**Masterpieces Project: Outline Sample 2**

John Steinbeck Final Outline

1. Introduction
   1. Born on February 27, 1902 in Salinas, California
   2. Died on December 20, 1968 in NYC of a heart attack
   3. Influenced by The Great Depression, WWI, WWII, Vietnam War, Cold War and Culture Changes surrounding them
      1. Worked for New York Herald Tribune as War Correspondent
      2. Became strong political activist in late 1950s
      3. Too young for draft in WWI but was influenced by military personnel
      4. Participated in fighting of WWII and Vietnam
   4. Thesis: John Steinbeck is considered one of the great writers in history due to his vast mix of philosophical and political beliefs, such as Taoism and Socialism, he included in his many novels, plays, and novellas; his strong defiance of social standards, while maintaining some conservative roles; and the events and themes he included in his literature continue to be relatable in society worldwide.
2. Multiple Cultures
   1. Eastern Culture- Taoist and socialist
      1. “Every man suddenly became related to Kino's pearl, and Kino's pearl went into the dreams, the speculations, the schemes, the plans, the futures, the wishes, the needs, the lusts, the hungers, of everyone, and only one person stood in the way and that was Kino, so that he became curiously every man's enemy. The news stirred up something infinitely black and evil in the town; the black distillate was like the scorpion, or like hunger in the smell of food, or like loneliness when love is withheld. The poison sacs of the town began to manufacture venom, and the town swelled and puffed with the pressure of it.” (Pearl 29)
         1. Repetitive form of the and then a noun creates rhythm to describe how everyone saw pearl
            1. Complimented and contrasted by the end of long sentence with word “enemy”
            2. Beginning speaks about what everyone envisioned for themselves
            3. End shows true darkness Pearl brought and the selfishness and evil capitalism can bring on
            4. Use words such as “speculations,” “schemes,” “needs,” “lusts,” and “hungers” to show true selfishness that is accompanied by wealth due to the words’ negative connotation
            5. Words sprinkled between of “dreams” and “wishes” but their positivity is clouded by the negative words surrounding them that emphasize human darkness and egocentrism that comes with wealth that everyone desired
      2. "Do Kino and Juana, when they return to their village, now identify themselves with the universe and see all things- life and death, joy and sorrow, gain and loss- as one? Have they transcended all distinctions of rank or status and, by doing so, attained that supreme emptiness and peace that comes from a complete loss of self?... yes and no… by rejecting the pearl’s charms and realizing the evil that his obsession has produced, Kino has become ‘aware of the true nature of man and his lonely fate.’” (George 98-99)
         1. Taoist questions approached in quote
            1. balance of good and bad
            2. Taoist philosophical questions: anti-materialism, anti-intellectualism, acceptance of what is, and becoming one with the Tao
         2. “evil,” selfish, “lonely fate” -Socialist view by looking at material objects (and capitalism)
      3. “Utilitarians, also called consequentialists, hold that moral rightness must be determined by that which will bring about well-being for the greatest number, with any means justified by a generally beneficial consequence. That is, consequences must benefit the majority.” (Han 21-22)
         1. Socialist view of life
         2. “Ends justifying the means”- *The Grapes of Wrath* and *Tortilla Flat* themes present
      4. “Steinbeck’s moral philosophy is in part deontological; acting out of duty and according to moral principles meant a great deal to him. At the same time, utilitarian ideas are unmistakably present in his fiction. Steinbeck was a product of his time, and intellectual influences on him- some of which conflicted with each other- were multiple.” (Han 27)
         1. Conflicting views and philosophies
            1. During depression-

saw tragedies of poverty and loss

world needed to band together and fight for a better end, regardless of the price

* + - * 1. During world wars- people need to act out of duty like a soldier
      1. “With humanity's long proud history of standing firm against natural enemies, sometimes in the face of almost certain defeat and extinction, we would be cowardly and stupid to leave the field on the eve of our greatest potential victory.” (“Video Player”)
    1. “It is not good to have so many breakable things around...When they are broken you become sad. It is much better to never have had them.” (Tortilla 17)
       1. Commentary on capitalism- better to not have so much because losing things hurts worse
       2. Short deliberate sentences to explain a short thought everyone can understand
       3. “Happiness is better than riches.” (Tortilla 92)
          1. Simple and to the point, but it is constantly repeated throughout the novel
          2. Money is not the most important thing in the world- happiness and family and friendship are

1. Defies the norm in society, while maintaining conservative roles at same time, and fights for people and things
   1. “The Pirate looked down at the ground and tried to think clearly, but as always, when he attempted to cope with a problem, his brain grew gray and no help came from it, but only a feeling of helplessness.” (Tortilla 50)
      1. Long sentence that is scattered to emphasize Pirate’s lack of coherent thoughts
      2. “helplessness”
         1. Not being lost, powerless, or uselessness
         2. Kind of understood the simple situation but was held back
         3. Refers to a juvenile feeling of not being able to do something, regardless of what he wanted to do
         4. Repetition of “no help” and “helplessness” emphasize his lack of ability and struggle to do so
      3. “grew gray”
         1. alliteration emphasizes the action of his thoughts
         2. Gray is an unemotional and neutral color that is detached, neutral, impartial and indecisive
            1. Color of compromise
            2. Color that creates a calm relief from chaotic world (that he can’t understand)
            3. Never will be the center of attention or the leader
            4. Gray creates sadness, depression and a tendency for loneliness and isolation
      4. “In all his books Steinbeck points up the common humanity of all people. He draws upon imperfection to demonstrate his thesis… One gets the feeling that we, his readers, are the true villains in life. His retarded characters are able to merge successfully into a group only if it is primitive, non-conventional, and unshackled by the false set of values which most of us condone.” (Roane 131)
         1. Most people overlook the mentally retarded in Steinbeck’s novels
         2. Author includes self in part of the villains
         3. “Primitive”
            1. In primitive times, mentally retarded people would be ignored
            2. Steinbeck has these people thrive in primitive settings
            3. Contrast of the two adds to Steinbeck’s defiance of the norms
   2. "The regularity with which she became a mother always astonished Teresina. It occurred sometimes that she could not remember who the father of the impending baby was; and occasionally she almost grew convinced that no lover was necessary.” (Tortilla 125)
      1. Society emphasized a perfect family of mother, father, child
      2. “… grew convinced that no lover was necessary”
         1. Final decision to break the social norm
         2. Became that way after a while of contemplating society and her life
         3. “…no lover…”- not no father showing that she put the life of her child above her own and is willing to face society’s consequences for it
   3. “She seemed to know, to accept, to welcome her position, the citadel of the family, the strong place that could not be taken. And since old Tom and the children could not know hurt or fear unless she acknowledged hurt or fear, she had practiced denying them in herself. And since, when a joyful thing happened, they looked to see whether joy was on her, it was her habit to build laughter out of inadequate materials. But better than joy was calm....She seemed to know that if she swayed the family shook, and if she ever deeply wavered or despaired the family would fall.” (Grapes 74)
      1. “to know, to accept, to welcome her position”
         1. Ma embraces her role as the rock of the family
         2. Repetition of word “joy” in long sentence showed Ma fighting to maintain some goodness in her family’s life to maintain hope- traditional role
         3. Use of word calm to ground the paragraph to represent calm and stillness that was in the world the novel started in (world of dust and a halt of growth)
      2. Last sentence contained “s” and “f” alliterations containing hard sounds to point out how difficult it was for her to not “sway” because if she did, her family would crumble
      3. Became head of family through strength (father traditionally holds family together)
         1. “… it is also an affirmation of the solidity of mankind and the sanctity of life;…” (Benet)
            1. Calls attention to the positive outlook the people had on the world through their horrible circumstances
            2. Solidity

Quality or state of being firm or strong in structure

Mankind may shake, but it will not be destroyed

* + - * 1. Sanctity

The state or quality of being holy, sacred or saintly

People still valued life even when it was horrible

* + 1. “Steinbeck as the narrator, perhaps to highlight the political lessons of the incident, twice calls Ma Joad’s defiance of the males’ wishes a ‘revolt.’” (Zirakzadeh 614)
       1. During a time where they are not truly trying to give women more rights and power, the revolt is significant
       2. Steinbeck tries to create strong women characters
    2. “She walked for the family and held her head straight for the family.” (Grapes 169)
       1. “walked for the family”
          1. didn’t walk with them or lead them, she stood for all of them
          2. Typically the head of something goes for the group (example: the president goes for the US to international affairs)
       2. “held her head straight”- emphasized she kept herself calm and focused for everyone
       3. “for the family”- repeated to truly emphasize all that she did and that it wasn’t for her own selfish reasons or that anybody else did what she did

1. Relatable themes still connecting to present day
   1. “66 is the path of a people in flight, refugees from dust and shrinking land, from the thunder of tractors and shrinking ownership, from the desert’s slow northward invasion, from the twisting winds that howl up out of Texas, from the floods that bring no richness to the land and steal what little richness is there. From all of these the people are in flight, and they come into 66 from the tributary side roads, from the wagon tracks and the rutted country roads. 66 is the mother road, the road of flight.” (Grapes 108)
      1. “Road of flight” is symbol of growth and change- stood as a pathway from horrible conditions to a new promise land
      2. “mother road” important because mothers are supposed to lead children and aid them to become better
      3. “Despite their talents, determination, and assiduity, such migrants are unable to succeed, unable to satisfy their high expectations in their new countries, for the forces are even more stifling and inhibiting to human development than the ones they left behind.” (Macauley 106)
         1. Replace “countries” with “cities” or “states” and that is situation during the Depression
         2. “stifling and inhabiting to human development”- not just disappointing or bad, it is destructive to human life and morale
         3. West Africa today is like the west during the Dust Bowl and Great Depression
         4. Low-class people of the Depression and West Africans both fought hard to try and accomplish better life, but were disappointed when got to “dreamland”
         5. “… West African migrants are inevitably faced with stark realities of poverty, hardship, and heartlessness of employers who exploit them.” (Macauley 104)
            1. Description of what Steinbeck describes the Okies find in California
            2. Same situation, different decade and people
2. Conclusion
   1. John Steinbeck is considered one of the great writers in history due to his vast mix of philosophical and political beliefs, such as Taoism and Socialism, he included in his many novels, plays, and novellas; his strong defiance of social standards, while maintaining some conservative roles; and the events and themes he included in his literature continue to be relatable in society worldwide.
   2. Steinbeck included philosophical ideas from the time
      1. Taoism and socialism were big ideas during his time
      2. Commentary on Capitalism and its pitfalls
   3. Steinbeck maintained many traditional family and societal roles, but went against them
      1. Ma was the leader of her family during a highly patriarchal society
      2. Defies traditional family structure with Teresina by her not knowing her baby’s father and deciding she didn’t need him
      3. Casts light onto the problems of society who push aside those who are disabled
      4. Brings attention to social change that is greatly needed and was willing to take criticism for it
         1. *The Grapes of Wrath* was banned in many areas in the United States for not portraying events accurately even though it was
         2. "They're not afraid of the book; they're afraid of the ideas," says Krug. "The materials that are challenged and banned say something about the human condition." (Neary)
   4. The themes and events Steinbeck uses in his novel are still relatable
      1. Friendship and love being more important than money
      2. Sacrifice to make others happy
      3. “… it is not so much the *people* who matter in Steinbeck’s novels as the places, the incidents, the *things*.” (Oliver 82)
         1. Emphasis on people and things shows the understanding that suffering is not unique and many people suffer the same things in slightly different ways
         2. Pushing on and working hard in order to get to a better place, just to be disappointed- West Africa today