

Unit Plan
The House on Mango Street



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Introduction

Unit:

The House on Mango Street

9th grade

50-minute periods

3 weeks

Overview:

This unit plan is for the novel *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros. The unit will be taught over the course of three weeks. There will be a variety of activities and strategies used over the three weeks, as well as a final writing project and an evaluative exam. As it is a multicultural novel, culture will in fact be a supplemental part of the overall unit. Students will learn several important concepts and will be able to relate much of the content of the unit to their own lives.

Theme:

The theme of this unit plan is identity and finding ones own identity in the process of growing up. In the novel we see the main character Esperanza growing up and finding out who she really is. She identifies herself with her name, her house on Mango Street, and her cultural heritage. Her home becomes a part of her and makes her who she is. This unit plan explores these ideas from the novel and relates them to the students' own lives as well.

Concept:

There are several concepts covered throughout this unit. Students will learn about literary elements such as theme, symbolism, and juxtaposition. They will also learn about culture – what it means to Esperanza as well as what it means to themselves. Many different themes from the novel will be analyzed and related to the main theme of the unit, identity. Students will also learn writing skills, such as how to write a vignette. This will become part of a larger project towards the end of the unit.

Rationale:

The House on Mango Street by Sandra Cisneros is an important novel to include in the canon of adolescent literature. It is filled with literary concepts that will be useful for understanding the novel as well as be applicable to future forms of literature. It also deals with subject matter that is very relatable to students at the 9th grade level, such as growing up and coming into ones own.

Classroom Makeup

The creation of this unit plan has a specific class structure in mind. There are twenty-five students in this heterogeneous 9th grade class – fifteen are females and ten are males. This is a multicultural class with nine students of Hispanic descent, seven students of African-American descent, two students of Asian descent, and seven students of Caucasian descent. Because this is a multicultural novel, there is already the implication that culture will be included in the unit. This is true; however, the lessons will also relate the cultural matter to students' own lives, as well as allow students to explore and research their own cultures if they decide to do so.

This is also an inclusion class. There are five students with ADD/ADHD, three students who are dyslexic, and four students who are alliterate. Several measures have been taken in order to include these students in the normal aspects of everyday learning activities.

For the students with ADD/ADHD it is important that classroom distractions are kept to a minimum. For this reason, the majority of the material that will be posted around the classroom will be relevant to the unit. Much of it will be individual student or group work. It is also to keep these students organized, which is why students will have their notebooks divided into four sections: Literary Vocabulary, Journal Entries, Writing, and Responses. This is to aid students with ADD/ADHD in staying on task and on track throughout the unit. There are also a variety of strategies used as to not bore students with any sort of attention deficit issue. Students will experience short lectures, group work, writing activities, individual assignments, presentations, and hands-on learning as well.

To ensure the success of students with dyslexia, there is no point at any time in the unit where a student is forced to read aloud. Students will be asked to participate on a volunteer basis only. If there is any time where a student does not want to read aloud, the teacher will assume the responsibility. These students will also be allowed extra time on the exam, or the option of an oral exam if necessary.

For the students who are alliterate/non-readers, again, a variety of strategies will be used. Many of the lessons will be related to real life situations so they become more tangible to students who do not like to read. There are also several graphic organizers used throughout the lesson as hands-on material for these students. Also, there are times during the unit when other students or the teacher will read aloud. This will help the material reach the students who are otherwise reluctant to read it themselves.

Day 1

Lesson Overview:

This lesson allows the students to get to know the author of the book we will be reading for this unit. By researching Sandra Cisneros, students will get an insight into the novel *The House on Mango Street*.

Concept:

Connecting author to literature to provide background knowledge in preparation for reading

Performance Objectives:

SWBAT use researching skills to find information on Sandra Cisneros.
SWBAT make connections between their findings and the novel.
SWBAT relate author's culture to culture in literature.

Materials/Resources:

Handout
Poster paper
Markers
Library/Internet

Lesson:

5 minutes – Explain to the class that we will be starting the novel *The House on Mango Street*. In order to understand the origins, style, and cultural aspects of this novel, students will be asked to research the author, Sandra Cisneros. Students will be put into five groups of five students. Each group will be assigned a different topic to research (See Handout).

15-20 minutes – Take students to the library. Each group will sit together around the computer and begin researching their topic. Students will use the guiding questions to help jumpstart their research but must also come up with some questions of their own to answer. Students must record the information they have found as well as cite the websites where they found the information.

15 minutes – Bring students back to the classroom. Students will be responsible for creating the poster to present to the class. They must include the information they have found, including the website address, in a well-organized manner so that the rest of the class will be able to learn from the presentation. Students will then give a brief but concise presentation of their information to the class. Posters will be hung up around the room for the remainder of the unit.

10 minutes – Relate Cisneros to her novel. Read following review of novel to the class: “Told in a series of vignettes stunning for their eloquence, *The House on Mango Street* is Sandra Cisneros’ greatly admired novel of a young girl growing up in the Latino section of Chicago ... It has entered the canon of coming-of-age classics. Sometimes

heartbreaking, sometimes deeply joyous, *The House on Mango Street* tells the story of Esperanza Cordero, whose neighborhood is one of harsh realities and harsh beauty. Esperanza doesn't want to belong—not to her rundown neighborhood, and not to the low expectations the world has for her. Esperanza's story is that of a young girl coming into her power, and inventing for herself what she will become.”

Ask students to make connections between what this novel is going to be about and the information they discovered about Cisneros. Use guiding questions such as: “How does Cisneros biographical information relate to the novel? What are the cultural similarities between Cisneros and Esperanza? Is *The House on Mango Street* written in Cisneros' known style of writing? Based on your research, where do you think the inspiration for this novel came from?”

Homework:

None.

Handout for Day 1

Sandra Cisneros

Research Project

Directions: Each group has been assigned a specific topic. Now, you must research your topic using the Internet. You may use any of several search engines to do so: Google, Yahoo, AskJeeves, etc. Use the questions as your guidelines, but try to go beyond them and find as much information as possible. Record all information as well as the website where you found it.

Group 1: Biography

Where and when was Cisneros born? Who are her parents and/or siblings? Where did she grow up? Go to school? Etc.

Group 2: Writing Career

When did Cisneros start writing? Did she have formal training, and if so, where? What else has Cisneros written? What other genres of writing is she known for? Etc.

Group 3: Influences

Who has influenced Cisneros? Why did she start writing? Does her culture influence her writing? Are there recurring themes or ideas in her work? Etc.

Group 4: Reviews and Critiques

What do others say about Cisneros' work? Are there positive reviews/negative critiques? What do others say about her style of writing? Etc.

Group 5: Other Jobs and Interests

What else has Cisneros done? Where has she worked? What are her interests/passions? Etc.

Day 2

Lesson Overview:

This lesson teaches students about style and more specifically, the vignette.

Concept:

Style – the vignette

Performance Objectives:

SWBAT define and identify style.

SWBAT define and identify vignette.

SWBAT recognize Cisneros' use of the vignette in *The House on Mango Street*.

Materials/Resources:

Lecture notes on transparency

Overhead Projector

The House on Mango Street

Lesson:

15 minutes – Give short lecture on style and the vignette (See Notes). Students should take notes in the literary vocabulary section of their notebook. After lecture, ask if students have any questions at this point. Answer potential questions.

20 minutes – Distribute copies of the novel to the students. Ask for a volunteer, or volunteers, to read the first vignette. If there are no volunteers, teacher reads aloud. After reading the first chapter, ask students to identify elements of the vignette from the first chapter. Students should keep in mind the following ideas from the lecture about a vignette: length, description, character, mood, tone, and theme. If students are reluctant to respond, ask questions related to these topics such as, “What do you think about the length of this chapter? What is being described? What is the mood being set or the tone of the narrator? What is the theme of this chapter?” Students should take notes on and give examples of each element of the vignette exemplified in this chapter.

15 minutes – Explain to students that they will be using Chapter One to complete a creative project/presentation for homework.

Homework:

Students should reread Chapter One, “The House on Mango Street.” Students will be asked to write a description of their own home, mirroring the description in Chapter One and using the elements of the style of a vignette. Students should write about the physical description of their home, as well as briefly mention any family members who live with them. Students should also describe what ‘home’ means to them. Students should be sure to answer the following questions: Does your home make you who you are/define you? How does it affect your identity? Does it depict your culture? They should accompany this with either a photograph or a drawn picture of their own home.

Students should be prepared to present this information to the class at the beginning of the next class period.

Lecture Notes for Day 2

What is *style*?

-Definition: the manner of expression of a particular writer produced by: choice of words, sentence structures, use of literary devices, rhythm, and other elements of composition

-Many writers have their own particular style

-Some types of style are scientific, expository, poetic, and journalistic

-For example, an article from a magazine or a newspaper is written in a different style than one from a scientific journal

-Newspaper: journalistic, factual but may be persuasive or biased, should appeal to wide variety of readers

-Scientific Journal: scientific, uses science-related words, should be solely factual, may only appeal to readers who share same scientific knowledge

What is a *vignette*?

-Definition: a short, well-written sketch or descriptive scene

-It does not have a plot, which would make it a story, but it does reveal something about the elements in it

-It may reveal character, or mood, or tone

-It may have a theme or idea of its own that it wants to convey

-It is the description of the scene or character that is important

-For example, Sandra Cisneros' novel *The House on Mango Street* is written in a series of vignettes.

Day 3

Lesson Overview:

This lesson will discuss the theme of one of the vignettes from the novel *The House on Mango Street*.

Concept:

Theme of home

Performance Objectives:

SWBAT define theme.

SWBAT identify theme in a vignette.

Materials/Resources:

Lecture notes on transparency

Overhead Projector

The House on Mango Street

Lesson:

35-40 minutes – Students will present their homework assignment from the day before. Each student will have just a few minutes for his or her presentation. They should read what they have written as well as show the class the picture of their home. All work will be posted around the classroom for the remainder of the unit.

10-15 minutes – Give short lecture on theme (See Notes). Students should take notes in the literary vocabulary section of their notebooks. Explain how ‘home’ is the theme of the first vignette. Assign and explain homework.

Homework:

Students should read up to page 26 (read through “Louie, His Cousin & His Other Cousin”). Students should pick one vignette and write a short response paper about it. They can write about their personal feelings, relate it to something that has happened to them or someone they know, etc. They must also explain what the theme of the chosen chapter is and support their idea with evidence from the text. Will be collected at the beginning of the next class period.

Lecture Notes for Day 3

What is *theme*?

-Definition: a common thread or repeated idea that is incorporated throughout a literary work

-It is a thought or idea the author presents to the reader that may be deep, difficult to understand, or even moralistic

-Generally, a theme has to be extracted as the reader explores the passages of a work

-The theme provides an answer to the question, "*What is the work about?*"

-Unlike plot, which deals with the action of a work, theme concerns itself with a work's message or contains the general idea of a work.

Day 4

Lesson Overview:

This lesson deals with the overall theme of the unit, identity.

Concept:

Theme of identity

Performance Objectives:

SWBAT identify theme of identity in *The House on Mango Street*.

SWBAT write his or her own vignette about identity.

Materials/Resources:

The House on Mango Street

Lesson:

10 minutes – Collect homework. Students will write a journal entry (in the journal section of their notebook) about the following prompt: “Think about the chapter ‘Our Good Day.’ Describe one of the best days you can remember from your childhood. What happened? How did you feel? Was your good day at all similar to Esperanza’s good day? If so, how?”

20 minutes – Review the chapter “My Name.” Explain how this vignette describes Esperanza’s name and how she got it, shows what other people think of her name, and tells what Esperanza thinks of her own name and how she wishes she could change it. Explain that this chapter exposes part of the narrator’s identity, another theme from the novel. Have students brainstorm (in the writing section of their notebook) for about 10 minutes about their own names, how they got them, what others say about it, etc.

10 minutes – Have students pair up with one other student sitting next to/near them. Students should discuss with each other what they wrote down for their brainstorming activity.

10 minutes – Ask students if they would like to share their stories about their names. If no one volunteers, teacher will share own story first to see if students will then follow. Assign and explain homework.

Homework:

Read up to page 35 (read through “Darius and the Clouds”). Students will also complete a writing assignment for homework. They should take their ideas from the brainstorming activity and turn them into a well-developed vignette. Students should review their notes about vignette as well as the chapter “My Name” in order to do so. Will be collected at the beginning of the next class.

Day 5

Lesson Overview:

This lesson focuses on the vignettes “Marin” and “Alicia Who Sees Mice” and how they show women’s place in society.

Concept:

Theme of women in society

Performance Objectives:

SWBAT identify the theme of women in society in *The House on Mango Street*.

Materials/Resources:

The House on Mango Street

Graphic organizer

Lesson:

10 minutes – Collect homework. Students will write a journal entry (in the journal section of their notebook) in response to the following prompt: “Do you feel like you have a role or place in society? If so, what is it? If not, what would you like your role in society to be? Is it influenced by your family? Your culture?”

20 minutes – Distribute graphic organizer. Split the class in half. Then split each half of the class into groups of three. The groups in one half of the class will be responsible for the vignette “Marin” while the other half of the class will be responsible for “Alicia Who Sees Mice.” Students should critically read the vignettes, respectively, and try to identify the role of women in society. Students should discuss this within their small groups. After about 15 minutes, students should return to their larger groups. During the last 5 minutes, students should communicate with the rest of the large group and share their ideas.

20 minutes – Recreate the graphic organizer on the board. Ask someone from each small group to contribute an idea that they came up with about a woman’s place in society according to what they read. After all the information has been put on the board, begin discussion by asking questions such as, “Do the women in this story seem to have an identity? If so, what is it? If not, why not and who seems to be ‘taking it away’ from them? In contrast, how are the men portrayed in this story?” Fill out “Identity of Women” section of graphic organizer together and assign and explain homework.

Homework:

Read up to page 58 (read through “Papa Who Wakes Up Tired in the Dark”). Write a response paper in response to the following prompt: “As you read, you are starting to see a change in Esperanza. She is beginning the transition from childhood to adolescence. What is happening physically, socially, and emotionally? Cite specific examples from the novel when necessary.” Will be collected at the beginning of the next class period.

Graphic Organizer for Day 5

Societal Roles of Women in *The House on Mango Street*

"Marin"	"Alicia Who Sees Mice"
Identity of Women	

Day 6

Lesson Overview:

This lesson first introduces the concept of bildungsroman. This concept will be illustrated by several of the vignettes from *The House on Mango Street*.

Concept:

The House on Mango Street as a bildungsroman

Performance Objectives:

SWBAT define and identify bildungsroman.

SWBAT relate bildungsroman to finding identity.

Materials/Resources:

The House on Mango Street

Chalk/Chalkboard for notes

Graphic Organizer

Lesson:

5 minutes – Collect homework. Give short lecture on bildungsroman (See Notes).

Students should take notes in the literary vocabulary section of their notebooks.

30 minutes – Distribute graphic organizer. Have students do a jigsaw exercise. Students will count off by number and letter (Numbers 1-6, Letters A-F; i.e., 1A, 2A, 3A...1B, 2B, 3B, etc.) First, students will group together by letter (all A's together, all B's together, etc.). Each group will be assigned one of the six vignettes to discuss amongst themselves. The students will critically read the vignette looking for specific scenes or moments where the bildungsroman is exemplified. Students should take notes in their respective sections of the graphic organizer on where and how they see Esperanza growing up and changing. After the first 15 minutes, students will then regroup with their same numbers (all 1's together, all 2's together, etc.). Each student will now have analyzed a different vignette and can share what they have found with each other. Students should take turns explaining to the rest of their new groups what they discussed in their first groups. At the end of 30 minutes, students should have shared all information and filled out their entire graphic organizer.

15 minutes – Students will return to their seats for a large group discussion. Teacher will ask for volunteers to share what they have learned today. As students are sharing information, teacher will ask guiding questions such as, “What changes do you see in Esperanza? Does she see the changes in herself? Do others/outsideers see the changes in her? How does it seem she feels about these changes? How do these changes relate to Esperanza's identity? Is she starting to find one?” After all six vignettes have been discussed and all questions have been answered, assign and explain homework.

Homework:

No reading. Tell students to start thinking about their own childhood experiences, specifically an experience that they felt changed them somehow or was important in their process of growing up. Explain that this will be part of the next class.

Notes for Day 6

What is a *bildungsroman*?

-Definition: a novel depicting someone's growth from childhood to maturity

-The protagonist grows, learns, and changes in order to take his or her place in the world

-Bildungsroman is a German word that literally means “a novel of formation”

-It is sometimes referred to as a coming of age story

Graphic Organizer for Day 6

The House on Mango Street as a Bildungsroman

"A Family of Little Feet"	"A Rice Sandwich"
"Chanclas"	"Hips"
"The First Job"	"Papa Who Wakes Up Tired in the Dark"

Day 7

Lesson Overview:

In this lesson, the concept of juxtaposition will also be introduced and exemplified by the vignette “Hips.” The concept of bildungsroman will also be revisited.

Concept:

Juxtaposition
Bildungsroman

Performance Objectives:

SWBAT define and identify juxtaposition.
SWBAT relate bildungsroman to own experiences.

Materials/Resources:

The House on Mango Street
Chalk/Chalkboard for notes
Jump rope

Lesson:

5 minutes – Give short lecture on juxtaposition (See Notes). Students should take notes in the literary vocabulary section of their notebooks.

15 minutes – Revisit the chapter “Hips.” Explain how in this chapter, Cisneros uses the juxtaposition of the act of jumping rope with the conversation about getting hips and growing up to show contrast. Explain that this chapter shows how as the older girls are jumping rope and singing songs about getting hips, we see them leaving Nenny behind. Show how she continues to sing the same old songs as the older girls move on.

15 minutes – Ask students to do an individual writing assignment. Have students write for about 10-15 minutes about a time in their childhood where they felt like something changed because they were growing up. Use guiding questions such as, “How old were you? Where were you? What were you doing? Why did you feel this way? Did you ‘leave someone behind’? Were you ever the one ‘left behind’ by an older someone else growing up?”

15 minutes – Explain the next activity, telling students that they will be acting out the jump rope scene, illustrating both juxtaposition and bildungsroman. Ask for seven volunteers. Five of these volunteers will be asked to tell their stories about growing up to the class. The other two students will be responsible for turning the jump rope. Students should move all desks to the sides of the room to create more space for this activity. Each of the five students will come up to the jump rope one at a time to tell their story. Students will jump through the rope as they tell their story from memory. Thank student volunteers and assign and explain homework.

Homework:

Read up to page 69 (read through “Edna’s Ruthie”). Write a response paper about the vignette “Geraldo No Last Name.” Explain that after this reading, they will have read three vignettes dealing with death (“Papa Who Wakes Up Tired in the Dark,” “Born Bad,” and “Geraldo No Last Name”). Students should respond to “Geraldo” according to the following prompt: “Who was Geraldo? What did we as the reader know about him? Does he have an identity? How does Esperanza feel about Geraldo’s death in comparison to the deaths in the other two chapters?” Explain that it is important for students to focus on this assignment, as it will be used as part of the next lesson. Will be collected at the beginning of the next class period.

Notes for Day 7

What is *juxtaposition*?

-Definition: the arrangement of two or more ideas, characters, actions, settings, phrases, or words side-by-side or in similar narrative moments

-Used for the purpose of comparison, contrast, rhetorical effect, suspense, or character development

Day 8

Lesson Overview:

This lesson focuses on the recurring theme of home as well as the social commentary created by the chapter entitled “Geraldo No Last Name.” This lesson will also begin a closer focus on Hispanic culture and stereotypes.

Concept:

Theme of home

Discovering social commentary in literature analysis

Performance Objectives:

SWBAT relate known theme of home to a new chapter of *The House on Mango Street*.

SWBAT define and identify social commentary.

SWBAT recognize social commentary in “Geraldo No Last Name.”

Materials/Resources:

The House on Mango Street

Chalk/Chalkboard for notes

Handout

Lesson:

10 minutes – Collect homework. Ask students to open their books to page 65 (“Geraldo No Last Name”). Explain to students that we will be looking for three things in this short chapter: theme, cultural stereotypes, and social commentary. These three things will be related to the overall theme of identity. Tell students that they will be discussing these issues in a large group setting for this lesson.

35 minutes – Distribute graphic organizer. Focus on theme first. Ask for a volunteer to read the following passage aloud: “His name was Geraldo. And his home is in another country. The ones he left behind are far away, will wonder, shrug, remember. Geraldo—he went north...we never heard from him again.” If no volunteers, the teacher reads. Ask questions to guide QAE session: “What do you think this means? Why does it matter where Geraldo’s home is? What does this say about how people feel about his death? What does his home have to do with his identity?” Explain how Geraldo’s identity is associated with his home. Explain that in this novel it is becoming apparent that home is a definition of who someone is. Students should take notes in the theme section of the handout. Move onto cultural stereotypes. Ask for a volunteer to read the following passage aloud: “And maybe if the surgeon would have come, maybe if he hadn’t lost so much blood, if the surgeon had only come, they would know who to notify and where. But what difference does it make? He wasn’t anything to her. He wasn’t her boyfriend or anything like that. Just another brazer who didn’t speak English. Just another wetback. You know the kind. The ones who always look ashamed.” If no volunteers, the teacher reads. Ask questions to guide QAE session: “How is Geraldo stereotyped? What is the author inferring when she writes ‘But what difference does it make?’ What does this say about how the surgeons and other people in society view

someone of Mexican descent? Does Geraldo have an identity or is he just associated with the stereotype of his culture?” Ask students to also focus on the title of this chapter when thinking about identity. Students should take notes in the cultural stereotypes section of the handout. Move on to social commentary. Teacher defines social commentary (See Notes). Students should take notes in the literary vocabulary section of their notebook. Ask the class to take a few minutes to read over the entire chapter before beginning QAE session. After class has reread the chapter, ask questions such as, “What opinion is this chapter stating about the nature of Esperanza’s society? How does society view Hispanics? Are there any other moments from the novel where something similar occurred?” Have students reread the chapter on page 28 called “Those Who Don’t.” Start asking more questions, now relating this chapter to the discussion: “How does Esperanza feel about how other people look at her and her culture? Ironically, how does she look at people of other cultures/communities? At the end of the chapter when Esperanza says, ‘That is how it goes and goes’ what is she really saying?” Explain that Esperanza is guilty of thinking about people of other cultures in the same way they tend to think about and treat her. Also show how Esperanza sees this as an inevitable cycle in society. Students should take notes in the social commentary section of the handout.

5 minutes – Assign and explain homework.

Homework:

Read up to page 85 (read through “Minerva Writes Poems”). Ask students to pay special attention to “Four Skinny Trees” as this vignette will be the focus of the next class period.

Notes for Day 8

What is *social commentary*?

-Definition: it is the act of expressing an opinion on the nature of society

-Social commentary may be obvious or it may be a slightly hidden message in literature

Handout for Day 8

Today we will be focusing on three important ideas from *The House on Mango Street*. These three ideas are theme, cultural stereotypes, and social commentary. We will be analyzing the vignette “Geraldo No Last Name” in order to take a closer look and get a better understanding of these three ideas.

Theme-

Cultural Stereotypes-

Social Commentary-

Day 9

Lesson Overview:

This lesson will introduce the concept of symbolism as exemplified by the chapter “Four Skinny Trees.” It will show how culture is symbolized and also allow for students to further explore culture, whether it be the Latino culture of Esperanza or their own.

Concept:

Symbolism

Performance Objectives:

SWBAT define and identify symbolism.

SWBAT relate culture more closely to the novel.

Materials/Resources:

The House on Mango Street

Chalk/Chalkboard for notes

Unlined paper

Markers/Crayons/Colored Pencils

Lesson:

10 minutes – Ask students to write a journal entry in response to the prompt: “Is there something in your community or neighborhood that is significant to you? What is it? What does it mean to you? Why is it so important to you?”

5 minutes – Explain how the chapter “Four Skinny Trees” exposes something that is meaningful in Esperanza’s community. Explain how this chapter is not really about trees, but about something deeper. Give short lecture on symbolism (See Notes).

15 minutes – Give students choices for this in-class assignment. Students may complete one of two options, and they may do it on their own, or in groups of two or three. Explain the first option: “Rewrite this vignette without mentioning trees. Find the symbolism that the trees provide, and in your writing use what they symbolize in place of the trees themselves.” Next, explain the second option: “Draw a picture of what this chapter is illustrating. What do you see? What vision does this scene create for you? In your drawing, be sure to include words and phrases labeling what the different parts of the drawing symbolize.”

15 minutes – Ask for a few volunteers to share their work with the rest of the class. Include both students who wrote something as well as students who drew a picture. Ask students who are sharing their work to explain exactly what they felt the trees symbolized. Be sure to explain to the class that the trees represent Latinos, just like Esperanza. Show how the trees seem as if they do not belong there, but they remain because their roots are there. This parallels the fact that some people may not want people like Esperanza and her family to live there, but they have their own roots in the ground: cultural roots. Finally, explain how the trees all lean on each other and need each

other to survive, just as Esperanza needs people who are like her to be around her to help her to learn and live in a society that does not always appreciate or recognize her in the way she deserves.

5 minutes – Assign and explain homework.

Homework:

Ask students to bring in something from their own culture that is meaningful to them. It can be something symbolic or something literal. It can be in any form – a written text, a song, a photograph, etc. In addition to this, each student must complete a WebQuest. Students will be asked to search the web for at least three and at most five websites that have to do with culture. They may choose to research Esperanza's Latino heritage or their own. Students should record the address of each website and also write a short paragraph about each website. The paragraph should not simply summarize the site, but should be the student's opinion on whether the site was helpful, what was most interesting about the site, and whether he or she could relate to anything on the site. This information, as well as the cultural artifact that they will bring in, will be presented during the next class period. The results of the WebQuest should be typed and will be collected after the presentations.

Notes for Day 9

What is *symbolism*?

-Definition: Something that on the surface is its literal self but which also has another meaning or even several meanings

- A symbol may be said to embody an idea

-There are two general types of symbols:

-Universal symbols that embody universally recognizable meanings wherever used, such as light being used often to symbolize knowledge

-Constructed symbols that are given symbolic meaning by the way an author uses them in a literary work, such as the four skinny trees in *The House on Mango Street*

Day 10

Lesson Overview:

In this lesson, students will learn more about culture, whether it be the Latino culture or the culture of one of their peers. This lesson allows students to think like Esperanza for a moment because in their research they are going to be finding out what makes culture so important to them as they find more cultural ideas to relate to. This lesson is important in the overall unit because *The House on Mango Street* is a novel that has its center in Esperanza's pride and love for her own heritage.

Concept:

Creating connections between students' own cultures and lives as a reflection of the main character's feelings in *The House on Mango Street*

Performance Objectives:

SWBAT more clearly relate culture to their own lives.

SWBAT relate to the feelings of the main character in *The House on Mango Street*.

Materials/Resources:

Students' cultural artifacts

WebQuests

Lesson:

40-50 minutes – Ask students to move their desks into a circle. Students will take turns going around the circle first explaining the results of their WebQuest and then their cultural artifact. Students should be as clear as possible in their description of their WebQuest, as well as their artifact. This may take the entire class period. If there is any time left, explain how today's activity showed how we should all be appreciative of our own and each other's culture. Explain to the students that the pride they have in their culture is the same pride that Esperanza has for her culture. Show how culture can create identity and make us who we are – through tradition, values, rituals, beliefs etc. Collect WebQuests. Assign and explain homework.

Homework:

Finish the book.

Day 11

Lesson Overview:

This lesson will focus on the end of the novel *The House on Mango Street*. Several important themes will be incorporated into this lesson.

Concept:

Themes of belonging, heritage, and home

Performance Objectives:

SWBAT analyze important quotes from *The House on Mango Street*.

SWBAT make connections between quotes from *The House on Mango Street*.

SWBAT identify themes of belonging, heritage, and home.

SWBAT relate quotes to theme.

Materials/Resources:

The House on Mango Street

Quotes

Chalk/Chalkboard

Lesson:

5 minutes – Explain to the class that in the end of the novel, there are three important recurring themes: belonging, heritage, and home. Explain that the three are related but there are also individual examples of each in the last chapters of the novel. Tell the students that it will be their responsibility to find and identify these themes, as well as make connections between them.

40 minutes – Divide the class in half. Every student will receive one quote from the list (See Quote List). Half of the class must walk around the classroom, sharing their quotes with each other, and discussing the importance of the quote. They should bring their books with them in order to find exactly where the quote came from. This will help them to decide what exactly the quote means and how it relates to belonging, heritage, and /or home. Students should try to make connections with as many people as possible, as some of the quotes may supplement/complement each other. While half of the class is doing this, the other half is working at the chalkboard. Each student will write their quote on the board. After all quotes have been written, students from this half of the class will read each one and write comments/thoughts/ideas next to it. They may also (literally) draw connections between quotes that may be related. Students should try to focus comments on themes of belonging, heritage, and home. After about 20 minutes, the groups switch. Each person from the first group switches their quote with someone from the second group. Now each student has a new quote to analyze. The group walking around discussing the quotes is now working at the board and vice versa. Students should follow the same directions as the previous group.

5 minutes – Have students return to their seats. Ask for volunteers to explain where and with what quote they identified the theme of belonging. Do the same for heritage and then home.

Homework:

None.

Quote List for Day 11

“I don’t tell them I am ashamed—all of us staring out the window like the hungry.” – p 86

“I am tired of looking at what we can’t have.” – p 86

“One day I’ll own my own house, but I won’t forget who I am or where I came from.” – p 87

“I am an ugly daughter. I am the one nobody comes for.” – p 88

“I have begun my own quiet war.” – p 89

“I could have been somebody, you know? my mother says and sighs.” – p 90

“I looked at my feet in their white socks and ugly round shoes. They seemed far away. They didn’t seem to be my feet anymore.” – p 98

“And the garden that had been such a good place to play didn’t seem mine either.” – p 98

“She says she is in love, but I think she did it to escape.” – p 101

“When you leave you must remember to come back for the others. A circle, understand?” – p 105

“You will always be Esperanza.” – p 105

“You will always be Mango Street.” – p 105

“You can’t erase what you know.” – p 105

“You can’t forget who you are.” – p 105

“You must remember to come back. For the ones who cannot leave as easily as you.” – p 105

“You live right here, 4006 Mango, Alicia says and points to the house I am ashamed of.” – p 106

“No this isn’t my house I say and shake my head as if shaking could undo the year I’ve lived here.” – p 106

“I don’t belong. I don’t ever want to come from here.” – p 106

“But me I never had a house, not even a photograph... only one I dream of.” – p 107

“Like it or not you are Mango Street, and one day you’ll come back too.” – p 107

“But what I remember most is Mango Street, sad red house, the house I belong but do not belong to.” – p 110

“Mango says goodbye sometimes. She does not hold me with both arms. She sets me free.” – p 110

“One day I will say goodbye to Mango. I am too strong for her to keep me here forever. One day I will go away.” – p 110

“Friends and neighbors will say, What happened to that Esperanza? Why did she march so far away?” – p 110

“They will not know I have gone away to come back. For the ones I left behind. For the ones who cannot out.” – p 110

Day 12

Lesson Overview:

Today's lesson will introduce a writing project.

Concept:

Writing a vignette

Performance Objectives:

SWBAT write a series of vignettes emulating Cisneros' style.

Materials/Resources:

The House on Mango Street

Handout

Lesson:

10 minutes – Distribute assignment to the class and explain (See Handout).

40 minutes – Students will have the rest of the class period to work on the project and to ask teacher any questions.

Homework:

Continue to work on the vignette project. Bring at least a first draft of each of the six vignettes to the next class period.

Handout for Day 12

A Series of Vignettes

Writing Project

For this project, you will be writing a series of vignettes that are similar to those that we have read in Sandra Cisneros' *The House on Mango Street*. You should review your notes in order to refresh your memory on style and the vignette. Of course, you should use the novel for help! Here are the requirements:

- You must write a series of six vignettes. Remember, you have already written two similar to “The House on Mango Street” and “My Name.” You should come up with an original title for your first vignette if you have not already done so. You may change the title of your second vignette if you wish, but you do not have to. “My Name” is a perfectly fine title for this one.
- You will pick four other chapters from *The House on Mango Street* to rewrite using your own experiences and ideas. Please come up with original titles for each of these four vignettes. The vignettes that you choose and your writing should convey something to the audience about your identity.
- After you have written four additional vignettes, you should put them together (in order), design a cover for your story, create a title, and create a dedication page. Sandra Cisneros dedicated *The House on Mango Street* “A Las Mujeres” or, to the women. You should dedicate your series of vignettes to some person, place, or thing that is meaningful to you.
- Remember that when you are writing, you should emulate the style of Sandra Cisneros. Again, use your novel!
- Be sure to keep in mind the elements of a vignette as you are writing. Review your notes or ask questions if you need help.
- Your first draft of the vignettes will be due at the beginning of the next class period. We will be peer editing in class, and you will also have the opportunity to work one-on-one with me if you need to do so.
- Finally, good luck, have fun, and be creative!

Day 13

Lesson Overview:

Today's lesson will be a continuation of the writing project. Students will have the opportunity to edit and revise in class with the help of their peers and the teacher.

Concept:

Writing and editing a vignette

Performance Objectives:

SWBAT write a series of vignettes emulating Cisneros' style.

SWBAT use advice from peer editing/teacher conferences for revision purposes.

Materials/Resources:

Students' work

Handout

Lesson:

30-40 minutes – Explain to students that we will be doing peer editing in class today. Students will be put into groups of two. Each student will exchange their drafts with their partner. Each partner should read over their partner's drafts and make comments/corrections where they see fit. All students should keep in mind the guidelines outlined during peer editing (See Handout).

10-20 minutes – After students have finished the peer editing process, they may work on their revisions or ask the teacher for more help. Teacher will be available for one-on-one writing conferences if the students choose to ask for further feedback.

Homework:

Revise the vignettes and put it all together. Students should make sure to fulfill all requirements of the writing project.

Handout for Day 13

Guidelines for Peer Editing

Because this assignment is about writing a series of vignettes, it is important that your partner has included elements of the vignette in his or her project. Here is a reminder of what a vignette includes:

- A vignette is a short, well-written sketch or descriptive scene
- It does not have a plot, which would make it a story, but it does reveal something about the elements in it
- It may reveal character, or mood, or tone
- It may have a theme or idea of its own that it wants to convey
- It is the description of the scene or character that is important

Here are some other things to keep in mind when peer editing. First of all, begin with something positive. What did you like about your partner's work? What stands out? Next, use constructive criticism. If you see something that you think needs to be fixed – a spelling error, a run-on sentence, etc. – let your partner know in a productive way. Do not just say that something is wrong without explaining why and how to fix it! Finally, make suggestions. In general, what do you think about your partner's work? Is there something that you think they should do differently? What would you recommend they change in order to improve the overall effectiveness of their writing?

Finally, do you get a sense of identity from your partner's vignettes? Does your partner's choice of vignettes to rewrite convey a message about who they are and what makes them who they are?

Day 14

Lesson Overview:

This lesson will serve as a review for the exam.

Concept:

Reviewing various concepts covered over the entire unit for test preparation

Performance Objectives:

SWBAT define and identify various concepts covered over the entire unit.

SWBAT connect author to literature.

SWBAT relate culture to literature.

SWBAT identify several different themes.

SWBAT explain significance of important quotes.

Materials/Resources:

Jeopardy review game

Lesson:

50 minutes – Split class up into three teams. Each team will compete against the others in a game of *The House on Mango Street* Jeopardy (See Review). One student at a time from each team will choose a category and a point value. The teacher will be the ‘host,’ asking questions and keeping track of point values. For a right answer, the team wins the point value and the next student on the same team chooses a new question. For a wrong answer, the question will be opened up to the other two teams. Whichever team answers gains control of the board and wins the point value. Teams do not lose points for wrong answers. Students will ‘buzz-in’ by raising their hands – the first student the teacher sees raise his or her hand will get the chance to answer the question. At the end of the period, whichever team has the most points wins. Those students will receive five extra points on their test.

Homework:

Study!

Review for Day 14

The House on Mango Street Jeopardy

Category 1: Literary Terms

- 100 points – What is theme?
- 200 points – What is symbolism?
- 300 points – What is juxtaposition?
- 400 points – What is a bildungsroman?
- 500 points – What is social commentary?

Category 2: Culture

- 100 points – Where is Esperanza from?
- 200 points – Where does Esperanza live now?
- 300 points – What does Esperanza mean in Spanish?
- 400 points – What is one symbol of Esperanza's 'deep-rooted' culture?
- 500 points – What is one role of women in Latino society as shown in the novel?

Category 3: About the Author

- 100 points – What is the author's name?
- 200 points – Where was the author born?
- 300 points – What is the author's known style of writing?
- 400 points – To whom is *The House on Mango Street* dedicated?
- 500 points – What is one award that the author has won?

Category 4: Themes

- 100 points – What is the theme of "The House on Mango Street"?
- 200 points – What is the theme of "My Name"?
- 300 points – What is the theme of "Hips"?
- 400 points – What is the theme of "Marin"?
- 500 points – What are the three themes repeated throughout the end of the novel?

Category 5: Quotes – Explain the significance

- 100 points – "I am tired of looking at what we can't have."
- 200 points – "When you leave you must remember to come back for the others. A circle, understand?"
- 300 points – "She says she is in love, but I think she did it to escape."
- 400 points – "I have begun my own quiet war."
- 500 points – "They will not know I have gone away to come back. For the ones I left behind. For the ones who cannot out."

Day 15

Lesson Overview:

Exam

Concept:

Evaluating knowledge of concepts learned over the course of the unit

Performance Objectives:

SWBAT answer questions based on what they have learned over the course of the unit.

Materials/Resources:

Exam

Lesson:

50 minutes – Students will have the entire 50-minute period to work on and complete the exam.

Homework:

None.