

# Travels with Charley

by John Steinbeck

## Teacher's Guide

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## Synopsis

### PART ONE

Steinbeck sets out in search of America from his home in Sag Harbor, New York. He drives a camper truck named Rocinante and carries as a passenger his blue poodle named Charley, a born ambassador. Before the Labor Day departure, he rescues his boat, the *Fayre Elayne*, from hurricane Donna.

### PART TWO

Steinbeck journeys north to Vermont and east to the White Mountains of New Hampshire, where he enjoys countryside tinged with fall. In Bangor, Maine, he regrets the sterility of travel accommodations. He and Charley welcome the friendship of Canuck nomads in Aroostock County with shared cognac and hospitality. As he concludes his tour of New England, he encounters a deserted motel and, in Vermont, a hellfire-and-brimstone Sunday sermon at a John Knox church. Crossing into New York and over the Canadian border, U. S. guards at Niagara Falls annoy him with red tape concerning Charley's vaccination and about a phone number that the author jotted in his passport.

Steinbeck honors the character of the working class and admires truckers and state troopers for their road knowledge. At a mobile home park in Michigan, he interviews a trailer owner and considers rootlessness in America's past. Beside a private lake in northern Michigan, he encounters a surly security guard, whom he charms with an invitation to visit in Rocinante. In Ohio, Charley develops an allergy to fly spray. The Midwestern tour halts tem-

porarily in Chicago, where Charley has a tantrum about being groomed. Steinbeck joins his wife at the Ambassador East Hotel.

### PART THREE

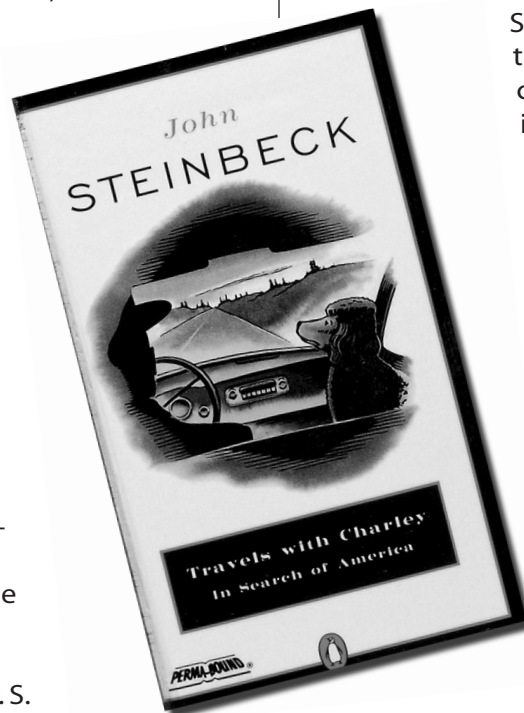
Steinbeck resumes his pursuit of Americana. Wisconsin advertises cheese. After getting lost in Minneapolis, he asks directions from a waitress to Sauk Centre, Minnesota, birthplace of Sinclair Lewis, author of *Main Street*. A Minnesota encounter with an actor performing Shakespeare's *The Ages of Man* leaves the author with questions. He crosses Bismarck, North Dakota, into Mandan territory and the Bad Lands, which glow in the setting sun. In Montana, he rhapsodizes over grassy expanses and mountains. At Yellowstone National Park, Charley yowls at the bears. Across the Great Divide, the poodle suffers bladder distension, which Steinbeck treats with Seconal. A veterinarian in Spokane, Washington, casually misdiagnoses the problem as a cold.

Steinbeck changes the oil in Seattle and fixes a tire in Oregon. On a rainy Sunday, a kind mechanic locates the

right size tires. Steinbeck introduces Charley to the giant sequoias in southern Oregon. On the Monterey Peninsula, the author delights in returning to Salinas, California, his birthplace. He squabbles with his Republican sisters and drives into his old neighborhood to Johnny Garcia's bar. Crossing the Mojave Desert, Steinbeck covers ground beyond Bakersfield, California, and celebrates Charley's birthday with pancakes, maple syrup, and a candle.

### PART FOUR

At a Texas ranch, Steinbeck anticipates taking part in a Thanksgiving orgy with wife Elaine and friends.



Meanwhile, in Amarillo, a young doctor keeps Charley for four days to cure him of prostatitis. Steinbeck swings south to view racial unrest in New Orleans, where a black child integrates public schools. Most shocking are female hecklers called Nellie and the Cheerleaders. An observer predicts that racial desegregation will be painful for whites and blacks. The three-month travelogue ends in New York. Unofficially, Steinbeck wearies of his odyssey in Abingdon, Virginia. Caught in rush-hour traffic, he needs directions to his own home.

### Steinbeck's Life

A giant of mid-20th-century American literature, John Ernst Steinbeck had a gift for extolling the common citizen. He began publishing in 1929 and continued writing short fiction, mythology, screenplays, essays, speeches, novels, and travelogues until his death from heart disease on December 20, 1968. Born on February 27, 1902, in Salinas, California, to John Ernst Steinbeck, Sr., a county treasurer and magistrate, and teacher Olive Hamilton Steinbeck, the author was the only son of four children. While attending public schools, he read Arthurian lore and the works of John Milton and Dostoevsky. He played sports, wrote for the school paper, and worked each summer on ranches in the San Joaquin Valley, where he evolved his famous multicultural humanism. At 18, he enrolled as an English major at Stanford University before changing his major to marine biology. He left school in 1925 without a diploma.

To prepare for writing Dust Bowl fiction, Steinbeck worked as a hod carrier, construction laborer, and caretaker. While initiating a career in journalism, he and his first wife, Carol Henning, moved from Pacific Grove to New York City, where he wrote for the *American* and worked on construction crews at Madison Square Garden. Returned to Salinas, he nurtured a partnership with biologist Ed Ricketts and explored the Baja Peninsula. In 1939, Steinbeck published his most controversial work, *The Grapes of Wrath*, the vehicle for a classic film starring Henry Fonda and Jane Darwell and directed by John Ford. Through realistic fiction, he stirred controversy concerning exploitation of illiterate workers by land owners, labor organizers, police, com-



munists, and government. The publication of *Tortilla Flat* netted the first critical attention to his humor and humanity toward Monterey *paisanos*. He followed with social criticism of striking fruit pickers in *Dubious Battle*. In 1942, he was a war correspondent for the *Herald Tribune* in Britain and the Mediterranean and a propagandist for the war department. His sons Thomas Myles and John, IV, were born in 1944 and 1946 to his second wife, singer Gwyndolyn Conger. Upon his return to Monterey, he found himself unwelcome because of his political opinions.

In his most productive period, Steinbeck wrote "The Pearl of the World" and *Cannery Row*. In 1938, he issued *The Red Pony*, a childhood memory, in a collection, *The Long Valley*. In 1945, Norway issued him a medal of freedom for *The Moon Is Down*, a retrospect on the World War II resistance movement. He also scripted the 1949 screen version of *The Red Pony*, starring Myrna Loy, Robert Mitchum, Peter Miles, and Louis Calhern. Aaron Copland provided the musical background. In 1952, Steinbeck wrote his most satisfying work, *East of Eden*, a California saga that caused local people to fear his research into Salinas history.

Steinbeck settled at Sag Harbor, New York, with third wife Elaine Scott Steinbeck and composed *The Winter of Our Discontent*, a disgruntled survey of moral decadence. He wrote political speeches for Lyndon B. Johnson, who awarded him a U. S. Medal of Freedom. Steinbeck scripted Hollywood movies, including *A Medal for Benny*, *Viva Zapata!*, starring Marlon Brando and Anthony Quinn and directed by Elia Kazan, and Alfred Hitchcock's *Lifeboat*, which earned an Oscar nomination for the screenplay. He was posted to Vietnam in 1967 to report on the war for *Newsday*. At his death, the family buried his ashes at the Hamilton family plot in Salinas. His boyhood home is now a museum. Nearby, the John Steinbeck Library houses 30,000 items of memorabilia, photos, first editions, and taped interviews.

### Steinbeck and the Critics

Steinbeck is best known for his novels of the 1930s about the poor and socially oppressed. In 1934, he won an O. Henry Prize for a short story, "The Murder." Most memorable are the novella *Of Mice and Men* and *The Grapes of Wrath*, a Pulitzer Prize-winning

saga of Oklahoma migrants. Because of his success in chronicling the Great Depression, he has risen to the status of a major American author. To prepare himself for writing about labor problems, he traveled with migrant pickers and earned denunciation as a communist agitator. Because the FBI vilified him for supporting playwright Arthur Miller during badgering by the House Un-American Activities Committee, Steinbeck suffered public disapproval. He remained virtually unread in the United States throughout the McCarthy era, but found favorable audiences in Europe.

In 1935, Steinbeck received a California Commonwealth Club gold medal for *Tortilla Flat*, the vehicle for a Hollywood film in 1942 starring Spencer Tracy, Hedy Lamarr, and John Garfield. Steinbeck achieved immediate success with *Of Mice and Men*. Readers sympathized with the lonely, victimized farmhands who wander and dream of escaping their round of labors with a stable home life. The book earned selection by the Book of the Month Club. A Broadway version, directed by George S. Kaufman, won a New York Drama Critics' Circle award. The 1939 screen version starred Lon Chaney and Burgess Meredith.

In 1947, Steinbeck wrote *The Pearl*, which a Hispanic cast filmed the next year. The touching parable of a humble family of pearl divers found a place in American literature for its poignant commentary on good and evil and the lure of quick riches. The fable touched on family values set against the trickery and duplicity of educated people of the upper crust. Because Steinbeck struck a resonant chord in readers with *Travels with Charley: In Search of America*, he became the sixth American to earn a Nobel Prize for Literature. The honor aroused some derision from mockers who found him too earthy, too populist for the literati. He agreed that he didn't feel he deserved the award. Critic Edmund Wilson rebutted: "There remains behind the journalism, the theatricalism and the tricks, a mind which does seem first-rate in its unpanicky scrutiny of life."

## Media Versions

### Audiobook (unabridged)

*Travels with Charley*, Highbridge Audio, 1994

### Large Print

*Travels with Charley*, G. K. Hall, 2000

## Bibliography

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- Dowland, Douglas. "Macrocosm of Microcosm Me," *Literature Interpretation Theory* 16, no. 3 (July 2005): 311-331.
- Romano-Lax, Andromeda. *Searching for Steinbeck's Sea of Cortez*. Seattle, Wash.: Sasquatch Books, 2002.
- Schultz, Jeffrey, and Luchen Li. *John Steinbeck*. New York: Facts on File, 2005.
- Sheffield, Carlton. *John Steinbeck: The Good Companion*. Berkeley, Calif.: Creative Arts, 2002.
- Shell, Shawn. "10 Great Places to Step Inside an Author's Life," *USA Today* (3 October 2003).
- Shillinglaw, Susan, and Nancy Burnett. *A Journey into Steinbeck's California*. Berkeley, Calif.: Roaring Forties Press, 2006.
- Steinbeck, John, IV. *The Other Side of Eden*. Amherst, N. Y.: Prometheus, 2001.

## Other Works by John Steinbeck

- A Cup of Gold*, 1929
- The Pastures of Heaven*, 1932
- To a God Unknown*, 1933
- Tortilla Flat*, 1935
- In Dubious Battle*, 1936
- Of Mice and Men*, 1937
- Their Blood Is Strong*, 1938
- The Long Valley*, 1938
- The Red Pony*, 1938
- The Grapes of Wrath*, 1939
- The Sea of Cortez* (with Edward F. Ricketts), 1941
- Bombs Away!*, 1942
- The Moon Is Down*, 1942
- Lifeboat*, 1944
- Cannery Row*, 1945
- The Pearl*, 1947
- The Wayward Bus*, 1947
- A Russian Journal*, 1948
- Burning Bright*, 1950
- East of Eden*, 1952
- Sweet Thursday*, 1954
- The Short Reign of Pippin IV*, 1957
- Once There Was a War*, 1958
- The Winter of Our Discontent*, 1961
- America and Americans*, 1966
- Journal of a Novel*, 1969
- Viva Zapata!*, 1975
- Acts of King Arthur and His Noble Knights*, 1976
- Working Days*, 1989

## General Objectives

1. To discuss the formation of community values
2. To characterize sectionalism
3. To discuss the settlement of New England and the West
4. To outline the relationship between residents and outsiders
5. To contrast types of sightseeing
6. To note the value of solitude and reflection
7. To read aloud examples of tradition and wisdom
8. To study the convention of the quest
9. To enumerate examples of social dysfunction and disorder
10. To explain the universality of sectional pride

## Specific Objectives

1. To describe Americans and Soviets during the 1960s
2. To recount how and why Lonesome Harry meets Lucille
3. To discuss public opinion of New Orleans school desegregation
4. To summarize Steinbeck's meeting with his sisters and with Johnny Garcia
5. To account for disappointment in a Spokane medical examination
6. To characterize Charley as an ambassador
7. To list incidents illustrating nostalgia, hospitality, and contentment
8. To evaluate changes in Steinbeck at Abingdon, Virginia
9. To account for changes in American character since frontier days
10. To describe the *Fayre Elayne* and *Rocinante*

## The Importance of Setting

John Steinbeck's survey of settings moves with such clarity that readers can visualize his counter-clockwise journey around the continental 48 states. Beginning in New York, he chooses to depart Sag Harbor on Labor Day and visit New England at the beginning of fall. As he presses west from Bangor toward the Great Lakes and into the Midwest, he regrets that superhighways give the driver no opportunity to enjoy unusual sights. Rather than sanitary motel rooms and franchise restaurants, he selects small places staffed by people who take the time to comment on where they live. He questions people about extremes of weather, their jobs, and places they would rather be.

On the swing across the West and down the West Coast after the stopover in Chicago, Steinbeck becomes more animated about beauty and grandeur. He loves Montana for its expanse of unsettled land and enjoys introducing Charley to bears in Yellowstone National Park and the giant sequoia south of Oregon. Problems with Charley's health force the search for a veterinarian in Spokane and reduce the author's focus on setting. As *Rocinante* approaches the Monterey Peninsula, Steinbeck begins to reminisce about growing up in Salinas and to anticipate visiting his sisters and his old neighborhood. The rapid move from Bakersfield southeast to Texas introduces desert animals and scenery best enjoyed in solitude, particularly a pair of coyotes he feeds. Outside Amarillo, he particularizes the failed hunt for quail and the indoor socializing with wife and friends that makes Thanksgiving special.

The last portion of the journey passes with less authorial speculation and comment. The drama in New Orleans departs from genial commentary on America to a dissection of hatred and the face-off between blacks and rabid racists. A conversation with a cotton farmer adds insight into Louisiana racial conditions and hope for a peaceful future. At Abingdon, Virginia, the travelogue loses its perusal of setting as Steinbeck hurries home to Sag Harbor. He satirizes the quandary of the driver in heavy traffic by picturing himself needing directions for the last miles home.

## Literary Terms and Applications

For a better understanding of John Steinbeck's style, present the following terms and applications to *Travels with Charley*.

**Framework Narrative:** an outer story or setting that encases and supports a story. Steinbeck explains his around-the-nation method of travel at the beginning and introduces his intent to survey the qualities and nature of American citizens. He keeps his purpose in mind and chastises himself for staying too long in New England.

**Travelogue:** a guidebook or account of trips, exploration, and exploits, often compiled by sailors, mercenaries, diplomats, researchers, missionaries, and troubadours. Steinbeck compiles his comments from the perspective of the social philosopher who compares the period of travel to the foundations of American history. Along the way, he determines that Americans sprang from restless Europeans who chose rootlessness over staying put.

**Universality:** a quality or theme that applies to all people at all times. The quest motif has appealed to readers from the time of Jason's wanderings and Homer's *Odyssey*. Steinbeck uses the journey as a framework for discussing the uniqueness of parts of America and the generalized behaviors of character types. Like Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, the narrative covers kind strangers, nosy questioners, old friends, harried hoteliers and waitresses, nomads, authority figures, couples, roadside assistants, and competent and incompetent doctors.

## Related Reading

- Richard Adams, *Watership Down*
- Joy Adamson, *Born Free*
- Pearl Buck, *The Good Earth*
- Paolo Coelho, *The Alchemist*
- Isak Dinesen, *Out of Africa*
- Robin Lee Graham, *Dove*
- Esther Hautzig, *The Endless Steppe*
- Barbara Kingsolver, *The Bean Trees*
- James Vance Marshall, *Walkabout*
- Larry McMurtry, *Lonesome Dove*



Farley Mowat, *Never Cry Wolf*  
Walter Dean Myers, *The Glory Field*  
Conrad Richter, *The Light in the Forest*  
John Steinbeck, *America and Americans*  
Amy Tan, *The Kitchen God's Wife* and *Daughter of Fortune*  
Mark Twain, *Life on the Mississippi* and *Roughing It*  
Yoko Kawashima Watkins, *So Far from the Bamboo Grove*

### Cross-Curricular Sources

For related reading and more information about John Steinbeck, shifts in economy and social status, American attitudes, desegregation, sightseeing, and national history consult these sources:

#### Articles

Manning, Diane T., and Perry Rogers.  
"Desegregation of the New Orleans Parochial Schools," *Journal of Negro Education* (winter 2002).

#### Audiocassette

*Ordinary People*, Recorded Books

#### Autobiography

*Life on the Mississippi*  
*Out of Africa*  
*So Far from the Bamboo Grove*

#### Internet

"Sequoia National Forest,"  
<http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/sequoia/>  
"Yellowstone National Park,"  
<http://www.nps.gov/yell/>

#### Novels

*The Bean Trees*  
*Dove*  
*Dr. Zhivago*  
*The Glory Field*  
*The Good Earth*  
*The Kitchen God's Wife*  
*The Light in the Forest*  
*Lonesome Dove*  
*A Passage to India*  
*Walkabout*  
*Watership Down*

#### Poems

*The Ancient Mariner*  
*The Canterbury Tales*

#### Posters

*American Authors of the Twentieth Century*, Knowledge Unlimited

#### Reference Works

*John Steinbeck*, Facts on File

#### Videos

*Born Free*  
*Dr. Zhivago*  
*Eyes on the Prize*  
*Oscar and Lucinda*  
*Out of Africa*  
*A Passage to India*  
*Sounder*  
*Walkabout*  
*Watership Down*

### Themes and Motifs

A study of the central issues and situations in Steinbeck's *Travels with Charley* should include these aspects:

#### Themes

- curiosity
- nationalism
- analysis
- change
- loss
- grandeur
- memory
- social status
- disorder
- racism
- regret
- fatigue

#### Motifs

- partnering with an animal
- honoring the past
- making friends with strangers
- surveying American values

### Meaning Study

Below are significant words, phrases, or sentences from the travelogue. Explain each in context. Part and page numbers pinpoint each entry so you can re-read the passage in which it appears.

1. I had to be peripatetic eyes and ears. (Part I, p. 6)  
*(On the journey from Labor Day until after Thanksgiving, Steinbeck becomes the itinerant sense organs for his readers. He conveys through the written word the condition of America in*

the 1960s, the time of his journey. His phrase also describes the job of any writer.)

2. I named it Rocinante, which you will remember was the name of Don Quixote's horse. (Part I, p. 7)  
(The hero of Miguel Cervantes' 17th-century epic satire likewise becomes "peripatetic eyes and ears." The don's visionary evaluation of most events renders his sense impressions unrecognizable to more mundane viewers. Nonetheless, the Spanish quest story seems unfamiliar to people viewing Steinbeck's truck.)
3. Yes, Joseph Addison I hear and I will obey within Reason. (Part II, p. 39)  
(Steinbeck pays tribute to a witty English essayist and social satirist of the early 18th century, the precursor of the magazine writer. Steinbeck imitates Addison's quaint style of capitalizing all nouns. Of Addison's influence, the author says, "He plays the instrument of language as Casals plays a cello. I do not know whether he influenced my prose style, but I could hope he did.")
4. "Sure," he said and he droned, "In nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti." (Part II, p. 61)  
(This phrase, which is inexplicable to the speaker, a Filipino hill-dweller, comes from the Latin mass. The words mean "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." The word "Filii" is misspelled. It should be "Fili.")
5. But since I know the passions of the mapifiers I can report that I moved north in Maine roughly parallel to U. S. Highway 1. (Part II, p. 71)  
(While choosing backroads for scenic beauty, Steinbeck tweaks map makers with a humorous substitute for "cartographers." The passage through outback communities helps to introduce the author to real people.)
6. I did not put aside my sloth for the sake of a few amusing anecdotes. (Part III, p. 140)  
(Anecdotes are short, entertaining accounts of personal happenings, the stuff of Steinbeck's subjective reportage. For the purpose of episodic narrative, he organizes the anecdotes neatly by the place where each occurs and its position on the route that he follows on a counterclockwise circuit of the United States.)
7. It seemed to me that a Long Island poodle who had made his devoirs to *Sequoia sempervirens* or *Sequoia gigantea* might be set apart from other dogs—might even be like that Galahad who saw the Grail. (Part III, p. 188)  
(Steinbeck makes humorous reference to Charley's urination on the world's largest tree, identified either as "evergreen sequoia"

or "giant sequoia." The use of the euphemism "devoirs" blends the two meanings of the word: duties and expressions of courtesy or respect." The author further honors the occasion by comparing Charley to Sir Galahad, the son of Sir Launcelot and Elaine in Arthurian lore, who was so pure of heart that he witnessed the Holy Grail, the cup that Christ drank from at the Last Supper.)

8. When I started this narrative, I knew that sooner or later I would have to have a go at Texas, and I dreaded it. (Part IV, p. 227)  
(Steinbeck indicates personal prejudices in his delight in visiting Salinas and his dread of Texas, where he is "mother-in-lawed and uncled and aunted and cousined within an inch of my life." Because of the state's size and location, there is little choice but to drive through the panhandle and on east.)
9. While I was still in Texas, late in 1960, the incident most reported and pictured in the newspapers was the matriculation of a couple of tiny Negro children in a New Orleans school. (Part IV, p. 249)  
(The enrollment of black children in a Southern school provides the background of the author's most intense examination of American behavior. Steinbeck's shock at the frenzied indecency of white protesters brings his trip to a prophetic conclusion. His words predict the national outburst of racism that followed desegregation in Louisiana.)
10. More generations than I can prove beyond doubt, except classified under *ci gît* in St. Louis. (Part IV, p. 261)  
(On several occasions, Steinbeck mentions the French term for "here lies," a tombstone inscription indicating the dead.)

## Comprehension Study

Answer the following questions in your own words. There is not always a right answer. Your judgment is important. Be ready to defend your answers by referring to passages in the travelogue.

### Character Interaction

1. Why does Steinbeck feel grateful to the Oregon mechanic?  
(Late in the journey, the author realizes that he has a dangerous tire situation while he is changing a flat. He stops at an Oregon service station on a rainy Sunday and discovers a sympathetic mechanic who searches for larger tires to prevent further difficulties with the heavy camper truck. Steinbeck reports that he could have kissed the man's hand. "I was so full of humble

*gratefulness, I could hardly speak. I hope that evil-looking service-station man may live a thousand years and people the earth with his offspring.”)*

### Action

2. How does Steinbeck befriend Canucks?  
*(The author explains in detail how he dispatches Charley towards the good smell of savory soup. When Steinbeck retrieves his “nuisance,” he mentions that the dog is a native of Bercy, France. The fact establishes a link between the author and the French Canadians. After dinner, he invites them to his small cabin for cognac, which brings smiles to the eyes and hearts of his guests. “The cognac was very, very good,” he summarizes, “and from the first muttered ‘Santé’ (to your health) and the first clicking sip you could feel the Brotherhood of Man growing until it filled Rocinante full—and the sisterhood also.”)*

### Exposition

3. What necessities accompany the journey?  
*(The bulk of packing is mundane—tools, food, thirty gallons of water, warm clothes, guns, ammunition, and spare fuel. The necessities of a writer, however, seem a little out of place for camping—paper, carbon, typewriter, pencils and notebooks, dictionaries, a compact encyclopedia, and assorted reference books. In addition, Steinbeck plans to prime the pump with “a hundred and fifty pounds of those books one hasn’t got around to reading—and of course those are the books one isn’t ever going to get around to reading.”)*

### Historical Milieu

4. Why does the author introduce American-Soviet relations of the 1960s?  
*(Political news provides conversation in several incidents. In New England, a farm owner has heard the five o’clock news report of Nikita Khrushchev’s banging the desk with his shoe before the assembled dignitaries of the United Nations. In Minnesota, another citizen comments on how the Russians supply a need for topics of discussion: “Hardly a day goes by somebody doesn’t take a belt at the Russians.” He concludes, “Nobody can find fault with you if you take out after the Russians.”)*

### Setting

5. Why does Steinbeck rename the Bad Lands of the Dakotas “the Good Lands”?  
*(After a day of treacherous driving west of the Great Lakes, Steinbeck tries to escape the harsh, rocky landscape of the Dakotas, which he describes as resembling “the work of an evil child.” But when sundown brings a metamorphosis of rich-hued beauty to the stark terrain, he decides to stay the night. He gathers cedar branches for a fragrant, lively fire, absorbs the night sounds, and beds down in insulated underwear to combat*

*the sudden cold. Charley, too, reflects the enjoyment of his owner. “I dug out an extra blanket and covered him—all except the tip of his nose—and he sighed and wriggled and gave a great groan of pure ecstatic comfort.”)*

### Interpretation

6. What causes animosity in Nellie and the Cheerleaders?  
*(Nellie and the Cheerleaders spew out the hatred that Southern racists feel for blacks who press for fuller participation in American life. The women’s extreme temerity on the fringes of a surly crowd causes onlookers to give place, listen, and encourage. Steinbeck realizes that the women’s scurrilous chants are pre-arranged and obviously rehearsed. They feed their egos on daily doses of the press and buoy themselves for the next encounter. In his assessment: “These blowzy women with their little hands and their clippings hungered for attention. They wanted to be admired. They simpered in happy, almost innocent triumph when they were applauded. Theirs was the demented cruelty of egocentric children, and somehow this made their insensate beastliness much more heartbreaking. These were not mothers, not even women. They were crazy actors playing to a crazy audience.”)*

### Literary Foils

7. How does Steinbeck rate the second veterinarian?  
*(As always, the author takes his cue from the reactions of Charley, who immediately senses competence in the gentle, probing hands of the doctor from Amarillo. Steinbeck contrasts the man’s expertise to the uncaring attitude of the vet in Spokane who tosses off Charley’s pain as a cold. As the second doctor settles the poodle on the front seat of his convertible for a ride to the clinic, Steinbeck notes that “the tufted tail twittered against the leather. He was content and confident, and so was I.” The author’s assessment proves true. Charley recovers from the chronic prostatitis which has plagued him and receives medication to prevent another occurrence.)*

### Theme

8. What does Steinbeck gain from the man he meets on the Mississippi River?  
*(In contrast to the insane virulence of Nellie and the Cheerleaders, a peacemaker offers sane analysis of a difficult situation. A benevolent observer, Monsieur Ci Git eases into conversation with natural gentility, disarming Steinbeck and establishing an undemanding fellowship. His predictions are ominous when he describes the status quo: “I know all of its aching past and some of its stinking future.” He does not think the transition from segregation to integration will be easy for blacks or whites. He proposes an early period of training for children to avoid the fear and anger of their elders.)*



**Tone**

9. What is Steinbeck’s attitude toward his subject and literary purpose?  
*(In his travels across America, Steinbeck finds occasions for social criticism—of pollution, neglect of civic responsibility, urbanism, loss of regional dialect, rudeness, authoritarianism, and racism. However, he glories in the knowledge he has gained of his native land and offers frequent encomia to its natural wonders and its varied people. He represents his nation well by neither idealizing it beyond belief nor degrading it in the reader’s eyes.)*

**Style**

10. Is Steinbeck’s method an appropriate way to survey American life?  
*(Steinbeck’s method of traveling, sampling, and observing suits his temperament and philosophy. The flow of days has a rationale that is fitting and functional. Had he pushed himself into more states, he might have soured on the project altogether. Even allowing himself visits with his wife and son plus private moments with his sisters and friends, Steinbeck is obviously exhausted by his experiences from Labor Day to Thanksgiving. By the end of his trek, his mind seems sufficiently stocked with perceptions for a reflective and creative output, as is evident by this book and its photographic sequel, America and Americans. Another author might choose a less isolated style of travel so the ferment of conversation with other observers would stimulate alternative modes of thought. Steinbeck, however, seems content with his non-verbal companion and enjoys the challenge of interpreting Charley’s responses.)*

**How Language Works**

Steinbeck expresses his attitude toward people, Charley, and themes through direct remarks:

1. But one thing Charley did not fake. He was delighted to be traveling again, and for a few days he was an ornament to the trip.
2. I talked with a very old man who had known me as a child. He remembered vividly seeing me, a peaked, shivering child walking past his house one freezing morning.
3. Other guests came and went silently. If one confronted them with “Good evening,” they looked a little confused.
4. I arrived in Monterey and the fight began. My sisters are still Republicans.

5. Jews—what? How do they cause trouble?
6. A little something on the side? Something to give it authority?
7. I haven’t left the country. I’m not about to leave the country.
8. The increasing river of traffic for New York carried me along, and suddenly there was the welcoming maw of Holland Tunnel and at the other end home.

**Across the Curriculum**

**Journalism**

1. Collect on-the-scene commentary from Nellie, the Cheerleaders, black and white parents, reporters, teachers, police, and neighbors for an evening telecast in New Orleans. Interview John Steinbeck and gain his insights into growing up with the Coopers.
2. Interview workers who perform heavy, demanding jobs, including long-distance trucking, auto mechanics, waiting tables, policing, harvesting produce, ranchers, bartenders, and managing motels and hotels. Note whether laborers are content with jobs and rewards. Which jobs pay well and offer fringe benefits and job security and satisfaction? Which are most dangerous? most tedious? most boring?

**Religion**

1. Summarize John Steinbeck’s response to a hellfire-and-damnation sermon at a Vermont church. How does his reaction reflect American respect for Puritan ancestry?
2. Comment on a critical claim that Steinbeck’s style is one half Mark Twain and one half Cotton Mather. Why do critics charge Steinbeck with didacticism?

**Research**

1. Create a bulletin board listing places mentioned in the travelogue. Include the Mojave Desert, Sauk Centre, Michigan, Fargo, Seattle, Amarillo, Abingdon, Sag Harbor, Niagara Falls, White Mountains, Aroostock County, Salinas, Monterey Peninsula, Great Divide, Bismarck,

Hoboken Ferry, Little Big Horn, Bad Lands, Carmel, Texas panhandle, Montana, New Orleans, Missouri River, St. Cloud, Minneapolis, Bangor, Chicago, Santa Cruz, Bakersfield, San Francisco, Deer Isle, Yellowstone National Park, Holland Tunnel, Spokane, "the Father of Waters," Baxter State Park, and Manhattan.

2. Divide the class into small groups to list identifiable attitudes and dialects of parts of the United States. Why does Steinbeck dawdle too long in New England? Why does he dread Texas? Why does he think of himself as a microcosm within a macrocosm?
3. Create a series of menus that Steinbeck could prepare in his simple kitchen with limited staples and fresh produce, meats, and fish from areas he visits, such as Wisconsin cheese, Oregon strawberries, Washington state apples, Idaho potatoes, Louisiana prawns and crawfish, California artichokes and avocados, Texas beef, Virginia ham and sweet potatoes, and New England clams.

**Reading**

1. Read aloud other literary descriptions of human and animal relationships. Include Dian Fossey's *Gorillas in the Mist*, Nicholas Evans' *The Horse Whisperer*, Catullus' sparrow poems, Joy Adamson's *Born Free*, Scott O'Dell's *Island of the Blue Dolphins*, John Steinbeck's *The Red Pony*, William Armstrong's *Sunder*, Yann Martel's *The Life of Pi*, Jean Craighead George's *Julie of the Wolves*, Wilson Rawls' *Where the Red Fern Grows*, Farley Mowat's *Never Cry Wolf*, Richard Adams' *Watership Down*, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings' *The Yearling*, Edgar Allan Poe's "The Raven," Isak Dinesen's *Out of Africa*, Robert Frost's "Come In," and Fred Gipson's *Old Yeller*. Determine aspects of animal behavior that relax and uplift humans, such as Charley's good humor, keen observation, and ability to make friends with strangers.
2. Read aloud essays from *America and Americans*. Determine whether Steinbeck maintains his original admiration for American history and his affability toward Americans.

**Literature**

1. With a group, list and explain significant literary styles and genres. Include these: anecdote, dialogue, essay, adage, definition, idiom, legend, history, memoir, autobiography, digression, flashback, framework, allusion, and travelogue. Note places where Steinbeck shifts from one genre or style to another to suit material and to offer variety and texture to the narration.
2. Explain to a small group why the racial situation in New Orleans causes Steinbeck to question the source of vituperative anger.
3. Contrast minor characters in terms of action, commentary, and significance. Include waitresses, Joe the mechanic, Sinclair Lewis, Joseph Addison, General George Armstrong Custer, George, Miss Eleanor Brace, hotel clerks, Lewis and Clark, Steinbeck's sisters, a Vermont minister, border guards, Specklebottom, Canucks, veterinarians, Texas ranchers, black student, security guard, an actor, park rangers, the Coopers, Nellie and the Cheerleaders, Johnny Garcia, short order cooks, Robbie, Lee, Lucille, cotton farmer, ferryman, lake guardian, toll collector, trailer park dwellers, and Lonesome Harry. Which characters are stereotypes? Which seem like characterizations of people you've met? Which have the most influence on the action?
4. Write a theme in which you explain the purpose of a minor incident in the action. Choose from these: eating too much at the Texas orgy, celebrating Charley's birthday, accidental shooting of a cow, buying a large tire, talking to people who hate New York, collecting lead, changing a tire, locating an empty motel, chatting with Johnny Garcia, saving the *Fayre Elayne* from hurricane Donna, stopping at the Canadian border, feeding a hungry coyote, questioning an ineffectual veterinarian in Spokane, looking for Sauk Centre, seeing bears in Yellowstone National Park, waiting for a room in the Ambassador East hotel, outfitting Rocinante, and giving Charley Seconal.

5. Compile and discuss a list of images from the travelogue that appeal to the five senses, for instance, "At a red light I saw that I was on an Evacuation Route," "They fish for tourists now, not pilchards," "I'll rent me a hundred feet of ground right near and I'll be in business," "There are enough antiques for sale along the roads of New England alone to furnish the houses of a population of fifty million," "Fish and crabs and shrimps lay beautifully on white beds of shaved ice," and "I dare his picturing mind not to go back to the shout of color, to the clean rasp of frosty air, to the smell of pine wood burning and the caressing warmth of kitchens." Determine why Steinbeck stresses sense impressions of the places and people he encounters.

**Math**

1. Using internal data, make a time line of events in the travelogue from Labor Day through Thanksgiving. Emphasize the period of time that the journey covers and the chronology of events, particularly Khrushchev's display at the United Nations, Thanksgiving in Texas, hurricane Donna, and the integration of New Orleans schools.

**Computer Art**

1. Draw an animated television or Internet advertisement for *Travels with Charley* emphasizing the crucial roles of driver and dog. Indicate the importance of separations and reunions, particularly Charley's restoration to health in Amarillo, his retreat to the kennel, his return from exploring a nearby camp, and his display of a pedicure and grooming.

**Social Studies**

1. Explain in a theme how the author portrays Native American and community history. How does the author characterize small town life? What does he learn from Johnny Garcia about the old neighborhood?
2. Compose a brief history of trailer parks. List advantages and disadvantages to living in a small space close to neighbors. Determine how taxes, lot rents, and utility costs compare with home ownership or apartment rental.

**Law**

1. Outline the laws governing international travel through Niagara Falls, New York, to Ontario. Why are American laws more stringent concerning rabies vaccinations? passports?
2. Define and give examples of a tort. Explain the legal ramifications of ignoring a court summons.
3. Summarize laws involving securing and using a passport.

**Psychology**

1. Lead a debate about the author's attitude toward government laws and regulations, including fishing licenses. Comment on the purpose of reflection and nostalgia to a simpler time in American history when there were fewer controls on citizen actions.
2. Analyze character interaction by simplifying the events and meaning of a single scene. For example, give a detailed sketch of the evening sharing cognac with Canucks, the visit to the sequoia forest, finding a crumpled court summons, locating liquor in a vase of roses, fishing at a private lake, dressing up for Thanksgiving dinner, or renting a sterile motel room.
3. Describe in a short speech the effects of isolation, anticipation, disease, frustration, disappointment, inconvenience, suspicions, and bad manners on characters in the book. How does Steinbeck ennoble ordinary people, like the cotton farmer in Louisiana, the polite toll collector, and the mechanic who orders a tire on a rainy Sunday?
4. Explain Steinbeck's logic in wearing a disguise in New Orleans. What does he have to do to pose as a "Limey"?

**Cinema**

1. Draw settings for a Texas Thanksgiving feast. Show features of the ranch that prove the owners are wealthy and hospitable, particularly expensive firearms.
2. Describe aspects of the narrative that are suited to radio, film, tableau, illustration, stage,

puppetry, and pageant, for example, the encounter with crossing the Mojave Desert, Nellie and the Cheerleaders, investigation of Lucille and Lonesome Harry's hotel tryst, Steinbeck's arrival at the Ambassador East Hotel lobby, an examination of Charley in Amarillo, celebrating a birthday, and the feeding of coyotes.

3. View various films featuring journeys, e. g. *The Grapes of Wrath*, *Out of Africa*, *Little Big Man*, *The Catcher in the Rye*, *Life on the Mississippi*, *Reds*, *Walkabout*, *Hawaii*, *The Pearl*, *Lonesome Dove*, *The Good Earth*, *Exodus*, *Watership Down*, *The Secret of NIMH*, *The African Queen*, *Cry the Beloved Country*, *Oscar and Lucinda*, *A Passage to India*, *Souder*, *True Grit*, *No Promises in the Wind*, *The Rabbit-Proof Fence*, and *Of Mice and Men*. Discuss why filmmakers focus on the outsider's views of ordinary people.

### Health

1. Present a two-column chart detailing symptoms, treatment, and prevention as a result of prostatitis in large dogs. Explain why the illness is life-threatening and why Seconal enables Charley to rest and relieve pressure on his bladder.
2. Determine what ingredient in aerosol fly spray might trigger an allergy in Charley.

### Science

1. Describe the habitat of the giant sequoia. Determine how long they live and how tall they grow. What are their natural enemies? Where are they protected?
2. Explain how Texas ranch owners insure cov-eyes of quail and wild turkeys for hunting.
3. Using a model, explain why a larger tire will alter the speedometer reading on Rocinante.

### Language

1. Draw flash cards explaining each word below: atrophy, olfactory, whet, pique, palpable, reservoir, vestiges, elan, fracas, slattern, prostate, vaunt, boisterous, warrens, Tom Wolfe, *Monsieur Ci Gît*, dogleg, starveling, loll, sequoia, votive, W. P. A., malfeasance, refurbish, welsh, bracero, breach, rapport, decadent, scrutiny, semantics, covey, intact, alimony, matriculation, purvey, scud, Limey, jibe, demo-

niac, generalities, improbably, manic, maudlinly, facetiously, musky, Wellington, *Fayre Elayne*, Jurassic period, blowzy, verge, solvent, goad, maw, ubiquitous, trajectory, vacillate, *et voilà*, gorged, and tort.

### Art, Costume Design, and Music

1. Using desktop publishing or other media, design a map of Minneapolis, international border sign in Niagara Falls, menu for a Wisconsin roadside diner, letterhead stationery for the Ambassador East Hotel, pattern for clipping a blue poodle, route from Bakersville to Amarillo, function of a garbage can washing machine, fishing regulations at a private lake, court summons for paying back alimony, instructions for dosages of Seconal, path of hurricane Donna, or trailer park rules.
2. Create a bulletin board illustrating visual scenes from the story. Include covering Charley with a blanket, studying the Bad Lands by sunset, the outfitting of Rocinante, retrieving the anchor of the *Fayre Elayne*, Khrushchev's tantrum at the United Nations, getting lost in Manhattan, and ejection of a racist from the truck.

### Drama and Speech

1. Write a conversation between Steinbeck and Elaine describing the first portion of the journey. Stress the beauty of fall in New England, a sermon at a John Knox church, Charley's tangled fur, driving Rocinante, locating Canucks, and difficulties at the Canadian border.
2. Describe aloud the multiple purposes of the journey. How does Steinbeck propose to capture American spirit and philosophy? How does Charley ease difficult social situations? Why does a thorough analysis require avoiding superhighways?
3. Discuss your reaction to the journey. How would you introduce Steinbeck to your area? What qualities of speech, dress, behavior, and attitude might interest him? What local food would you suggest for his meals? What local authors would you add to his book collection?

**Composition**

1. Make an oral report on the theme of curiosity. Summarize lines that capture Steinbeck's interests, particularly the intrusion of laws and regulations on normal life, the grandeur of open country, the loss of Chief Joseph at the Canadian border, a survey of coyotes, Charley's romance with a dachhund, and sources of racism and pride.
2. Compose a first person account of Steinbeck's arrival home. How would he and Charley acclimate themselves once more to city life? to regular hours? to living with other people? to questions about the journey?
3. Compose an extended definition of national pride in which you compare Steinbeck's pro-Americanism to that of Walt Whitman, Paul Revere, Sacajawea, Harriet Tubman, or George Gershwin.
4. Compose an informal essay on writing travelogue. List historic places in America you would like to describe in a TV special, scenario, tableau, stage musical, or outdoor drama, for example, the Grand Canyon, Everglades, prairies, Kaho'Olawe, Charleston, Key West, Shenandoah Valley, Arlington Cemetery, Death Valley, Boston harbor, North Carolina outer banks, historic Philadelphia, Oregon Trail, or Mount Whitney. Explain to a small group why you chose these sites and why they appeal to visitors.

**Education**

1. Compose an introduction to civil rights by pantomiming the integration of New Orleans public schools. Stress how the actions of a few brave people ended centuries of segregation and racial inequity.

**Alternate Assessment**

1. List in chronological order and describe these significant events: shooting a cow, admiring a firearm, touching a good luck charm, buying a large tire, getting directions to St. Cloud, finding a deserted motel, visiting Canucks, crossing the Mojave, arguing with Republican sisters, conjecturing about Harry and Lucille, treating Charley with Seconal, studying coyotes, ending the journey, pulling up an anchor, viewing cheese advertisements, celebrating a birthday, meeting a would-be hairdresser, returning to Niagara Falls, and visiting Johnny.
2. List events from the travelogue that express strong attitudes toward kinship, dog ownership, laws, curiosity, religion, nostalgia, home, hospitality, desegregation, hunting, food, back roads, and American history. Indicate Steinbeck's philosophy on each subject.
3. Compose brief definitions of framework and episode as they apply to *Travels with Charley*. What changes in the work would create a memoir? separate essays? Why does Steinbeck prefer travelogue?
4. Summarize scenes that depict conflict, particularly animosity toward "nigger lovers," suspicion of New York Jews, a delayed hotel check-in, faulty physical examination, crumpled court order, search for a large tire, security at a private lake, Charley's anger at bears, hurricane Donna, getting directions to St. Cloud, rejection at the U. S.-Canada border, and defiance of desegregation.

## Vocabulary

Match each underlined word with its synonym listed below. Place your response in the blank at left.

absolutes, abysmally, alliance, aplomb, boisterous, breach, buttes, commodities, constants, covey, demoniac, disunity, dogleg, generalities, goad, improbably, inevitability, intact, jibe, Jurassic, Labyrinth, loll, manifestations, maudlinly, maw, perspective, rasp, refurbish, reprisal, semantics, solvent, succumbed, tort, trajectory, transit, ubiquitous, vacillate, verge, votive, warrens

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I yielded utterly to my desolation, made two peanut-butter sandwiches, and went to bed and wrote letters home, passing my loneliness around.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. If I knew they were there, I would have weapons against them, charms, prayers, some kind of union with forces equally strong but on my side.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. And in this report I do not fool myself into thinking I am dealing with certainties.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. He put my sins in a new view.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I who love words and the endless possibility of words am saddened by this eventuality.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I will repeat only one admonishment from a native of Maine, and I will not put a name to that person for fear of revenge.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Bargains and trades are announced, social doings, prices of wares, messages.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. And in the humid ever-summer I dare his picturing mind not to go back to the shout of color, to the clean abrasion of frosty air, to the smell of pine wood burning and the caressing warmth of kitchens.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. It is my experience that in some areas Charley is more intelligent than I am, but in others he is sadly ignorant.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. He was a silent, ever-present small boy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Well, he got me out of town by a route which would have made the path into the maze at Knossos seem like a throughway.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Even at his age he is a vain dog and loves to be beautified, but when he found he was to be left and in Chicago, his ordinary self-control broke down and he cried out in rage and despair.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. This might well be an explanation of ghosts and such appearances.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. In my travels, it was pleasant and good; in writing, it would contribute only a jumble.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. But humans being what they are, and I being human, I turned off the highway on a shaley road and headed in among hills, but with a shyness as though I crashed a party.

## Comprehension Test A

### Part I: Matching (30 points)

Match the following descriptions to the names or places each refers to:

- |   |                        |                   |                     |
|---|------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| _____ 1. harvests lead from a sycamore log        | A. Abingdon            | G. Steinbeck      | M. Portland, Oregon |
| _____ 2. 3/4 ton pickup                           | B. Canucks             | H. Khrushchev     | N. Robbie           |
| _____ 3. a native of Bercy                        | C. Charles le Chien    | I. Chinese cook   | O. Rocinante        |
| _____ 4. the beginning of the trip                | D. <i>Fayre Eleyne</i> | J. Lonesome Harry | P. Sag Harbor       |
| _____ 5. cabin boat                               | E. Joe                 | K. Lucille        | Q. Salinas          |
| _____ 6. pounds a table with a shoe               | F. Johnny              | L. Mrs. Steinbeck | R. Cheerleaders     |
| _____ 7. migrant potato harvesters                |                        |                   |                     |
| _____ 8. defaces a passport                       |                        |                   |                     |
| _____ 9. Italian-American trailer owner           |                        |                   |                     |
| _____ 10. meets the author at the Ambassador East |                        |                   |                     |
| _____ 11. throws away a wife's letter             |                        |                   |                     |
| _____ 12. pours a drink into roses                |                        |                   |                     |
| _____ 13. wants to be a hairdresser               |                        |                   |                     |
| _____ 14. wears a gold medal for luck             |                        |                   |                     |
| _____ 15. home town                               |                        |                   |                     |

### Part II: Identification (20 points)

Explain the significance of each of these:

1. Chief Joseph \_\_\_\_\_
2. Great Divide \_\_\_\_\_
3. *Sequoia gigantea* \_\_\_\_\_
4. birthday cake \_\_\_\_\_
5. Texas orgy \_\_\_\_\_
6. Donna \_\_\_\_\_
7. red Kleenex \_\_\_\_\_
8. Ftt \_\_\_\_\_
9. Sauk Centre \_\_\_\_\_
10. Coopers \_\_\_\_\_

## Comprehension Test A (Page 2)

### Part III: Matching (10 points)

Match parts of quotations from the travelogue.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. And as in states and communities so in individual Americans
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Behind these small mites were the law's majesty and the law's power to enforce—both the scales and the sword were allied with the infants—
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. But government can make you feel so small and mean that
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. But where were the others—the ones who would be proud they were of a species with the gray man—
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. How unthinkably rich these Texans must be
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I have never resisted change, even when it has been called progress
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. It occurs to me that, just as the Carthaginians hired mercenaries to do their fighting for them, we Americans bring in mercenaries
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. It seemed to me that regional speech is
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Nearly every city I know has such a dying mother of violence and despair
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. The honest bookkeeper, the faithful wife, the earnest scholar get little of our attention

- A. to do our hard and humble work.
- B. this hunger for decent association with the past.
- C. I could sit and contemplate and stare out over the stately, brown, slow-moving Father of Waters as my spirit required.
- D. not man and beast, not black and white, but pleasant things.
- E. It takes some doing to build back a sense of self-importance.
- F. in the process of disappearing, not gone but going.
- G. where at night the brightness of the street lamps is sucked away and policemen walk in pairs.
- H. the good and moral purpose of a thousand human beings gathered to curse one tiny human.
- I. compared to the embezzler, the tramp, the cheat.
- J. and yet I felt resentment toward the strangers swamping what I thought of as my country with noise and clutter and the inevitable rings of junk.
- K. it's the only weapon that can win against violence.
- L. to live as simply as they were.
- M. how can you explain that Charley knew it was over too?
- N. while against them were three hundred years of fear and anger and terror of change in a changing world.
- O. the ones whose arms would ache to gather up the small, scared black mite?

### Part IV: Essay Questions (40 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

- 1. Account for Steinbeck's reaction to a Vermont church service.
- 2. Summarize Steinbeck's attitude toward guns and hunting.
- 3. Compare crossing the Mojave Desert with getting lost in Minneapolis.
- 4. Express the author's attitude toward change.
- 5. Describe the circumstances that end the journey.



## Comprehension Test B

### Part I: True/False (30 points)

Mark each statement either T for true or F if any part is false:

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Steinbeck stops in New Orleans to visit Dr. St. Martin.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The Cheerleaders hunger for publicity.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The author gets lost near home.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Charley responds to commands in French.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Steinbeck composes from his notes each night.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. The author fears that hurricane Donna will smash Rocinante.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. The author is often recognized as a famous novelist.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Charley's love affair with a Pomeranian ends with Steinbeck being bitten.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Sauk Center is the birthplace of Chief Joseph.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. A security guard burns a court order informing Jack of back alimony owed to his ex-wife.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Steinbeck remembers the Coopers as hard-working.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Rocinante's designers fail to anticipate the heavy load she carries.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Two days in the sequoias are a quiet time.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Charley weeps as he is carried to the vet for a rabies shot.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. After debating whether to kill coyotes, Steinbeck shoots them with a borrowed gun.

### Part II: Fill in the Blanks (20 points)

Fill in the blanks with terms that make a true statement:

- 1. Steinbeck washes clothes in a \_\_\_\_\_ tied to the inside of Rocinante.
- 2. The \_\_\_\_\_ gives the author free passage into Canada.
- 3. The family entering California with a load of \_\_\_\_\_ stops at the state line.
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_ suffers bladder distension.
- 5. Steinbeck and his sisters argue bitterly over \_\_\_\_\_.
- 6. Out of all the states, Steinbeck falls in love with \_\_\_\_\_.
- 7. Steinbeck pulls the *Feyre Eleyne's* \_\_\_\_\_ out of the bay.
- 8. The actor keeps a \_\_\_\_\_ from John Gielgud.
- 9. From \_\_\_\_\_ Steinbeck learns the vocabulary of the road.
- 10. Steinbeck wraps red \_\_\_\_\_ around Charley's tail.

## Comprehension Test B (Page 2)

### Part III: Multiple Choice (20 points)

Choose the correct answer to complete each statement below:

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Steinbeck hears that Maine natives sometimes
- A. shoot dogs.
  - B. deliberately confuse directions.
  - C. suspect New Yorkers.
  - D. harbor racism.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. To protect a cow, one New York farmer
- A. paints "cow" on both sides.
  - B. orders a moose call from Abercrombie and Fitch.
  - C. posts signs banning hunting.
  - D. places antlers on four gunny sacks of sand.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. At Eleanor Brace's home, Charley receives a hostile reception from
- A. a Pomeranian.
  - B. bears.
  - C. Elizabeth Otis.
  - D. George.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Steinbeck is sad after talking with
- A. a Maine state trooper.
  - B. a hairdresser.
  - C. a careless veterinarian.
  - D. a waitress who winters in Florida.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Steinbeck prefers a beard for
- A. a disguise.
  - B. warmth.
  - C. decoration.
  - D. an escape from shaving.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Steinbeck's grandfather loved
- A. telling war stories.
  - B. writing.
  - C. collecting guns.
  - D. hunting wild turkeys.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Charley wakes his master by
- A. staring at him.
  - B. saying Ftt.
  - C. whimpering.
  - D. jumping on the bunk.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Charley is ineligible for dog shows because
- A. he is not American.
  - B. he is part airedale.
  - C. his front teeth are crooked.
  - D. his color is unusual.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Steinbeck makes the trip
- A. for money.
  - B. to hunt with a friend in Texas.
  - C. to survey changes in the country.
  - D. out of boredom with Sag Harbor.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. No one asks Steinbeck about
- A. Rocinante's name.
  - B. Nellie and the Cheerleaders.
  - C. Charley's defective ear.
  - D. the empty motel.

### Part IV: Essay Questions (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Explain why Charley amazes Steinbeck with aggressive behavior.
2. How does Charley prove himself an ambassador?
3. Describe the historic sites that appeal to Steinbeck.
4. Explain why the the doctor in Amarillo satisfies the dog and his owner.
5. Discuss places where Steinbeck loses his objectivity.

**Answer Key**

**VOCABULARY**

- |                  |                |                    |
|------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| 1. succumbed     | 6. reprisal    | 11. Labyrinth      |
| 2. alliance      | 7. commodities | 12. aplomb         |
| 3. absolutes     | 8. rasp        | 13. manifestations |
| 4. perspective   | 9. abysmally   | 14. disunity       |
| 5. inevitability | 10. ubiquitous | 15. buttes         |

**COMPREHENSION TEST A**

**Part I: Matching (30 points)**

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

**Part II: Identification (20 points)**

- chief of the Nez Percé Indians whose tribe met disaster in an attempt to escape into Canada from the American cavalry
- Rocky Mountains or "continental spine," separating east from west
- world's largest tree
- stack of pancakes and maple syrup topped with a candle stub
- Thanksgiving meal at a Texas ranch with wife and friends
- hurricane that threatens Rocinante and the *Fayre Eleyne*
- protective device rubber-banded to Charley's tail to ward off hunters
- sound that Charley makes through crooked front teeth
- home of Sinclair Lewis
- Steinbeck's black friends in Salinas

**Part III: Matching (10 points)**

- |      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. B | 6. J  |
| 2. N | 7. A  |
| 3. E | 8. F  |
| 4. O | 9. G  |
| 5. L | 10. I |

**Part IV: Essay (40 points)**

Answers will vary.

**COMPREHENSION TEST B**

**Part I: Multiple Choice (30 points)**

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

**Part II: Fill in the Blank (20 points)**

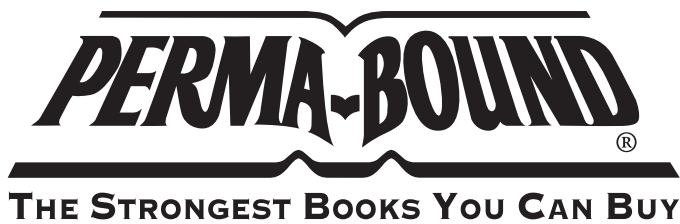
- |                   |             |
|-------------------|-------------|
| 1. garbage can    | 6. Montana  |
| 2. toll collector | 7. anchor   |
| 3. potatoes       | 8. letter   |
| 4. Charley        | 9. truckers |
| 5. politics       | 10. Kleenex |

**Part III: Multiple Choice (20 points)**

- |      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. B | 6. B  |
| 2. A | 7. A  |
| 3. D | 8. C  |
| 4. D | 9. C  |
| 5. C | 10. A |

**Part IV: Essay (30 points)**

Answers will vary.



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