***The House on Mango Street*** by Sandra Cisneros

Chapter Questions

***“House on Mango Street” – Ch 1***

1.Where did the narrator live before she moved to The House on Mango Street?

2.How were her previous homes different?

3.In what kind of house would she like to live?

***‘Hairs” – Ch 2***

1. Who are the members of the narrator’s family? How is the hair of each member different?

2. What makes her mother’s hair special? What are the narrator’s feelings for her mother?

***“Boys and Girls” – Ch 3***

1. What does the narrator say about the relationship between boys and girls? What evidence does she provide to support this idea?

2. What does the narrator say about her sister? How does this impact their relationship?

3. About what does the narrator dream? What does this say about her?

***“My Name” – Ch 4***

1. What does her name mean?

2. After whom was she named? Why does she connect her name with the records her father plays on Sunday morning?

3. What point does Esperanza make about both the Chinese and the Mexicans? Does she seem to resent this?

4. How did her grandmother get married?

5. What does what happened to Esperanza’s grandmother tell you about women’s roles in Mexican society?

6. Why does she want to baptize herself with a new name?

***“Cathy Queen of Cats” – Ch 5***

1. To whom does Cathy claim to be related? Is this true?

2. How long will Cathy be Esperanza’s friend?

3. Why does Cathy say her family has to move?

4. How does Esperanza feel about Cathy’s family’s reason for leaving?

***“Our Good Day” – Ch 6***

1. Why do the girls want five dollars? What are they willing to give Esperanza in exchange for the money? Why does Esperanza feel that five dollars is cheap?

2. How does Cathy react to the sisters?

3. How are Lucy and Rachel better friends than Cathy?

4. Why doesn’t Esperanza tell them about Nenny immediately?

5. How do they divide up the bike? How do they ride the bike the first day?

***“Laughter” – Ch 7***

1. How are Nenny and Esperanza alike? How are Rachel and Lucy alike?

2. What did the houses represent to Esperanza? Did she know exactly why they represented this? Why or why not?

3. Who agreed with her? What does this show?

***“Girls Furniture Bought and Sold” – Ch 8***

1. How does the personality difference between the two sisters show up in the store?

2. Why does Esperanza pretend she doesn’t care about the music box?

3. What literary devices are used to describe the music from the music box?

***“Meme Ortiz” – Ch 9***

1. Who is Meme?

2. How are Meme and the dog alike?

3. What happened to Meme in the First Annual Tarzan Jumping Contest?

***“Louie, His Cousin….” – Ch 10***

1. Where does Louie live?

2. Who are his cousins?

3. Why were people so interested in the yellow Cadillac?

4. Where does Louie’s cousin get the Cadillac?

5. What happened to Louie’s cousin?

***“Marin” – Ch 11***

1.Who is Marin?

2.Why is she unable to leave her house?

3.How does she plan to change her situation?

4.Why do Esperanza and her friends admire her? 5.Where is Marin going in a year? Why?

***“Those Who Don’t” – Ch 12***

1. How do outsiders view Esperanza’s neighborhood?

2. How do the people who live in Esperanza’s neighborhood view it?

3. How does Esperanza feel when she drives “into a neighborhood of another color?”

***“There Was An Old Woman…” – Ch 13***

1. Who is Rosa Vargas? Why does she cry?

2. What happened to the children’s father?

3. What does Esperanza say the Vargas children are lacking?

4. How do other people in the neighborhood feel about the Vargas children? Why?

5. The title of this chapter is a reference to a nursery rhyme. How did the Old Woman in the shoe handle her children? How does Rosa handle hers?

***“Alicia Who Sees Mice” – Ch 14***

1. What did Alicia inherit from her mother?

2. Of what is Alicia afraid?

3. How does Alicia’s father treat her? What does he say about a woman’s place?

***“Darious and the Clouds” – Ch 15***

1. Esperanza says that you can never have too much sky. Why does the sky symbolize for her?

2. What is there a shortage of on Mango Street?

3. What wise thing did Darius say? Why is it wise?

***“And Some More” – Ch 16***

1. Why do the girls argue about the names of things?

2. Why does the argument disintegrate into name calling? Are the girls actually fighting or are they exercising their wit?

***“The Family of Little Feet” – Ch 17***

1. What happens to Esperanza when she and her friends are given some second-hand high heel shoes?

2. Why does the man say the shoes are dangerous?

3. How doe the shoes change the girls?

4. How do the men in the neighborhood behave when they see the girls in those shoes?

***“A Rice Sandwich” – Ch 18***

1. Why does Esperanza want to eat in the canteen?

2. How does Esperanza convince her mother to allow her to eat in the canteen?

3. Why did Esperanza say that the house was hers when it wasn’t?

4. What did Esperanza experience in the canteen?

***“Chanclas” – Ch 19***

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***“Hips” – Ch 20***

1. What are the girls doing while they talk about hips?

2. What do they say hips are good for? What ideas does Nenny have that are probably wrong?

3. What does the comments made about hips tell you about the girls’ ages?

***“The First Job” – Ch 21***

1. Why did Esperanza need a job?

2. What job did Esperanza get?

3. What happened to her on her first day of work?

***“Papa Wakes Up Tired in the Dark” – Ch 22***

1. What does Esperanza’s father tell her? Why does he cry?

2. How does Esperanza react to her father’s statement?

3. How does his crying make her feel?

***“Born Bad” – Ch 23***

1. What happened to Aunt Lupe?

2. Why does Esperanza believe she was born bad?

3. What is the relationship between Esperanza and her aunt?

4. What advice does her aunt give Esperanza?

***“Elenita, Cards, Palm, Water” – Ch 24***

1. Who is Elenita?

2. What does Elenita tell Esperanza?

3. What does Esperanza want to hear?

4. What three things does Elenita consult?

***“Geraldo No Last Name” – Ch 25***

1. Where did Marin meet Geraldo?

2. Why doesn’t Geraldo have a last name?

3. Why does Geraldo die? What clues let you believe that his death did not have to happen?

***“Edna’s Ruthie” – Ch 26***

1. Who is Ruthie? Who is Edna?

2. What does Esperanza say about Ruthie? What doesn’t she understand about Ruthie?

3. How are Ruthie and Esperanza alike?

***“The Earl of Tennessee” – Ch 27***

1. Who is Earl? Where does he live?

2. What is Earl’s job?

***“Sire” – Ch 28***

1. Why is Esperanza afraid of Sire? What do her parents say about him?

2. Who is Sire’s girlfriend? Why is Esperanza curious about what she does with Sire?

3. Why does her curiosity about Sire make her feel as if “everything is holding its breath inside me?”

***“Four Skinny Trees” – Ch 29***

1. In what ways does Esperanza identify with the four skinny trees?

2. What does Esperanza learn from the trees?

***“No Speak English” – Ch 30***

1. What English phrases does Mamacita know?

2. Why doesn’t Mamacita leave the apartment?

3. Where is home to Mamacita?

4. What broke Mamacita’s heart?

***“Rafaela Who Drinks Coconut & Papaya Juice on Tuesdays” – Ch 31***

1. Why is Rafaela growing old?

2. Why does her husband lock her in the apartment?

3. Who is Rapunzel? Why would Rafaela wish that she had hair like Rapunzel?

***“Sally” – Ch 32***

1. Who is Sally?

2. What is Sally’s relationship with her father?

3. How does Sally change when it is time to go home?

4. According to Esperanza, what does Sally want?

***“Minerva Writes Poems” – Ch 33***

1. Why is Minerva always sad?

2. Describe the relationship between Minerva and her husband.

3. Why does Esperanza say “There is nothing I can do.”

***“Bums in the Attic” – Ch 34***

1. What is Esperanza’s father’s job?

2. Why doesn’t Esperanza go with her family on their Sunday outings?

3. What does Esperanza dream of?

4. What will she keep in her attic? Why?

***“Beautiful & Cruel” – Ch 35***

1. How does Esperanza describe herself?

2. Esperanza says she began “my own quiet war.” With what is she at war?

3. What does Esperanza decide about growing up?

***“A Smart Cookie” – Ch 36***

1. What does Esperanza’s mother say about her life?
2. What skills does Esperanza’s mother have? What does she lack?
3. Why did her mother quit school?
4. Does she still believe she was a “smart cookie?”

***“What Sally Said” – Ch 37***

1. What does Sally say about her father? Does anyone believe it?

2. What does her father fear?

3. Did the situation ever change?

***“The Monkey Garden” – Ch 38***

1. How does the Monkey Garden change?

2. What does Sally do that makes Esperanza angry?

3. How did Esperanza try to help Sally? What happened when Esperanza tried to help her?

4. Why does Esperanza feel that the garden is no longer a good place to play?

***“Red Clowns” – Ch 39***

1. What does Esperanza say that Sally lied about?

2. What happened to Esperanza at the Carnival?

***“Linoleum Roses” – Ch 40***

1. Why did Sally say she got married? How old was she when she married?

2. Why does Esperanza believe that Sally got married?

3. How does her husband treat her?

***“The Three Sisters” – Ch 41***

1. When did Esperanza meet the three sisters?
2. How are the three sisters described?
3. What future do the three sisters predict for Esperanza?
4. What do they say that Esperanza must do to complete the circle?

***“Alicia & I Talking on Edna’s Steps” – Ch 42***

1. Why does Esperanza like Alicia?

2. Why isn’t 4006 Mango Street Esperanza’s house?

3. What will make Mango Street better? Who will make it better?

***“A House of My Own” – Ch 43***

1. How does Esperanza describe her house? What does this say about her?

***“Mango Says Goodbye Sometimes” – Ch 44***

1. What does Esperanza do to help her cope?

2. What are her plans?

3. How does the ending of the novel complete a circle?

4. What does she mean when she says, “I’ve gone away to come back?”