**WHAT IS A THESIS? A thesis declares what you believe and what you intend to prove. A good thesis statement makes the difference between a thoughtful research project and a simple retelling of facts.**

**Sentence #1 (part 1):**  – (topic sentence) – make one claim about the overall topic of the essay that relates to the thesis.

**Sentence #2 (part 2):**– explain why the topic sentence is true, *or develop it further*.

**Sentence #3 (part 3):**  – give an example of the claim made in the topic sentence (make a "for instance" statement).

**Sentence #4 (part 4):**  – give another example of the claim to better support it.

**Sentence #5 (part 5):**  – support the claim with even more specific information (this is where integrating an outside source can be helpful).

**Sentence #6 (part 6):**  – write a sentence that wraps up the paragraph (an “in conclusion” sentence).

*\* Notice I use “part” to indicate sometimes what you write will require more than one sentence.*

Your assignment:

Write a paragraph on the following topic sentence (fill in the blank first!):

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is the most difficult thing I have ever done.

Workers on the farms and ranches turn mean from being lonely, and if George left Lennie, George would become mean. While George and Lennie often talk about how different they are from other ranch workers, it might be nothing more than just talk. Evidence suggesting they actually are different becomes clear when examining the personality of Carlson. Carlson is old, and has worked on ranches for years, and is mean. Not mean in a traditional sense, but in Of Mice and Men, “mean” takes on a slightly different definition. “Mean” in the novel suggests a character who has been beaten down by circumstances in his life, and has allowed those circumstances to get the better of him. Carlson, for example, hates Candy’s dog, and for selfish reasons wants the dog gone. He uses the excuse of the dog smelling bad, although no other character ever says this. His solution is simple, one-sided, and fatal: “Well, I can’t stand him in here. . . .Why’n’t you shoot him?” (44) The only solution Carlson finds acceptable is one where Candy must give up his only companion, his only sense of friendship, and maybe his only reason to face a new day. Candy is pained by the idea, but Carlson sees it merely as practical. Carlson does not have the emotional understanding to see what he is asking is cruel – not just to the dog, but to Candy as well. He offers up no sympathy in discussing the matter, and offers no sympathy after returning from having shot the dog. In the novel, Carlson serves as an example of the type of person who has spent all his life working ranches, living month-to-month, and ending up mean. At the beginning of the novel it is apparent both George and Lennie have a certain level of affection for each other, making them seem more real and human. If George were to leave Lennie, his fate would be to end up no different than Carlson: uncaring and mean.