**OM&M Characterisation Essay Plan**

Choose a novel or a short story in which the author creates a fascinating character.

By referring to appropriate techniques, show how the author has created this character and why you found him/her so fascinating.

|  |
| --- |
| **Introduction**  Name of text  ‘Of Mice and Men’  Name of author  John Steinbeck  Very BRIEF summary of plot   * Set in California in the 1930s * Two travelling men are trying to earn enough money to achieve their dream of owning their own land * The men face many issues in their struggle to achieve the American Dream, proving that this is often an unattainable goal   Rephrase question-mention techniques that will be discussed   * The main character Lennie is fascinating, because his physical power is at odds with his mental abilities, and this causes many problems for the men * Steinbeck uses characterisation, key incident, dialogue and symbolism to explore this interesting character |
| **Main Paragraph 1**  Point  Firstly, characterisation is used by Steinbeck to show that Lennie is powerful yet vulnerable.  Context  At the beginning of the novel, George and Lennie are travelling to find new work at a ranch:  Quotation  “He walked heavily, dragging his feet a little, the way a bear drags his paws.”  Explanation   * Steinbeck’s description tells us Lennie is clumsy, heavy-footed and slower than George * Lennie is always following George, showing he is dependent on him * Comparison with bear-bears can be ferocious and frightening, but teddy bears are soft and comforting-indicates that there are two sides to Lennie’s character, making him fascinating |
| **Main Paragraph 2**  Point  Furthermore, Steinbeck uses a key incident to illustrate that Lennie is unable to control his own strength.  Context  Midway through the novel, Curley has been provoking Lennie, trying to encourage him to fight. Lennie eventually responds, overpowering Curley:  Quotation  “The next minute Curley was flopping like a fish on a line and his closed fist was lost in Lennie’s big hand.”  Explanation   * Simile shows us that Curley is weak compared to Lennie’s immense strength and power-completely overpowered by Lennie * Key incident changes how we see Lennie-previously thought of as vulnerable, now seen as powerful and frightening. * This makes Lennie interesting, as Steinbeck is revealing a different side to Lennie’s character. |
| **Main Paragraph 3**  Point  Additionally, dialogue is used to demonstrate that Lennie is unable to take responsibility for his actions.  Context  At this point in the novel, Lennie has just killed Curley’s wife:  Quotation  “For a moment he seemed bewildered, and then he whispered in fear. ‘I done a bad thing. I done another bad thing.’”  Explanation   * Lennie pauses, as if he does not understand what he has done or how it has happened, showing he is unable to take responsibility for his actions * Lennie’s childish response in his dialogue indicates that he has a limited understanding of what is right and wrong * This makes Lennie interesting, as his reactions to key events are very different from how others respond. |
| **Main Paragraph 4**  Point  Finally, Steinbeck uses Lennie as a symbolic character, showing the naivety of the American Dream.  Context  At the end of the novel, Lennie has run away from the ranch. He is found by George, who plans to shoot him to save him from the wrath of Curley  Quotation  “Lennie giggled with happiness. ‘An’ live on the fatta the lan’.’”  Explanation   * George comforts Lennie in his final moments by telling him about their dream * Lennie’s naivety about the situation mimics the wishful thinking of those who strive for the American Dream * The shooting of Lennie represents the lost hopes of many who fail to achieve the American Dream |
| **Conclusion**  Explain why character is fascinating  In conclusion, Lennie is fascinating character because of his child-like manner, which contrasts with his physical power and strength.  Explain how techniques have been used to show this  Steinbeck uses characterisation, key incident, dialogue and symbolism to create this fascinating character, who ultimately represents the failure of the American Dream. |