

# Grade 7 Summer Reading 2013

## Project: Book Review Letter

You are expected to read every day this summer. Choose ONE book, write a letter addressed to me discussing what you read. Follow the guidelines below.

### Directions

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Letter Format and Content:

\_\_\_ Date

\_\_\_ Salutation

\_\_\_ Please address your letter to me, Mrs. Januski

\_\_\_ Opening introduction paragraph

\_\_\_ This is where you should introduce yourself.

\_\_\_ Also, introduce your book, the author and genre.

\_\_\_ *Two to Three* Body paragraphs

\_\_\_ Briefly and concisely summarize the plot of the book.

\_\_\_ Discuss what you loved and disliked about the book.

Provide specific examples from the book to justify your feelings.

\_\_\_ Explain what you feel is the deeper meaning in the book (theme).

Provide specific examples from the book.

\_\_\_ Discuss connections you made to the book:

text-to-text, text-to-world, text-to-self, or text-to-emotion.

\_\_\_ Closing paragraph

\_\_\_ Here you should discuss whether you would recommend the book. Explain your reasoning.

\_\_\_ Complimentary Closing and Signature

\_\_\_ Please close and sign you letter.

\_\_\_ Type your work using font style Times New Roman and font size 12.

# Example Letter

July 16, 2013

Date

Dear Students,

Salutation

My name is Mrs. Januski and as you now know, I teach 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts at Thurgood Marshall. Let me tell you: I am thrilled and excited about next year. I'm also excited to pass on the last good book I just read: The House on Mango Street, by Sandra Cisneros. In her book, Sandra uses the writing form of vignettes. I know what you're thinking – what is a vignette? A vignette is a short descriptive piece of writing on something or someone important. In her book, Sandra writes a series of vignettes reflecting moments in the life of Esperanza.

The House on Mango Street is the story of a year in one 13-year old's life. It is a year full of sadness, giggly moments and discoveries about what life is all about. Esperanza is the main character living in a poor neighborhood in Chicago. She has two loving and hard-working parents, a sister and a few good friends. What Esperanza wants more than anything in the world is to have something to feel proud of and to call her own. From the start of the book, she desires nothing more than a beautiful house with a yard. From there, she describes the life that she does have, which includes many unique and strange people on her street. With these people and her friends she shares great moments and heartbreak. Yet in the end she rises above the shame to find hope and self-love.

I fell in love with Esperanza from the very first start when she tells us how desperately she wishes for a beautiful house. Like Esperanza, I too wanted a prettier house as a child. I also enjoyed the simple but powerful words Sandra used to make me cry when Esperanza cried or laugh when she laughed. I especially like when Esperanza calls herself a red balloon tied to an anchor. She truly was an energized red balloon tied down by the anchor of fear and doubt.

When Cisneros wrote this book I believe she wanted her readers to see and understand that true happiness doesn't come from the things we have but from the moments we share. Esperanza thought she wanted a house but what she really wanted was to feel proud of her heritage and herself. Beneath the surface she was just a girl who didn't want to feel unworthy to eat in the cafeteria with other kids. She didn't want people to judge her because of her ethnicity or neighborhood. I understood exactly what Esperanza felt because I immigrated to this country with my family around 1989. It was hard to be accepted at school because I came from a different country. My classmates had a stereotypical view of me and Haiti.

For anyone who has ever felt ashamed or unsure, I would recommend they read this book to see that there is hope. I would also pass this book to anyone who loves poetry because Sandra Cisneros use great poetic language. It's a short book and you might want to try to read.

Sincerely,

Complimentary Closing

Mrs. Januski

Signature

Body Paragraphs

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Summer Reading 2013**

**Letter Rubric**

	1 Point	2 Points	3 Points	You	T
Organization	<input type="checkbox"/> No clear structure <input type="checkbox"/> Very few transitions, creating choppy flow <input type="checkbox"/> Disregarded much of the directions	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair structure <input type="checkbox"/> Few awkward moments without transitions <input type="checkbox"/> Follows most of the direction in a general way	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong structure <input type="checkbox"/> Smooth transitions throughout letter <input type="checkbox"/> All parts of directions followed		
Voice	<input type="checkbox"/> Distant, too formal – or too informal, chatty, sarcastic. <input type="checkbox"/> Tone inappropriate for audience, purpose, topic.	<input type="checkbox"/> Shows moments of spontaneity <input type="checkbox"/> Tone acceptable for topic, audience and purpose.	<input type="checkbox"/> Enthusiastic & engaging. <input type="checkbox"/> Tone suits audience and purpose.		
Word Choice	<input type="checkbox"/> Moments of imprecise, incorrectly used language confusion and unclearness. <input type="checkbox"/> Overwritten or underwritten (weak words like <i>good, nice, fun</i> ). <input type="checkbox"/> Lacks verb power.	<input type="checkbox"/> Functional, clear language. <input type="checkbox"/> Some clichés, or overused wordings. <input type="checkbox"/> Some strong verbs - general phrases.	<input type="checkbox"/> Precise, vivid language. <input type="checkbox"/> Word choice enhances meaning. <input type="checkbox"/> Lively, appealing verbs and striking phrases.		
Sentence	<input type="checkbox"/> Mechanical, but readable. <input type="checkbox"/> Awkward moments outweigh smoothness. <input type="checkbox"/> Run –ons, choppy sentences	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat of a good flow. <input type="checkbox"/> Some variety in length, structure. <input type="checkbox"/> Some repetition in sentence beginnings.	<input type="checkbox"/> Nearly all varied sentence beginnings. <input type="checkbox"/> Variety in sentence structure, length. <input type="checkbox"/> Purposeful writing.		
Conventions	<input type="checkbox"/> Noticeable, frequent, distracting errors. <input type="checkbox"/> Errors on basic words: simple spelling, punctuation, cap’s. <input type="checkbox"/> Through editing required	<input type="checkbox"/> Minor errors do not obscure meaning. <input type="checkbox"/> Readable – but lacks close attention to conventions. <input type="checkbox"/> Good once-over editing needed.	<input type="checkbox"/> Minor errors that are easily overlooked. <input type="checkbox"/> Text appears edited. <input type="checkbox"/> Varied use of punctuation. <input type="checkbox"/> May need minor touch-ups.		
1.0 – 1.1    1.2 -1.3    1.4    1.5 – 1.6    1.7    1.8- 1.9    2 - 2.1    2.2 - 2.3    2.4    2.5 –2.7    2.8 – 2.9    3.0 D-            D            D+            C -            C            C+            B-            B            B+            A-            A            A+				Total pts = Average 5 traits      Score	
<b>Parent Signature:</b>					