

21CLD Learning Activity Description

Please fill in one of these sheets and attach it to *EVERY* learning activity you submit. Choose the learning activities that you feel **provided the best learning opportunities for students**.

1. Title of Learning Activity & Average Age of Students

Title: House on Mango Street

Average Age of Students: 13 years

2. What did you hope your students would learn from this learning activity?

The goal is that students will gain an awareness of the immigrant experience and be able to communicate this to others using what they learned in our poetry lesson. They first read the book in order to gain an understanding of the challenges immigrants face. They will gather and synthesize information about a particular group of people. Interviewing a real immigrant and understanding his or her context will allow them to build a deeper connection that will help them be more sensitive to others and give them something real to write about.

3. Did you have learning goals from more than one discipline (for example, literature and history, or science and math) for this learning activity?

This learning activity has learning goals in history and language arts.

The history goal for students is to synthesize information about the immigrant experience in the United States by researching online and interviewing an immigrant.

The language arts goal is for students to write a poem about the immigrant experience and build on their previous experiences with the genre of poetry.



4. Were students required to work in pairs or as a group on any part of this learning activity?

- No
- Working in groups was *optional*. Please describe below the work that students did together.
- Working in groups was *required*. Please describe below the work that students did together.

Students shared their poem with another classmate to get feedback before submitting it to me. I also allowed the students to pair up during the interviews, if they wanted to, but each one had to submit his/her own poem.

5. Were students allowed to work with technology (ICT) such as computers or digital cameras for any part of this learning activity? Please describe.

- No technology was used for this learning activity.
- Students *could* use technology for this activity
- Students were *required* to use technology for this activity

Students were required to use ICT for both research and typing their final product

6. What criteria did you use to judge the quality of students' work on this learning activity? Were students aware of the criteria in advance of completing the learning activity?

I checked for grammar and made sure they followed one of the patterns of poetry that we had learned. I checked for the quality of their writing and to see if the poem included details from the reading and what they may have learned from the interview.

7. How long did the learning activity take?

- a. Completed in a single class period
- b. Completed in 2-4 days
- c. Required one week or more to complete

8. What verbal instructions did you give to students?

I reminded students about our past lesson on the poetry patterns and that they should follow one of these patterns when they write their poem.

9. Is there any other information you would like to include to help another teacher using this learning activity be successful?

PLEASE REMEMBER TO INCLUDE:

- *Instructions for the learning activity*
- *Handouts and materials*
- *Grading rubrics*



The House on Mango Street is a memoir written by Sandra Cisneros about her experiences growing up on a street in Chicago which is populated by impoverished immigrants from Latin America.

Step 1.

Read the book. Reflect on this question: “What are some of the important elements of the immigrant experience?”

Step 2.

Find someone in your neighborhood or family who is an immigrant to the United States. You will interview this person to ask them, “*Tell me two or three of the most important problems you faced when you first immigrated to the United States.*” Ask them to describe what the world they lived in was like and how their community treated them.

You can conduct your interview alone or with a friend, but you will still have to submit separate poems.

Step 3.

Based on all that you learned from the book and interview, write a poem about a real problem that immigrants face when they come to the United States and how that impacts their life. Reflect on the following: *Why is it so hard? What can non-immigrants and others in the community do to make the transition easier for immigrants?*

Think about people in your community who might not be aware of what immigrants experience. *How can you communicate what you have learned to this audience?* Use vivid language to make the experience more real to your readers. Offer suggestions that are realistic so they might be useful to the reader.

Step 4.

Work in pairs with another student. Read your partner’s poem. Think about the following questions, and use them to provide feedback to help your partner edit and improve his or her poem:

- *Does the poem have enough detail? Is it clear what you are describing? Mark places that are vague.*
- *Is the poem written using correct conventions and grammar? Does it follow one of the patterns that we learned about in class? Note any mistakes.*
- *What would make the poem better?*

Step 5.

Use your partner’s comments to edit your poem. Fix all mistakes and consider your partner’s suggestions for improving the poem.

Step 6.

Put your poem into final form. It must be typed, using double spacing in Times New Roman, size 12.

