 8. I |
| 4. H | 9. J |
| 5. F | 10. D |

Part III: True/False (30 points)

- | | | |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1. T | 6. T | 11. T |
| 2. T | 7. T | 12. F |
| 3. T | 8. T | 13. T |
| 4. F | 9. F | 14. F |
| 5. F | 10. F | 15. T |

COMPREHENSION TEST B ANSWER KEY

Part I: Matching (40 points)

- | | | | |
|------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. L | 6. N | 11. A | 16. P |
| 2. R | 7. J | 12. H | 17. A |
| 3. O | 8. F | 13. Q | 18. D |
| 4. A | 9. C | 14. K | 19. M |
| 5. E | 10. B | 15. G | 20. I |

Part II: Short Answer (20 points)

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1. politics | 6. Mack |
| 2. Doc | 7. Mary Talbot |
| 3. quilt | 8. cancer |
| 4. St. George | 9. five cents |
| 5. hitchhiker | 10. Doc |



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