

Name:

Dreams Analysis Project–Student Rubric

What Does My Work Need to Show?

Option A (Interview) _____ or Option B (Portfolio) _____

Category 1: Do I Understand the Theme of Dreams? (30 points)

What am I showing? That I understand why dreams matter to people, even when those dreams seem impossible to achieve.

Level	What This Looks Like	Example
Advanced (27-30 pts)	• I explain deeply WHY dreams are so important to people • I show how dreams give meaning and hope even when life is hard • I connect dreams to power, identity, and circumstances • I answer the essential question with insight	Option A: "Both my abuela and Candy need their dreams to feel like they matter. Even though my abuela's dream of owning a restaurant never came true, it gave her a reason to keep working hard. Similarly, Candy's dream of owning land with George and Lennie gives him dignity when the ranch makes him feel worthless. This shows that dreams aren't just about achieving something—they're about having purpose." Option B: "The three characters show that dreams keep people human in dehumanizing situations. Lennie's dream lets him stay innocent, Crooks' dream is

		about basic dignity, and Curley's wife's dream represents lost potential. Steinbeck reveals that even 'impossible' dreams protect people's spirits."
Level	What This Looks Like	Example
Proficient (24-26 pts)	• I clearly explain that dreams are important • I show how dreams give people hope • I make connections to the essential question • My analysis is clear and supported	Option A: "My uncle and George both have dreams that keep them going. My uncle dreams of bringing his family to the U.S., and George dreams of owning a farm. Both dreams give them hope even though they're hard to achieve." Option B: "All three characters need their dreams. Lennie dreams about the rabbits, Crooks dreams about being treated equally, and Curley's wife dreams about being an actress. Their dreams are important because they give the characters something to hope for."
Level	What This Looks Like	Example
Developing (18-23 pts)	• I identify that dreams are important • I describe what characters dream about • My explanation could be deeper • I need more analysis, less summary	Option A: "My mom dreams of a better job and George dreams of a farm. They both want better lives." Option B: "Lennie wants rabbits, Crooks wants respect, and Curley's wife wanted to be famous. They all have dreams in the story."

Level	What This Looks Like	Example
Emerging (0-17 pts)	• I list dreams but don't explain why they matter • My work is mostly plot summary • I need to develop my ideas more	Option A: "I interviewed my sister. George and Lennie want a farm." Option B: "Lennie likes rabbits. Crooks is lonely. Curley's wife talks to Lennie."

Category 2: Do I Use Effective Evidence (25 points)

What am I showing? That I use specific examples from the book (and from my interview for Option A) and EXPLAIN how they prove my point.

Level	What this Looks Like	Example
Advanced (23-25 pts)	• I choose the BEST quotes and examples • I explain HOW my evidence proves my point • Option A: My interview quotes connect clearly to textual evidence • Option B: I have strong evidence for ALL three characters • I don't just drop in quotes—I analyze them	Option A with quote explanation: When my tío said, "Even when I couldn't find work, I kept sending money home because I promised myself I'd give my kids opportunities I never had," it reminded me of when George tells Lennie, "We got a future. We got somebody to talk to that gives a damn about us" (p. 14). Both show that dreams aren't just about material things—they're about promises we make to ourselves and others. Option B with quote analysis: Steinbeck shows Curley's wife's desperation when she says, "I could've been in the movies, an' had nice clothes"

		(p. 89). The way she uses "could've" in past tense shows her dream is already dead, but she keeps talking about it anyway. This proves people need dreams even after they're gone.
Level	What this Looks Like	Example
Proficient (20-22 pts)	• I use relevant quotes and examples • I explain most of my evidence • Option A: I include interview quotes AND textual evidence • Option B: I have evidence for all three characters • My evidence supports my ideas	Option A: My cousin said he dreams of becoming a mechanic even though money is tight. George also has a dream that seems hard: "We'd just live there. We'd belong there" (p. 57). Both keep dreaming despite obstacles. Option B: For Crooks, Steinbeck writes, "If I say something, why it's just a nigger sayin' it" (p. 70). This shows Crooks dreams of being heard and respected.
Level	What this Looks Like	Example
Developing (15-19 pts)	• I use some evidence but it could be stronger • Sometimes I don't explain my quotes • Option A: My interview OR text evidence is weak • Option B: Some characters have weak evidence • I might just list quotes without analysis	Option A: My mom has dreams. George says they'll have a farm. Option B: Lennie wants rabbits. The quote is on page 14. Crooks is in chapter 4.

Level	What this Looks Like	Example
Emerging (0-14 pts)	• I have very few quotes or examples • Option A: Interview is too short or missing • Option B: Missing evidence for characters • I don't explain my evidence	Option A: I talked to someone. George wants a farm. Option B: Lennie likes animals.

Category 3: Do I Make Good Connections (20 points)

What am I showing? That I can compare and analyze how dreams work in different situations and think critically about social context.

Level	What this Looks Like	Example
Advanced (18-20 pts)	• Option A: I show deep connections between my interviewee and character—similarities AND differences • Option B: I compare all three characters thoughtfully • I analyze how power, money, and society affect dreams • I have original insights	Option A: Both my interviewee and Candy face economic barriers, but there's a key difference: my interviewee has family support while Candy is completely alone. This shows that dreams are easier to hold onto when you have community. Candy clings to George and Lennie's dream because he has no one else—when that dream dies, he has nothing left. My interviewee struggled but her family helped her believe in possibilities. Option B: All three characters are powerless, but in different ways. Lennie has mental disability, Crooks faces racism, Curley's wife faces

		sexism. Steinbeck shows that society blocks different people's dreams in different ways, but the NEED to dream is universal. The most powerful people on the ranch—Curley and the boss—are the only ones who don't seem to dream, which suggests dreams come from hardship.
Level	What this Looks Like	Example
Proficient (16-17 pts)	• Option A: I make clear connections between interviewee and character • Option B: I compare characters with good examples • I explain how circumstances affect dreams • My thinking is clear	Option A: My aunt and George both work hard jobs for their dreams. My aunt works two jobs to send money to Mexico, and George works on ranches to save for the farm. Both face economic challenges that make their dreams hard. Option B: Lennie, Crooks, and Curley's wife all have dreams that depend on other people. Lennie needs George, Crooks would need friends, and Curley's wife needed someone to discover her talent. This shows that dreams often need support.
Level	What this Looks Like	Example
Developing (12-15 pts)	• Option A: I make some connections but they're basic • Option B: I compare characters but focus on plot	Option A: Both people have dreams. They both face challenges. Option B: All three characters want different things. Lennie wants a farm, Crooks wants

	• Limited analysis of social context • My thinking needs more depth	respect, and Curley's wife wanted fame.
Level	What this Looks Like	Example
Emerging (0-11 pts)	• My connections are unclear or missing • I mostly retell the story • Little critical thinking shown	Option A: I interviewed someone. Candy is in the book. Option B: The characters are all different.
Category 4: Is My Work Organized & Clear (15 pts)		
What am I showing? That my project is well-organized, easy to follow, and uses appropriate language.		
Level	What this Looks Like	Example/Checklist
Advanced (14-15)	My work flows smoothly from one idea to the next	☐ Clear introduction, body, conclusion ☐ I use transitions like "similarly," "in contrast," "this shows that" ☐ Professional formatting ☐ I use academic language appropriately ☐ Option A: Interview and analysis connect smoothly ☐ Option B: All portfolio parts work together ☐ Very few grammar errors

Level	What this Looks Like	Example/Checklist
Proficient (12-13 pts)	My work is clearly organized and easy to understand	☐ Logical structure ☐ I use some transitions ☐ Follows all formatting requirements ☐ Mostly academic language ☐ Option A: Interview and analysis are clearly labeled ☐ Option B: All required portfolio parts included ☐ Some grammar errors but meaning is clear
Level	What this Looks Like	Example/Checklist
Developing (9-11 pts)	My work has basic organization but could be clearer	☐ Basic structure present ☐ Few or awkward transitions ☐ Meets minimum requirements ☐ Sometimes too informal ☐ Option A: Interview and analysis separate but disconnected ☐ Option B: Some portfolio parts missing or weak ☐ Grammar sometimes makes meaning unclear
Level	What this Looks Like	Example/Checklist
Emerging (0-8 pts)	My work is hard to follow	☐ No clear structure ☐ Ideas jump around ☐ Missing requirements ☐ Mostly informal language ☐ Grammar makes work hard to understand

Category 5: Do I Show Personal Reflection (10 pts)

What am I showing? That I really thought about the essential question and connected it to my own understanding.

Level	What this Looks Like	Example
Advanced (9-10 pts)	• My reflection is honest and thoughtful • I make meaningful personal connections • I show how my thinking changed • My authentic voice comes through • I go deeper than required	"Before this project, I thought dreams were just about getting what you want. But analyzing Crooks and interviewing my grandfather taught me that dreams are about dignity and hope. My grandfather's dream of learning English never fully happened, but pursuing it gave him confidence to try new things. Now I understand why Steinbeck shows us failed dreams—they still matter because the hoping itself is valuable. This changes how I see my own community's struggles."
Level	What this Looks Like	Example
Proficient (8 pts)	• My reflection shows real thought • I make relevant personal connections • I show my understanding grew • Meets requirements thoughtfully	"This project taught me that dreams matter even when they don't come true. I see this in my own family—my parents' dream of owning a house hasn't happened yet, but it keeps them motivated. Like the characters in the book, having something to hope for is important."

Developing (6-7 pts)	• My reflection is present but basic • Personal connections are minimal • Shows some thought but limited depth • Feels rushed	"I learned that dreams are important. People need dreams. The characters had dreams and so do people today."
Emerging (0-5 pts)	• Reflection is missing or very short • No personal connection • Seems incomplete	"Dreams are good. The end."

What's My Total Score	Points Possible	My Score
1. Understanding Dreams Theme	30	
2. Evidence & Analysis	25	
3. Connections & Critical Thinking	20	
4. Organization & Communication	15	
5. Personal Reflection	10	
TOTAL	100	

Grade Scale:

- **90-100 = A** (Advanced: Exceptional work!)
- **80-89 = B** (Proficient: Strong work!)
- **70-79 = C** (Developing: Good start, needs more depth)
- **60-69 = D** (Emerging: Needs significant revision)
- **Below 60 = F** (Not yet meeting standards)

Before I Turn It In: Self-Check

Option A Students:

- ☐ My interview is 15-20 minutes with at least 5 questions answered
- ☐ I chose ONE character and provided 3+ pieces of textual evidence
- ☐ I compared my interviewee to the character (similarities AND differences)
- ☐ I analyzed how social context affects dreams
- ☐ I wrote a thoughtful reflection
- ☐ Everything is clearly labeled and organized

Option B Students:

- ☐ I analyzed THREE different characters (including one marginalized character)
- ☐ Each character has: description of dream, why it matters, what happens to it, and visual representation
- ☐ I wrote my 2-3 page comparative essay answering one prompt
- ☐ I created my Universal Themes Chart
- ☐ I wrote a thoughtful reflection (1-2 pages)
- ☐ All portfolio parts are included and organized

Peer Review Option (Optional Extra Credit: +5 points)

Before final submission, I can have a classmate review my work using this rubric and give me feedback. If I use their feedback to improve my project, I can earn up to 5 extra points.

Peer Reviewer Name: _____

Date Reviewed: _____

One strength of this project:

One suggestion for improvement: