

## STUDY GUIDE FOR *Riding the Rails*

(a documentary which serves as background knowledge for the novel *Of Mice and Men*)

1. At the height of the Great Depression, there were \_\_\_\_\_ teenagers living on the road in America.
2. By the early 1930's, riding the rails became an epidemic, even though it was dangerous and illegal. In 1932, the Southern Pacific Railroad threw \_\_\_\_\_ transients off their boxcars, many of them teenagers.
3. In \_\_\_\_\_, Warner Brothers produced the movie \_\_\_\_\_, warning young people about the dangers of riding freights.
4. What were some of the reasons teenagers left home to ride the rails? Name at least 3.
  - 1)
  - 2)
  - 3)
5. Name at least two ways that city missions and relief agencies, like the Salvation Army, treated the young transients worse than the adults.
  - 1)
  - 2)
6. What kind of reception did young people get from people in the places they passed through? Give three examples, including at least one positive and one negative example.
  - 1)
  - 2)
  - 3)
7. Why was traveling in the South especially dangerous for African-American hobos?
8. Being a homeless migrant was considered a crime in itself. Vagrancy was punishable by \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.
9. To avoid being arrested, young transients slept in temporary camps set up by hobos along the outskirts of towns. The camps were known as \_\_\_\_\_.
10. The Depression and the terrible drought of the Dust Bowl had forced four million people onto the road. Young hobos swelled this growing army of migrants looking for seasonal work. Most headed west to \_\_\_\_\_.
11. Name 3 disadvantages that young people looking for work had going against them.
  - 1)
  - 2)
  - 3)
12. True or False? Teenagers on the road were far more concerned about strikes and riots than about their day-to-day survival.
13. Young transients need to provide what two things to qualify for the Civilian Conservation Corps?
  - 1)
  - 2)
14. Qualifying for the CCC allowed them what opportunity?

