Teachers Instructions for Searching Out Our Own Answers: K-W-H-L for *Of Mice and Men*

**Purpose:** This strategy should help students begin thinking about life of a migrant worker during the Depression Era. It will help them isolate specific kinds of information they want to learn about during the gathering information stage of understanding the time period. Also, to acquaint them with pertinent vocabulary of the time period and to give students a context for the novel.

**Context:** This would be ideal to do after the guided imagery portion of the pre-reading, but before the problem situation. This should be followed by one to two days of opportunities to acquire information both as a class and on their own. Class time should be structured with activities to help them answers the questions from this exercise (i.e. by viewing or reading functional texts).

**Directions:** Have copies of the blank page for each student and a matching overhead. Then, as a class, students should come up with their previous knowledge about the topic, what they want to learn, and how they will find out. It is easiest if each column is done separately rather than everything all at once. Students should also be given some time to add their own individual questions. The following days should be spent in helping students acquire answers to their questions either in class, in the library, or assigned as homework. Some questions you might consider asking in order to instigate/stimulate discussion could include: What do you think you could learn about John Steinbeck that might help you understand this novel better? Who do you know now that was still alive at that time? What have they shared with you? What parts of your life now do you think you would be without if you lived during that time? How do you know?

**Assessment:** This exercise should be assessed more heavily than the other strategies. Some points should be given to the depth of the questions asked. There should be a requirement of perhaps 5 different kinds of sources (to help students break away from relying on the internet). Points should be given for adhering to this directive. Finally, the most points should be given to the quality and quantity of information the students found.

Allen, 2002