

And the Earth Did Not Devour Him Vignette Honors Project

A Vignette is a short written description or scene, a small graceful literary sketch. For the purposes of our class we are going to think about vignettes as extremely short stories that focus on describing specific moments. For example, in *And the Earth Did Not Devour Him*, Rivera ends each chapter with a vignette on Mexican American migrant workers' experiences.

You will write a series of vignettes (3 vignettes) that can take the structure of a paragraph, story, or poem, but each vignette needs to focus on accurately portraying a theme, mirroring Rivera's use of vignettes in his novel *And the Earth Did Not Devour Him*. Rivera focuses on

- 1) social oppression makes it difficult for adult Mexican American migrant workers to survive
- 2) children of Mexican American migrant workers find themselves trapped between their families' culture and mainstream society, leading to struggles in determining their identities.

In short, you will write a very short, yet authentic creative piece on trying to survive or searching for identity. And, since we all live in a small low-income town, our stories will focus on survival and identity within this setting. By focusing on different perspectives from the same setting and culture when portraying these similar themes, we will provide a more accurate depiction of life in a small town.

Tips:

- Brainstorm a couple of ideas that fit one of the two topics/themes
- Focus on very specific moments or events
- Rely on stories that you know – from personal experience or experiences from others that you witnessed or heard about
- Share stories that you are comfortable sharing with other people – your teachers and classmates. If the story is too personal and you want to write it, you can write it on your own for your own catharsis, but it will not count toward your work. Only share stories and events that you are comfortable letting your 2 teachers and your peers read
- Select a form (paragraph, poem, or story) that fits with your story and theme
- Write the piece and then go back to edit it
- Tell the story in your first draft, then change the structure and add literary devices on your revision

Grading (for each story):

- Identifies a current problem and researches 3 facts on this problem /2 points
- Focuses on a very specific moment or event /1 point
- Shows theme through actions and dialogue, doesn't merely state what happened /3 points
- Clearly relates to theme of survival or identity /2 points
- Maintains realistic tone and language /2 points
- Uses a literary device smoothly and effectively that carries over into the other vignettes /3 points
- Structure of vignette develops the mood, plot, or Theme /2 points

Grading (across all stories):

- Clearly, thoroughly justifies writing choices on structure, tone, language, and literary devices to develop themes /5 points