

- a) In this passage, what methods does Steinbeck use to present Curley's wife and the attitudes of others to her? Refer closely to the passage in your answer.

Within the passage, Curley's wife is presented as a dangerous and much provocative character, this is apparent through Steinbeck's portrayal of Curley's wife and her actions when she is first introduced in the novella, as she enters the bunk-house; "Both men glanced up, for the rectangle sunshine in the doorway was cut off." Even before she enters the room, she "cut off" the sunshine in the doorway; this little detail suggests she brings darkness with her, particularly as the word "cut" is a negative verb. Portrayed as a seductive temptress and troublemaker, Steinbeck uses the symbolism of darkness to present her as Eve, the temptress, leading men into darkness and sin by tempting them in a way they cannot resist foreshadowing her manipulating Lennie shown further by his fascination, he 'watched fascinated', which led to the end of George and Lennie's companionship and their dream. Furthermore, Steinbeck metaphorically uses the noun 'sunshine' to portray Curley's wife as a menace, because it metaphors hopes and dreams. The reader may imply that the 'sunshine in the doorway is cut off' because Curley's wife is the darkness that erases George and Lennie's version of the 'American dream' they dream of living "off the fatta the lan" and having a better life. All of these appearances cause the reader to dislike Curley's wife as the audience see her as the downfall of the men in the story.

Whilst describing Curley's wife in this passage, Steinbeck uses language techniques such as colour imagery, foreshadowing and symbolism to cast her as flirtatious and threatening, this is shown through the description of Curley's wife: "She had full, rouged lips...Her fingernails were red. Her hair rung in little rolled clusters, like sausages... red mules on... and little buggies of red ostrich feathers." In this part of the novella Curley's wife is introduced for the first time her hair 'in little rolled clusters, like sausages' though she is trying to style herself like the movie icons she idolises, the uses of the simile "like sausages" could perhaps be stating that men only see her as being a piece; this is how women were portrayed in the 1930s. Constantly, Steinbeck utilises colour imagery to portray and foreshadow the dangerous nature of Curley's wife he describes her 'fingernails', 'mules' and the 'ostrich feathers on the shoes as red', classically symbolising danger and warning. Furthermore, it also denotes sex and passion which implies she is wearing the outfit for attention though it catches the eye of the ranchers most men besides Slim try to ignore her because of the consequences. Alternatively, Curley's wife could be wearing this 'red' to her attempt to emulate those film stars she aspires to become; as actresses usually wore 'red ostrich feathers'. Ostriches are famous for being birds that are unable to fly so the reader may also argue that this infers Curley's wife cannot fly; she will remain on the ranch unable to achieve her dreams of becoming a famous actress which evokes the reader to feel sympathy for Curley's wife relating back to the theme of dreams. Nevertheless, Steinbeck's intention of using the colour 'red' is probably because Curley's wife is dependent upon the consuming and objectifying gaze of the male characters though most ranchers admit she is 'purty' they still think she is a 'tramp' similar to the prostitutes at the alehouse.

Further emphasising Curley's wife as being a flirt, Steinbeck represents her as a promiscuous woman, throughout the passage appearance is used to show her in this way, however Steinbeck also uses her physical movements as she was "heavily made up...and leaned against the door from the door frame, so that her body was thrown forward". Evidently, Curley's wife is using suggestive body language by thrusting her breasts forward for the men to see to make her more sexually attractive, especially as the word 'thrown' is a forceful word which means flung; relating to sexual actions. George cautions Lennie of her and dislikes Curley's wife along with Candy who refers to her as a 'bitch' and 'whore', because she is portrayed as a troublemaker who brings ruin on men and drives them mad; Curley is

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