

Zach Vonnegut
Wayland High School
246 Old Connecticut Path
Wayland, MA 01778
9th Grade English
August 12, 2012

“You Will Always Be Mango Street”: Sense of Place and *The House on Mango Street*

1. Abstract:

Esperanza Cordero, the protagonist in *The House on Mango Street* is a keen observer of her surroundings and thus can be a role model for readers looking to develop a stronger sense of place. What does she do that we should emulate? She pays attention to detail, she talks to people, she looks for patterns, and she reflects on her experiences. Some activities in this unit encourage students to do these same things.

The House on Mango Street isn't just a how-to book though. More interestingly, this novel shows how complicated someone's feelings toward a place can be. Esperanza describes her childhood home as “the house I belong but do not belong to”. I would guess that this accurately describes the way that many people feel about the place where they grew up and some of the activities below are designed to clarify those feelings.

2. Duration and Objectives:

Mango Street is a book that can be read quickly or over a longer period with high school students; it depends how much detail you want to get into with it. What follows is a unit where students move fairly quickly through the novel and mainly focus on the sense of place issue; however, if time allows, a slower approach might be beneficial in terms of allowing students time to explore other aspects of this text.

I hope that this unit helps students to:

- Develop their ability to pay attention to detail (both in a literary text and in the real world)
- Develop their ability to make inferences
- Develop their ability to identify significant patterns
- Develop their ability to make meaning
- Develop a stronger sense of place

NOTE: The pre-reading activities and the writing project described below could work well with any text that deals with sense of place.

3. Outline:

1. Introduction to sense of place → Pre-reading activity: annotated neighborhood map
2. Pre-reading activity #2: Agree/disagree statements about sense of place
3. Getting started with *Mango Street*. Reading aloud and making inferences.
4. Notes on quotes: thinking about *Mango Street* and sense of place
5. The people of Mango Street: taking a close look at personal profile vignettes
6. Identifying patterns in *Mango Street*
7. Clarifying Esperanza's attitude toward Mango Street
8. Getting started with the sense of place vignette
9. Descriptive writing tips and practice
10. Reading like a writer: close reading of exemplar vignettes from *Mango Street*.
11. Peer-feedback on rough drafts of sense of place vignettes
12. Revisiting agree/disagree statements

4. Lesson Details:

NOTE: All handouts referred to are included at the end of this document.

DAY ONE:

Focus: Pre-reading activity: creating neighborhood maps.

Process:

1. Quick presentation: what is sense of place?

(Key points: Sense of place involves: knowing the place that you live in a detailed way, caring about it, and feeling connected to it.)

2. Distribute assignment sheet.
3. Explain and model assignment.

(Note: Two ways to go here. You could have your demo map created prior to the class, but you could also begin to work on creating your own map in front of the class and model thinking aloud about the topic as you do.)

4. Time to work individually.
5. Sharing with partners.
6. Optional sharing with whole class using the document camera.

Homework: Finish neighborhood map

DAY TWO:

Focus: Pre-reading activity #2: agree/disagree statements about sense of place.

Process:

1. Continue sharing of neighborhood maps using document camera.
2. Collect neighborhood maps.
3. Distribute handout with agree/disagree statements on sense of place.
4. Explain and model procedure.
5. Time to work individually.
6. Sharing responses in small groups.
7. Groups present on either a statement they agreed about or a statement they disagreed about. Whole class discussion.

Homework: Journal: Is a strong sense of place an essential component to the good life? Explain.

DAY THREE:

Focus: Getting started with *Mango Street*.

Process:

1. Distribute handout and copies of the novel.
2. Quick presentation to introduce the novel.

(Key points: When we read *The House on Mango Street* we can understand Esperanza better than she understands herself. The better we understand Esperanza, the better we understand ourselves. To fully understand Esperanza, we need to make inferences.)

3. Read aloud to page 9.
4. Stop to take questions and discuss what we learn about Esperanza. Encourage students to make inferences and explain their thinking. Take notes.
5. Continue reading aloud to page 16.
6. Stop to take questions and discuss what we learn about Esperanza. Continue notes.

Homework: Read *Mango Street* to page 32.

DAY FOUR:

Focus: Notes on quotes: Esperanza and Mango Street

Process:

1. Discuss responses to reading. Questions?
2. Quick presentation: Esperanza and sense of place

(Key points: Esperanza has a strong sense of place. Reading *Mango Street* can help us to more fully understand what sense of place means. Reading *Mango Street* can help us to develop a stronger sense of place.)

3. Distribute notes on quotes assignment.
4. Explain and model.

(Might be good to use the vignette “Those Who Don’t” to get started with this. This vignette helps to clarify an important aspect of Esperanza’s attitude toward her surroundings, one that might be surprising to some students who live in more affluent areas.)

5. Time to work in partners.
6. Sharing. Whole class discussion.

Homework: Read *Mango Street* to page 61.

DAY FIVE:

Focus: Close reading of profile vignettes.

Process:

1. Discuss responses to reading. Questions?
2. Distribute profile handout.
3. Explain and model.

(Might be good to use the vignette “Marin” and/or “Alicia who sees Mice” to get started with this since these two young women are so significant in Esperanza’s mind and represent different identities/life paths she is considering. Some questions to ask include: What do we learn about this person? Why is this person interesting to Esperanza? What is Esperanza’s attitude toward this person? Key point to make: The people who live in a given place are an important part of it, in many cases the most important part.)

4. Time to work in partners.
5. Sharing. Whole class discussion.

Homework: Read *Mango Street* to page 85. Journal: What people in your neighborhood (not part of your family) are interesting to you? What do you know about them? Would you like to learn more? If so, what?

DAY SIX:

Focus: Identifying important patterns in *Mango Street*.

Process:

1. Discuss responses to reading. Questions?
2. Quick presentation: What is a pattern?

(Basic idea: A pattern is something that repeats. In literature, when we look for patterns, we should be looking for situations, ideas, behavior, thinking, and images that repeat throughout the text.)

3. Distribute handout on patterns.
4. Explain and model procedure.

(A good pattern to focus on might be women looking out windows. There are many examples of this such as Mamacita (77), Rafaela (79), Esperanza (73), and Esperanza’s grandmother (11). Clearly this is an important pattern in Esperanza’s mind, and it works well to demonstrate how a pattern can be significant, which can be a tough concept for some students. Basic idea: this is an important pattern to Esperanza because it is what she wants to avoid.)

5. Work in partners.
6. Each partner group shares at least one idea with the class. Discuss observations and add to notes as needed.

Homework: Read *Mango Street* to end (p. 110). Journal: What patterns do you see in *your* neighborhood?

DAY SEVEN:

Focus: Clarifying Esperanza's feelings toward her neighborhood.

Process:

1. Discuss responses to the end of the novel. Questions?
2. If it didn't come up already, read the part of the final vignette where Esperanza describes her home as "the house I belong but do not belong to".

(Key points: If we are going to understand *Mango Street* well, we need to understand this statement. Today's class will be focused on exploring what Esperanza might mean by this.)

3. Distribute handout on Esperanza's feelings toward her neighborhood.
4. Explain and model procedure.
5. Time to work in partners.
6. Sharing. Discuss as a class and add to notes as needed.

Homework: Journal: How do you feel about your neighborhood? Do you feel like you belong? Not belong? Both? Explain.

DAY EIGHT:

Focus: Get started with sense of place vignette.

Process:

1. Distribute assignment sheet.
2. Discuss options.
3. Preview process.
4. Introduce evaluation criteria.
5. Begin brainstorming.
6. Share ideas in groups. Develop more?

Homework: Step 2 of Sense of Place Vignette: Research

DAY NINE:

Focus: Descriptive writing review.

Process:

1. Distribute handout.
2. Present technique #1: vivid verbs

3. Practice→Sharing
4. Present technique #2: sensory detail
5. Practice→Sharing
6. Present technique #3: figurative language
7. Practice→Sharing
8. Putting the 3 skills together.
9. Sharing.

Homework: Step 3 Sense of Place Vignette: Planning

DAY TEN:

Focus: Reading Like a Writer: Close Reading of Exemplar Vignettes from *Mango Street*

Process:

1. Distribute handout.
2. Explain rationale.

(Key points: Good writers read the work of other writers for inspiration. They don't aim to copy the work of others exactly, but they get ideas about how to approach their own subject matter most effectively, how to find their own voice.)

We've already looked closely at some vignettes about people. Today we'll look at one vignette about an element of the landscape and one vignette about an experience.)

3. Get started with #1 together.
4. Work in partners to continue with #1 and then do #2.
5. Sharing ideas/Whole class discussion.

Homework: Rough draft of sense of place vignette

DAY ELEVEN:

Focus: Peer-feedback on rough drafts

Process:

1. Distribute handout.
2. Review process/ questions about the statements?
3. Work with partner #1.
4. Work with partner #2.
5. Sharing of brilliance.

(This is a chance for students to nominate someone's draft to be read for the class if they thought it was especially strong in some way. If the student accepts the nomination, I'll project his or her draft on the screen using the document camera, read it aloud, and ask for feedback. "What is this writer doing well? What could this writer do to make this draft even stronger?")

Homework: Begin revision.

DAY TWELVE:

Focus: Revisit agree/disagree statements.

Process:

1. Distribute blank copies of the same handout they worked with previously.
2. Work individually.
3. Discuss in groups.
4. Groups present/ Whole class discussion.
5. Collect sheets to analyze changes that have occurred in the unit.

Homework: Journal: What is the most important thing you learned about sense of place in this unit?

NOTE: Final drafts of sense of place vignettes will be collected in approximately two weeks to allow adequate time for conferences and revision. On the day they submit their final drafts, students will be given the opportunity to read one of their vignettes aloud for extra credit.

Changes in responses to agree/disagree statements on sense of place will also be shared with students in a future class, though obviously will not require a full-class period.

5. List of Materials:

Many lessons require at least one handout. Handouts are included at the end of this document in the order they are used. In addition to handouts, a document camera can be very useful because it can be used to project the handout onto a screen so that the teacher can model each activity and write down student responses as appropriate. The unit can of course be done without a document camera; it just makes things easier.

Lesson 1 requires enough blank sheets of paper for the entire class. Standard size would be most convenient for transporting to and from school, but larger would allow students more space to create their map. Markers and/or crayons are also recommended for this lesson so that students can add color to their map if they wish.

Some lessons require a short presentation. I've included the suggested text for these so that they can be transcribed into PowerPoint or another presentation medium if needed.

6. Grading System:

Students will be graded on the neighborhood map and their sense of place vignettes using the attached rubrics.

Journal entries will be graded as a whole using the attached rubric.

All other assignments (e.g. sheet with agree/disagree statements) will simply be given completion grades.

A unit test could be incorporated into this unit but is not currently part of the plan. Students could be tested on skills (e.g. their ability to make inferences), concepts (e.g. What is sense of place?) and content (e.g. In what sense does Esperanza feel that she does not belong to her neighborhood?). If given a test like this, students could use handouts to review.

Students will be given a participation grade based on:

- How frequently they participate
- How thoughtful and helpful their contributions are
- How well they work with a partner or in a small group

7. Link to State Standards:

9.RL.1

"Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the texts says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text."

In the lesson where we are getting started with reading *The House on Mango Street*, I ask students, "What do we learn about Esperanza?" Essentially, I am asking them to make inferences, which I will then ask them to support using the text.

9.RL.2

“Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of a text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of a text.”

After reading the entire novel, we focus on Esperanza’s interesting characterization of her childhood home as “the place I belong but do not belong to”. When students are asked to explain why she feels that way, they are exploring a key idea in the text.

9.RL.3

“Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative language and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact specific word choices on meaning and tone.”

The House on Mango Street is an excellent novel to look at if you want to give your students a chance to play around with some very interesting similes and metaphors. For instance, on page 9, Esperanza says, “Someday I will have a best friend all my own. One I can tell me secrets to. One who will understand my jokes without my having to explain them. Until then I am a red balloon, a balloon tied to an anchor.” Later, when she is walking around her neighborhood in fancy shoes, Esperanza says, “the men can’t take their eyes of us. We must be Christmas.” Students are very interested in talking about what she might mean by these comparisons, maybe because they come so close to their own experience.

9.W.3

“Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured sequences.”

Writing the sense of place vignettes will not only help students develop a stronger sense of place, it will give them practice with narrative writing. Moreover, students will get direct instruction on descriptive writing techniques on day nine, allowing them to develop skills that will hopefully transfer to other narrative pieces that they might write in the future.

8. Bibliography:

Cisneros, Sandra. *The House on Mango Street*. Vintage Books: New York, 1984.

Pre-Reading for *The House on Mango Street*: Neighborhood Map

Background: In *The House on Mango Street*, the protagonist thinks a lot about the place where she lives and, in doing so, develops a strong sense of place. Where do you live?

Task: Create an annotated map of your neighborhood.

Purpose: I hope that this assignment helps you to:

- Develop a stronger sense of place
- See the relevance of *The House on Mango Street*

Guidelines:

1. Must be a view from above.
2. Must include as many landmarks (houses, trees, roads etc.) as possible.
3. Must be as accurate as possible.
4. Landmarks must be labeled.

Process:

1. Brainstorm.
2. Create your map.
3. Revise as needed.
4. Share with small group.
5. Submit.

Evaluation Criteria:

A good annotated map must be...

- Detailed
- Visually appealing

Brainstorming:

Directions: *As usual, there are many ways to brainstorm for this assignment. Two possibilities:*

- *List out things you want to include in your map.*
- *Make a rough sketch of your map.*

Evaluation of Your Neighborhood Map

Name: _____

	Exceeds the Standard	Meets the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Fails to Meet the Standard
Level of Detail	Map is impressively detailed.	Map is acceptably detailed.	Some parts of the map offer an acceptable amount of detail, yet others do not.	Map lacks detail throughout.
Visual Appeal	Map succeeds impressively in terms of visual appeal.	Map is visually appealing.	Some parts of the map are visually appealing, yet others are not.	Map is visually unappealing throughout.

Grade: _____

Pre-Reading for *The House on Mango Street*: Thinking About Sense of Place

Directions: Read each of the following statements and indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree.

Statements:	Agree		Disagree	
1. I have a detailed mental map of my neighborhood.	1	2	3	4
2. It is important to have a detailed mental map of your neighborhood.	1	2	3	4
3. I know many people in my neighborhood very well.	1	2	3	4
4. It is important to know many people in your neighborhood well.	1	2	3	4
5. The part of Wayland I live in is different in significant ways from other parts of Wayland.	1	2	3	4
6. Wayland is different in significant ways from other towns in eastern Massachusetts.	1	2	3	4
7. It is important to know a lot about what makes your neighborhood and town unique.	1	2	3	4
8. A strong sense of place is an essential part of the good life.	1	2	3	4

Getting to Know Esperanza

Directions: *As I read the opening of this novel, consider: what do we learn about the narrator and protagonist, Esperanza Cordero? Write down as many notes as possible. Remember that sometimes, to fully understand a character, we must make inferences.*

What we learn about Esperanza:

Notes on Quotes: Esperanza and Sense of Place

Directions: *In the first column, write a quotation from The House on Mango Street that relates to sense of place. In the second, explain what is important to note about this quotation and/or respond to it. (What do we learn from this quotation about Esperanza's relationship with the place where she lives?)*

Quotes:	Notes:

--	--

The People of Mango Street: Close Reading of Profile Vignettes

Directions: Choose three profile vignettes to take a closer look at. Write down the title and the name of the person being profiled and then take as many notes as possible in the three columns that follow.

Profile Vignette #1: _____

Person Profiled: _____

What we learn about this person:	Esperanza's attitude toward this person:	Why this person interests Esperanza:

Profile Vignette #2: _____

Person Profiled: _____

What we learn about this person:	Esperanza's attitude toward this person:	Why this person interests Esperanza:

Profile Vignette #3: _____

Person Profiled: _____

What we learn about this person:	Esperanza's attitude toward this person:	Why this person interests Esperanza:

Identifying Important Patterns in *The House on Mango Street*

Directions:

1. Identify a pattern that you see in this novel and write down a brief description of it.
2. Write down specific examples of it (including page #s).
3. Briefly explain what you see as the significance of this pattern (either to Esperanza or to us as readers).
4. Repeat this process for at least two more patterns.

Pattern #1: _____

Examples:

--

Significance:

--

Pattern #2: _____

Examples:

Significance:

Pattern #3: _____

Examples:

Significance:

Pattern #4: _____

Examples:

Significance:

Pattern #5: _____

Examples:

Significance:

Clarifying Esperanza's Feelings Toward Her Neighborhood

Directions: Brainstorm under each of the following headings and then answer the questions that follow.

Esperanza belongs to Mango Street because...	Esperanza does not belong to Mango Street because...

What are more significant or weighty, the ways in which Esperanza belongs to Mango Street or the ways in which she does not belong? Explain.

Does Esperanza have a good understanding of her relationship to the place she is from? Explain.

Roughly what percentage of people do you think have similarly ambivalent feelings about the place they grew up in?

Major Writing Project: Sense of Place Vignettes

Background: As we have seen, Sandra Cisneros communicates a strong sense of place in the series of vignettes that make up *The House on Mango Street*. If we read this novel closely, we understand Mango Street well. Where do you live?

Task: Write three vignettes that, together, will give your reader a compelling answer to this question.

Each vignette may write one of three types:

- Focused on a person who lives in your neighborhood (e.g. “The Earl of Tennessee”)
- Focused on an element of the landscape in your neighborhood (e.g. “Four Skinny Trees”)
- Focused on an experience you’ve had in your neighborhood (e.g. “The Monkey Garden”)

Process:

1. Brainstorm.
2. Research.
3. Plan.
4. Write a rough draft for peer-feedback.
5. Revise...Rewrite....Confer....Edit...
6. Submit final draft.

Evaluation Criteria:

A good vignette must...

- Be engaging to read.
- Use descriptive writing techniques (sensory details, vivid verbs, and figurative language) to make key scenes vivid for your reader.
- Communicate a strong sense of place/ Provide a compelling answer to the question: where do you live?

Step 1: Brainstorming

Directions: List as many things as possible under each of the following headings and then star the ones that seem the most interesting to write about.

People in my neighborhood who I could write about:

--

Elements of the landscape in my neighborhood that I could write about:

--

Experiences I've had in my neighborhood that I could write about:

--

Step 2: Research

Directions:

1. Choose a topic for your first vignette and write it down.
2. Write down what you already know about your topic.
3. Write down what you want to know about your topic.
4. Conduct your research and write down what you learn.
5. Repeat the process for subsequent topics.

Topic of Vignette #1:

What I already know:

What I want to know:

What I learned:

Topic of Vignette #2:

What I already know:

What I want to know:

What I learned:

Topic of Vignette #3:

What I already know:

What I want to know:

What I learned:

Step 3: Planning

Directions: Use the boxes below to write down a plan for what will happen in each of your vignettes or some of the key information you want to convey in it.

Vignette #1:

Vignette #2:

Vignette #3:



Evaluation of Your Sense of Place Vignettes

Name: _____

	Exceeds the Standard	Meets the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Fails to Meet the Standard
Engaging the Reader	Vignettes are especially engaging to read.	Vignettes are engaging to read.	Vignettes are somewhat engaging to read, yet could be more so.	Vignettes fail to engage the reader.
Descriptive Writing	Impressively effective use of descriptive writing techniques such as vivid verbs, sensory details, and figurative language to make key scenes vivid for the reader.	Effective use of descriptive writing techniques such as vivid verbs, sensory details, and figurative language to make key scenes vivid for the reader.	Effective use of descriptive writing techniques at some points yet could go further at others.	In sufficient use of descriptive writing techniques.
Sense of Place	Vignettes are impressively effective in terms of communicating a strong sense of place. You provide your reader with a highly compelling answer to the question: where do you live?	Vignettes are effective in terms of communicating sense of place. You provide your reader with a good answer to the question: where do you live?	Vignettes are somewhat effective in terms of communicating a sense of place, yet they could be more so.	Vignettes are ineffective in terms of communicating sense of place.

Grade: _____

Descriptive Writing Tips and Practice

SUGGESTION #1: DESCRIBE ACTION WITH ACTIVE, VIVID VERBS

To write effective description of action, you should use active, vivid verbs such as:

- Slammed
- Glared
- Sprinted

Avoid using too many passive, weak verbs such as

- Is
- Am
- Are
- Was
- Were
- Went

Example: Susan was angry at Bob.

Revision: Susan kicked open the door and glared at Bob as he sat slouched in front of the television. When her dramatic entrance failed to turn Bob's attention away from "The Price is Right," she stormed across the room, her shoes thudding against the floor.

Practice:

Revise each of the following sentences so that the verb is more active and vivid.

1. Desperate not to be seen, Rainsford went behind the curtain.
2. Rainsford looked at Zaroff and said, "You are a sick man."
3. Zaroff put the gun down on the table.
4. Rainsford went up the cliff.
5. Rainsford was freezing cold.

SUGGESTION #2: USE SENSORY DETAILS TO ALLOW YOUR READER TO IMAGINE THE ACTION MORE CLEARLY

Try to use images that appeal to each of the senses:

- Sight
- Sound
- Touch
- Smell
- Taste

Original Text: The room was filthy.

Revision: After forcing the shut door open, a shower of dirt fell on my head. As I walked into the room, a cloud of dust rose before me, blurring my vision and clogging my nose. A tiny speck of sun peeked through the only semi-clear spot on the otherwise soot-encrusted window. When I opened the refrigerator, a stench like the odor of rancid milk filled the air.

Practice:

Write a description of Rainsford entering a cave in which you use sensory detail to make the scene vivid for your reader.

SUGGESTION #3: EXPERIMENT WITH FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

Some types of figurative language are...

Simile-

Metaphor-

Examples:

“An apprehensive night crawled by like a wounded snake.”

“The general was playing with him! The general was saving him for another day’s sport.
The Cossack was the cat: he was the mouse.”

“His face was set and the forced the machinery of his mind to function.”

PRACTICE:

Write a description of Rainsford climbing a tree that uses at least one type of figurative language.

Reading Like a Writer: Close Reading of Exemplar Vignettes from *Mango Street*

Directions: Re-read each of the following vignettes so as to get a better sense of how to write your own. Underline anything that seems especially important or effective and make notes in the margins.

Look for:

- *Effective descriptive writing*
 - *Figurative language*
 - *Vivid verbs*
 - *Sensory detail*
- *Parts that effectively characterize Mango Street (This suggests that Mango Street is a place where...)*
- *Parts that effectively characterize Esperanza*
- *Parts that effectively characterize Esperanza's feelings toward Mango Street and/or the people who live there*

Four Skinny Trees

They are the only ones who understand me. I am the only one who understands them. Four skinny trees with skinny necks and point elbows like mine. Four who do not belong here but are here. Four raggedy excuses planted by the city. From our room we can hear them, but Nenny just sleeps and doesn't appreciate these things.

Their strength is their secret. They send ferocious roots beneath the ground. They grow us and they grow down and grab the earth between their hairy toes and bite the sky with violent teeth and never quit their anger. This is how they keep.

Let one forget his reason for being, they'd all droop like tulips in a glass, each with their arms around the other. Keep, keep, keep, trees say when I sleep. They teach.

When I am too sad and too skinny to keep keeping, when I am a tiny thing against so many bricks, then it is I look at trees. When there is nothing left to look at on this street. Four who grew despite concrete. Four whose only reason is to be and be.

The Monkey Garden

Who was it that said I was getting too old to play the games? Who was it I didn't listen to? I only remember that when the others ran, I wanted to run too, up and down and through the monkey garden, fast as the boys, not like Sally who screamed if she got her stockings muddy.

I said, Sally, come on, but she wouldn't. She stayed by the curb talking to Tito and his friends. Play with the kids if you want, she said. I'm staying here. She could be stuck-up like that if she wanted to, so I just left.

It was her own fault too. When I got back Sally was pretending to be mad...something about the boys having stolen her keys. Please give them back to me, she said, punching the nearest one with a soft fist. They were laughing. She was too. It was a joke I didn't get.

I wanted to go back with the other kids who were still jumping on cars, still chasing each other through the garden, but Sally had her own game.

One of the boys invented the rules. One of Tito's friends said you can't get the keys back unless you kiss us and Sally pretended to be mad at first but then said yes. It was that simple.

I don't know why, but something inside me wanted to throw a stick. Something wanted to say no when I watched Sally going into the garden with Tito's buddies all grinning. It was just a kiss, that's all. A kiss for each one. So what, she said.

Only how come I felt angry inside. Like something wasn't right. Sally went behind that old blue pickup to kiss the boys and get her keys back, and I ran up three flights of stairs to where Tito lived. His mother was ironing shirts. She was sprinkling water on them from an empty pop bottle and smoking a cigarette.

Your son and his friends stole Sally's keys and now they won't give them back unless she kisses them and right now they're making her kiss them, I said all out of breath from the three flights of stairs.

Those kids, she said, not looking up from her ironing.

That's all?

What do you want me to do, she said call the cops? And kept on ironing.

I looked at her a long time, but couldn't think of anything to say, and ran back down the three flights to the garden where Sally needed to be saved. I took three big sticks and a brick and figured this was enough.

But when I got there Sally said to go home. Those boys said leave us alone. I felt stupid with my brick. They all looked at me as if *I* was the one that was crazy and made me feel ashamed.

And then I don't know why but I had to run away. I had to hide myself at the other end of the garden, in the jungle part, under a tree that wouldn't mind if I lay

down and cried a long time. I closed my eyes like tight stars so that I wouldn't, but I did. My face felt hot. Everything inside hiccupped.

I read somewhere in India there are priests who can will their hearts to stop beating. I wanted to will my blood to stop, my heart to quit its pumping. I wanted to be dead, to turn into the rain, my eyes melt into the ground like two black snails. I wished and wished. I closed my eyes and willed it, but when I got up my dress was green and I had a headache.

I looked at my feet in their white socks and ugly round shoes. They seemed far away. They didn't seem to be my feet anymore. And the garden that had been such a good place to play didn't seem mine either.

Peer Feedback on Rough Draft of Sense of Place Vignettes

Author: _____ Editor: _____

Directions:

1. *Ask your partner what his or her concerns are.*
2. *Read your partner's vignette silently.*
3. *Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.*
4. *Note strengths and make suggestions for improvement.*
5. *Discuss your partner's vignette with him or her and listen to his or her feedback on yours.*

Statements:	Agree		Disagree	
1. The beginning of each vignette gets my interest.	1	2	3	4
2. Each vignette is focused on either a person, an element of the landscape, or an experience.	1	2	3	4
3. The author effectively uses vivid verbs to describe action.	1	2	3	4
4. The author effectively uses sensory details to make key moments vivid for the reader.	1	2	3	4
5. The author effectively uses figurative language to add descriptive power to his or her writing.	1	2	3	4
6. The vignettes are generally engaging to read.	1	2	3	4
7. Collectively, the vignettes give me a good sense of the place where the author lives.	1	2	3	4

Strengths:

Suggestions for Improvement:

Evaluation of Your Journal Entries

Name: _____

	Exceeds the Standard	Meets the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Fails to Meet the Standard
Thoroughness	Entries are impressively thorough.	Entries are acceptably thorough.	Some entries are acceptably thorough, yet others are not.	Entries are consistently underdeveloped.
Thoughtfulness	Entries are impressively thoughtful.	Entries are thoughtful.	Entries are somewhat thoughtful.	Entries lack thoughtfulness.

Grade: _____