

ENGLISH IIE

Children of the Dustbowl Comprehension Questions

The photographs in this book are just as important as the words. Take your time and look at the photos. Try to imagine what it would be like to have been a part of that picture. Read each chapter first. Then go back and answer the questions.

Introduction:

1. Who was John Steinbeck?
2. Who were the Okies?
3. What was the farm labor camp in Arvin like?
4. What did Steinbeck call this situation?
5. What was the name of Steinbeck's novel and what did it focus on?
6. What did Kern County think of this book? What did they do?

Chapter 1: Mean Clouds

1. What were the problems of "dry farmers"?
2. What happened to farmers in the Depression?
3. What was the Dust Bowl?
4. How did the wind and dust affect people and animals?
5. What was dust pneumonia?
6. How did the Okies survive during this time without crops?
7. Why did Okies name this period the Dirty Thirties?

Chapter 2: The Mother Road

1. What did the Okies believe about California?
2. What led to the Dust Bowl migration?
3. What transportation did they use to get to California?
4. What was the Mother Road?
5. What were three of the problems they had on their trip to California?
6. Where did they get money along the way?
7. What area had the most severe test for the migrants?
8. What did a local businessman say was the miracle of the Okies?

Chapter 3: Dead Time

1. What did the Okies see from the Tehachapi grade?
2. What six cities did the Okies head for?
3. Why couldn't they get jobs?
4. How long and how many days a week did the average field hand work? What was his salary?
5. What was dead time?
6. During dead time, where did the Okies live?
7. What did the Farm Security Administration do to help the Okies?

8. What kind of housing did the camps have? How much did it cost to live there?
9. What were some of the good things the camp had?

Chapter 4: Okie Go Home

1. Why were Californians hostile to the Okies?
2. Give one example of how the Okies were discriminated against.
3. What was it like for the Okie children at the regular schools?

Chapter 5: Mr. Hart

1. What did Mr. Hart believe about the Okie children?
2. What office was Leo elected to?
3. Who were the Bum Brigades?
4. What would be taught at the Okie school Leo decided to build?

Chapter 6: Weedpatch School

1. What did the Weedpatch School start with?
2. What kind of “best teachers” did Leo try to find?
3. During the spring of 1940, Leo and Edna stumped the County for what?

Chapter 7: Something to Watch

1. Who built the Weedpatch School?
2. What useful trades did the Okie children learn?
3. What did they plant?
4. What animals did they raise?
5. On page 56, the text says, “...the school had become completely self-sufficient in potatoes, vegetables, etc.” What does this mean?

Chapter 8: Our School

1. How was the day divided at Weedpatch School?
2. What was “An Okie Man?”
3. What were “outings?”
4. What was the most important lesson the students learned at Weedpatch School?

Chapter 9: Sunset School

1. What were the good stories the community heard about Weedpatch School?
2. What were the once-hostile residents of Kern County clamoring for?
3. When did Weedpatch School end? What is its name today?
4. What does Leo say when his eye caught the photo of Okie children?

Afterward:

1. What did Leo Hart’s mobile program do?
2. After his consultant work with the Korean government, what job did he take?
3. When did he die? How old was he?

