

Esperanza of the house on mango street



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The House on Mango Street is a collection of musings of a young female named Esperanza. The main character and the direction of the stories is revealed in the first story. It is in The House on Mango Street that Sandra Cisneros sets Esperanza up as a young girl dreaming of a brighter future and yet floored on the realities of her situation. The first story introduces Esperanza as someone who plans on escaping the place where she is growing up.

She is old enough to understand that the promises of her parents about the temporariness of their house are not going to be fulfilled any time soon. She is, however, young enough to believe that physically leaving Mango Street will mean a complete escape from the things that Mango Street and their house represent. The youthfulness of Esperanza is shown in Hairs where she describes her family and herself through a description of the type of hair each had. She tells about still being comforted by her mother's presence beside her in their bed.

It is also in this story that one understands Esperanza's personality. She is free-spirited and hard to tame, like her hair. But she is clearly in the process of developing into a woman as she expresses her emotions for her mother's hair - the hair of a truly ladylike woman. Esperanza is shown here to be in the transitional period of developing from a child into a complete lady. She most probably would be in her teenage years. The emotional and personal development of Esperanza is also seen in My Name.

When she speaks of not wanting to be like her grandmother - a woman beside the window, trapped - she shows that she is already capable of deciding for herself the future she wants to have. She also shows her

knowledge about the outside world when she speaks of the Chinese culture and its possible similarities with the Mexican culture. She also shows a deeper understanding of society when she explains how Chinese culture and Mexican culture do not want their women strong which is why they do not give them strong names.

Her reference to women being suppressed and kept from being strong also shows that she is aware of this bias. She is clearly developing emotionally because she can formulate for herself judgments about the things that occur in the society she lives in. In this part of the stories, My Name, Esperanza demonstrates development from being the young girl who dreams of escaping her house because she wants more space to the teen who wants change because she no longer agrees with the things around her. She wants to change her name insisting that it does not refer to the "real her".

She wants a life that is different from her grandmother's. The aspirations of Esperanza in this part have developed. From a house with more bedrooms and bathrooms, Esperanza now aspires for more abstract concepts - independence, choice, freedom. In the final parts of the stories, Esperanza seems to have finally developed into a wiser and more practical woman. She realizes that escaping Mango Street is not something she can do physically for the moment. She decides to write instead. This allows her release from the frustrations she feels for the place she lives in.

Esperanza understands now that Mango Street is a part of her life and will continue to be so even after she leaves it. She seems to have made peace with herself and instead of continually trying to push for a way out, she now focuses on ways to improve herself. This is, according to her, the way to

finally be able to leave Mango Street. Her wisdom is seen when she states that only in leaving Mango Street, improving herself somewhere else, and coming back to Mango Street can she truly be able to help those who do not have the ability to leave.

Her goals are now realigned to include those in her community. Esperanza completes her journey from childhood to young adulthood in the pages of *The House on Mango Street*. She forms a clearer view of who she really is through her experiences in her house and grows emotionally as well. The maturity of Esperanza is seen not only in her thoughts but in the observations she has made from her neighborhood. She has learned from the lives of those around her and has grown from the lessons she gathered.