| **Week 5** | | | |
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| **Name of the Story** | **Mrs. Sen’s** | **Themes** | Exile, Cultural difference, Adjustment in new life, affection to the roots. |
| **Useful/interesting Quotes** | “Here, in this place where Mr. Senhas brought me, I cannot sometimes sleep in  so much silence.”  “You must miss her. When I think of you, only a boy,separated from your mother  for so much of the day, I am ashamed.”  “I must wear the powder every day” | | |
| **Course Content Focus:** | **Write a summary of the story within 150 words. Make sure to use APA in-text citation and attributive tags appropriately.**  *[Note: You can use the Summary Checklist from the handouts provided for this week]*  *Larrihi(1999) in her story “Mrs. Sen’s” demonstrated the experience and situation in the life of Mrs Sen who was an immigrant detached from her roots trying to cope up with a whole new culture. She showed us the life of Mrs Sen through the eyes of a little boy named Elliot of whom Mrs Sen used to take care of since his parents were busy at work. Even when she was living in a different culture she still had not adapted it rather maintained the essences of her roots around her. Lahiri also showed that she missed her family and everything about her past life and it hurt her even more when her family had a wrong interpretation of her life. She was shown by the author to be expressing her feelings to Elliot who also in a different way felt lonely and detached from his family even after getting to see his mother everyday. Even after trying so hard when she couldn't cope up with her loneliness and frustration it burst into a car accident which led Elliot to stop from seeing her.* | | |
| **Choose any one of the following extracts** (taken from the story) **and paraphrase it. Remember to follow the APA in-text citation rules appropriately.**  *[Note: You can use the Paraphrase Checklist from the handouts provided for this week]*  *Extract 1:* Eliot didn't mind going to Mrs. Sen's after school. By September the tiny beach house where he and his mother lived year-round was already cold; Eliot and his mother had to bring a portable heater along whenever they moved from one room to another, and to seal the windows with plastic sheets and a hairdryer. The beach was barren and dull to play on alone; the only neighbors who stayed on past Labor Day, a young married couple, had no children. Mrs. Sen's apartment was warm, sometimes too warm; the radiators continuously hissed like a pressure cooker.  Lahihi(1999) shows how after school, Eliot didn't mind going to Mrs. Sen's. She also mentioned that Eliot and his mother had to lug a portable heater with them whenever they moved from one room to another, and they had to shut the windows with plastic sheets and a hairdryer by September since the tiny beach cottage where they lived year-round was already freezing.Moreover The beach was desolate and boring to play on alone; the only neighbors who stayed until Labor Day, a young married couple with no children, were the only ones who did. Mrs. Sen's flat was hot, perhaps too hot; the radiators hissed like a pressure cooker all the time.  *Extract 2:* By then Eliot understood that when Mrs. Sen said home, she meant India, not the apartment where she sat chopping vegetables. He thought of his own home, just five miles away, and the young married couple who waved from time to time as they jogged at sunset along the shore. On Labor Day they had a party. People were piled on the deck, eating, drinking, the sound of their laughter rising above the weary sigh of the waves. Eliot and his mother weren't invited. It was one of the rare days his mother had off, but they didn't go anywhere.  *Extract 3:* She did the laundry, and balanced the checkbook, and, with Eliot's help, vacuumed the inside of the car. Eliot had suggested that they go through the car wash a few miles down the road as they did every now and then, so that they could sit inside, safe and dry, as soap and water and a circle of giant canvas ribbons slapped the windshield, but his mother said she was too tired, and sprayed the car with a hose. When, by evening, the crowd on the neighbors' deck began dancing, she looked up their number in the phone book and asked them to keep it down.  *Extract 4:* Each afternoon Mrs. Sen stood in a grove of pine trees by the main road where the school bus dropped off Eliot along with two or three other children who lived nearby. Eliot always sensed that Mrs. Sen had been waiting for some time, as if eager to greet a person she hadn't seen in years. Her sari, a different pattern each day, fluttered below the hem of a checkered all-weather coat. As they walked back from the bus stop she produced a sandwich bag from her pocket, and offered Eliot the peeled wedges of an orange, or lightly salted peanuts, which she had already shelled  *Extract 5:* When Eliot's mother arrived at quarter to six, Mr. Sen told her the details of the accident and offered a check reimbursing November's payment. As he wrote out the check he apologized on behalf of Mrs. Sen. He said she was resting, though when Eliot had gone to the bathroom he'd heard her crying. His mother was satisfied with the arrangement, and in a sense, she confessed to Eliot as they drove home, she was relieved. It was the last afternoon Eliot spent with Mrs. Sen, or with any baby-sitter.  *Extract 6:* The daily procedure took about an hour. In order to occupy Eliot she supplied him with the comics section of the newspaper, and crackers spread with peanut butter, and sometimes a Popsicle, or carrot sticks sculpted with her blade. She would have roped off the area if she could. Once, though, she broke her own rule, in need of additional supplies, and reluctant to rise from the catastrophic mess that barricaded her, she asked Eliot to fetch something from the kitchen.  *Extract 7:* At first Eliot had wondered if she had cut her scalp, or if something had bitten her there. But then one day he saw her standing before the bathroom mirror, solemnly applying, with the head of a thumbtack, a fresh stroke of scarlet powder, which she stored in a small jam jar. A few grains of the powder fell onto the bridge of her nose as she used the thumbtack to stamp a dot above her eyebrows. “I must wear the powder every day,” she explained when Eliot asked her what it was for, “for the rest of the days that I am married.”  *Extract 8:* They drove in silence, along the same roads that Eliot and his mother took back to the beach house each evening. But in the back seat of Mr. and Mrs. Sen’s car the ride seemed unfamiliar, and took longer than usual. The gulls whose tedious cries woke him each morning now thrilled him as they dipped and flapped across the sky. They passed one beach after another, and the shacks, now locked up, that sold frozen lemonade and quahogs in summer. Only one of the shacks was open. It was the fish market. | | |
| **Reference:** | | |