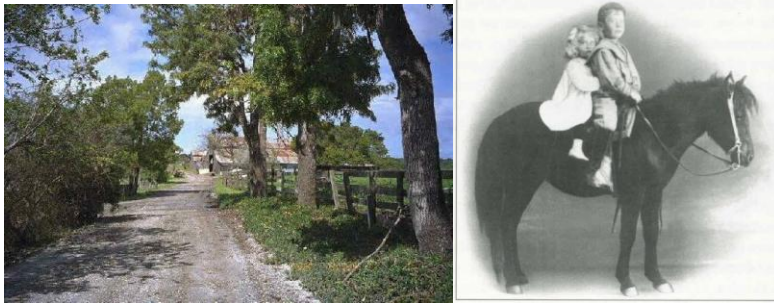


The Red Pony

by John Steinbeck

St. Catherine of Siena School, Vallejo CA

The Red Pony Ranch, near Salinas CA



7th Grade Project

Mr. Steven Federle

[adapted from unit written for *The Pearl* by
Linda Taggart-Fregoso](#)

California Language Arts Standards met by this unit: Reading 2.4 3.0, 3.1, 3.3, 3.5; Writing 1.0, 1.2, 1.4, 1.6, 1.7, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5. Written and Oral English Language Conventions 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7. SLE Critical Thinking, Communication, Work Ethic, Collaboration

All of the following student activities will be submitted as part of your *Steinbeck Project Book*. Each activity will be graded individually, and you will receive an overall grade for the total project. I will let you know when your *Steinbeck Project Book* is due in class.

Student Activity 1: Steinbeck Biographical Book Cover for Project Book

Essential Question:

John Steinbeck is one of the most widely read American writers. He spent much of his life writing about the common folk of the world. He wrote about everyday men and women with common struggles.

What in Steinbeck's life would prompt him to tell the world about farmers, laborers, strikers and fishermen?

The Task

You will be looking at John Steinbeck's life and making an educated guess about what caused him to write about the humble people of the world. Create an 8 ½ X 11 book cover (for your project book) depicting the events, people and places that shaped Steinbeck's life and writing.

The Process: Exploring the Web, Creating a Product

You will create a book cover describing important events and people in Steinbeck's life that might have influenced the depiction of his characters. Use the websites listed below to research John Steinbeck's family background and life. Select events, things, places and people you believe influenced him the most.

1. Visit these sites to learn about John Steinbeck, and take notes on the most important influences in his life.

[The Steinbeck Center](#)

[John Steinbeck: The California Novels](#)

[John Steinbeck's Pacific Grove](#)

2. Create a book cover illustrating these events, things, places and people. Your book cover may be hand drawn, or you may use PhotoShop. If you use images from the Internet, be sure to cite your sources' URL's.
3. Include a limited number of captions identifying the influences you are depicting, and if appropriate, a work by Steinbeck related to that influence.
4. Use your book cover as the cover of your Steinbeck Project book.

How You Will Be Graded

How You Will Be Graded (print and include in your book).

24-25 points= YES! 22-23 points= Yes (most of the time). 19-21 points= Some of the time.
17-19= Not much 15-16= Not at all.

Your book cover should	Possible Pts	Your evaluation	My Evaluation
Accurately depict influences on Steinbeck's life and art.	25		
All images properly cited	25		
Be neatly prepared	25		
Grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling, etc. correct on all captions.	25		
TOTAL POINTS	100		

Revise until you can give yourself a 24 or 25!

Student Activity 2: Expository Essay on symbolism

The Essential Question:

There are many symbols in modern day life. \$ is a symbol for money. ZZZZ is a symbol for sleeping. A light bulb symbolizes an idea. John Steinbeck used a lot of symbols when he wrote *The Red Pony*. Jody wants a pony to take care of. What does the pony symbolize? Much is said about the two mountain ranges surrounding the valley. How are these mountains used as symbols? Are there other symbols in this book that you find captivating?

The Task

You will research and explain two major symbols in the Red Pony and make an educated guess about why Steinbeck included them. You will analyze ways in which Steinbeck uses symbolism to evoke readers' emotions, advance an idea about the author's use of symbolism, and support that idea with detailed references.

- Horses and Horse Care: <http://www.thehorse.com/>
- Steinbeck Country:
http://www.viamagazine.com/top_stories/articles/steinbeck_country06.asp
- Use a clustering map to formulate your opinions about the symbols. Look at the ways an author could use more than one meaning when choosing names, objects, and details for a story. Look for significance in using objects as symbols.

Select symbols of your choice (two symbols total) and explain why you think Steinbeck chose these particular items to use in his story, *The Red Pony*.

Write a minimum of three paragraphs (300 to 400 words) that explain your thoughts and ideas, especially how the symbols evoke the readers' emotions.

How You Will Be Graded (print and attach to your essay).

19-20 points= YES! 17-18 points= Yes (most of the time). 15-16 points= Some of the time. 13-14= Not much 11-12= Not at all.

Your writing should	Possible Pts	Your evaluation	My Evaluation
Introductory paragraph contains an idea about Steinbeck's use of symbolism in <i>The Red Pony</i>	20		
Analyze and describe how Steinbeck uses these symbols in this story; are the symbols effective in making the story "come alive" for you? How do they help you think about the big ideas (themes) of <i>The Red Pony</i> ?	20		
support your ideas with detailed references and	20		

quotes from the story itself			
Conclusion paragraph restates thesis, and summarizes your proof.	20		
Grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling, etc. correct.	20		
TOTAL POINTS	100		

Revise until you can give yourself a 19 or 20!

Activity 3: Write a Letter of Condolence

Introduction :Jody’s red pony is dead. Imagine his great sense of loss. A thoughtful letter of condolence is both a tribute to the deceased and a source of comfort and courage to the living.

The Task: Write a Letter of Sympathy

Compose a letter to Jody expressing your sadness over their loss. A good letter is like a visit on paper. Use normal vocabulary and phrasing.

Your letter of condolence should:

- **Acknowledge Jody’s loss**
- **Express your sympathy**
- **Note special qualities of the pony**
- **Recount a memory about the pony**
- **Note special qualities of the bereaved (Jody)**
- **Offer help.**

- Close with a thoughtful word or phrase

Visit the sites with examples of condolences listed below:

- [Condolence Book for Princess Diana](#)
- [Condolence Book for Michael Jackson](#)

Write a letter of condolence to Jody. Revise the letter. Turn in a final copy typed or written neatly in ink.

How You Will Be Graded (print and attach to your letter).

19-20 points= YES! 17-18 points= Yes (most of the time). 15-16 points= Some of the time. 13-14= Not much 11-12= Not at all.

Your letter should:	Possible Pts	Your evaluation	My Evaluation
Note Special Qualities of the pony	20		
Recount a memory of the pony	20		
Note special qualities of Jody	20		
Offer assistance and close with a thoughtful word or phrase.	20		
Grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling, etc. correct.	20		
TOTAL POINTS	100		

Revise until you can give yourself a 19 or 20!