

## Essay Assignment

Directions: Choose one of the following essay topics or creative writing assignments:

### Essays

1. Of what importance is Tom's having been imprisoned? Tell what effect it has on his relationships with strangers, with the family as a unit, and to the final decision that he makes.
2. The Battle Hymn of The Republic was once printed as part of the novel. Argue for or against its inclusion as a highlight for the theme of the book.
3. List several internal; and external factors that led to the break-up of the Joad family in what you believe to be the order of importance. Whose leaving of the group do you consider to be the most devastating? Support your choice by noting the reactions of the rest of the family unit.
4. Steinbeck did not want the novel condensed. He stated that if he could have left out anything, he would have. Choose an incident or passage that might be considered trivial by an editor and defend its inclusion in the novel by telling of its importance to the understanding of the story.
5. Explore Casy as a Christ figure. How does Tom's final decision reinforce this role?

---

### Creative Writing

1. Write a brief story about the background of each of the items in the stationery box that Ma looked through before the family left for California.
2. Choose one of the people that the Joads met on the road and write a biography of the remainder of his or her life after the encounter. What effect does the meeting have on that person?
3. Compose a letter that Connie might have sent to Rose of Sharon explaining why he left when he did.
4. Write a eulogy for Grandma that Casy would have given. Compose an epitaph for her.
5. Tell in a short story what happened to Noah after he left the family in Needles.