**Prompt**: Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (e.g., lighting, sound, color, or camera focus and angles in a film).

**DO WHAT**

Compare/contrast chapter 9 of Grapes of Wrath to scene from the film

Analyze techniques unique to each medium

**Pick:**

sense of bitterness - “The bitterness we sold to the junk man” (book);

sense of excitement - excited chatter, men hopping on back of truck (film);

burning the things they cannot take (book);

slow, hesitation to leave - “The tenant men scuffed home to the farms through the red dust.” (book); “they didn’t laugh and they didn’t dance” (book)

carrying drunken man onto back ot truck (film);

man asks to come if they have room and they excitedly invite him (film);

yelling, cheering as truck drives off (film);

wind picks up, paper flying, door of empty home flapping (film);

woman doesn’t want to look back, forces herself to be stoic - “never had to lose everything I had in life” (film);

different preparations of men v. women: “men were ruthless...but the women knew how the past would come cry to them in the coming days” (book);

view of truck turning up dust on road as it drives away with upbeat music playing (film);

selling all their possessions - “you’re buying a sorrow that can’t talk” (book)

unsure/hesitation - “Maybe we can start again” (book) but then expresses that they can’t start again

Label each, then group:

1. **Sense of excitement** - film emphasizes the excitement of what is to come in California: eager chatter, men hopping on back of truck; man asks to join them if they have room and they excitedly nod and invite him onto truck; cheering as truck drives off; view of truck turning up dust on road as it drives away with upbeat music playing (film)
2. **Feelings of bitterness** - book emphasizes sense of bitterness at leaving: selling possessions which has become ‘junk’ - “The bitterness we sold to the junk man;” “We could have saved you, but you cut us down;” burning remaining possessions
3. **Hesitation to leave/anger at situation**  - “The tenant men scuffed home to the farms through the red dust.” (book); burning possessions - “They sat and looked at it and burned it into their memories.” (book); “even when hope is gone, we’ll have the rifle” (book)
4. **Sense of loss and fear of the unknown** - “men were ruthless...but the women knew how the past would come cry to them in the coming days” (book); wind picks up, paper flying, door of empty home flapping (film); burning the things they cannot take (book); woman doesn’t want to look back, forces herself to be stoic - “never had to lose everything I had in life” (film); selling all their possessions - “you’re buying a sorrow that can’t talk” (book); unsure/hesitation - “Maybe we can start again” (book) but then expresses that they can’t start again

**Organize:**

**T**: film emphasizes excitement of the possible while book displays the more nuanced and complicated feelings that accompany being forced to leave home

**I**: film highlights sense of excitement

**D**

**I**: book emphasizes bitterness

D

**I**: book reveals hesitation to leave and anger at their situation

**D**

**I**: while both book and film address the sense of loss in this scene, book leaves us with deeper sense of loss and what is at stake in their new lives

**D**

**Write**

**Level 4/5**

The film and book versions of the scene in the *Grapes of Wrath* where the tenant farmers pack up and leave to move to California show some similar emotions about leaving, but also reveal important differences. While the film version emphasizes the excitement of the possible, the book displays the more nuanced and complicated feelings that accompany being forced to leave home.

With its boisterous talk and focus on what is to come, the film emphasizes the sense of excitement the tenant farmers feel as they prepare to go to California. As the scene opens, we see people hurrying about, excitedly chattering, and helping a drunken man onto the back of a truck as others hop up eagerly themselves. A man asks to join them if they have room and they enthusiastically nod and motion him onto the truck. There seems to be room and possibility for all. As the truck drives off, we hear the sound of animated cheering and upbeat music plays in the background. The camera lingers on the house left behind as a wind picks up and blows paper and flaps the flimsy door on its hinges, leaving us with the sense that what is being left behind is frail and papery. What is to come must be better.

At the opening of chapter 9 in the book, we do not find the same focus on excitement. Rather, a sense of bitterness is highlighted through the words and actions of the characters. The past “had been spoiled” and so their dear possessions are now junk to sell to the junk man for much less than they feel they are worth because their lives themselves have become ‘junk.’ Moreover, their possessions contain their bitterness, their sorrow, all of the work they put in that came to nothing. The tenant women sit “among the doomed things” knowing “how the past would cry to them in the coming days.” We see only one hint of this snuffing out of sentimentalism in the film when a woman’s son asks her if she is going to take one last look back. The camera comes to focus on her face as she stoically looks forward, refusing to look behind, telling the viewer that she “never had to lose everything I had in life.” Their efforts to make a life here have failed and yet the possessions, the place, and the land will always remain a part of them -- a tragic, ill-fated part. Ultimately, they burn the last of their possessions and then, with nothing left, they feel an anxiousness to hurriedly get out of there.

It is only at the end of the scene in book that we see this urgency, though. Prior to that, the book lingers on the hesitation of the tenant farmers to leave and their anger about leaving. The tenant farmers “scuffed home to the farms through the red dust” -- imagery that shows their reluctance, their slowness, their dawdling of a sort. As they burn their last remaining possessions (a scene which the film does not even depict), the tenant farmers and their families “sat and looked at it and burned it into their memories.” Here again, we have an image of the doubts they have about leaving and the ways in which memory of this past will remain with them in a painful way. This pain can even turn to anger as we see when one character mentions that “when even hope is gone, we’ll have the rifle.” Their old tools are worthless, but they can protect themselves if needed.

The film and the book both address the sense of loss in this scene; however, the book leaves us with a deeper sense of the loss of their old lives and what is at stake in their new lives. As they are forced to sell their possessions, something we do not see in the film, one character tells the buyer he is “buying a sorrow that can’t talk.” Despite the one moment in the film where we see the woman in the truck express her sense of loss, the film is focused on where they are going, on their future. In the book, the tenant men return from selling their possessions with “hands in their pockets, hats pulled down,” giving a sense of weight and despair. One character expresses that maybe they can start over in California, but another responds that no, “only a baby can start.” There are no real do-overs or new beginnings for these people. The heaviness of their past and what has been lost will remain with them, forever shaping even their new lives and new beginnings.

In comparing the opening of chapter 9 with the film version of this scene from the *Grapes of Wrath*, we see that, although there is some overlap in expressing the tenant farmers sense of loss, the scene in the book is able to depict the complexity of emotions -- from bitterness to hesitancy to anger to resignation -- in a much deeper manner than the film. The descriptive writing and the more engaged conversations between characters give us more insight into how difficult and painful the upheaval is. Memories cannot be left behind like dust in the road but will sting in their eyes whenever memory comes. Their past is part of them and the question is left open: “How will we know it’s us without our past?” The loss expressed in the book is a loss not just of land and things, but of who they are and who they might become.

Level 3/4

The scene in the film and book versions of the *Grapes of Wrath* where the tenant farmers pack up and leave to move to California show similar and different emotions. While the film version emphasizes the excitement of the possible, the book reveals more complicated feelings about being forced to leave home.

The film emphasizes the excitement the tenant farmers feel as they prepare to go to California. As the scene opens, we see people hurrying about and helping a drunken man onto the back of a truck as others hop aboard. A man asks to join them if they have room and they enthusiastically nod. There seems to be room and possibility for all. As the truck drives off, we hear the sound of animated cheering and upbeat music.

At the opening of chapter 9 in the book, we do not find the same focus on excitement. The past “had been spoiled” and so their dear possessions are now junk to sell to the junk man for much less than they feel they are worth because their lives themselves have become ‘junk.’ Moreover, their possessions contain sadness, all of the work they put in that came to nothing. The tenant women sit “among the doomed things” knowing “how the past would cry to them in the coming days.” In contrast, in the film, we see only one hint of this snuffing out of sentimentalism when a woman’s son asks her if she is going to take one last look back, but she refusing, saying she “never had to lose everything I had in life.”

The film and the book both address the sense of loss in this scene, but the book shows the greater sadness at this. As they are forced to sell their possessions, something we do not see in the film, one character tells the buyer he is “buying a sorrow that can’t talk.” Despite the one moment in the film where we see the woman in the truck express her sense of loss, the film focuses on their future. In the book, the tenant men return from selling their possessions with “hands in their pockets, hats pulled down,” giving a sense of weight and despair.

Although there is some overlap in expressing the tenant farmers sense of loss, the scene in the book shows the complexity of emotions in a much deeper manner than the film. The descriptive writing and the more engaged conversations between characters give us more insight into how difficult and painful the upheaval is. Their past is part of them and the question is left open: “How will we know it’s us without our past?” They lose belongings, but also a sense of who they are.