

HIGH SCHOOL | BLUE VALLEY DISTRICT NOVEL RATIONALE

***The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck**

English Language Arts, 11th Grade

WHAT'S THE STORY?

As the Depression settled in economically around the United States, the Dust Bowl affected the farmers in the Midwest. *The Grapes of Wrath* is the story of one family whose farm is lost. They hear wonderful things about the opportunities in California and decide to travel west to begin a new life. After their long journey, they arrive to find that life is not much better in California. They refuse to give up and stay together as a family as they fight to survive against all odds.

CONNECTIONS TO CURRICULUM*

The following are some, but not all, of the connections to curriculum for this novel.

- **Unit 1: Language and Perspective**
 - Essential Questions: “How do texts reflect society both historically and linguistically?” and “How can crafting your story reflect personal identity?”
- **Unit 3: Universal Human Experience**
 - Essential Questions: “How does sustained inquiry of the past inform and motivate change?” and “How do we prepare for an uncertain future?”

KEY STANDARDS ADDRESSED

- Analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama. RL.11.3
- Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem, evaluating how each version interprets the source text. RL.11.7
- Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 11–12 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. RL.11.11
- Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text. RL.11.2
- Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant. RL.11.6
- Demonstrate knowledge of foundational works of American and world literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics. RL.11.9
- Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to

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comprehend more fully when reading.RL.11.10