***House on Mango Street* Questions 7**

**Novellas 38-47 pages 88-110**

***Beautiful & Cruel* pages 88 & 89**

1. How does Esperanza characterize herself?

Esperanza believes she is ugly and undesirable, but her mother tells her she will grow to be beautiful.

1. What decision has Esperanza made about her life?

Esperanza has decided, after looking at all the other women that she will not be tame and give up her life for men. Instead, she will be fierce and fight the expectations people have for women in her neighborhood.

1. What “quiet war” has Esperanza begun? What is the first step in that war for her?

The quiet war she talks about is battling expectations for behavior, especially behavior related to gender. She begins this war by leaving her place at the messy table.

***A Smart Cookie* pages 90-91**

1. What kinds of skills does Esperanza’s mother have? What does she dream of doing?

Esperanza’s mother can speak two languages, sing an opera beautifully, fix a television, draw and do beautiful needlework. She hopes to leave the neighborhood to see a ballet or an opera.

1. What advice does she give Esperanza?

Esperanza’s mother tells her to go to school and study hard, and then she suggests that marrying a man will not solve her problems. Instead, Esperanza’s mother says, you have to do things for yourself. She also warns Esperanza against shame because it kept her from being the best she could be.

1. Why did Esperanza’s mother quit school? Do you think she could go back now? Why?

Esperanza’s mother said she quit school because she was ashamed of the clothes she wore, which were not as nice as the other kid’s clothes. I think she could go back to school now, if she wanted to, but she talks as if her chance is gone.

***What Sally Said* pages 92-93**

1. What does Sally say about her father? What does Esperanza know?

Sally says her father never hits her hard, and she lies when she says her bruises come from falling down stairs. Esperanza knows that Sally’s father beats her.

1. What does Sally’s father fear?

Sally’s father is afraid that Sally will run away like her sisters did and bring more shame to the family. He also may be afraid that she will not get involved with a boy.

1. How do you think Esperanza feels about the situation? Why do you think that?

Esperanza feels protective of Sally because she asks Sally to stay with her for a few days. However, when Sally’s father comes for her and takes her home, Esperanza may feel powerless to help.

***The Monkey Garden* pages 94-98**

1. How does the Monkey Garden change over time?

Originally, when the family first moved, the garden was colorful and natural, with big sun flowers and sweat peach trees, bees and fruit flies pollinating, and a welcome smell of wood and dampness. However, it became too wild and overgrown, and people started dumping their garbage and their broken down vehicles there.

1. What game do the kids play there? What game does Sally play there?

The kids play chasing, jumping, and hiding games in the monkey garden. They like to pretend it was the original garden or that pirates and dinosaurs were buried there. However, Sally thought those games were too childish and dirty. In the game Sally plays, she agrees to kiss Tito and several other boys behind the pickup truck in the garden in return for the keys Tito stole from Sally.

1. How does Esperanza try to help Sally? Does she succeed?

Esperanza thinks Sally is in a dangerous situation with Tito and his friends, so she runs up three flights of stairs to tell Tito’s mother about it. However, Tito’s mother does nothing about it, so Esperanza gathers a brick and some sticks to throw at the boys. It does not matter though, because Sally tells Esperanza to go away.

1. Why does Esperanza never return to the Monkey Garden?

Esperanza feels ashamed after trying to help Sally, but she does not know why. Going to the garden would remind her of those feelings, so she never returns.

***Red Clowns* pages 99-100**

1. What happened to Esperanza at the carnival?

Esperanza was raped by one or more boys at the carnival. She does not seem to know who they were.

1. Why didn’t Sally help Esperanza?

Sally did not help Esperanza because she was somewhere else and did not hear her screaming.

1. What does Esperanza think Sally and the others lied about?

Esperanza says that Sally and the others lied about sex. They probably said sex would be wonderful and romantic, but Esperanza can only remain the pain and dirtiness of this experience.

***Linoleum Roses* pages 101-102**

1. How does Sally escape her father’s home?

Sally escapes her father’s home by marrying a marshmallow salesman she met at the school carnival. Even though she is still in the seventh grade, they get married in another state where it is legal for an adult to marry someone so young.

1. Does Sally appear happy in her new life? Explain your opinion.

Sally appears happy in her new home, surrounded by all material things that a housewife would want. Sally says she is in love.

1. What is Esperanza’s opinion of Sally’s new life? What details suggest this?

Esperanza does not think Sally’s new life is very good. Sally used to be very energetic, strong, and outgoing, now she is required to stay away from the window and cannot talk to her friends from her pre-marriage life. Sally has exchanged the control of her father for the control of her husband.

***The Three Sisters* pages 103-105**

1. Where does Esperanza meet the three sisters?

Esperanza meets the three sisters at Lucy and Rachel’s baby sister’s funeral, which is held in their home.

1. What are three details about the sisters that make them mysterious?
2. The sisters appear mysterious because their arrival is described as being related to the wind and moon.
3. They speak in riddles and incomplete statements, which they finish for each other.
4. The sister with the marble hands guesses Esperanza wants to leave Mango Street.
5. They wave when Esperanza looks back, but she never seems them again.

***Alicia & I Talking on Edna’s Steps* pages 106-107**

1. What do Alicia and Esperanza disagree about?

Alicia believes that Esperanza will always have Mango Street inside her because this is her home, but Esperanza does not feel she belongs on Mango Street and doubts she will ever return.

1. What does Alicia predict for Esperanza’s future?

Alicia predicts that Esperanza will return back to Mango Street.

1. Why do the girls talk about the mayor? What does it suggest about their neighborhood?

The girls talk about the mayor because they do not believe the mayor will ever try to make Mango Street a better place to live. This suggests that Mango Street is in a poor area that has been forgotten by the people in charge of the city. The neighborhood will only improve if the people who live there make changes themselves.

***A House of My Own* page 108**

1. What will Esperanza’s house not be? What does this say about Esperanza?

Esperanza says her future home will not be a small apartment or a flat. She will own her nice big house herself, as this shows Esperanza plans to retain control of her life and not let a man into it.

1. What type of person is Esperanza? Is she an introvert (shy person) or an extrovert (outgoing person)? How do you know?

Esperanza seems to be an introvert because she wants to live by herself, with her own things around, no one to clean up after, and the quiet she needs to write. However, she makes friends easily and plans to allow strangers (bums) to live in the attic of her home. So she may be slightly extroverted as well.

***Mango Says Goodbye Sometimes* pages 109-110**

1. What does Esperanza do to get through each day?

Esperanza makes up stories in her head to get through the day, and she feels better when she writes them down.

1. What are Esperanza’s goals for the future? Does she plan on following the three sisters’ advice?

One day, Esperanza plans to pack up her books and her papers and move away from Mango Street.

1. How does this vignette come full circle from the first vignette in the novella?

This vignette comes full circle form the first one because it has some of the same wording as the first vignette does related to Esperanza’s homes in the past. However, Esperanza is not the same person as she was at the beginning because she has a better idea of her future, plus she is more aware of how important her roots on Mango Street are.