**How to write a vignette**

1. *Write small*. Be specific. You can't write about your entire life or everything you are in six vignettes. Decide which type of story you want to tell.
2. *Reflect*. You probably didn't turn into a young adult or learn a lesson or gain a perspective overnight. It's a gradual process. Try to capture that (it's not easy).
3. *Find the poetry*. Remember, a vignette is half-story, half-painting. Read *The House on Mango Street* as a writer looking to do something similar.

There is **no** **ONE WAY** to write a vignette. But here are some things to try using the model of *The House on Mango Street.*

* Focus on feeling and imagery instead of plot. *But my mother's hair...is the smell when she makes room for you on her side of the bed still warm with her skin...*
* Get to the point. Tell us what the vignette is going to be about right off the bat. *We didn't always live on Mango Street. — Everybody in our family has different hair. — They are the only ones who understand me.*
* Go beyond what you're talking about. “Hairs” is about more than hair. It's about how everyone in her family is different. It's about her relationship with her mother. It's about belonging. Comfort. Happiness.
* Don't worry about quotation marks when you include dialogue. Sometimes you can even include the dialogue in the paragraph instead of beginning a new paragraph.
* Begin with a line of dialogue. *Close your eyes and they'll go away, her father says, or You're just imagining.*
* Sentence fragments are okay.
* Don't worry about including tons of background information. This isn't a novel, where each character must be fleshed out and explored. Sometimes just a character name is enough.
* Be poetic. Metaphors, similes, personification. *Until then I am a red balloon, a balloon tied to an anchor. — You can never have too much sky.*
* Include other characters.
* Embellish. Imagine what someone else is feeling or thinking, even if you didn't ask them about it. Esperanza is the narrator of Mango Street, and she tells her own story. But she also tells the stories of others. *Marin, under the streetlight, dancing by herself...waiting for a car to stop, a star to fall, someone to change her life.*