

Of Mice and Men Motif Essay

In *Of Mice and Men*, readers are introduced to the two main characters, George and Lennie. It is easily evident at first that they have a strong friendship. Though these two may have a strong connection between themselves, in the beginning, all of it is wiped away by George shooting his best friend Lennie. George uses the game of solitaire to escape and be with himself. Usually, solitaire is a one-person game typically played when someone is alone. However, when George is playing it he is with other people with whom he has various relationships. In *Of Mice and Men* George experiences various friendships, but the use of playing cards reveals his loneliness and independence.

George's devout friend Lennie does not play cards with him at all for the duration of the book creating a disconnect between George and Lennie. From the start of the book, George and Lennie's friendship is highlighted and readers follow it to the tragic death of Lennie at the end. In their bunk, George is playing solitaire, "George stared at his solitaire lay, and then he flounced the cards together and turned around to Lennie. Lennie was lying down on the bunk watching him" (Steinbeck 28-29). Lennie seems to take interest in George playing cards yet George never lets Lennie play. This is due to Lennie possibly having a mental disability he is unable to do and brain-busting tasks. Sadly, this was a reason that George ended his friendship with Lennie separating himself from him. At the end of the book, it is evident that George sees Lennie as an extra weight due to his mistakes throughout the book. The cards revealed George wanting to be independent and that George sees Lennie as added weight.

When George is playing cards he detaches himself from his surroundings. Whit, a ranch hand, talks to George while he is playing solitaire in one instance. Whit seems to go towards