

# Critique: the end of firpo in the world assignment

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**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

One of the themes in this story suggests that recurrent verbal and psychological abuse results in alienation and feelings of inferiority. 2. The Setting The details of the houses within the neighbourhood emphasize Cody's feelings of alienation. Cody lives in a wealthy neighbourhood consisting mostly of two house models; Monte Vistas and Bueno Verdes, but his house predates the others and is neither Monte Vista or Bueno Verde; it is small and "smelled like cat pee and hamburger blood.

The house reflects Cody's feelings of alienation; just like the house, he is different than everyone else and does not fit in. This setting makes him feel inferior because he does not live in a nice, big house like everyone else so he believes that there is something wrong with him. 3. Symbols The symbol of the nosehole sound is used to illustrate Cody's alienation. Cody is constantly ridiculed for making the nosehole sound but it is an involuntary nervous response that is triggered by anxiety. Cody is ashamed of the nosehole sound and tries to conceal it from others in order to avoid humiliation.

The sound is a direct result of the psychological abuse he endures and it is out of his control, "he couldn't help it, it made him nervous to think about junior high, and he made the nosehole sound." He wants to fit in and be liked but whenever he gets nervous he makes the sound and gets ridiculed for it, "when he tried to laugh to show he was a good sport he made the nosehole sound for real, and they totally cracked up." Being mocked for something that is out of his control causes him to feel alienated and believe that he is a freak. Characters The secondary characters serve to demonstrate how negatively their behaviour has impacted Cody. The

characters' abusive behaviour towards Cody lead him to have a negative perception of himself and others as well. No one ever shows Cody kindness or affection; abuse is all he knows and believes. By referring to him as a Firpo, Cody's parents are enforcing a very negative perception of himself and others. Not only does Cody believe that he is Firpo, but he also refers to his neighbours by derogatory terms such as "chink," "squattybody," "wop," and "stickman."

He depersonalizes those around him in the same way that his parents have depersonalized him by calling him Firpo. Since all of the secondary characters (excluding the Stickman) treat him like a freak, Cody knows no other way of seeing himself. The idea that he is Firpo and nothing else is so deeply embedded in him that he cannot, for one second, believe otherwise; "If the stickman thought he, Cody, was good he must be Firpo because he, Cody wasn't good, he was Firpo." The characters' incessant abuse affects Cody much more negatively than they could imagine.