

Victor's Community Journal Project
Harden Middle School, Salinas, CA
Spring 2022

Madrid St in Salinas California is a street with many cars passing by through the street all hours of the day. Madrid St has many trees. Usually when walking outside you will see many birds on the trees and sometimes you will even see some cats roaming around. Men, women, and children walk around this street going to school, stores or jobs dressed in uniforms, casual clothes and work clothes. Sounds of cars starting, birds chirping, people walking, some even talking to each other. A garage sale going on across the street, people asking about prices looking at objects in the garage sale, kids looking for toys to buy, men and women looking at furniture and many other things. As I look at the people walking I wonder where they could be going maybe to the mall or other places but one guy stood out to me because he was wearing shorts unlike the other people who were wearing jeans, he looked like he just got finished with a jog with small amounts of sweat accumulating on his forehead then I heard a dog bark which caused me to turn around it was a woman walking her dog I couldn't identify the type of dog breed it was off the top of my head but it was small and lots of fur. Further down the street I see a couple arguing they look like they could be in highschool or perhaps they graduated from highschool already. I didn't matter because I started to go the opposite direction due to their shouts getting slightly obnoxious. When I passed the garage sale again I saw two people arguing because they both wanted the same piece of furniture which was a chair which looked in pretty good condition for it to be in a yard sale then the person who the yard sale belonged to got into the argument and took the chair back into the house. As I started walking further I could see the mall well at least the part that used to be a Sears but now that it's not there anymore it's just an empty space that was used as a spirit halloween last halloween there were some people walking to the other entrances into the mall. As I keep walking forward cars drive past me I then see a cat so me being me I try to get close to the cat to pet it but when I start getting closer it runs the other way. I soon make it to the end of the street and I see the many stores on the other side of the street, the cars driving as the light turns green, I watch as they move in a perfect unison I see another person walking to the other side of the street then I look back and wonder how much time it took to make Madrid St into what it is now. Well I should be heading back to my house now because it's getting late and I don't want my mom to worry.

Aileen's Community Journal Project
Harden Middle School, Salinas, CA
Spring 2022

I sit on my sidewalk as I write this paper. Something I've been putting off for days. The sound of my family rolls out the gate. A dog speaking up to its owner. The chickens calling out to each other. The neighbors, fighting over which rims to place on the car. My neighbors are mechanics. At least, I assume they might be. A man, on his daily walk. I've seen him for a few days. He's retired. My dog barks at nothing. He's been like this since he was a baby. It quiets down. Cars, driving by. I see the Lightning McQueen car drive by. A frequent passer. The only thing that stands out to me. The bunnies, crossing the street. One almost gets run over. A tragic death, that would've been.

Briana's Community Journal Project
Harden Middle School, Salinas, CA
Spring 2022

Looking off of my second-story balcony in North Point apartments, the air smells clean and fresh with a slight hint of musk. The dusty wood, a lovely dusty brown color, tops all of the surrounding balconies, as well as the bumpy texture of the color. Below the balcony, there is a large open grassy space; more apartment buildings are ahead, as well as a small parking lot. Not many cars come or go at the time of day, but when they do, they are seemingly relaxed in their driving. A girl on rollerskates follows a younger boy on a scooter as they glide happily across the sidewalk, across the big pine tree which causes a bump in the sidewalk, across the laundry room with a pool behind, and goes around the building for more fun. Mountains with greenery and lots of trails are apparent in the far distance, above the also distant highschool. Few people gather in the highschool entrance and seem to be friends having fun and hanging out in the after-school hours, as the few cars there begin to leave the school. A tall and wide pine tree fills the air with the cawing of crows as the noise of cars rushing past the building continues, loud enough to notice but quiet enough to let it fade to the background. There is occasionally the loud revving of a powerful car speeding past the building and down the street, lasting for no longer than a few seconds. Every few minutes, there is a stunning silence where the cars do not woosh past as the lights have gone red, a lovely silence which allows you to really take in the small neighborhood where not much happens and yet so much happens at the same time. The laundry room door opens, and my curiosity gets the better of me as I silently watch the man dressed in a comfortable outfit-- simple, khaki shorts and a black tank top with a red hat-- as he carries his tall, gray basket filled with clothes. He walks calmly and I can imagine he is having a good day as he crosses over the dry, flowery grass as he watches something on his phone, occasionally looking up with a good-day kind of smile. A good half-minute passes of him walking, and he goes into the building in front of me. Keys jingle quietly and then a door distantly opens and closes shut. Looking back to the laundry room and the grass where groups of kids play games most days, I can already image the spider-infested outer walls with the broken light.

Bryan's Community Journal Project
Harden Middle School, Salinas, CA
Spring 2022

I think Steinbeck made observations by just observing normal everyday events and being very specific and using sensory detail to make the reader feel like they are there with him. Even though he uses derogatory terms in his writings, it was part of his time so we have to try and adapt to his writing to see what he saw back then. It seemed that Steinbeck just took notes and rarely wanted to interact with surroundings.

So i guess this thing starts off at, calm intersection by a nearby elementary school. Its about 1pm and I am just listening to music walking down the well maintained sidewalk. Minimal cars driving beside me on the rode. The music drowns out any real noise but the occasional loud car driving by. Across the two lane street a see a middle aged man walking his Golden Retriever down the side walk and the dog seemed like it wanted to pee so the guy that was wearing a gray tracksuit

Cayden's Community Journal Project
Harden Middle School, Salinas, CA
Spring 2022

Valdez Circle April 6th, 2022. 6pm, a quiet double cul de sac only briefly interrupted by life's various toys. First there was an older looking lady walking her dog, the dog looked about as old as her, about mid 60s. As she and her dog walked, some other dogs from a neighboring house began to bark. She began to speed up her pace as a little bit of visible discomfort began to show. Those dogs reminded me of one my Aunt's dog, old but full of energy and they ran right to the border of the very weak looking fence. And as they walked by I heard those dogs bark and bark before they passed. Then the dogs hurried back inside and their feet grew quieter as they got closer to the door. For a while it was quiet, nothing but the overgrown lawns, the cloud like house colors of baby blue and green grass. Then a car pulled by, it was black and white, black like the night and white like paper, as it slowed to the driveway of a light blue house it stopped as a middle aged looking woman got out and walked to her home. When I was on my lawn I saw a gopher come out of a hole, I didn't see him for long but he looked very chubby but not in a way that would be fat. Nearly right after I heard a dog in the faint distance bark a few times, his bark was not one of play but the one you would hear when a dog was at a tree trying to get a bird. I noticed something I hadn't before, I knew one of our neighbors had a boat in their front which They haven't used since I moved in, but something I noticed about it is that the boat window is cracked in a way that I'm surprised I hadn't noticed before, maybe that's why they haven't used it, but either way I'm just surprised they haven't gotten rid of it yet it takes up half of their parking lot, the crack was like the seed of a plant, 1 central point and all sprouting out from it. As it

Cheyanna's Community Journal Project
Harden Middle School, Salinas, CA
Spring 2022

When I read Steinbeck's observations, I thought he was making them based on stereotypes because of the language he was using. Maybe he was born in a way where people dress a certain way and they immediately have a title that goes with the way they look and they might not think they look that way in their own eyes but other people like Steinbeck do. My second opinion is that is how he actually feels about people or how he sees them because of what he believes and not anyone else but him.

I lived on the same street for most of my life, more specifically, 8 years. Ever since I've started living here there is one thing I have noticed from the beginning. The later it gets into the night, the more people start coming home from work and that is the time where it starts to get the busiest on the street. There is lots of grass but there used to be this brown patch of grass from when my brothers used to play soccer there and they would run and slide in the grass. I have walked this sidewalk so many times it has become a part of me. I have memorized where every bump is or which pieces of gum look like an animal. The street used to be so quiet and empty and now people from other streets only come around here so they can park their cars and go back to their houses that are 15 minutes away from here. I used to have so many friends but they all moved and the only other friend I had was a little kid. We are not friends anymore. Her mom hates my guts and I hate hers and she is constantly staring at me from across the street like I'm scared or something but honestly, I feel kind of embarrassed for her. Like, do you not have anything better to do? Anyways, there are lots of little flowers in the grass that my little brother picks for my mom and puts them in a bowl. This street scares me because of the people around me but at the same time, I couldn't imagine being anywhere else.

Evelia's Community Journal Project
Harden Middle School, Salinas, CA
Spring 2022

A loud silence filled my street, warm, new yet old, and lonesome. Warm air replaces sweaters and jackets as summer comes closer. The extended street is full of unique homes each with its problems and joys. No person is in sight but the buzzing of nearby cars fills the empty street. Cats are allured by the food left at the women's house that is in front of mine. Always lingering around the overgrown grass and under cars on especially hot days. The lady must work quite a lot since she is never seen unless it is arriving at her home. But she always finds the time to feed them. They must be thankful.

Periodically a big old man will pass with his miniature dog walking slower than most old people. Me and my family always laugh, not at the man or his dog but at the way they stroll around. We don't know if it's the man that walks as slow as the dog or if the dog walks in pair with the man. It is sweet to see them, they seem to have a bond. People and their pets are occasionally seen. Like my neighbor Nataly. You can see them every other day as the sun goes down playing like children. She must be in her 30s and moved about a year ago replacing a kind old lady who lived in that same home. I laugh at the thought of the first time I hear her. She was talking loudly on the phone about how quiet the neighborhood was. And now her voice is one of the loudest in the area.

The large eucalyptus tree flows with the warm air like a pair of ballet dancers. My street is much like a tree, the small alleys act like branches and the main street as the trunk. The birds can be heard chirping in harmony. The dogs can be heard barking like dominos one after the other. This usually indicated a car coming or a person walking through the street. I watched as a familiar car passed and drive into an alleyway.

Apart from barks and occasional cars passing nothing happens. There is always a comforting silence. Enough silence to feel calm but not enough to make you go crazy. The sound seems to increase as summer arrives. More people can be trying to escape the heat by sitting on their porches or on walks. Kids are sometimes seen playing, but not often. Adults are the ones that seem to find relief by going out, I suppose to take away from their hectic tasks.

But everything changes if you walk towards the end of my street. There is an entryway that leads to the side of Costco. Everything is loud and hectic. But the noise never seems to affect my street. So as I sit on the sidewalk I realize that my street is to Costco as homes on my street are to me. They seem lifeless when in reality they are full of stories and life.

Flor's Community Journal Project
Harden Middle School, Salinas, CA
Spring 2022

Steinbeck observed the people of Cannery Row by sitting and observing the behavior of the people and places. Just like in Science class, Steinbeck could have written down observations he made. In science you try to pay attention to the details and the reason behind it. While observing Steinbeck could have also payed very close attention to behaviors and try to find a reason behind the behavior . Paying close attention to little details may also help you read people and their emotions .For example, paying attention to your friends body language may help you figure out when they are upset or not.

A soft breeze filling up the air, the neighbors with their usual mysterious aura bringing in their stuff. Cats meowing and purring every now and then, The dog barking aggressively at anyone who walks by, The kids running around chasing a ball as they all laugh and scream. The trees with multicolored leaves moving. The smell of my mothers cooking filled the air despite her cooking inside. A man seemed to arrive from his job heading towards his apartment building.The calming aura the place radiates filling me up with peace. The same boys from everyday trying to show off their new skating tricks to each other. The blue sky being plain and clear, the kids playing ding dong ditch and running away quickly. A tall pretty looking woman picking up her child from a close neighbor, The sound of a random car turning on being heard for at least five seconds. The little girl staring at me with such curiosity in her eyes as she walks by holding her mothers hand.The breeze suddenly turning into harsh wind, the trees moving violently for a split second and suddenly the calm aura returning. No movement is seen for a while as the green grass dances with the wind, the flowers move slowly, the clouds move as well, and a cat stays still for a while. The sky starts darkening little by little, suddenly the lights begin to light up, brighting up the pathways for people. More cars are heard parking, Lights from apartments start turning on one by one, a fresh scent fills the air as the calm day transforms into a cool calm night. The dogs went back to be fed, back to be cleaned, back to be given affection, all back at home.The kids are all called to go back inside by their concerned mothers, The sky now being slowly lightened up little by little by the shimmering stars. A group of teenage kids all coming out of an apartment building all dressed looking like they are ready to party walk out in the pale moonlight. The air suddenly doesn't feel fresh, the calm aura is taken from a short mousy looking man smoking a cigarette. For what reason does he smoke every night? Perhaps his wife has left him? Or perhaps he does it for his enjoyment. The sprinklers are turned on,making the once dry grass now wet. After the moon fades and the sun rises the sky is now painted in an orange and pink color. The birds start chirping again and the children and adults all come out dressed for either work or school. The place starts to feel busy

and stressful. The adults all carry a tired face as if they didn't get any sleep as they rush to their cars. People begin to avoid the grass in order to not get their shoes muddy. A mother walks by telling her kid to hurry before school starts, the mother carries a frustrated look whilst the child carries an annoyed expression. It doesn't take long for the original calm aura to return, And just like that the cycle repeats itself.

Giselle's Community Journal Project
Harden Middle School, Salinas, CA
Spring 2022

In 48 Cascade Way is dead silent, no voices surround the green and plentiful tree filled street. Only the smell of carne asada in the air. Ah, a car, many muddy, crusty cars parked outside the 2 story houses. Needed a repaint to repair their old selves. There's a child on his bike, I imagine peddling his worries away, oh no, he fell. I guess the only thing he's going to have to worry about is keeping his feet steadily on the floor. His father was tall and fat, racing his stubby little legs to help his now crying son to his feet. The man is probably worrying about what his wife is going to say when she sees that her son is injured and eyes swollen from tears. As they walk away, I notice a big pine tree looking outside of my house. It's tall and skinny with tattered almost dead looking leaves. To be honest, I don't like the tree, but oh well, can't do anything because the tree stump is too dug in. Its roots are too firmly placed inside the floor. My mom loves plants, there's this red blooming rose almost to its end. It's been alive for a while so I doubt it will preserve its beauty for much longer. It will soon wither and perish onto the floor and yet again rebirth and the cycle will go on and on until its roots and no longer sustain another trial. The clouds look nice today, wispy and fluffy as can be. Its long arms reach and hug the Earth ever so gently, caressing it in a light soft motion as it moves around to get a feel of every inch on the Earth. Another car passes by, a Toyota, a Tacoma perhaps, speeding past our neighborhood. The airbrushed my face slowly and softly. It feels nice, and mostly on this new hot day. Its rays are burning as they lash my back, Yet I don't move out of the way. It feels nice in a way, maybe it's the pain, maybe it's the hot sizzling effect it has on my brown skin? Whatever it is, it feels good. Ugh, the bitch of my old neighbor taking out her trash like usual, is her presence what bugs me? Or is it the fact she just doesn't like my wonderful dogs? She's probably just a dog hater. Still though, she can be an actual asshole from time to time. I remember the first time we met, I saw her old wrinkly face looking straight at me and my dogs, yet her eyes were hidden behind a huge pair of sunglasses she had on. I put on the loveliest smile and waved and she just started with a frown of disgust flashed towards me. What a bitch, I thought to myself. Despite that, it's a calm neighborhood. No one bugs no one, everyone, almost everyone, is kind. We care for each other in a way that makes this neighborhood not just a place slumped with houses and people in them, but a home where you're welcomed and cared for.

Kaila's Community Journal Project
Harden Middle School, Salinas, CA
Spring 2022

The fresh cool air and smell of fertilizer and moist dirt fill your nostrils as soon as you step out the door, people cutting their grass or watering their plants along with a warm good morning nod are always available. Cars bussing by to make it to work on time whether it is down the street to Natividad Medical Center, Monterey county jail, the Dental offices, or to one of the three schools near my home. The streets are always busy, noisy, and full of different people looking to meet their different needs. Mexican, Filipino, Caucasian, Middle Eastern, and everything else in between can be found in our beautiful melting pot of a city. Walking, talking, hurrying, and never stopping. Cars fill the streets, honking can be heard all throughout the city. Different emotions fill the air, the children who dread school, who would rather be home getting rest, the parents who believe have to go to work to maintain that financial stability, the smaller children who are still half asleep, morning joggers, who are glad to finally get a whiff of the cooling ocean breeze in the morning, and elderly people, who are glad to finally get out of the house for a change, who are glad to have something to do to pass up some time as they await company, or anything else that lies ahead of them during the afternoon to the rest of the day. Everyone in Salinas is busy, busy at work, busy at school, or busy resting up for the long day that awaits them, either way everyone is always doing something; whether that is the elder man who lives across the street whose hobby is to build things, he walks out at least twice in the morning to smoke a cigarette, probably to relieve any type of stress that weights him down, or the women that lives on the house on the corner who has to manage to balance her busy schedule that consists of working at the hospital, taking care of her children, making sure that they make it to school safely in the morning, and are being well taken care of. Her and her children aren't the only family that lives in that household, there are about three more families that must do the same thing. Heated arguments can be heard from my cold garage. They tend to argue about smaller issues like, who's taking the kids to school, or who's gonna be home today to take care of the little ones; whatever it is, it is never quiet. I have another neighbor, who lives in the house to the right of mine, she is an elderly woman, who is afraid of leaving the comfort of her home, she doesn't come out very often, but when she does it's typically in the mornings when no one is around, she waters her plants and make sure that everything is well managed and well taken care of. Nobody here is allowed rest, because everyone here has a part to play. Life at home in the morning is quiet for the sole reason that everyone is given something to do, something to keep them occupied.

How did Steinbeck make his observations?

I think he sat back and observed as people argued, bickered, and shared their opinions on different issues. He didn't just base his writings on his opinions, but also what other people believed, whether they were negative stereotypes or just an opinion on a smaller matter. We often make observations in social studies, typically when doing an image analysis, we copy down what we can physically see, and then what message that the particular image is trying to send. Observing nature and observing humans can be similar in the sense that you can visibly see both, you can note any physical characteristics.

Katelyn's Community Journal Project
Harden Middle School, Salinas, CA
Spring 2022

My neighborhood in Salinas, California is the bustling and the cluttered, the noisy sound of cars honking, discourses between angry neighbors, civilians walking on the sidewalks, oftentimes which are filled with a few weeds here and there, the rows and rows of houses that look all too well alike, the occasional ice cream man in his colorful, eye-catching ice cream truck playing its tune, which the children never fail to recognize as he drives down the street. Wispy, white clouds float across the shimmering blue sky as the sun's golden rays fall, coloring everything it touches with a light, golden streak. Its serene sky is dotted with a varied sea of birds, ranging from your average large, black crow, to colorful and delicate hummingbirds feeding on the nectar of nearby flowers filling the sidewalks. They soar high above in the sky, cawing and cooing gently. Giddy and energetic children fill the street, quickly pushing on the pedals of their bikes, laughing as their parents try to chase after them. It's expected for the neighborhood to be filled with kids and parents, as there is a nearby elementary school just around the corner. The sound of honking cars can often be heard by the inhabitants of the neighborhood, especially during rush hour. The whole street grumbles and stirs and growls as the chaos starts. The rush of hectic parents to get their children to school on time often leads to arguments between drivers hurrying to get somewhere. Then school bells scream all over and parents, along with their children, scramble down the street and come running before the gates of the school close. Then parents hurry back into their cars and drive off to another destination, more than likely to be their work, as they disappear, the neighborhood dials down. The sound of angry drivers and cars honking has faded away, replaced with the sound of birds chirping and the soft breeze of the cool wind. People who live in this neighborhood can likely agree that this is the most peaceful time during the day, that is until the children are let out of school, and the once peaceful and quiet neighborhood is transformed into what it was just a few hours ago. During this tranquil and precious time, the gentle afternoon breeze blows through the crystal clear windows of those who choose to air out their mind. Living in a neighborhood as hectic as this one, it is almost deemed required to do so. To value the small amount of time where peace and quiet is guaranteed, where you're not likely to get run over by an irritated and annoyed driver in a hurry or when having an argument with someone on the road while driving is less likely. As the bright afternoon sun weakens, a cool rush of wind brushes over the neighborhood. Once again, cars start to fill the streets of the neighborhood. Parents emerge from either their cars or if they're lucky to live close to the school, their house. As parents pick up their children from school, a troublesome look can be seen on their faces, and if you look close enough, small bags can be seen starting to appear under their tired eyes. As they hold their child's hand, or rather the child dragging them along by their arm, I can't help but not try to laugh. Then, as they start to drive off, the sun starts to lose its brightness, and now cool darkness starts to wash over. This darkness also seems to wash off on the residents of the neighborhood and now they start to gather inside their houses, seeking warmth from the breezy wind. One by one, houses start to light up, resembling how one candle can

light a thousand, a domino effect. And perhaps that is how this story should be written—to let one word spark up the imagination of so many others.

Lilia's Community Journal Project
Harden Middle School, Salinas, CA
Spring 2022

Cannery Row Reflection Summary:

I assume Steinbeck would sit back and watch as the streets would fill and empty. He may have communicated with people here and there but was not always having a conversation. I think he would keep more to himself and observe what others were doing rather than be involved with what is going on. However, he did know many people because he mentions some names as he recognizes them on the streets, an example being Henri the painter. This makes me believe that he was a part of the community and did not isolate himself. When I was in art class, I had to make observations about how lines would curve, or how point a corner would be. We observed the different textures and shades of colors. At the beginning of the year, we were making many observations during science class. We would look at images of animals, habitats, and plants trying to notice the different colors, shapes, and sizes of things found in the images. Similarly to Steinbeck, we would sit back and look but when needed we would communicate with each other to share what we saw or noticed and we would feed off of each other's observations and try to figure out what was going on. When observing nature, someone can just sit and listen, smell, look, and touch what is going on around them. You don't necessarily need to be walking around to notice what goes on in nature, just by finding one area you can learn a lot about a location. When observing humans you may need to be more interactive, talking to people can be a good way to learn about the area. Just by asking questions you can learn what places serve delicious meals, where is a good place to take a walk, whether or not there is a library to read fascinating books. Detailed observations are important in our society since they can help individuals learn about a community they may be new to. If observations were vague and dull, no one would want to take the time to read about the astonishing facts in the world.

Neighborhood Observation:

Kids riding bikes

Cats walking around

Birds chirping

Hawks scanning the sky

Dog barking

Sun shining orange and pink

Bees buzzing

Trees blowing in the breeze

Flowers blooming in the grass
People walking on the sidewalk up the busy street
Sky turning oranges and pinks
Each house spaced equally as to not upset the eye

In my quiet little neighborhood, not much goes on. Most days nothing new happens, my neighbors continue on with their day as if it was planned by an unknown force, that ensures nothing goes wrong. The houses go down the street, each spaced out evenly so as to not upset the eye. In every house is a family. The energetic children ride their bikes around the cul-de-sac, chasing each other as they scream with excitement. Giggling as they see each other run around, huge smiles on their faces. Silently cats crunch in the corner hiding from the monstrous children, lurking in the shadows so as to not add to the ruckus. In the trees, small song birds chirp and chatter with each other, rustling in their nest attempting to make it the perfect home for their chicks. Up in the clear skies massive eagles soar in the sky, scanning the area, looking for any little movement, waiting for the moment that they swoop down to catch their prey. Down the street and around the corner a dog is barking, its deep coarse bark sounding almost like the rumble of thunder. The dog warns their owners that a friend or foe may be near. Shining over everything is the enormous sun, making the atmosphere fill with a warm feeling, its powerful rays so strong that it seems it will never dissipate. On the ground, the green prickly grass is filled with spring flowers, bees buzzing from bud to bud collecting nectar as they go. On the other side of the metal fence people can be seen driving, walking, and biking up and down the street. Each person with a look of intention, as if they are on a mission. At moments the streets quiet down, the sound of cars fading away into the distance. As the wind begins to pick up, the trees start to wave as if saying good night. Streaks of pink and orange start to fill the sky as dusk begins to fall.

Marisol's Community Journal Project
Harden Middle School
Spring 2022

While writing his observations Steinbeck sat back and watched others interact all day rather than he himself interacting with others, he already knew many people and described them by name. Similarly we make observations and write detailed descriptions in science class but they are different from Steinbeck because they are factual rather than Steinbeck describing people based on his biased opinions. When you observe human behavior there's more to note about their interactions rather than nature because humans are more unique and different from each other. Detailed observations are important to help us understand with further accuracy what we see.

The sky outside begins to reach darkness before entering the store as my phone reads 8:37 PM. The brightly lit walls that blind a tired eye and lack of windows serve as a distraction for how long I've been shopping and how quickly the day passes. Late night shoppers are on the look for last minute groceries as the store is never devoid of people. Most wear pjs or sweatpants for comfort, others wear outfits you see on a daily basis that would usually go unnoticed by me, few people are wearing outfits that at first glance can obviously be categorized as expensive. One woman in particular sticks out to me, her sweatshirt and pants are plain and black but she carries a small fluffy backpack on her and I can't help but silently laugh at how much it resembles a dog.

I'm here to find supplies for my Science fair project but my earlier attempts at convincing mom to find a different socially active place for me to work on my English assignment were unsuccessful and it's too late for a new plan so the aisles of the store and the unaware participants of my writing will have to work. It's easy to forget that every stranger I pass has their own life that is drastically different from my own but with the role of observing others I notice these small bits of strangers lives more. I notice a young girl around the preschool age dressed in full pink, she holds a bag of plastic eggs towards what I assume is her parents. Easter is approaching as spring has begun as the orchids and tulips of assorted pinks, purples, reds, and yellows line the tops of mini fridges filled with cold energy drinks, flowers I know from previous experience won't last long outside of the store without proper care.

Among the diverse crowd I find no one I know on a personal basis besides my family, still, one face in particular sticks out to me as a boy I have the feeling I've seen before. He wears shorts and a black t-shirt with a quote of a reference I'll probably never understand, maybe star wars? He carries a cabbage, a family size box of frosted flakes cereal, a pack of a dozen eggs,

and a loaf of bread impressively all with just his two hands. While on my journey for notes and also trying to find my mom I find a man that also sticks out, he dresses in a navy blue GAP hoodie and shorts to match, an underwhelming outfit. What I notice is the large snake tattoo on his calf, I wonder if he wears shorts often simply to show off the tattoo.

Much more could be written about the aisles of the grocery and the people in them as each is different but the temper of my mom is short and so is the day so I head to my mom who is ready for self check out. Self checkouts have replaced the old registers I remember, back to when the store was arranged differently and it contained small Mc Donals I'd frequent. I suppose self checkout is better because it involves less interaction but others find it more difficult. One man wearing a white hoodie, black shorts, white air forces, and a backwards black cap has trouble with the barcode scanner specifically as he accidentally drops it from the stand but when placing it back placed it backwards, I choose against fixing it for him despite how much it bothers me.

"Select from list or key in the items code"

"Select payment type"

"Please take your receipt"

"Cash is dispensed below the scanner"

"Thank you for shopping at Walmart"

Millie's Community Journal Project
Harden Middle School, Salinas, CA
Spring 2022

Steinbeck observations:

I believe when Steinbeck made his observations, he not only just sat back and watched, which is a hard thing to do I might add, but I think he also had many interactions with the people and places he was talking about. In science we make lots of observations, just like Steinbeck. We observe things in as much detail and write about every little thing. In his writings, he describes the ecosystems of Cannery Row and all the interactions between people. Observing nature and humans are very different things to watch. Observing nature is a special thing because you can think of all the magical things that happen behind the scenes. When it comes to humans, instead of thinking about all the magic, I tend to think about how someone is and where they are going or even about how they got to where they are today.

My observations:

It's currently 7:38 and I'm outside sitting and observing. Right in front of me, is a cul de sac with 14 houses in it. The sun has set and the sky is at the perfect color where you look above you and see blues and purples but when you look ahead, you can see reds and oranges. Going back to the houses, about 3 houses into the cul de sac, there is a woman in a purple shirt watering her lawn. The house right to the left of it is a very clean looking, yellow house with very friendly people who live in it. The house next to it has a red door. It's a brick red but it stands out since the rest of the house is brown. The house directly in front of me, gives me a very eerie vibe. They have statues of children on their lawn but they look a little spooky. As for the sounds, I hear an old green SUV pull up to the house with the red door and it was interestingly loud and squeaky. The man that came out of it looked very professional. He said "Hi" to me and I said it back even though I don't know him. That's just the way my neighborhood is. As I was thinking about how pleasant my neighborhood was, I hear a woman yell at the top of her lungs "What?" She seemed to be upset and I hope everything is alright. There was also a singular black bird that has been flying by itself for a while. Do you ever wonder what it feels like to be that bird? So free, and I doubt it even knows it! Back to what's happening, I guess purple is just the color today! There is an older woman with curly gray hair and a violet sweater walking her dog who also has curly hair. The sound has died out a bit and it's very peaceful. A family of a mother, son and daughter just stepped out of their car and as soon as they opened the car door, the smell of wing stop gushed into my nose, The stars are starting to become visible now and the moon is a beautiful crescent shape that makes you wish you were laying on it. Behind my house is a creek. The sounds of crickets chirping start to arise. Also the sound of an ambulance and its

sirens going to try to save someone. The creepy house looks even scarier at night. They have a giant window facing my direction with 4 candles that are flickering. It's starting to get cold now. You can tell when the goosebumps start popping out of your skin. The sirens are still going and it sounds like they have multiplied. They seem farther away though. My dad just came out and gave me a smoothie he made. It's pretty good, just a little too much banana. The sky has turned a dark shade of blue which makes me think it's time to head on inside.

Nianti's Community Journal Project
Harden Middle School, Salinas, CA
Spring 2022

As I walk down the street I feel the cold breeze hit my hot skin, a relief from the hot weather that consumed me just a couple minutes ago. I walk, pulling on the leash that holds my energetic dog, painting over 2 minutes of walking. I see a boy around my age sprint from what I assume is his house. The house blinds my eyes with its yellow and blue colors, an absurd color combination. I keep my eyes on the boy, curious to see where he is off in such a rush. When he doesn't stop running I realize he's out for a run. The leaves are turning green again and my shoes seek leaves to crush, seeking the satisfying CRUNCH that comes with it. A cat walks majestically past me, looking at me for a couple seconds before going on with its walk. I follow it with my eyes, it continues to walk, then jumps on a nearby fence and disappears in a blink of an eye. Eventful is an understatement for today's report, people roam the streets more than usual. Almost aware I need to write. A man fixes his car across from my house for the fifth time this month. Let it go bud. Sweat trickles from his forehead as he twists and turns objects with no meaning to my brain. He notices me as I walk and gives me a soft smile. He looks tired, his beard is unshaved, his eyes are puffy, and his undereyes are bright red. I send him a soft smile back, careful not to observe too much at his ungroomed face. I keep walking, turning left to a steep hill. A boy near my age, probably a little older, runs past me, sweat dripping down his hair. He puts his head down as he sees me and continues on. His breath is heavy as he passes me, and his cologne washes over my nose, causing me to cough. It smells good but obnoxious. The smell reminds me of pine but also a faint smell of mold. A sign of too much cologne sprayed on. A family of three passes by, and the little girl stops me to compliment my hair. Her hair is blonde and bright, just like her mother's. Her father has his set of brown hair, gray hairs peek out. Probably caused by the child. Stress does cause gray hairs. Cars pass by next to me, my dog keeps his ears lifted as they pass. A man walks past us, he has a suit on, holding his dog tight on the dog's leash. At this point the dog is walking him, dragging him wherever his nose leads him. My dog barks loudly, causing the other dog to yip and yap. I practically drag my dog as far away as possible. The cracks in the pavements have grass growing out of them, and the uneven sidewalks cause me to trip continuously. I trip again and curse the ground. Carvings stop me from walking ahead. On the pavements, drawings of characters are carved out almost perfectly. I take out my phone and take a picture. The camera fails at capturing its essence but on I go. The sun is starting to set, with the moon more vibrant in the air. I turn around, dreading the incline from the steep hills ahead of me. The music blasts through my headphones. I walk to the beat, the headphones bouncing along as I start the hill. A woman walks with a stroller, trying to calm the baby down, scrambling to find anything in her bag to assist the child. Dogs bark so loud in the distance I can hear them through my headphones. Although credit shouldn't be

given so effortlessly, the beat down headphones hang on despite them being only a couple months old, blocking out most of the noise for me. Let's just say our neighborhood gets quite loud. Perhaps it comes from our house, Christmas lights still up. The house owners too busy to put them down. Pumpkins lay on the front mat, surprisingly not moldy yet despite the 6 months it spent laying on the floor. The houses around look beautiful, with flowers sprouting from their pots, and vines climbing up their fences, no wood peeking out. I look one last time at the view. It's not Hawaii but nevertheless it still looks gorgeous. I peek one last time before entering the house with the Christmas lights still hanging, my dog looking forward to going back to sleep.

Sophia's Community Journal Project
Harden Middle School, Salinas, CA
Spring 2022

The place I chose was my front yard. I sat outside on the grass. It was pretty hot outside, the grass had a cool touch, I heard birds, the wind hitting trees, and the noticias playing from my house. I also heard music coming from a distance. It seemed like some rock band. While I was hearing all of this I was looking around. There were many cats in my neighborhood all of which I loved dearly. Cats were my favorite. I love taking photos of them to show the cat I own. They were all different shapes and colors, some gray with a bit of brown spots and white and others were just black. There were smaller cats, skinny ones, and then super chunky cats. I looked around and noticed there were only two kids. Both looked like they were around 4-7 kids playing in the house in front of mine. I knew them I would get babysat by their mother all the time when I was younger. They ran around and chased each other with a stick falling here and there but continuing to get up and run around still. I looked to my left and saw my neighbor that lived right next to me barely got home and brought his daughter inside the house she was two then he went outside to water the plants most of his plants were dead though and were brownish and looked very lifeless. After that I looked to my right next and saw the other people who lived next to me moving into their house there were about 7 of them all very tall and pale they all seemed related and had the same hair color a dirty blonde it seemed as if though they were cloned one of them, who seemed like the youngest out of the group, dropped a box, laughed, while picking it up while get scolded I continued watching them move in for a few more minutes then turning my attention to the very large tree that was in front of their brownish orangish house looking at it long enough made it seem as if though it was going to fall on me then I heard something behind me which took my attention I turned around I saw my cat barely coming out of the house he walked up to me than fell on the very bright and full of life looking grass laying down like he usually does looking at me with huge eyes he likes to fight with the neighbors cats even though they are much bigger and fatter than he is yet somehow he wins every fight. I stared at him for a for seconds as he tried putting his head near my hand trying to get it scratched or even a little pet and sooner or later I ended up petting him since he wouldn't stop while I tried to finish my project he then walked a few feet away from me near this little tree stump we have that was right in the middle of the front yard then he slumped back on the grass still staring at me for some reason I could hear him purr from where I was from it sounding like a car he had a weird purr that I oddly enjoy when I hear it every time.

Valeria's Community Journal Project
Harden Middle School, Salinas, CA
Spring 2022

John Steinbeck describes his surroundings in a very detailed way. Within his own perspective, he describes people, things, and the whole of the atmosphere of Cannery Row with various depictions that makes you understand the place more. In my mind, I see him sitting back and watching in order to grab information to create certain vivid illustration in both the creators and readers minds. He catches feelings and both small and big actions from the people he observes. Buildings such as stuffed with people stores and adults running to their jobs. Its all there. The bitter smell of Cannery Row and irritating sounds. The rumors and sayings. Like me, he makes observations. I make them a lot in art class since its what I'm most passionate about. Since humans are capable of taking any actions or forming any types of thoughts, good or bad, its harder to pin down what a person is thinking, so we watch and use physical movements to actually decide. Similar in nature as well, but things tend to be a bit easier to spot.

The street

My street. The evenings are filled with loud an obnoxious motor cycle sounds in the distance that hammer in your ears; annoying as always. It still keeps going. The pavement of the road on my street is old and cracked. The air smells of green, dirt, and freshness as birds chirp while the wind makes tree branches and leaves flutter. The sky is still blue. A very pale blue, like what once was the color of my own house. Ambulance sirens everywhere at any time of day, there is one right now. So many trees and plants in the front yard of my neighbors house; some tall, some short, some green, some with yellowish tints, purple and white flowers on the very bottom of all the nature. A green base of my house; very very vivid emerald grass with some yellow spots disturbing the emerald around it from cat piss. Next to it is a small tree stump leftover from the newly killed tree. Now one stands alone. Looking dry and damaged as if she lost her sister. Her branches are droopy and a washed out warm grey color covers the whole of her body; she has eyes everywhere and prickly looking things at the end of those branches. I'm being watched, by the tree. My rowty neighbors, all they do is yell and scream. And there goes those irritating motorcycle sounds again. They never ever shutup. My other neighbors walk around the street. A girl which I used to know in elementary and a 30 year old looking man that my parents rent jumping houses from whenever we need one for any birthday party, walk the opposite way. The girl goes back to her house with a man I don't know who is holding a plastic back full of beef; most likely her uncle. The air is getting chillier and chillier every minute. But not the type of cold that is bone chilling. Its calm and is kissing my skin. Besides the very green

grass that is touching my feet as I sit in a old desk chair outside, there are huge, smelly, dried, cat turds on the top of the lawn that my mom absolutely hates. She has a thing for hating cats. Another gauzy feeling of the wind pushes the sister tree and her neighboring friends; a red lefed tree on the front of the girls house, a bright crimson and blush pink rose bush a little further down the street, another one at the girls house again, and the whole of my front neighbors jungle where I said where those purple and white flowers. Bugs and ants move on the sidewalk cement. Some little plants and weed growing on the edges of the side walk. There used to be pink flowers there. Even more engine sounds are heard near us and more voices coming from the girls house. Cars pass and pass by. I've seen many white cars pass by already. More birds chirp and I wonder if they are calling their friends. Maybe they have a worm they'd like to share. But knowing how birds are portrayed in cartoons, I don't think they are stupid enough to share. A crow swoops by over my head. The sister tree has sap coming out of its eyes which looks like tears of a yellowy chartruce color. Flys are everywhere in the somewhat peaceful scenery. Birds, chirps, grass flicking, vehicles. The voices front he girls house have died arleady. Now its just all of nature. But it only lasts a bit before the the engines of cars are heard again. My fingers are cold now. Now we hear the girl and her mother again, and the police far away. The 30 year old neighbor is running back to his house after taking his small black and white dog for a walk. It was a bright red leash. Once he goes inside, barking fill the atmosphere. Some children cry and crows and birds start chircping all at once yet again. Like the motorcycle, they are never going to stop. Only when day time comes to an end which is not hat far away. It feels as if I miss october. But spring is here and that means more flys and bugs and beetles with all of this sticky starting heat in salinas. The smell of greasy buffet food fills my nostrils as the scent swims with the gentle wind. Now its gone and my neighbor has opened the garage. He sneezes. And again. And 6 more times. I wonder if he is okay, because thats lots of sneezing. The top of the sky looks more purplish now. Its getting darker. Its like a blueberry tone. I can see a cat now, dark gray with a white tummy. At the foot of my lawn. Near sister tree. Its cautious and is aware of the black cat near the sidewalk of the girls house. It has now spotted me with its big, chartreuse eyes and is getting closer and then it disappears behind my dads blue honda. I tried to call it over but it got annoyed, like one does with those stupid motorcycle engine sounds which are dead yet again. The scent of ciggarette smoke is getting a bit stronger around me and so is the buffet food smell. Okay now its colder.

Valerie's Community Journal Project
Harden Middle School, Salinas, CA
Spring 2022

There was very little to no chance that John Steinbeck was sitting and watching all of this action unfold the whole time. As he described the start of this day in Cannery Row, he watched as the boats pulled up in the coast against canneries. He also must've gone into the cannery to observe because he saw superintendents and accountants heading into their offices. Men and women and people from other countries with rubber coats and aprons would come running to clean, pack and cook fish. Then after the last fish is cleaned, packed and cooked the men, women and others head back into town after a long day of work and Cannery Row is peaceful. I doubt that Steinbeck would be able to observe such things by only sitting down and watching the street. As for interactions, later in this excerpt, Steinbeck states "The girls from Dora's emerge for a bit of sun if there is any. Doc strolls from the Western Biological Laboratory and crosses the street to Lee Chong's grocery for two quarts of beer. Henri the painter noses like an Airedale through the junk in the grass-grown lot for some part or piece of wood or metal he needs for the boat he is building." Since he knows their names and the places they're going to they must be quite familiar with each other. Not only that earlier this excerpt claimed "Its inhabitants are, as the man once said, "whores, pimps, gamblers, and sons of bitches," by which he meant Everybody." This was an interaction with another man who described people in 'restaurants and whore houses, and little crowded groceries, and laboratories and flophouses'. As he was telling of a day in Cannery Row he had gotten input from someone else and also saw his friends. As for notes, he took a lot. He describes cannery row as a 'dream' and nostalgia. He took notes on restaurants and what kind of people were in them. He described how upperclassmen were treated and how owners and superintendents went into their offices. How people at the cannery got and worked at the cannery. How peaceful it was when everyone went home after work. The people he saw. In art we had some time to create what's called an observational drawing. We looked at a shell and tried to draw as much detail as possible. We also learned the concept of field journaling in which we go outside and notice different relationships between animals and plants. Very similar to what Steinbeck did. He looked around Cannery Row and noticed human interaction. In Science, we ask questions and make hypotheses. Then we test these experiments making observations and learning things. I believe it is important to make detailed observations of nature and humans to know more about them. You can see what is occurring around you when you're not paying attention. Not only that, these observations make your mind stronger and cause you to pay more attention to your surroundings.

I am currently sitting in front of my neighborhood. I observe the houses in front of me. About 3 I see. The colors of one house are white and a light green-blue. There are about 6 cars, three white one green. I can't see the other one as it is covered by a white tarp. The remaining vehicle is blocked by the white car. It's seven pm. The sun is still in the sky but it's slowly setting. I had my music in for a few minutes but turned it on to hear the sounds around me. I heard the rumbling of the engine of a delivery truck and the sound of cars in the Costco behind my house. As for the logo of the delivery truck, I can't remember. To the right of the house in front of ours is a pretty big cage with a dog. The dog breed? Maybe a German Shepard? Though I can't say what breed it is, I can say that it is very loud. I can hear its barks and whines throughout the night. I hear birds chirping. You know for some reason in movies it doesn't show that birds chirp during the night but just last friday night there was this annoying bird that was making ghastly sounds. By the way, the crickets in the movies that are supposed to be heard at night are usually very quiet and only come through some times of the year. Anyway, I don't really smell anything. But I'd say a hint of grass and hay for some reason. There is a cold breeze that gives me chills. Plants? I see eight trees and this really big one in the distance. You know we actually have one in our backyard except when it was fall my dad cut off most of the branches so he wouldn't have to deal with the leaves when they fell. The people in front of us have a burgundy red fence and a solar panel. Energy from the sun. There's some really pretty flowers. A vibrant orange and red. They look soft like a cloud. The dog started barking again. I see a lot of birds in the sky. I changed where I was sitting. Now I am standing a little to the side of my house. I see mountains but not very clearly. Actually at school like by the basketball courts during P.E. When it's sunny I can see how much of the mountains are covered in green grass or just dry plains. I'd say when it comes to Salinas, the landscapes are beautiful. I just saw a woman walking towards costco. She was with her dog, had headphones, and a bright pink sweater. Maybe she was going to buy something from Costco but I think it's more likely that she was going on a walk with her dog. It startled me. Moving on. Two houses over from ours to the right there is an American flag waving. The house right next to us has 2 dogs and they do a good job of scaring people. Like say I'm walking home, minding my business and these two dogs come over and try to jump the fence and attack me. There is also a trampoline and a front yard filled with overgrown weeds. I actually know the kid who lives next to me. He went to my elementary school for the 6th grade. Now he's in harden. He's the person closest to my house. The other kid lives in a bright orange house. In between that house and my neighbors is our mailbox. My neighbor just pulled out of the house. I just saw a black cat with a red collar across the street from me. He is staring at me with beady black eyes. Just reminded me that I might get bad luck or maybe that's when they get in your way. From where I am there are still a lot of cars but hardly any people. There is a place where you can eat food like hot dogs, sundaes, churros, pizza, and drinks. My mom says that on tuesday night there aren't many people eating there. As for the people in the actual store, they might be buying the wine that came in. My

focus has now shifted to the white flowers with a long orange center. They look pretty. The border separating Costco and our house has some thin brown trees surrounding it. The leaves I see are growing back slowly but surely. My dad is pulling out of the driveway probably to buy some food. I waved goodbye to him. The neighborhood is as expected quiet and calm. The way I like it. I don't see that much of my neighbors but when I don't they're usually polite. The sun is completely set now. The sun still has some hints of blue and purple. Very pretty. It's about time to head inside.