

Sample Literary Analysis Paragraph Outline

<p>Topic Sentence</p>	<p>In John Steinbeck's novella, <i>Of Mice and Men</i>, the greatest threat to George and Lennie at the ranch is Lennie himself due to his love of soft things and his extreme strength.</p>
<p>Evidence 1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Context: In Chapter 1, at the clearing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lennie has a dead mouse in his pocket because he likes the feel of the soft fur ○ George demands that Lennie hand it over ○ Lennie slowly and reluctantly gives the mouse to George ● Quotation: "Aw, leave me have it, George. 'Give it here!' Lennie's closed hand slowly obeyed" (Steinbeck 5–6)
<p>Analysis of Evidence 1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Zoom In: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "aw:" reveals Lennie's sadness ○ "leave:" likely unfamiliar to readers, so define it as "let" ○ "slowly obey:" reveals Lennie does not want to listen to George right away ○ George's dialogue is in italics, highlights his anger ● Zoom Out: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Overly focused on soft things: Lennie is sad when he can't have the mouse, & tries to keep it, despite consequences ○ Reluctant to listen: Even when George is yelling, "slow to obey" ○ Combination of focus on soft things with hesitation to obey makes him a threat
<p>Evidence 2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Context: Chapter 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ George and Lennie arrive at the ranch near Soledad & are interviewed by the boss ○ Boss is suspicious that Lennie isn't answering questions ○ George loudly tells the boss why Lennie is a valuable farmhand ● Quotation: "George broke in loudly, 'Oh! I ain't saying he's bright. He ain't, But I say he's a God damn good worker. He can put up a four hundred pound bale'" (22)
<p>Analysis of Evidence 2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Zoom In: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Diction: bale means hay bale ○ Diction: 400 lbs reveals that Lennie has super-human strength. A typical person can lift about 50 lbs ● Zoom Out: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lennie is a threat: he could break something or hurt someone accidentally
<p>Last Sentence</p>	<p>All in all, Lennie's love of soft items alone would not likely put George and Lennie at much of a higher risk; however, in combination with Lennie's extreme strength, the two traveling companions are at a real risk at the ranch.</p>