**TOPIC: CHARACTERS**

**Discipline**

Language Arts

**Grade Level**

6-12

**Type of Activity**

Individual, Small Group, Large Group, On-going

**Objectives**

* Students will have a greater understanding of the characters and their relation to other characters.

**Overview**

This activity can be done by students individually, in small groups, or the class as a whole together. Either a character web or a simple chart can be used. This activity uses a graphic organizer to help students to understand the motivations of characters – the factors that have shaped characters. Other minor characters, such as the Muley Graves or Mae from the diner, may be added.

**Materials Needed/Preparation**

* Characters Organizer
* Large sheet of butcher paper (optional, for working together as an entire class)
* Sample character web (optional)
* If done as a character web, students need to have prior instruction in how to create a character web.
* *The Grapes of Wrath* notebooks

**Estimated Time**

* 1 class period
* 5-10 minutes for multiple class periods (if done as an ongoing activity)

**Procedures**

* Distribute chart (optional)
* If using a character web, review character webs. Distribute character web sample (optional).
* Choose one character and, with class participation, model how to complete the chart/character web. If doing this activity on an on-going basis, or as a large group, single period activity, consider modeling on a large sheet of butcher paper (this can remain up throughout the unit).
  + Start with the simple, objective facts (physical description, age, etc.).
  + Move into more subjective descriptions (personality, attitudes, fears, etc.).
  + Finish with how the character relates to others and what their role is in the novel.
* For a one day activity
  + Have students work individually or in small groups to complete the chart or character web.
  + Or, continue to complete the chart or character web as a class. Use student participation and input.
  + Each student should create and keep a completed copy of the chart or character web, even if done as a group activity.
  + If done individually or in small groups, allow time at the end of the class period for each group to share to the class.
* For an on-going activity
  + Post the chart or character web on the wall
  + During discussions of the reading, add to the chart or character web when important discoveries have been made. Consider allowing students to come up and do this.
  + Each student should create and keep a completed copy of the chart or character web, adding to it as the unit continues.

**Post Activity/Takeaways/Follow-up**

* Post Activity
  + Ask students to predict what *may* happen in the novel based on what they have discovered about the characters (consider keeping a record of these predictions to follow-up on later).
* Takeaways
  + Family is an important theme in *The Grapes of Wrath*. Students should be aware of what other relationships are being made and why and how those relationships are related to family.
  + How are the relationships between characters like relationships the students have experienced (parent-child, friend, mentor, etc.)?
  + Students should come away from this exercise with more understanding of the characters and how they interact.
* Follow-up
  + When appropriate, go back to student predictions to see if those predictions came true. Discuss why or why not.

**Assessment**

* Quiz on the characters (based on the student findings).
  + The quiz could be to create a table or an identity chart for a character or characters.
  + The quiz could be strictly factual (e.g. “Who is Rosasharn’s fiancé?” and so on).
* Points for maintaining a copy of the chart or character web

**Standards Met**

* Reading Standards for Literature 6-12
  + Key Ideas and Details: 1, 3
  + Craft and Structure: 5
* Speaking and Listening Standards 6-12
  + Comprehension and Collaboration: 1