**TOPIC: RESTAURANT REVIEWS**

**Discipline**

Language Arts, Creative Writing

**Grade Level**

9-12

**Type of Activity**

Small Group, Individual, Creative Writing

**Objectives**

* Students will have a greater understanding of the social and economic tensions of the Great Depression.

**Overview**

“Truck Drivers. That’s the stuff”

Mae (156).

In chapter 15 the reader gets a general telling of life at a highway-side diner. Of the various clientele that Mae meets, the truck drivers are her favorite. John Steinbeck is saying a great deal about class, class tensions, and prejudice in this chapter.

This activity is a creative way for students to express their understanding of the social and economic tensions present in the novel and during the Great Depression.

**Relevant Sections**

* Chapter 15

**Materials Needed/Preparation**

* *The Grapes of Wrath*
* Optional: Restaurant Review Organizer

**Estimated Time**

* Minimum: 15-20 minutes
  + More elements can be added on to extend this exercise.
  + Consider assigning parts of this activity as homework to extend its reach while dedicating only the minimum amount of class time to the exercise.

**Procedures**

Warm up or Pre-class preparation:

* Read/re-read chapter 15
  + In notes (or using the Restaurant Review Organizer), summarize the chapter.
    - List each of the clientele who Mae interacts with
      * What do you think their social and economic status is?
        + Look for context clues (What do they drive? How are they dressed? Etc.)
      * How does Mae treat each person? Why?
      * What is Steinbeck saying about social and economic status in this chapter?

Writing

* Write restaurant reviews of roadside diners.
  + Can be fictional or can be the diner in the novel.
  + Choose a style (or multiple styles)
    - Newspaper review, social media review/post, a food show that features restaurants, etc.
    - Remember, Mae reacts differently to different people who enter the diner, consider who is writing the review and write from their perspective.
  + Option:
    - Write multiple reviews of the same location by different people (like what would be found in social media or other restaurant review web sites).

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

* Takeaways
  + The main focus of this activity is for students to understand why Mae reacts differently to different clientele. Students should gain an understanding of what Steinbeck is saying about class and status in this chapter.
* Follow-up
  + Repeat this process for gas stations, camps, etc.
  + Repeat this process for situations not found in the novel but would have happened during the Great Depression
    - * Examples: a visit to a doctor’s office, applying for relief benefits, a hospital visit.

**Assessment**

* Student writing should be appropriate to the genre chosen and adhere to those conventions.
* Assess student writing based on how closely they adhere to the attitudes in chapter 15 and the themes throughout the novel.

**Standards Met**

* Reading Standards for Literature 6-12
  + Key Ideas and Details: 1, 2, 3
  + Craft and Structure: 4, 5, 6
  + Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: 7, 9
  + Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity: 10
* Reading Standards for Informational Text 6-12
* Key Ideas and Details: 1,2,3
* Craft and Structure: 4,5,6
* Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: 7,8
* Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity: 10
* Writing Standards 6-12
  + Text Types and Purposes: 2
  + Range of Writing: 10
* Speaking and Listening Standards 6-12
  + Comprehension and Collaboration: 1, 2, 3, 4
  + Presentation and Knowledge of Ideas: 4
* Language Standards 6-12
  + Conventions of Standard English: 1, 2, 3
  + Knowledge of Language: 3
  + Vocabulary Acquisition and Use: 6