Write your own reactions to each passage below. How did you analyze the passage in your group discussion? How does that analysis lead you to an opinion about what John Steinbeck thinks about Curley’s wife?

A girl was standing there looking in. She had full, rouged lips and wide-spaced eyes, heavily made up. Her fingernails were red. Her hair hung in little rolled clusters, like sausages. She wore a cotton house dress and red mules, on the insteps of which were little bouquets of red ostrich feathers. “I’m lookin’ for Curley,” she said. Her voice had a nasal, brittle quality (31).

2

1

“Don’t you even take a look at that bitch. I don’t care what she says and what she does. I seen ‘em poison before, but I never seen no piece of jail bait worse than her. You leave her be” (32).

“…Ever’ time the guys is around she shows up. She’s lookin’ for Curley, or she thought she lef’ somethin’ layin’ around and she’s lookin’ for it. Seems like she can’t keep away from guys” (51).

4

3

“If I catch one man, and he’s alone, I get along fine with him. But just let two of the guys get together an’ you won’t talk. Jus’ nothing but mad.” She dropped her fingers and put her hands on her hips. “You’re all scared of each other, that’s what. Ever’ one of you’s scared the rest is goin’ to get something on you” (77).

5

“Sure I gotta husban’. You all seen him. Swell guy, ain’t he? Spends all his time sayin’ what he’s gonna do to guys he don’t like, and he don’t like nobody. Think I’m gonna stay in that two-by-four house and listen how Curley’s gonna lead with his left twict, and then bring in the ol’ right cross?” (78).

6

“…Whatta ya think I am, a kid? I tell ya I could of went with shows. Not jus’ one, neither. An’ a guy tol’ me he could put me in pitchers…” She was breathless with indignation. “—Sat’iday night. Ever’body out doin’ som’pin’. Ever’body! And what am I doin’? Standin’ here talkin’ to a bunch of bindle stiffs—a ni\*\*er an’ a dum-dum and a lousy ol’ sheep—an’ likin’ it because they ain’t nobody else” (78).

7

She turned on him in scorn. “Listen, Ni\*\*er,” she said. “You know what I can do to you if you open your trap?”
Crooks stared hopelessly at her, and then he sat down on his bunk and drew into himself.
She closed in on him. “You know what I could do?”
Crooks seemed to grow smaller, and he pressed himself against the wall. “Yes, ma’am” (80).

8

“I get lonely,” she said. “You can talk to people, but I can’t talk to nobody but Curley. Else he gets mad. How’d you like not to talk to anybody?” (87).