

You must keep writing. It will keep you free,  **aunt** I say yes, but  **aunt** ~~th~~ **aunt** time I didn't know ~~wh~~ **aunt** she ~~me~~ **aunt**.

### ***Falling Text –*** **illuminating *The House on Mango Street* with music and movement**

In this project, you and your partner are to use Microsoft PowerPoint to fashion a slide show of lines from *The House on Mango Street*. You may use any text that you find from the book but you should try to concentrate on words & ideas that we haven't gone over in class.

A good place to start as you're looking for text to illuminate is by taking a look at Group Work #2 (The House on Mango Street), question #5 – notice how the word “rose” is used in different chapters – how it is transformed, how it builds, and how it helps to link ideas & images. Also check out the sheet that you got on the first day that showed “Stephen Booth” moments in the text.

Once you have your text (either from one place or from more than one part of the novel), then you can begin to find a way of illuminating the words (making their meaning clearer). The teacher will have shown you at least one example in class of what such a presentation can look like. In your presentation, you will show the original text from the novel along with optional pictures<sup>1</sup> (either in the background or inset within your slides), music (one or more songs and/or sound effects), as well as using the text animation effects (this is the most important part, and the part that most of your grade will come from) found in PowerPoint to help the viewer better understand what is taking place in the poem.

For instance, in the pictures at the top of this handout the words that Esperanza uses to describe herself (“a red balloon”) are brought out and animated. The word “I” becomes the red balloon and it's shown tethered to a house (a background picture) on which the words “an anchor” appear. In the next sequence Cisneros's masterful (and poetic) use of words is highlighted (Stephen Booth moments). In one paragraph (part of the chapter on the guilt she feels over the death of her aunt) at least 5 of the words in the paragraph are only 1 or 2 letters away from the word “aunt.” Again, animation is used to bring this out.

Finally, a final sequence goes back to the beginning quote and Esperanza's (Sandra Cisneros's) words appear in the background – the aunt's words are understood and all of the “I”'s in that first excerpt (appearing as red balloons) are set free.

When I put that presentation together, I hoped its various effects served to give the viewer **more** meaning from the words RATHER than detract from the original text. This is key. In so many PowerPoint presentations special effects (or even the entire presentation) are used to detract from otherwise weak content. Here the content that you are starting with is far from weak. Again, you must help the viewer of your presentation better understand Cisneros's words or to see something (either in layers of the text – Stephen Booth moments or in meaning (such as the word “I” becoming a balloon, and tethered then set free. Keep this in mind at all times.

In any case, as you set the pictures to music try to be very conscious of the following:

- Pictures are the least important part of this project, though they may be included as long as they don't detract from the text. Try to washout (see Help) the picture in the Format Picture menu.
- You must have at least one song (MP3's or WMA files are what PowerPoint allows). I strongly suggest that you use a song without words (classical, instrumental, etc.) Words in a song can quickly overpower the words you are attempting to illuminate. Karaoke versions of songs work fine as well.
- The majority of your presentation should contain text animation.

<sup>1</sup> I have found that some of the most effective, powerful presentations of this sort – do NOT use pictures and all the text to speak for itself (well maybe not completely by itself – you will use movement, color, etc.)

- Your pictures should very closely follow the words and/or music in some meaningful way (in other words the pictures should illuminate the words – not simply be somehow related to them)
- You should have no pictures or music that are offensive.
- Feel free to stick to one page, one paragraph, or combine texts to come up with a bigger meaning (see my presentation and your group works)

You do not have to “set” (if you use pictures and with your music) the text in Chicago in a neighborhood like you picture Esperanza’s to be. Feel free to put in any setting that you find illuminates, clarifies, and shows off the text.

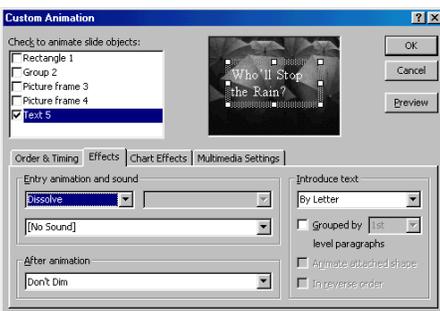
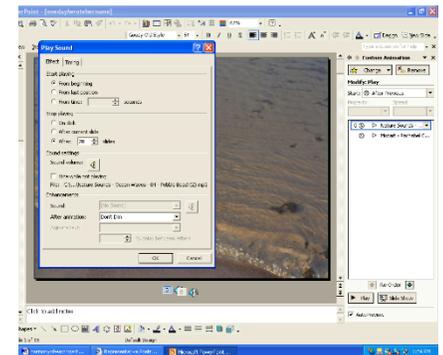
Besides entering your text into various slide – in my presentation I began by putting each line of text into a separate slide – you may want to begin by finding your pictures. You may either scan these from “paper” sources or you may get them on the Internet. One way to get them on the Internet is to use a web browser, find a picture, and “right-click” on the picture – this will bring up the save feature. A good search engine may be found at [www.google.com](http://www.google.com). At Google you will find a separate engine just for searching for pictures.

Once you have your pictures (if you use them), you may wish to crop or otherwise edit them using a program such as Paintshop Pro (found on all of our computers) or Photoshop. Think about how you want the pictures to fit on your slide (when using PowerPoint).

Once you are in PowerPoint, choose to create a new presentation. Then click on the blank slide (nothing on it) icon. If you want to insert a picture, click on Insert, then Picture from file. Fill in the location (such as your floppy “a:”) and it will insert the picture. Position the picture where you want it on the slide.

To add sound (you should add it to your first slide) go to Insert, then Insert Movies and Sounds, and then Sound from File. Again, give it the proper location. You must first convert you music to either an MP3 or WMA file – you can do this easily using Media Player. Make sure you don’t have content protection on while you are doing so or it won’t play on our computer.

Key Note: Once you insert a sound a tiny speaker icon will appear on that slide – you can move it below the slide so the picture of the icon won’t appear in your actual presentation. Next, if you need to (this will vary depending on what version of PowerPoint you are using) – in PowerPoint 2002, after you right click on the speaker icon, right click on the name of the music file (see the figure below), then choose to stop playing the sound after the number of slides that you want it to play for (usually this is going to be the entire number of slides in your show).



To insert text, click on Insert then text box. To animate text after you entered it, click on Slide Show (on the top menu) and then Custom Animation. This will bring up the dialogue box on the right. This is also the place to arrange which effect you want to occur first on a slide and how you want the effect to look. Make sure effects fit the words.

There are too many text effects to go into any detail here – I used custom motion path (to make the words move along a certain path that I defined). You can also choose how you want the animations to appear, for instance word by word or letter by letter (I used both for different effects).

To insert a new slide, click on Insert, then New Slide. To indicate how long you want a slide to last and what transition effect you want it to appear with click on Slide Show, then Slide Transition (this is also the place that you will say what kind of transition you want between slides – I stuck with either cut or slow fade)

With most transitions as well as text animations you can select the speed you want the effects to appear at.

If you get lost or confused, click on Help at any time and search for an answer or find Mr. Scotese or someone else who knows the software. For instance type in *text animation* if that’s what you want help on – they really do go into detail in the help files.

Have fun – ask friends how they are doing it– and remember – each effect, each picture, each sound must somehow make the overall text MORE CLEAR.

More on saving your work later. You will just need to save your Powerpoint file and your music file in a folder with you and your partners name. MOST PROBLEMS are due to students not saving their MP3 file in the same folder (they think its there but it’s really on their computer or on a CD in their computer. Check your presentation on a different computer than the one you created it on. **These projects are due October 18<sup>th</sup> and are worth 600 points.**