



## DRIVING QUESTION

How can music help us better understand the themes, characters, and tone of *Of Mice and Men*?

## PROJECT SUMMARY

Students will analyze *Of Mice and Men* to explore how Steinbeck uses character, theme, and tone to convey ideas about loneliness, friendship, power, and the American Dream. Working in collaborative teams, students will create a thematic or character-based soundtrack that interprets the emotional and thematic arc of the novel. Students will select songs that reflect key moments, emotional shifts, and character perspectives, then justify each choice using textual evidence and tone analysis. Through research into song lyrics and presentation design, students will demonstrate how music—like literature—can tell a story and shape audience understanding. Students will present their soundtracks to an authentic audience, explaining how their music choices deepen interpretation of the novel and defending their analysis with evidence from the text.

## REAL-WORLD CONTEXT

Students explore how music is used in films, games, and media to establish mood, tone, and character. Students practice skills used in storytelling, media curation, and presentation design. Students connect emotional themes from the novel to music that reflects real human experiences.

## PRODUCTS & AUDIENCE

Students created and presented a soundtrack inspired by *Of Mice & Men*.

## STUDENT REFLECTIONS

- “Having to sign and use the group contract helped us recognize and focus on our potential.”
- “I learned how to problem solve and work with others while also using my knowledge and creativity to create a good slideshow.”
- “It made me realize that I have to speak up more when I’m presenting so everyone can hear me.”
- “It was interesting to find new ways of applying music.”

## NC PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE SKILLS GAINED



COLLABORATION



ADAPTABILITY



COMMUNICATION



PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY



EMPATHY



LEARNER'S MINDSET



CRITICAL THINKING

## TEACHER REFLECTION

“Students in English I created soundtracks related to characters or themes from *Of Mice and Men*. Throughout this project, students were able to explore characters and themes in depth and relate contemporary music to an older text. Student choice was important to this project, as students were able to self-select groups and theme or character for the project, so they produced unique and strong products.”