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**Pearson Edexcel International GCSE 4ET0/01**

**Pearson Edexcel Certificate KET0/01**

**English Literature, Paper 1**

**Question 11: Of Mice and Men, John Steinbeck**

**Of Mice and Men – John Steinbeck**

**11 EITHER**

(a) 'Steinbeck presents Curley and Curley's wife as the source of most of the trouble on the ranch.'

How far do you agree with this view?

**OR**

(b) In what ways does Steinbeck explore the theme of disability in this novel?

The purpose of this pack is to provide centres with a set of exemplars with commentaries.

Included in this pack:

- Range of responses
- Examiner marks and commentary

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**Exemplar A: Question 11(a)**

I think Steinbeck does present Curley and Curley's wife as the source of ~~most~~ most of the trouble on the ranch. It's Curley's anger and Curley's wife's loneliness which causes them to be trouble makers. ~~most~~

Curley's wife is always looking for company, she gets left on her own all the time, while Curleys out on a Saturday night at the cat house, Curley's wife is left on the ranch with the 'bindle sticks'. As she is the only female on the ranch she gets called a tart for trying to talk to all the men and none of the men react or talk back to her as that gives Curley a excuse to try and fight with one of the ranch men. Curley is the boss's son, therefore he thinks he is in charge

and better than everyone else on the ranch, he thinks he can control everyone which causes him to be a trouble maker.

Curley is a small man and doesn't like big men. So when George and Lennie get to the ranch he instantly has a problem with Lennie. He picks on Lennie and eventually have a fight, George shouts at Lennie to fight back which causes him to use his strength and he crushes ~~Curley's~~ Curley's hand, everyone says he got what was coming to him, and that made him stop being such a trouble maker. I think this is due to the fact he now only had one hand.

Together they cause a lot of trouble but I don't think Curley's wife intends to, it's just the way Curley reacts to what his wife does. I think he is jealous when she tries to seek for company, but if he was nicer to her and if Curley gave his wife some attention then there wouldn't be as much trouble on the ranch. ~~Curley's~~

In some ways I agree with Steinbeck but I have come to conclusion that it is mainly Curley who is the ~~trouble~~ source of most of the trouble on the ranch. If Curley's wife wasn't so lonely then she wouldn't be getting the ranch men into trouble by Curley, but the fact he thinks he is in charge of everyone gives the reason of his trouble and he likes to fight to seem like a strong person because he is short and small and ~~weak~~ as he is the boss's son, he thinks he is more important than everyone else on the ranch, and lastly, as he has a wife, and she is the only female on the ranch, he shows her no sign of love which ~~gives~~ makes her look for company and he gets jealous and suspicious but hides it with anger and strength.

Mark	Commentary
11	The answer focuses on Curley and his wife. There is some knowledge and understanding, with points made broadly linked to the detail of the novel. Evidence of personal engagement is present on page 2. The answer reaches a conclusion that answers the question but lacks overall development and exploration. <b>Level 2.</b>

**Exemplar B: Question 11(a)**

'Steinbeck presents Curley and Curley's wife as the source of most of the trouble on the ranch.' I agree to a certain extent as Curley has 'a glove fulla vaseline' to keep his hand soft for his wife. However, this can be interpreted that Curley is quite intimate with his wife but Curley character is violent based on his description. This means that his "heavily made up" wife could be hiding ~~make~~ marks from an abusive relationship. The fact that Curley ~~is~~ is the son of the ranch owner means he does not have to work like the other ranch hands. However, his relationship with his newly married wife is suspiciously not going very well. Curley's wife is nameless so has no

identity she is just known as the property of Curley. This could make her upset to release her anger on other of a lower rank to her. This results in her say, "they left all the weak ones here". This shows that she knows where the other men have gone (including her husband). This shows the Curleys possibly does not want to look ~~to~~ hang up on his wife or wants to ~~ex~~ show authority over her. This leaves her to trouble other men in the ranch presenting herself in a promiscuous way and hang around the bunkhouse.

Curley's wife is described as "rouged lips... fingers were red... red mule... red ostrich feather". This shows her appearance to be eye catching for men as they think she is "party". However, it acts as a danger sign to ~~not~~ them. The colour "red" makes the ~~red~~ <sup>readier</sup> cautions as ~~Although~~ she is constantly looking for her husband.

This could be because she is lonely. However, it is implied that she is dangerous based on the way George and Candy avoid eye contact. This may be a reference to the power of women in the 1930s & in a sexual object or the witchcraft involved in the manipulation. This is shown through the way Lennie is ~~strung up~~<sup>hooked</sup> after looking at her. This makes Gatsby and his wife the source of the most trouble as they are never together and Lennie is then attracted to her which he is then killed. This results in Lennie being killed to ~~remove~~<sup>take away</sup> him for his problems. This presents the killing of the dream. Moreover, the title "Of Mice and Men" which is from a poem of Robert Burns shows that however hard you try to plan it won't work out.

The novella is structured to

not fully reveal the character of Curley's wife until the ~~is~~ further into the story. This means <sup>preconceptions</sup> ~~preconception~~ are believed by the reader like "jailbait" and "bitch". This presents her badly but the reader then gets to know her and she ~~is~~ thinks that she "coulda made something of myself" as her dreams were ~~destress~~ destroyed.

This is true to the time as the Depression was happening in 1930s after the 1929 Wall Street Crash. This means that many people moved to California as migrant workers.

This meant that Curley and his wife were lucky relative to the people around them who were striving for the dream which they both had. However, they were not content with it and wanted more. This means that Curley and Curley's wife unappreciation to what they have resulted in them causing the most

trouble to look for happiness.

They are not happy together as Curley's wife says that

"I don't like Curley" when she is talking to Lennie. This shows her loneliness in a bad marriage and ignore they by the other men as they think she is trouble.

Curley goes to the brothel despite being married this may make Curley's wife even more bitter. However, Curley's wife may ~~only~~ represent the women of the 1930s and the viewing of them in a sexual way.

This is because there is only one woman on the range and she ~~is~~ <sup>possibly</sup> portrays herself in a promiscuous way and the girls in the "brothel" are used to "flop".

This results in Curley and his wife trying to live up to stereotypes with the man having authority and the woman has a ~~stay~~ servant to his needs.

Curley and Curley's wife are unable to please each other emotional and physically. This makes them cause the most trouble as hennie likes to "pet soft things" but he usually damages them beyond repair. This builds up tension and when he begins to stroke "harder and harder" he killed her. This is of a result of Curley not being their to listen to her to fulfill her emotional. Moreover, the Dream is killed through hennie as ~~it~~ based on George's name, ~~then~~ 'Milton' paradise is lost. This means the disconnection between the pair cause so much trouble. However, George was not there at the time and George telling him to go to the "brush" if anything happens is preparing for the worst. Nevertheless, the ranch hands are lucky to get jobs so George ~~should~~ <sup>should</sup> have continued with parental

role of staying with him as Lennie relies on George. Overall Curley and his wife caused the most trouble as they were distant despite being newly married and having all that they needed. This means that Lennie doing 'a really bad thing' was pre-foreshadowed but could be avoided by a better relationship between the married couple.

Mark	Commentary
18	This is a sound response that tries to get to the heart of the arguments. Quotation is well-selected and appropriately applied to points made. Discussion is clear and focused with a sense of personal engagement. <b>Level 3.</b>

**Exemplar C: Question 11(b)**

Steinbeck explores the theme of disability in this novel through many characters, in different ways. No one on the ranch is fulfilled and are all unable to achieve their hopes and dreams as a result of their disabilities.

18. Crooks, the black stable buck, ~~is~~ has a disabled back as a result of getting kicked by a horse. Crooks is made to live with the same animals which disabled him ~~when shows~~ and lives separate from all the other men on the ranch. ~~thinks~~ He is also not much help due to his disability which makes him unable to move on and find a better job. His disability leads to his loneliness and "a man goes nuts." this shows that he is unhappy with his situation but has no choice other than to carry on with his

crooked back. Despite his disability however he is very smart and is fully aware of his rights. Steinbeck presents Crooks to have many books, renewing the American Civil Rights book and shows the ~~the~~ reader that he has not always been disabled, unhappy or discriminated against. "I ~~ain't~~ aint no southern Negro" and "I used to play with white kids." shows that he did have a life before he became crooked. His name emphasises his condition and disability and could have been used purposefully by Steinbeck to show the ~~the~~ reader how much of an impact and control his disability has over his life.

Candy, the oldest worker on the ranch, is disabled by his age and lives on the ranch in fear that he may be "canned". Once again Steinbeck uses his craft to use names 'Candy' to emphasise a problem in the character's life. The death of Candy's dog foreshadows the death of Lennie, ~~and~~ when both Candy and George are left lonely. Not all

disabilities throughout the novel are physical, many of them are mental disabilities.

~~Lennie~~ Lennie is unable to think for himself and therefore relies on George to constantly tell him what to do. Despite his fight with Curley, he is aware with what is right and what is wrong. "I've done a bad thing" this shows that despite his mental disability, he knows when he has done something wrong. Lennie's mental disability contrasts to his appearance. He is "big and strong" and is able to work well. Steinbeck does not present any of the characters to be completely useless. Lennie's disability gets him in to a lot of trouble and Curley's wife ends up dead because of this. In a panic, Lennie breaks her neck. This ~~also~~ proved his inability to be able to think for himself without the influence of George.

George is disabled by his lack of intelligent equal and ~~although~~ is not presented as lonely (until the end of the play), he is always

looking after Lennie and is presented to be annoyed by this. "I could have done so much better if it wasn't for you". Despite his unhappiness, he continues to care for his only friend as he is all he has and "promised Aunt Clara" that he would.

Curley's wife is ~~more~~ disabled by her lonely marriage and is isolated by being the only woman on the ranch. None of the other men on the ranch will converse or be friends with her in fear that they may lose their jobs for flirting with the boss's son's wife. She constantly ~~reminds~~ reminds the men that she "ain't hurtin' nobody" by talking to them and repeatedly makes attempts to talk to the men through the excuse that she is "looking for Curley". Throughout the novel she is never in the same place as her husband which highlights her troubled relationship.

Curley's wife is also left physically disabled and dead due to Lennie. This leaves her dead without fulfilling her dreams, and is presented by Priestley to be better

off dead than alive by her final description:

To conclude, all of the ~~poor~~ people on the ranch are described in one way or another and ~~at~~ those who die, die along with their unfulfilled ~~and~~ dreams. Steinbeck uses these characters to provide a harsh reality for the audience of what the fate was for the majority of the Dust Bowl migrants: ~~the~~ disabilities of the characters in the novel left them either dead or lonely, which each event foreshadowing something even worse.

Mark	Commentary
18	In dealing with the theme of disability the answer covers a good deal of ground, including Crooks, Candy and Curley's wife in its discussion. The answer is very sound, reaching <b>Level 3</b> in its knowledge and understanding.