Concept of American Dream in Of Mice and Men by John Steinbeck

Have you ever hoped of one day having a nice house and good family? Well, that is what happens in Of Mice and Men.This is commonly known as the American Dream. The American Dream as defined by Merriam Webster is “an American social ideal that stresses egalitarianism and especially material prosperity.” Of Mice and Men is a book written by John Steinbeck that displays the adventure of two best friends named George and Lennie, who travel together in order to accomplish the American Dream. The book presents quite a few facets of human qualities. There are various ways that Of Mice and Men display Truth, Beauty, and Goodness.

A good example of Truth shown in the novel is when Lenny beats Curley in the fight. They were at the farm when Curley had confronted Lennie for smiling at him. The text stated “Lennie took his hands away from his face and looked about for George, and Curley slashed at his eyes. The big face was covered with blood. George yelled again, ‘I said get him.’ Curley's fist was swinging when Lennie reached for it. The next minute Curley was flopping like a fish on a line, and his closed fist was lost in Lennie's big hand. George ran down the room. ‘Leggo of him, Lennie. Let go.’ ” (Steinbeck 63) This is truthful because Lenny has a mental disability and Curley is a boxer, so Curley should have won that fight, but didn’t and started it because he thought that Lennie was laughing at him, but Lennie was not. The text says, “Curley stepped over to Lennie like a terrier. ‘What the hell you laughin' at?’ Lennie looked blankly at him. ‘Huh?’ Then Curley's rage exploded. ‘Come on, ya big bastard. Get up on your feet. No big son-of-a-bitch is gonna laugh at me. I'll show ya who's yella.’ (Steinbeck 62) Curley gets mad very easily because he is short, and he thinks everybody is laughing at him, or think he’s weak. He needs to learn to not get so angry all the time. While there is Truth in the book, there is another important quality shown, which is Beauty.

A good example of Beauty shown in the novel is how George tells Lenny how they will one day, live on their own piece of land, and have animals. The text says, 'O.K. Someday- we're gonna get the jack together and we're gonna have a little house and a couple of acres an' a cow and some pigs and-' 'An' live off the fatta the lan',' Lennie shouted. (Steinbeck 14) George normally tells Lennie alot about how when they get the money, they will have a piece of land, and they will have lots of animals including rabbits, which Lennie loves because they are soft. They will also have some crops as well.'Well,' said George, 'we'll have a big vegetable patch and a rabbit hutch and chickens. And when it rains in the winter, we'll just say the hell with goin' to work, and we'll build up a fire in the stove and set around it an' listen to the rain comin' down on the roof- ”(Steinbeck 14-15) Although George knows this will be hard to accomplish with Lennie, he still sees the positive and is willing to work hard for this. He even told his co worker at the farm about it, and he wants to help them. The text says, “ ‘In one month. Right squack in one month. Know what I'm gon'ta do? I'm gon'ta write to them old people that owns the place that we'll take it. An' Candy'll send a hundred dollars to bind her.’ ‘Sure will,’ said Candy.” (Steinbeck 61) That is beauty right there because they are all working together and are so happy to almost have the land. Beauty is another important quality shown in the book, while another very important one shown is Goodness.

A good example of Goodness shown in the novel is how George travels with Lenny through the

story. In the text George says, “ ‘Him and me was both born in Auburn. I knew his Aunt Clara. She took him when he was a baby and raised him up. When his Aunt Clara died, Lennie just come along with me out workin'. Got kinda used to each other after a little while.’ ”(Steinbeck 40) George always cares for Lennie wherever they go and tries to keep him under control, but sometimes it doesn’t go so well.. The text states,“ ‘O.K.,’ said George. ‘An' you ain't gonna do no bad things like you done in Weed, neither.’ Lennie looked puzzled. ‘Like I done in Weed?’ ‘Oh, so ya forgot that too, did ya? Well, I ain't gonna remind ya, fear ya do it again.’ A light of understanding broke on Lennie's face. ‘They run us outa Weed,’ he exploded triumphantly. ‘Run us out, hell,’ said George disgustedly. ‘We run. They was lookin' for us, but they didn't catch us.’ ” (Steinbeck 7) Lennie had gotten them run out of Weed because he wanted to touch a girls dress since it was soft, and was accused of rape. They were going to be lynched and ran to California. George is a very good friend for staying with him. The text said, ' ‘Well, he seen this girl in a red dress. Dumb bastard like he is, he wants to touch everything he likes. Just wants to feel it. So he reaches out to feel this red dress an' the girl lets out a squawk, and that gets Lennie all mixed up, and he holds on 'cause that's the only thing he can think to do.’ ”(Steinbeck 41)He must have a lot of patience for Lennie because he could have told Lennie to leave and have the land by himself. Goodness is just like being kind, and a simple act can change someone’s life, like Lennie’s.

These virtues are as important as having good health, if you don’t have them, you won’t feel good.. Three qualities that Of Mice and Men show are Truth, Beauty, and Goodness. Next time, think about if anything you do, shows truth, beauty, or goodness.