**Settings as Symbols**

Symbolism, Imagery, Allegory

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The **pool by the river** is the place where Lennie and George’s story begins and ends. It is a safe sanctuary to meet and a place free from society, where Lennie and George can be themselves. What happens in the grove stays in the grove. This is where the story is born and where the dream farm and Lennie meet their end.   
  
The **bunkhouse** represents the spot where conflict is most evident. Cruelty, violence, jealousy, and suspicion all arise here.  
  
**Crooks’s room** represents the retreat (and the jail cell) of the repressed. Here we see the most obvious manifestations of discrimination: name calling, isolation, fear, and the threat of death.  
  
**The barn** is representative of a supposedly safe place where animals can find shelter and warmth. It is a man-made place where humans take care of animals, which is symbolically ironic because it is where Lennie kills his puppy and Curley’s wife.  
  
The **dream farm** is symbolic of Lennie and George’s friendship. It is the thing that ties them together and keeps them working, even when times are hard. It is also their personal form of religion, with the re-telling of the dream serving as a form of litany or catechism. It is, ultimately, their version of heaven, so that when Lennie kills a human being, their chances of going there are forever ruined.

There is a recurring reference to **rabbits** throughout the story. **What, if anything, do the rabbits represent or symbolize?**