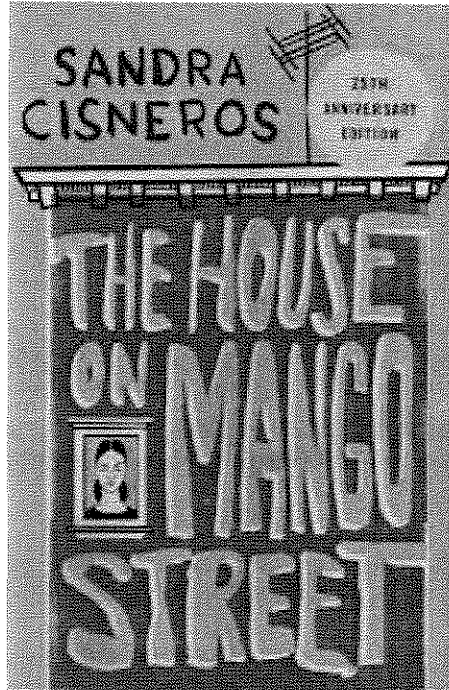


Name _____

The House on Mango Street

Sandra Cisneros



**English 9
Credit 7**

Teacher Checklist

- Check student answers for understanding and use of quotations
- Graphic Organizer is complete
- Article Response answers all 4 parts of the prompt
- Read outlines for essay
- Check thesis statements and quotations/ support for arguments
- Talk to student about Cause and Effect essay in credit 8
- Talk about what to expect in *The Odyssey* and offer additional resources

Student Checklist

- All questions have thoughtful, complete responses and include quotations when necessary
- Going Further article graphic organizer is complete
- Article response is complete and includes all 4 parts of the prompt
- Outlines for essay test include thoughtful thesis statements and appropriate support

Date	
Grade	
Supervising Teacher	
NCLB Teacher	
Comment	

Standards

Reading - Literature

RL.9-10.1

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL.9-10.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.9-10.3 Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

RL.9-10.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).

RL.9-10.5 Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.

Reading - Informational Text

RI.9-10.2 Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

RI.9-10.7 Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person's life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account.

Writing

W.9-10.1 Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant or sufficient evidence.

Language

L.9-10.5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. A) Interpret figures of speech (e.g., euphemism, oxymoron) in context and analyze their role in the text.

Background

The House on Mango Street is a deceptively simple novel: Cisneros uses uncomplicated vocabulary and sentence structure, but creates a story with many layers and levels of meaning. It is a book of short stories—and sometimes not even full stories, but character sketches and vignettes—that add up, as Sandra Cisneros has written, "to tell one big story, each story contributing to the whole—like beads in a necklace." That story is told in language that is as full of meaning and feeling as poetry, and the slang and breaks from grammatical correctness contribute to its immediacy. It is narrated in the voice of a young girl—a girl too young to know that no one may ever hear her—but whose voice is completely convincing, because it is the creation of a mature and sophisticated writer. *The House on Mango Street* appears to wander casually from subject to subject—from hair to hips, from clouds to feet, from an invalid aunt to a girl named Sally, who has "eyes like Egypt" and whose father sometimes beats her. But this apparent randomness disguises an artful exploration of themes of individual identity and loyalty to one's community, separation and loss, escape and return, the temptation of romance and the dead end of sexual inequality and oppression.

The House on Mango Street is also a book about a culture—that of Chicanos, or Mexican-Americans—that has long been disguised by demeaning stereotypes and hurt by a lack of concern within the community. Although Cisneros uses language as a recurring metaphor for the gulf between Mexican-Americans and the majority culture, what keeps Esperanza Cordero and her family and friends locked in their barrio is something more permanent than language: a combination of racism, poverty, and shame. Remember that many Chicanos did not come to the United States by choice, but simply found themselves in alien territory as a result of the U.S.'s expansion into an area that was once Mexico.

It is a work that captures the universal pains of otherness—what Cisneros has called "the shame of being poor, of being female, of being not-quite-good-enough." It suggests from where that otherness comes and shows how it can become a cause for celebration rather than shame.

This packet is adapted from lessons written by Peter Trachtenburg found on RandomHouse.com
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Guided Reading Questions

Please answer all questions in complete sentences.

"The House on Mango Street"

1. Where did the narrator live before she moved to Mango Street? How were her previous homes different? _____

2. In what kind of house would she like to live? Why doesn't her new home live up to her expectations? _____

"Hairs"

3. Who are the members of Esperanza's family? Name and describe each of them. _____

"My Name"

4. After whom was Esperanza named? What does that person's story tell you about the status of women in Mexican society? _____

"Cathy Queen of Cats"

5. Why is Cathy's family about to move? _____

"Our Good Day"

6. How does Esperanza make friends with Lucy and Rachel? What makes them better friends than Cathy? _____

"Marin"

7. Who is Marin? Why is she unable to leave her house? How does she plan to change her situation? Why do Esperanza and her friends admire her? _____

"Those Who Don't"

8. How do outsiders see Esperanza's neighborhood? How does Esperanza feel when she visits other neighborhoods? _____

"There Was an Old Woman She Had So Many Children She Didn't Know What to Do"

9. Why does Rosa Vargas cry every day? Why do her children misbehave? What happens to her son Angel? _____

"Alicia Who Sees Mice"

10. How does Alicia's father treat her efforts to get an education? How might this affect Esperanza? _____

"The Family of Little Feet"

11. What happens to Esperanza when she and her friends are given some cast-off shoes? How do the shoes change them? What effect do they have on the men in the neighborhood? _____

"A Rice Sandwich"

12. Why does Esperanza want to eat in the school cafeteria? How does she get her mother to help her? _____

"Hips"

13. What are the girls doing as they talk about hips? What are hips good for? What does their conversation tell you about their ages? _____

"The First Job"

14. Why does this story have a misleading title? What happens to Esperanza on her first day at work? What does this episode tell you about her family and their expectations? _____

"Papa Who Wakes Up Tired in the Dark"



15. Why does Esperanza's father cry? How does his crying make her feel? Use quotations to support your answer. _____

"Born Bad"

16. What happens to Aunt Lupe? Why does Esperanza believe she deserves to go to hell? What special relationship did Esperanza have with her aunt? _____

"Geraldo No Last Name"

17. Why does Geraldo have no last name? From the information Cisneros provides, do you believe that his death was inevitable? Why/why not? _____

"Sire"

18. Why is Esperanza afraid of Sire? What do her parents think of him? Why is she so curious about what he does with Lois, and why does this curiosity make her feel as though "everything is holding its breath inside [her]" (73)? _____

"No Speak English"



19. What eight English words—or, really, phrases—does Mamacita know? What do they tell you about the ways in which Mexican immigrants relate to the "official," English-speaking culture outside their communities? _____

"Rafaela Who Drinks Coconut & Papaya Juice on Tuesdays"

20. What is making Rafaela grow old? Who was Rapunzel, and why would Rafaela dream of having hair like hers? _____

"Sally"

21. Describe the relationship between Sally and her father. How do her schoolmates see her? What transformation takes place when Sally comes home? _____

"Minerva Writes Poems"

22. Why does Minerva write poems? Why is she black and blue when she comes to visit Esperanza? How do you know? _____

"Bums in the Attic"

23. What does Esperanza's father do for a living? Why has Esperanza stopped joining her family on their Sunday outings? _____

"Beautiful & Cruel"

24. What is the nature of Esperanza's "quiet war" [89]? Against whom—or what—is she fighting? _____

"A Smart Cookie"

25. How would you categorize the things Esperanza's mother knows? What things might she not know that Esperanza does? Why do you think she left school? _____

"The Monkey Garden" / "Red Clowns" / "Linoleum Roses"

26. How does the Monkey Garden change? What does Sally do that makes Esperanza so angry? From whom is she trying to save her? What eventually happens to Sally? How does Esperanza feel about her marriage? _____

27. What happens to Esperanza at the carnival? Who does she blame? Why? _____

"The Three Sisters"

28. How does Esperanza meet the three sisters? What kind of future do they predict for her? What is the responsibility they place on her? _____

"Mango Says Goodbye Sometimes"

29. How does the ending of *The House on Mango Street* complete a circle? _____

Language: Image, Metaphor, Voice

1. Throughout the book Cisneros has Esperanza employ common idiomatic phrases that serve as a kind of shorthand. Analyze some of the following phrases and suggest what Esperanza means by them—and what the author means to tell us about Esperanza herself:

a. "But I know how those things go." [5] _____

b. "people like us" [13] _____

c. "We take what we can get and make the most of it" [33] _____

d. "Ain't it a shame" [66] _____

e. "Same story" [85] _____

2. In the story "Hairs," Esperanza describes her mother's hair as being "like little candy circles all curly and pretty." [6] What does this metaphor, and those in the next paragraph, suggest about Esperanza's feelings for her mother? _____

★ Find another example in the book where metaphor and simile convey information about the narrator as well as about the person or thing she describes. Write it out and explain. _____

3. In "Gil's Furniture Bought and Sold," Cisneros describes the sound of an old music box: "It's like all of a sudden he let go a million moths all over the dusty furniture and swan-neck shadows in our bones." [20] This technique, in which a sound is described in terms of things seen and felt, is called synesthesia. Where else in the book does Cisneros use synesthesia? Write descriptions of:

a. a place, using sounds _____

★ b. a piece of music, using smells _____

c. a meal, using colors _____

d. a person, using taste and touch _____

4. In "Boys & Girls," Esperanza describes herself as "a balloon tied to an anchor" [9]. What are the connotations of this metaphor, and what does it tell you about Esperanza? _____

Where else in the book does Cisneros use images and metaphors associated with the sky? What ideas do these recurring images evoke? _____

5. In "Chanclas," an embarrassed Esperanza declines her cousin's invitation to dance, because her feet "are growing bigger and bigger." What Cisneros is describing is not a literal reality but a feeling that in turn suggests other feelings. In this case, the sensation in Esperanza's feet tells us about her self-consciousness and embarrassment. Where else does the author use this technique? _____

Describe the following situations in terms of the sensations they might evoke in different parts of your body:

- a. entering a dark basement _____
 - b. seeing a pet die _____
 - c. learning that someone you secretly care for also likes you _____
 - d. making a speech at your high school graduation _____
 - e. seeing a baby brother or sister for the first time _____
6. The last sentence of the book is: "For the ones who cannot out" (110). Strictly speaking, the sentence is ungrammatical, since "out" is not a verb. Why do you think Cisneros has chosen to break perceived rules of grammar here? Might there be any relation between "breaking" grammar and breaking out of Mango Street? _____

The People on Mango Street

1. Why do you think Cisneros tells the reader about Esperanza's house before she writes about her name? Why is where Esperanza lives more important than who she is? _____

2. How does she feel about the men in "The Family of Little Feet," "Chanclas," "The First Job," "Sire," and "The Red Clowns"? _____

3. Throughout *The House on Mango Street*, Esperanza describes herself from two points of view: as she sees herself and as she believes others see her. We can find an example of this in "My Name" when she says, "At school they say my name funny as if the syllables were made out of tin and hurt the roof of your mouth" (11). Where else in the book does Cisneros convey this dual consciousness? How does Esperanza see herself? How does she think other people perceive her? _____

4. At the novel's end, Esperanza declares that she is too strong for Mango Street to keep her forever. What is the nature of her strength? How does Cisneros establish this characteristic elsewhere in the book? _____

Going Further

Choose an issue raised in *House on Mango Street* and do some further research on it. Find at least one article about the issue and fill out the graphic organizer on the next page. Then write a response including how Cisneros presents or deals with this issue in the book, how it is dealt with in the article, the similarities and differences between the texts. Issues may include poverty, education, immigration, sexual or domestic abuse, homelessness, ethnic identity, or sexism.

Some articles to consider are:

- "Changing Our Minds" (search article title + Sojourners)
- "Poor Among Plenty" (search article title + Newsweek)
- "Looking for a way out" (search article title + Chicago Tribune)
- "A Different Kind of Home Schooling" (search article title + LA Times)
- "Children Who Live in Public Housing Suffer in School" (search article title + NY Times)
- "No. 1 Student: 'I'm Still Crossing the Border'" (search article title + Chicago Tribune)
- "Immigration Debate is Latest Fight over What It Means to Be an American" (search article title + KRT News Service)
- "Downturn Brings a New Face to Homelessness" (search article title + Washington Post)
- "When Barry Became Barack" (search article title + Newsweek)

Please note that you must search for, find, read, and complete the graphic organizer using an article you find on the internet, in the newspaper, or in a magazine/journal. You cannot do this assignment using only *House on Mango Street*.

This activity was adapted from one published by San Benito High School at
<http://www.sbhsd.k12.ca.us>

Graphic Organizer: Connections to Our World

Main idea of the first 1/3 of article:	Main idea of the second 1/3 of article:	Main idea of the last 1/3 of article:
Details that support this main idea: 1. 2. 3.	Details that support this main idea: 1. 2. 3.	Details that support this main idea: 1. 2. 3.
The main idea of the essay or article		
Connection to novel (include quote if possible)		
Source: Title:		Author:
Name of Publication:		Date of Publication

Theme Analysis and Application of the Text

Pick 2 Theme Essays to write for your test. Each is worth 25 points and should have at least 4 paragraphs with a clear thesis, body (with quotations), and conclusion.

1. In "Boys and Girls" [8-9], Cisneros writes, "The boys and the girls live in separate worlds." In "Beautiful & Cruel," there is the declaration "I have decided not to grow up tame like the others who lay their necks on the threshold waiting for the ball and chain." [88] How would you describe the respective worlds in which Cisneros's boys and girls live? What kind of men and women are they likely to become when they grow up? How would you sum up the book's depiction of relations between the sexes? Use incidents and descriptions in such stories as "My Name," "Marin," "Alicia Who Sees Mice," "Rafaela Who Drinks Coconut and Papaya Juice on Tuesdays," "Sally," "Minerva Writes Poems," "Beautiful & Cruel," "Sally Says," and "The Monkey Garden."
2. In the stories "My Name" and "No Speak English," Cisneros describes a gulf between two languages, a gap of meaning and of feeling. In English, for example, Esperanza means hope; in Spanish, says the narrator, it suggests sadness and waiting [10]. How does Esperanza feel about her two languages—and by extension, about her two cultures? How does she feel about the society outside her barrio? Look particularly at the chapters "Cathy Queen of Cats," "Those Who Don't," "Papa Who Wakes Up Tired in the Dark," "Geraldo No Last Name," and "Bums In the Attic."
3. When Esperanza visits Elenita to have her fortune told, the witch tells her that she sees "an anchor of arms" and "a home in the heart." What is the possible significance of these visions? How do they tie in to themes Cisneros develops elsewhere in the book?
4. Nearly all the characters in Cisneros's book dream of escaping. What do they want to leave? Describe the ways in which different people try to escape, as well as the result of their efforts. Do you think that Esperanza's dreams of escaping are likely to be more successful? How does being poor—as most of these characters are—affect one's chances of escaping a dead-end neighborhood or fulfilling other dreams?

Pre-Writing

Each paragraph of a literary analysis should include at least one quotation from the book that supports your thesis and at least two original sentences that explain what that quotation means that why it is important to your argument. The easiest format for a literary analysis paragraph looks like this:

1. Topic Sentence (The Big Idea)
2. Background for your quotation – What is happening in the book? Who are the characters involved?
3. Quotation (with a citation!)
4. Explain what the quotation means.
5. Explain how the quotation relates to and proves your thesis.
6. Concluding Sentence (similar to the topic sentence but gives a sense of closure).

For Example:

[1] In Richard Connel's short story, "The Most Dangerous Game," the hunter Rainsford learns what it feels like to be the prey. [2] When Rainsford finds himself on General Zaroff's island, he is horrified to discover that the General plans to hunt and kill him. [3] During the hunt, Rainsford experiences fear that "sent a shudder of cold horror through his whole being" (19). [4] This is the first time that Rainsford feels what a hunted animal may feel when a man comes toward it with a gun. [5] Since Rainsford had never been the hunted one before, he didn't know how scared the animals were. [6] This experience teaches Rainsford what it feels like to fear for his life and changes how he thinks about hunting animals in the future.

Outline 1

Prompt: _____

Thesis: _____

Topic Sentence 1: _____

Example/Quotation from the book with lead-in: _____

Topic Sentence 2: _____

Example Quotation from the book with lead-in: _____

Outline 2

Prompt: _____

Thesis: _____

Topic Sentence 1: _____

Example/Quotation from the book with lead-in: _____

Topic Sentence 2: _____

Example Quotation from the book with lead-in: _____

Short Essay Rubric

	5	4	3	2	1
Thesis	Specific, answers all parts of the prompt, demonstrates critical thinking	Specific, answers all parts of the prompt	Answers all parts of the prompt	Vague or incomplete	Missing
Paragraph 1	Includes a topic sentence, lead in, at least one quotation, and at least 2 sentences of original analysis for each example that relates to the thesis. Quotes are cited properly. Concluding sentence makes sense and lead into next paragraph.	Includes a topic sentence, lead in, at least one quotation, and at least 2 sentences of original analysis for each example that relates to the thesis. Quotes are cited properly.	Includes a topic sentence, specific reference or quotation, and some analysis that relates to the thesis.	Examples are loosely connected and may not have lead in or may not relate to the thesis.	No specific examples or no connection to the thesis.
Paragraph 2	Includes a topic sentence, lead in, at least one quotation, and at least 2 sentences of original analysis for each example that relates to the thesis. Quotes are cited properly. Concluding sentence makes sense and lead into next paragraph.	Includes a topic sentence, lead in, at least one quotation, and at least 2 sentences of original analysis for each example that relates to the thesis. Quotes are cited properly.	Includes a topic sentence, specific reference or quotation, and some analysis that relates to the thesis.	Examples are loosely connected and may not have lead in or may not relate to the thesis.	No specific examples or no connection to the thesis.
Conclusion	Wraps ideas together and restates the main points in a new way.	Wraps ideas together in a way that feels complete.	Seems vague or repetitive.	Vague or unrelated to the rest of the essay.	Incomplete or missing.
Vocabulary and Conventions	Varied and academic vocabulary. Correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.	Varied and academic vocabulary. Mostly correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.	Academic vocabulary. Some issues with spelling, grammar, and punctuation.	Vocabulary is repetitive or inappropriate. Many issues with spelling, grammar, and punctuation.	Vocabulary is repetitive or inappropriate. Issues with spelling, grammar, and punctuation interfere with understanding.

