

## Annotated Model Literary Essay

### (For Teacher Reference)

In the chapter “Los Higos” of *Esperanza Rising*, by Pam Muñoz Ryan, the Ortega family wakes in the middle of the night because their house is on fire. El Rancho de las Rosas is home to both 13-year-old Esperanza Ortega, whose wealthy family owns the ranch, and Miguel Gonzales, the 16-year-old son of one of the workers. *In the dark of night, each responds differently to this crisis. Esperanza seems unable to do anything, while Miguel jumps straight into the action.*

Once Mama has led Esperanza outside the burning building, Esperanza seems to be confused and does not do anything to help. On page 41 it says, “Esperanza felt dizzy. Nothing seemed real. Was she still dreaming? Was this her own imagination gone wild?” and she stands in the courtyard “as if in a trance” watching the house burn. Esperanza also feels numb. On page 41 it says, “Someone wrapped a blanket around her. Was she cold? She did not know.”

*In contrast, Miguel reacts quite differently, as he takes action immediately. On page 41 when Miguel sees Esperanza, but not her mother or grandmother, he immediately asks, “Where is your mother and Abuelita?” When he realizes that Abuelita must still be in the burning house, he runs inside, even though it is dangerous and puts him in danger. He returns with Abuelita safe in his arms, but his shirt catches fire on the way out. On pages 41–42 it says, “Miguel ran out of the burning house carrying Abuelita in his arms. He laid her down and Hortensia screamed. The back of his shirt was on fire.”*

Although the fire will profoundly change both their lives, Esperanza and Miguel react very differently. Esperanza is a rich child who is used to everyone looking after her and having things done for her. She probably does not know what to do to help, and so she does nothing. In contrast, Miguel is older and is used to looking out for Esperanza, like an older brother, and taking responsibility for getting things done. His life seems to have taught him that when things go wrong, you need to take action. If not for his brave response, Abuelita would have been killed. These very different reactions show that the life you lead can affect how you react in a situation.

Paragraph 1 Gist: Introduces the text and author; briefly describes the event; introduces the purpose of the essay

Paragraph 2 Gist: Description of Esperanza’s reaction to the fire

Paragraph 3 Gist: Description of Miguel’s reaction to the fire

Paragraph 4 Gist: Reflects on why the characters’ reactions are different

Source:

Ryan, Pam Muñoz. *Esperanza Rising*. New York: Scholastic. 2000. Print.

Key:

Red

*Green*

**Yellow**

**Blue**

***Green (a different shade)***