

Change a life through
education: the house
on mango street, and
its characters' c...



According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, students who graduate from college are more likely to find success in life than those who dropout of high school. Sandra Cisneros communicates the importance of education in a coming of age novel, *House on Mango Street*. Cisneros emphasizes how education is the key to one's chance of living a better life through the characters of Mama, Alicia and Esperanza, characters whose fates differ and whose responses clearly link the idea of education to the idea of personal and social improvement.

Esperanza's mother, whom she calls Mama, acts as a foreshadowing of what happens to someone who does not pursue education and lives a life full of regrets. One day after school Mama mentions how she could have been more than just a housewife and advises, " Esperanza, you go to school. Study hard... Got to take care all your own"(90). She is emphasizing that it's very important to pursue your education so you can live freely and care for others. Mama regrets not continuing school because she is now stuck at home only taking care of her family instead of having the ideal life that education could give her. Esperanza's mother reflects on her decision to get married young and give up her education when she regretfully says, " I could have been somebody, you know?"(90). Mama talks about how she could have been anything she wanted. She had talents that could had given her opportunities to freedom. At that time she thought it was best to conform to the beliefs of society. She found regret later in life due to that decision. Mama lives in regret each day of her life, wishing that she would have chosen to continue her education and take advantage of the opportunities that an education would give her. Mama exemplifies what life is like for one

who chooses to not continue her education when it could have changed her life for the better.

Alicia's mother dies in the novel and in her society when a mom dies the daughter is to become the housewife. Alicia decides instead to attend a University to make a better life for herself. Esperanza admires her friendly neighbor Alicia who "inherited her mama's rolling pin and sleepiness, is young and smart and studies for the 1st time at a university"(30). Alicia was meant to inherit her dead mother's role in the house but she decided to get a better education instead. Alicia is not following society's expectation for her. By attending college she will escape the dead end life that many residents on Mango Street are used to. Esperanza sits on the curb looking at Alicia's house while thinking about the determination Alicia has in order to fulfill her dream, "Boarding two trains and a bus because she doesn't want to spend her whole life in a factory or behind a rolling pin"(31). People on Mango Street usually just make tortillas for the family, but Alicia goes to college to defy that expectation. Due to her choice of going to college she will become an independent woman that many women don't have the chance to achieve. In contrast to Mama, Alicia chooses to strive for a better life with continuing her education.

Esperanza has many different role models in her life that make her want to pursue education. As the novel comes to an end, Esperanza expresses about how she will leave Mango Street to pursue her education and achieve her own freedom. She resolves that "One day I will pack my bags of books and paper. 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"(110). Esperanza conveys about <https://assignbuster.com/change-a-life-through-education-the-house-on-mango-street-and-its-characters-choices/>

what she plans on doing in the future as she strives to continue her education and make a better life for herself. Mango Street holds Esperanza and all the other women from going to college and living a successful life, but Esperanza chooses a different path by attending college.. Esperanza dreams of a future where she can be proud of her life as she conveys, “ I want to be like the waves on the sea, like the clouds in the wind, but I’m me. One day I’ll jump out my skin. I’ll shake the sky like a hundred like a hundred violins”(60). Esperanza declares the freedom and pride she will have by going to college to become her own person. In her life, Esperanza chooses to use education to break the chains Mango Street holds over her so that she may one day live a life better than the life she is living now. Esperanza is heavily influenced by those who live on Mango street, whether they are continuing their education to escape the life on Mango street or those who are stuck on Mango street regretting the life that they could have had in advancing their education.

One’s path to live a better life than they might now have can only start with education. Cisneros portrays the theme through Esperanza and Alicia who lived that life in House on Mango Street. On the contrary, Mama lives the life of regret and remorse of her decision to quit school. Everyone has a chance to live a better life than the one they have now through education. By choosing to forgo education, they live in dissatisfaction their whole life. Many people in the world today want some sort of success in their life and everyone has to chance to achieve that desired success. It just depends on whether they choose to take the route that might seem too hard or choose to not take the chance and live in remorse. People will always regret not

continuing their education because education is an opportunity to success that is available to each citizen in the United States. Life may have its hardships but pursuing one's education is ultimately the way to one's success in life.