



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2025 Volume I: Objects, Material Culture, and Empire: Making Russia

Writing Object(ive)s: Items as Inspiration for Literacy Work

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In this unit, students are asked to examine Sandra Cisneros's work *The House on Mango Street* through object study to improve their writing skills and their understanding of symbolism. Throughout the course of the unit, students will use a modified form of Jules Prown's material culture theory to study objects in order to develop greater understanding of the objective, write in more detail, and delve deeper into symbolism. Students will use their object study notes to build descriptions of the objects that they will use to write object biographies at the conclusion of the unit. In addition, students will create material examples of the house on Mango Street in order to show their understanding of symbolism and to use the object study process to examine the work of their peers.

(Developed for Language Arts, grade 8; recommended for Language Arts, grade 7)

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