

A celebration of grandfathers

[Family](#), [Father](#)



1. In "A Celebration of Grandfathers," the author writes that respect for elders is "a cultural value to be passed on from generation to generation." What does he say the elders could teach young people? Use evidence from the text to explain your answer.

Anaya states that elders can teach young people to live "authentic lives." By this he means lives that have meaning and purpose achieved through hard work, faith, and a sense of community. Anaya states, "They learned that to survive one had to share in the process of life," and that means sharing in the good and the bad. Anaya compares the eyes of the older generation to windows that "peer into a distant past," and have a knowledge and spirit that comes from an understanding of the earth with which younger generations have lost touch.

2. Anaya recalls an incident where his grandfather tells him, "Know where you stand." What did his grandfather mean literally? What did he mean figuratively?

Anaya's grandfather says this to Anaya when he comes home as a young boy having been badly bitten by ants while working out in the fields. Literally, Grandfather means "watch where you are going/standing," or "pay better attention." Figuratively, Grandfather means this in a more philosophical sense; he is telling young Anaya to learn to pay attention to the world around him so that he can avoid danger. Specifically, he means to pay attention to the Earth (nature) because, unless you show it respect, it can become unfriendly. Even nature's tiny ants can become hostile and, when working as a community, can become threatening.

3. The title of this memoir is " A Celebration of Grandfathers," not " A Celebration of My Grandfather." Why do you think Anaya made this distinction?

In this memoir, Anaya is celebrating the " elders," which include all older generations and all future generations that will one day be old. Anaya uses his own grandfather as an example. By relaying his personal experiences with his grandfather, Anaya shows examples of what the elders can pass on to younger generations. This piece is intended as a celebration of all older generations (grandfathers and grandmothers) and the cultural values they passed on.

4. How does Anaya's grandfather help him cope with the death of his young friend?

When a young boy is dragged to his death by a horse, young Anaya is upset that death came to someone so young. To help him understand the process of death as a function of life, Anaya's grandfather explains death through images of nature and the changing of seasons. These are common and comforting images that a young Anaya can relate to. Grandfather explains death as a resting period before blooming again, a " small transformation in life" rather than a permanent unknown.

5. The author states that " They [ancianos] learned that to survive one had to share in the process of life." What does he mean by this? What is the " process of life"?

Anaya means that the elders worked together as family, friends, and neighbors to support each other when times were bad and to share in the

bounty when times were good. It was a life that was community-oriented. The process of life is the daily process of living and surviving. They shared good times and hard times. They helped each other through the “ epidemics and personal tragedies” and they “ shared what little they had when the hot winds burned the land and no rain came.” Rappers, if only they knew what they looked like... maybe they would stop.