

The Complete Question List for *House on Mango Street*

Ch 1. The House

How does Esperanza define a “real house”? What features would it have? What’s wrong with the house on Mango Street? Why is the word “there” so insulting to Esperanza?

Ch 2. Hairs

Describe the different hairstyles of Esperanza’s family. Whose hair does she love most?

Ch 3. Boys & Girls

Why doesn’t Esperanza get along particularly well with her siblings? What does she desire instead?

Ch. 4: My Name

What does Esperanza’s name mean (list at least 3 different meanings)? Why doesn’t Esperanza like her name? How do people make her feel about it?

Ch. 7: Laughter

How are Nenny and Esperanza similar? How are Lucy and Rachel similar?

Ch 9: Meme Ortiz

What happened to Meme at the First Annual Tarzan Jumping contest? What does this tell you about Meme?

Ch. 10: Louie

Describe Louie's cousin's car. Why is everyone fascinated with it? What happens to him because of this car?

Ch. 11: Marin

Do you think Marin loves her boyfriend? Why or why not?

Ch. 12: Those Who Don't

How do people (presumably white people) feel when they enter Esperanza's neighborhood? Why? How do Esperanza's people feel when they are in other neighborhoods? Why is this ironic?

Ch. 13: There was an Old Woman...

How does Rosa Vargas feel about kids? Why is she so stressed out? How do the kids behave?

Ch. 14: Alicia Who Sees Mice

What does Alicia do that's different from the other characters we have seen so far?

Ch. 15: Darius and the Clouds

What does Esperanza like about the sky? What does it represent? What does Darius say?

Ch. 17: The Family of Little Feet

Why do the girls ultimately decide to get rid of the shoes? What kinds of reactions were they getting?

Ch. 18: A Rice Sandwich

Why does Esperanza never want to eat at the canteen again after this experience?

Ch. 20: Hips

What are hips used for, according to the girls?

Ch. 21: The First Job

Describe Esperanza's work life. What happens to her once she starts trusting someone at her job?

Ch. 22: Papa Who Wakes Up Tired in the Dark

Why is Papa crying? Why is this strange to Esperanza? How does Esperanza feel about her father?

Ch. 23: Born Bad

What did Esperanza do to make her feel so much guilt?

Ch. 24: Elenita, Cards, Palm, Water

Why does Esperanza see Elenita? What does she want to know? Why is she disappointed?

Ch. 25: Geraldo No Last Name

What happened to Geraldo? Why doesn't the author give us his last name? What's the larger point she's trying to make?

Ch. 26: Edna's Ruthie

What's special about Ruthie? How is she different from most adults?

Ch. 27: The Earl of Tennessee

Why are there different accounts of what Earl's wife looks like? Why is really going on?

Ch. 28: Sire

Why does Mama warn Esperanza about the boy, Sire? What's he really after?

Ch. 29: Four Skinny Trees

Why does Esperanza feel a connection with the trees? How are they similar (think outside the box a bit)?

Ch. 30: No Speak English

Why does *Mamacita* cry when her son starts singing the Pepsi commercial?

Ch. 32: Sally

Describe Sally. Why is Esperanza interested in her? What is her "beauty" a problem?

Ch. 33: Minerva Writes Poems

How does Minerva's husband treat her? How does this compare to other married couples?

Ch. 34: Bums in the Attic

Why does she say she will offer bums a place to sleep? What's her point?

Ch. 35: Beautiful and Cruel

How does Esperanza rebel? What is she rebelling against? Be sure to mention the “ball and chain.”

Ch. 36: A Smart Cookie

Why did her mother quit school? Why is this so tragic?

Ch. 37: What Sally Said

What has happened to Sally? Why does she cover it up? Why does she forgive the person who did it to her?

Ch. 38: The Monkey Garden

Describe the Monkey Garden immediately after the monkey left. What does it remind you of? What does Sally do in the garden that disturbs Esperanza?

Ch. 39: Red Clowns

How does Sally betray Esperanza? What happened to her? How does this event hasten Esperanza’s coming-of-age? Why is it so tragic?

Ch. 40: Linoleum Roses

Why did she marry, according to Esperanza? How does Sally's husband treat her? Why is this ironic? Who does her husband remind you of?

Ch. 41: The Three Sisters

Why is this a significant moment in Esperanza's life? What do the sisters teach her about life?

Ch. 42: Alicia and I Talking on Edna's Steps

What wisdom does Alicia give to Esperanza?

Ch. 43: A House of My Own

Describe Esperanza's dream house. What does she compare it to? How is that fitting for her?

Ch. 44: Mango Says Goodbye Sometimes

Why does Esperanza write? What promise does she make? Why is this essential for her growth?