

D. Lange *Freeway 1937*



## Dorothea Lange: Politics of Seeing - Group A **B1 B2**



**Dorothea Lange at work in Texas, photographed by her husband Paul S. Taylor.**

Dorothea Lange au Texas sur les Plaines vers 1935 © The Dorothea Lange Collection, the Oakland Museum of California, City of Oakland. Gift of Paul S. Taylor

### Activity 1 : Pair Work

Select one of the photographs from the slideshow and get ready (5') to present it orally to your neighbor who will have to find out the picture you're talking about. You may start by whatever point you want, combine description and analysis, but your presentation must include all the following points:

- a brief description of the picture
- the context of the picture (When? Where? What's going on?)
- hypotheses about the people in the photo
- the photographer's point of view (neutral, showing empathy...) and intention - the reason why you selected this particular photograph

### Activity 2

#### A. Read the text. Use different colours and underline:

1. personal information about Dorothea Lange and her private life
2. elements about her career as a photographer
3. the USA at the time
4. elements suggesting or showing she was a committed artist willing to have things change

#### B. Remember the following photographs and get ready to present Dorothea Lange and some of her pictures.



### 03. Webquest :

#### *Of Mice and Men* WebQuest

You and your partner(s) will be assigned one of the ten topics listed below. Each topic relates to the novel *Of Mice and Men* and the time period in which it takes place. You will begin by investigating your topic and collecting information from several different websites. You must decide on the most important information to collect. You are required to collect 7-10 pieces of information/key facts. Once you have all of your collected information organized, you and your partner(s) will create a Presentation using Prezi / Genially / Powerpoint / Impress on your topic. You will present your findings on your assigned topic to your classmates using your presentation.

#### 1. Author Biography: John Steinbeck

- <http://www.teenreads.com/authors/john-steinbeck>
- <http://www.biography.com/people/john-steinbeck-9493358>
- <http://www.notablebiographies.com/Sc-St/Steinbeck-John.html>
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Steinbeck](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Steinbeck)
- <http://www.buzzle.com/articles/life-of-john-steinbeck-a-biography.html>
- [http://www.oprah.com/oprahsbookclub/interview-with-thom-steinbeck\\_1/1](http://www.oprah.com/oprahsbookclub/interview-with-thom-steinbeck_1/1)

#### 2. Salinas River area of California (setting of novel & home of Steinbeck)

- <http://www.oprah.com/oprahsbookclub/john-steinbecks-east-of-edden-salinas-valley-california>
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salinas\\_Valley](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salinas_Valley)
- <http://www.angelfire.com/ca2/stnbk/>
- <http://www.mchsmuseum.com/salinasbrief.html>
- <https://www.cityofsalinas.org/>

#### 3. The Great Depression

- <https://www.history.com/topics/great-depression>
- <http://www.english.illinois.edu/Maps/depression/depression.htm>
- <https://www.thoughtco.com/causes-of-the-great-depression-104686>
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great\\_Depression\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Depression_in_the_United_States)
- [http://www.softschools.com/facts/us\\_history/the\\_great\\_depression\\_facts/1199/](http://www.softschools.com/facts/us_history/the_great_depression_facts/1199/)

*This is the very beginning of the novella.*

A few miles south of Soledad, the Salinas River drops in close to the hillside bank and runs deep and green. The water is warm too, for it has slipped twinkling over the yellow sands in the sunlight before reaching the narrow pool.

Evening of a hot day started the little wind to moving among the leaves. The shade climbed up the hills toward the top. On the sand banks the rabbits sat as quietly as little gray sculptured stones. And then from the direction of the state highway came the sound of footsteps on crisp sycamore leaves. The rabbits hurried noiselessly for cover. A stilted heron labored up into the air and pounded down river. For a moment the place was lifeless, and then two men emerged from the path and came into the opening by the green pool.

They had walked in single file down the path, and even in the open one stayed behind the other. Both were dressed in denim trousers and in denim coats with brass buttons. Both wore black, shapeless hats and both carried tight blanket rolls slung over their shoulders. The first man was small and quick, dark of face, with restless eyes and sharp, strong features. Every part of him was defined: small, strong hands, slender arms, a thin and bony nose. Behind him walked his opposite, a huge man, shapeless of face, with large, pale eyes, and wide, sloping shoulders; and he walked heavily, dragging his feet a little, the way a bear drags his paws. His arms did not swing at his sides, but hung loosely.

The first man stopped short in the clearing, and the follower nearly ran over him. He took off his hat and wiped the sweat-band with his forefinger and snapped the moisture off. His huge companion dropped his blankets and flung himself down and drank from the surface of the green pool; drank with long gulps, snorting into the water like a horse. The small man stepped nervously beside him.

"Lennie!" he said sharply. "Lennie, for God' sakes don't drink so much."

Lennie continued to snort into the pool. The small man leaned over and shook him by the shoulder. "Lennie. You gonna be sick like you was last night."

Lennie dipped his whole head under, hat and all, and then he sat up on the bank and his hat dripped down on his blue coat and ran down his back. "That's good," he said. "You drink some, George. You take a good big drink." He smiled happily.

George unslung his bindle and dropped it gently on the bank. "I ain't sure it's good water," he said. "Looks kinda scummy."

Lennie dabbled his big paw in the water and wiggled his fingers so the water arose in little splashes; rings widened across the pool to the other side and came back again. Lennie watched them go. "Look, George. Look what I done."

George knelt beside the pool and drank from his hand with quick scoops. "Tastes all right," he admitted. "Don't really seem to be running, though. You never oughta drink water when it ain't running, Lennie," he said hopelessly. "You'd drink out of a gutter if you was thirsty." He threw a scoop of water into his face and rubbed it about with his hand, under his chin and around the back of his neck. Then he replaced his hat, pushed himself back from the river, drew up his knees and embraced them. Lennie, who had been watching, imitated George exactly. He pushed himself back, drew up his knees, embraced them, looked over to George to see whether he had it just right. He pulled his hat down a little more over his eyes, the way George's hat was.



Mr. Bones had been with Willy since his earliest days as a pup, and by now it was next to impossible for him to imagine a world that did not have a master in it. Every thought, every memory, every particle of the earth and air was saturated with Willy's presence. Habits die hard, and no doubt there's some truth to the adage about old dogs and new tricks<sup>1</sup>, but it was more than just love or devotion that caused Mr. Bones to dread what was coming. It was pure ontological terror. Subtract Willy from the world, and the odds<sup>2</sup> were that the world itself would cease to exist.

Such was the quandary<sup>3</sup> Mr. Bones faced that August morning as he shuffled through the streets of Baltimore with his ailing<sup>4</sup> master. A dog alone was no better than a dead dog, and once Willy breathed his last, he'd have nothing to look forward to but his own imminent demise. Willy had been cautioning him about this for many days now, and Mr. Bones knew the drill by heart: how to avoid the dogcatchers and constables, the paddy wagons and unmarked cars, the hypocrites from the so-called humane societies. No matter how sweetly they talked to you, the word *shelter* meant trouble. It would begin with nets and tranquilizer guns, devolve onto a nightmare of cages and fluorescent lights, and end with a lethal injection or a dose of poison gas. If Mr. Bones had belonged to some recognizable breed, he might have stood a chance in the daily beauty contests for prospective owns, but Willy's sidekick<sup>5</sup> was a hodgepodge of genetic strains – part collie, part Labrador, part spaniel, part canine puzzle – and to make matters worse, there were burrs protruding from his ragged coat, bad smells emanating from his mouth, and a perpetual bloodshot sadness lurking in his eyes. No one was going to want to rescue him. As the homeless bard was fond of putting it, the outcome was written in stone. Unless Mr. Bones found another master in one quick hurry, he was a pooch primed for oblivion<sup>6</sup>. [...]

Most dogs acquire a good working knowledge of two-legged speech, but in Mr. Bones's case there was the advantage of being blessed with a master who did not treat him as an inferior. They had been boon companions from the start, and when you added in the fact that Mr. Bones was not just Willy's best friend but his only friend, and then further considered that Willy was a man in love with the sound of his own voice, a genuine, dyed-in-the-wool logomaniac<sup>7</sup> who scarcely stopped talking from the instant he opened his eyes in the morning until he passed out drunk at night, it made perfect sense that Mr. Bones should have felt so at home in the native lingo. When all was said and done, the only surprise was that he hadn't learned to talk better himself. It wasn't for lack of earnest effort, but biology was against him, and what with the configuration of muzzle, teeth, and tongue that fate had saddled him with, the best he could do was emit a series of yaps and yowls, a mooning, muddled sort of discourse. He was painfully aware of how far from fluency these noises fell, but Willy let him have his say, and in the end that was all that mattered. Mr. Bones was free to put in his two cents<sup>8</sup>, and whenever he did so his master would give him his full attention, and to look at Willy's face as he watched his friend struggle to make like a member of the human tribe, you would have sworn that he was hanging on every word.

- 
- <sup>1</sup> « You can't teach an old dog new tricks » : people who have long been used to doing things a certain way cannot change
- <sup>2</sup> chances of something happening
- <sup>3</sup> dilemma
- <sup>4</sup> in poor health
- <sup>5</sup> a person closely associated with another as a subordinate or partner
- <sup>6</sup> a dog ready to be forgotten
- <sup>7</sup> extreme pathological talker
- <sup>8</sup> give his opinion

## 06. OMAM – Extract 2 :

*George Milton and Lennie Small, two migrant workers, are sitting around a campfire.*

George still stared morosely at the fire. “When I think of the swell<sup>1</sup> time I could have without you, I go nuts<sup>2</sup>. I never get no peace.”

5 Lennie still knelt. He looked off into the darkness across the river. “George, you want I should go away and leave you alone?”

“Where the hell could you go?”

“Well, I could. I could go off in the hills there. Someplace I’d find a cave.”

“Yeah? How’d you eat? You ain’t got sense enough to find nothing to eat.”

.0 “I’d find things, George. I don’t need no nice food with ketchup. I’d lay out in the sun and nobody’d hurt me. An’ if I foun’ a mouse, I could keep it. Nobody’d take it away from me.”

George looked quickly and searchingly at him. “I been mean, ain’t I?”

“If you don’t want me I can go off in the hills an’ find a cave. I can go away any time.”

5 “No – look! I was jus’ foolin’, Lennie. ‘Cause I want you to stay with me. Trouble with mice is you always kill ‘em.” He paused. “Tell you what I’ll do, Lennie. First chance I get I’ll give you a pup. Maybe you wouldn’t kill it. That’d be better than mice. And you could pet it harder.”

Lennie avoided the bait<sup>3</sup>. He had sensed his advantage. “If you don’t want me, you only jus’ got to say so, and I’ll go off in those hills right there – right up in those hills and live by myself. An’ I won’t get no mice stole from me.”

.0 George said, “I want you to stay with me, Lennie. Jesus Christ somebody’d shoot you for a coyote if you was by yourself. No, you stay with me. Your Aunt Clara wouldn’t like you running off by yourself, even if she is dead.”

Lennie spoke craftily<sup>4</sup>. “Tell me- like you done before.”

“Tell you what?”

:5 “About the rabbits.”

George snapped<sup>5</sup>, “You ain’t gonna put nothing over on me.”

Lennie pleaded, “Come on, George. Tell me. Please, George. Like you done before.”

“You get a kick<sup>6</sup> outta that, don’t you. Awright, I’ll tell you, and then we’ll eat our supper...” George’s voice became deeper. He repeated his words rhythmically as though he had said them many times before.

.0 “Guys like us, that work on ranches, are the loneliest guys in the world. They got no family. They don’t belong no place. They come to a ranch an’ work up a stake<sup>7</sup> and then they go inta town and blow<sup>8</sup> their stake, and the first thing you know they’re poundin’ their tail on some other ranch. They ain’t got nothing to look ahead to.”

Lennie was delighted. “That’s it – that’s it. Now tell us how it is with us.

:5 George went on. “With us it ain’t like that. We got a future. We got somebody to talk to that gives a damn<sup>9</sup> about us. We don’t have to sit in no bar room blowin’ in our jack jus’ because we got no place else to go. If them other guys gets in jail they can rot for all anybody gives a damn. But not us.”

Lennie broke in. “*But not us! An’ why? Because... because I got you to look after me, and you got me to look after you, and that’s why.*” He laughed delightedly. “Go on now, George.”

.0 “You got it by heart. You can do it yourself.”

---

<sup>1</sup> excellent, very good

<sup>2</sup> (inf.) mad

<sup>3</sup> temptation

<sup>4</sup> cleverly, cunningly

<sup>5</sup> said something quickly and irritably

<sup>6</sup> stimulating, pleasurable excitement

<sup>7</sup> sum of money, share in a business

<sup>8</sup> (inf.) spend extravagantly

<sup>9</sup> (inf.) cares



"No, you. I forget some a' the things. Tell about how it's gonna be."

"O.K. Someday – we're gonna get the jack together and we're gonna have a little house and a couple of acres an' a cow and some pigs and –"

15 "An' live off the fatta the lan'," Lennie shouted. "An' have *rabbits*. Go on, George! Tell about what we're gonna have in the garden and about the rabbits in the cages and about the rain in the winter and the stove<sup>10</sup>, and how thick the cream is on the milk like you can hardly cut it. Tell about that, George."

"Why'n't you do it yourself. You know all of it."

"No... you tell it. It ain't the same if I tell it. Go on... George. How I get to tend the rabbits."

20 "Well," said George "we'll have a big vegetable patch and a rabbit hutch and chickens. And when it rains in the winter, we'll just say the hell with goin' to work, and we'll build up a fire in the stove and set around it an' listen to the rain comin' down on the roof – Nuts!" He took out his pocket knife. "I ain't got time for no more." He drove his knife through the top of one of the bean cans, sawed out the top and passed the can to Lennie. Then he opened a second can. From his side pocket he brought out two spoons and passed one of

25 They sat by the fire and filled their mouths with beans and chewed mightily. A few beans slipped out of the side of Lennie's mouth. George gestured with his spoon.

**John Steinbeck, *Of Mice and Men* (1937)**

---

<sup>10</sup> device for cooking or heating

## 07. The American Dream :

### THE AMERICAN DREAM

an excerpt from *The Epic of America* by James Truslow Adams

"The American Dream is that dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone, with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement. It is a difficult dream for the European upper classes to interpret adequately, and too many of us ourselves have grown weary and mistrustful of it. It is not a dream of motor cars and high wages merely, but a dream of social order in which each man and each woman shall be able to attain to the fullest stature of which they are innately capable, and be recognized by others for what they are, regardless of the fortuitous circumstances of birth or position.

. . . The American dream, that has lured tens of millions of all nations to our shores in the past century has not been a dream of merely material plenty, though that has doubtlessly counted heavily. It has been much more than that. It has been a dream of being able to grow to fullest development as man and woman, unhampered by the barriers which had slowly been erected in the older civilizations, unrepressed by social orders which had developed for the benefit of classes rather than for the simple human being of any and every class."

**"Let America Be America Again" by Langston Hughes**

Let America be America again.  
Let it be the dream it used to be.  
Let it be the pioneer on the plain  
Seeking a home where he himself is free.

(America never was America to me.)

Let America be the dream the dreamers dreamed—  
Let it be that great strong land of love  
Where never kings connive nor tyrants scheme  
That any man be crushed by one above.

(It never was America to me.)

O, let my land be a land where Liberty  
Is crowned with no false patriotic wreath,  
But opportunity is real, and life is free,  
Equality is in the air we breathe.

(There's never been equality for me,  
Nor freedom in this "homeland of the free.")

*Say, who are you that mumbles in the dark?  
And who are you that draws your veil across the stars?*

I am the poor white, fooled and pushed apart,  
I am the Negro bearing slavery's scars.  
I am the red man driven from the land,  
I am the immigrant clutching the hope I seek—  
And finding only the same old stupid plan  
Of dog eat dog, of mighty crush the weak.

I am the young man, full of strength and hope,  
Tangled in that ancient endless chain  
Of profit, power, gain, of grab the land!  
Of grab the gold! Of grab the ways of satisfying need!  
Of work the men! Of take the pay!  
Of owning everything for one's own greed!

I am the farmer, bondsman to the soil.  
I am the worker sold to the machine.  
I am the Negro, servant to you all.  
I am the people, humble, hungry, mean—  
Hungry yet today despite the dream.  
Beaten yet today—O, Pioneers!  
I am the man who never got ahead,  
The poorest worker bartered through the years.

Yet I'm the one who dreamt our basic dream  
In the Old World while still a serf of kings,  
Who dreamt a dream so strong, so brave, so true,  
That even yet its mighty daring sings  
In every brick and stone, in every furrow turned  
That's made America the land it has become.  
O, I'm the man who sailed those early seas  
In search of what I meant to be my home—  
For I'm the one who left dark Ireland's shore,  
And Poland's plain, and England's grassy lea,  
And torn from Black Africa's strand I came  
To build a "homeland of the free."

The free?

Who said the free? Not me?  
Surely not me? The millions on relief today?

The millions shot down when we strike?  
The millions who have nothing for our pay?  
For all the dreams we've dreamed  
And all the songs we've sung  
And all the hopes we've held  
And all the flags we've hung,  
The millions who have nothing for our pay—  
Except the dream that's almost dead today.

O, let America be America again—  
The land that never has been yet—  
And yet must be—the land where *every* man is free.  
The land that's mine—the poor man's, Indian's, Negro's,  
ME—  
Who made America,  
Whose sweat and blood, whose faith and pain,  
Whose hand at the foundry, whose plow in the rain,  
Must bring back our mighty dream again.

Sure, call me any ugly name you choose—  
The steel of freedom does not stain.  
From those who live like leeches on the people's lives,  
We must take back our land again,  
America!

O, yes,  
I say it plain,  
America never was America to me,  
And yet I swear this oath—  
America will be!

Out of the rack and ruin of our gangster death,  
The rape and rot of graft, and stealth, and lies,  
We, the people, must redeem  
The land, the mines, the plants, the rivers.  
The mountains and the endless plain—  
All, all the stretch of these great green states—  
And make America again!

### 08. OMAM – Extract 3:

George won't do nothing like that. I've knew George since—I forget when—and he ain't never raised his han' to me with a stick. He's nice to me. He ain't gonna be mean."

"Well, he's sick of you," said the rabbit. "He's gonna beat hell outa you an' then go away an' leave you."

"He won't," Lennie cried frantically. "He won't do nothing like that. I know George. Me an' him travels together."

But the rabbit repeated softly over and over, "He gonna leave you, ya crazy bastard. He gonna leave ya all alone. He gonna leave ya, crazy bastard."

Lennie put his hands over his ears. "He ain't, I tell ya he ain't." And he cried, "Oh! George—George—George!"

George came quietly out of the brush and the rabbit scuttled back into Lennie's brain.

George said quietly, "What the hell you yellin' about?"

Lennie got up on his knees. "You ain't gonna leave me, are ya, George? I know you ain't."

George came stiffly near and sat down beside him. "No." "I knowed it," Lennie cried. "You ain't that kind." George was silent.

Lennie said, "George."

"Yeah?"

"I done another bad thing."

"It don't make no difference," George said, and he fell silent again.

Only the topmost ridges were in the sun now. The shadow in the valley was

blue and soft. From the distance came the sound of men shouting to one another. George turned his head and listened to the shouts.

Lennie said, "George."

"Yeah?"

"Ain't you gonna give me hell?"

"Give ya hell?"

"Sure, like you always done before. Like, 'If I di'n't have you I'd take my fifty bucks—'"

"Jesus Christ, Lennie! You can't remember nothing that happens, but you remember ever' word I say."

"Well, ain't you gonna say it?"

George shook himself. He said woodenly, "If I was alone I could live so

easy." His voice was monotonous, had no emphasis. "I could get a job an' not have no mess." He stopped.

"Go on," said Lennie. "An' when the enda the month come—"

"An' when the end of the month came I could take my fifty bucks an' go to a . . . cat house—" He stopped again.

Lennie looked eagerly at him. "Go on, George. Ain't you gonna give me no more hell?"

"No," said George.

---

"Well, I can go away," said Lennie. "I'll go right off in the hills an' find a cave if you don' want me."

George shook himself again. "No," he said. "I want you to stay with me here."

Lennie said craftily—"Tell me like you done before."

"Tell you what?"

"'Bout the other guys an' about us."

George said, "Guys like us got no fambly. They make a little stake an' then they blow it in. They ain't got nobody in the worl' that gives a hoot in hell about 'em—"

"But not us," Lennie cried happily. "Tell about us now." George was quiet for a moment. "But not us," he said. "Because—"

"Because I got you an'—"

"An' I got you. We got each other, that's what, that gives a hoot in hell about us," Lennie cried in triumph.

The little evening breeze blew over the clearing and the leaves rustled and the wind waves flowed up the green pool. And the shouts of men sounded again, this time much closer than before.

George took off his hat. He said shakily, "Take off your hat, Lennie. The air feels fine."

Lennie removed his hat dutifully and laid it on the ground in front of him. The shadow in the valley was bluer, and the evening came fast. On the wind the sound of crashing in the brush came to them.

Lennie said, "Tell how it's gonna be."

George had been listening to the distant sounds. For a moment he was businesslike. "Look acrost the river, Lennie, an' I'll tell you so you can almost see it."

Lennie turned his head and looked off across the pool and up the darkening slopes of the Gabilans. "We gonna get a little place," George began. He reached in his side pocket and brought out Carlson's Luger; he snapped off the safety, and the hand and gun lay on the ground behind Lennie's back. He looked at the back of Lennie's head, at the place where the spine and skull were joined.

A man's voice called from up the river, and another man answered.

"Go on," said Lennie.

George raised the gun and his hand shook, and he dropped his hand to the ground again.

"Go on," said Lennie. "How's it gonna be. We gonna get a little place." "We'll have a cow," said George.

"An' we'll have maybe a pig an' chickens .

. . . an' down the flat we'll have a . . . little piece alfalfa—" "For the rabbits," Lennie shouted.

"For the rabbits," George repeated.

"And I get to tend the rabbits."

"An' you get to tend the rabbits."

Lennie giggled with happiness. "An' live on the fatta the lan'."

"Yes."

Lennie turned his head.

"No, Lennie. Look down there acrost the river, like you can almost see the place."



Lennie obeyed him. George looked down at the gun.

There were crashing footsteps in the brush now. George turned and looked toward them.

“Go on, George. When we gonna do it?”

“Gonna do it soon.”

“Me an’ you.”

“You . . . an’ me. Ever’body gonna be nice to you. Ain’t gonna be no more trouble. Nobody gonna hurt nobody nor steal from ‘em.”

Lennie said, “I thought you was mad at me, George.”

“No,” said George. “No, Lennie. I ain’t mad. I never been mad, an’ I ain’t now. That’s a thing I want ya to know.”

The voices came close now. George raised the gun and listened to the voices. Lennie begged, “Le’s do it now. Le’s get that place now.”

“Sure, right now. I gotta. We gotta.”

And George raised the gun and steadied it, and he brought the muzzle of it

close to the back of Lennie’s head. The hand shook violently, but his face set and his hand steadied. He pulled the trigger. The crash of the shot rolled up the hills and rolled down again. Lennie jarred, and then settled slowly forward to the sand, and he lay without quivering.

George shivered and looked at the gun, and then he threw it from him, back up on the bank, near the pile of old ashes.

The brush seemed filled with cries and with the sound of running feet. Slim’s voice shouted. “George. Where you at, George?”