

"The Monkey Garden"/"Red Clowns"/"Linoleum Roses"

26. How does the Monkey Garden change? What does Sally do that makes Esperanza so angry? From whom is she trying to save her? What eventually happens to Sally? How does Esperanza feel about her marriage?

"The Three Sisters"

27. How does Esperanza meet the three sisters? What kind of future do they predict for her? What is the responsibility they place on her?

"Mango Says Goodbye Sometimes"

28. How does the ending of **The House on Mango Street** complete a circle?

## II. *Language: image, metaphor, and voice* –Complete one

1. Throughout the book Cisneros has Esperanza employ common idiomatic phrases that serve as a kind of shorthand. Analyze some of the following phrases and suggest what Esperanza means by them—and what the author means to tell us about Esperanza herself: a) "But I know how those things go." [5] b) "people like us" [13] c) "We take what we can get and make the most of it" [33] d) "Ain't it a shame" [66] e) "Same story" [85]

2. In the story "Hairs," Esperanza describes her mother's hair as being "like little candy circles all curly and pretty." [6] What does this metaphor, and those in the next paragraph, suggest about Esperanza's feelings for her mother? Where else in the book do metaphor and simile convey information about the narrator as well as about the person or thing she describes?

3. In "Gil's Furniture Bought and Sold," Cisneros describes the sound of an old music box: "It's like all of a sudden he let go a million moths all over the dusty furniture and swan-neck shadows in our bones." [20] This technique, in which a sound is described in terms of things seen and felt, is called synesthesia. Where else in the book does Cisneros use synesthesia? Write descriptions of: a) a place, using sounds; b) a piece of music, using smells; c) a meal, using colors; d) a person, using taste and touch.

4. In "Boys & Girls," Esperanza describes herself as "a balloon tied to an anchor." [9] What are the connotations of this metaphor, and what does it tell you about Esperanza? Where else in the book does Cisneros use images and metaphors associated with the sky? What ideas do these recurring images evoke? Where else does Sandra Cisneros use related images to suggest complicated themes?

5. In "Chanclas," an embarrassed Esperanza declines her cousin's invitation to dance, because her feet "are growing bigger and bigger." What Cisneros is describing is not a literal reality but a feeling that in turn suggests other feelings. In this case, the sensation in Esperanza's feet tells us about her self-consciousness and embarrassment. Where else does the author use this technique? Describe the following situations in terms of the sensations they might evoke in different parts of your body: a) entering a dark basement b) seeing a pet die c) learning that someone you secretly care for also likes you d) making a speech at your high school graduation e) seeing a baby brother or sister for the first time.

6. The last sentence of the book is: "For the ones who cannot out." [110] Strictly speaking, the sentence is ungrammatical, since "out" is not a verb. Why do you think Cisneros has chosen to break perceived rules of grammar here? Might there be any relation between "breaking" grammar and breaking out of Mango Street?