

## Week 2 Reflection: Planting Sweetgrass

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1. What is your favorite quote from this section and why is this so memorable to you (100 word minimum).

“What I mean of course is that our human relationship with strawberries is transformed by our choice of perspective. It is human perception that makes the world a gift. The relationship of strawberries alike are transformed. The relationship of gratitude and reciprocity thus developed can increase the evolutionary fitness of both plant and animal” (Kimmerer 30).

This quote envelops this entire portion of *Braiding Sweetgrass* in this reciprocity relationship between the world and the humans in that world. Unlike in western world communities who destroy the Earth more and more every day with our part in pollution and destroying the oceans, in Indigenous communities, they hold all things around them as important as they are. It is also seen as the trees, birds, etc. all give so much to the ground as a gift. As is mentioned in a lower question, in Western culture, reciprocity is something hard to list when the definition of reciprocity is mentioned in this book. My definition does not hold up to the author’s at all, which puts me in deep thought because I want to find that form of reciprocity within myself and nature.

2. What does reciprocity look like in your culture? Provide specific examples (150 word minimum)

In my own family, one of two reciprocity relationships is Christmas. During the month of December, I attend anywhere between 4-8 Christmases, and this includes all twenty-two great grandchildren, siblings, long distance family, any and all in between. Gifts are always given at these functions, whether that be money, something from the Christmas list, or just a sweet card. Pertaining to how Kimmerer spoke about reciprocity in this book, the only relationship I can think of is my grandparent’s relationship with our home garden. Every year, once school is over, we go to our local feed store and buy baby plants and seeds and wait to plant. The plants have different needs, based on watering, feeding with fertilizer, and tilling every one to two weeks. We deliver to the plants, and the plants provide us with tomatoes, cucumbers, zucchini, and other yummy foods. We also have two indoor plants, but those are a little less needy than the plants in the garden. I purposefully chose plants that were hard to kill, even though I had started out with three and I killed one of plants which was very sad. These indoor plants provide us happiness within our home.

3. This section begins with the following quote, “*Sweetgrass is best planted not by seed, but by putting roots directly in the ground. Thus the plant is passed from hand to earth to hand across years and generations. Its favored habitat is sunny, well-watered meadows. It thrives on disturbed edges.*” What does this mean to you? (150 word minimum).

To me, this quote means that sweetgrass is not only a plant that is placed in the ground to grow for communities, but the sweetgrass also carries generations of stories of removal, relocation, slander, personal findings, and culture. The sweetgrass is one that comes back year after year as long as it is tended to in the correct way. This plant gives comfort and protection in the case of using the sweetgrass to rid the area of bad luck. In return, the people hold the sweetgrass to a high standard and tend to it very generously. The third sentence of this quote can also hold multiple meanings. One could be the literal meaning, noting where the sweetgrass grows the best. However, it could also be speaking of the people. Meaning that the communities thrive off of well-rounded and giving relationships between themselves and the earth. The line of “It thrives on disturbed edges” I am not confident in what I think it might be about. If I took a guess, I would say that maybe this means that the sweetgrass grows on edges of land between sacred land and the outside western ideal land.

4. Specifically in “The Offering”, Kimmerer discusses how we focus our attention. What are ways in which you choose to focus your attention and are you happy with these choices? (100 word minimum)

I choose to focus my attention on school, friends, my future, and my phone. I must admit it, I would love to sit here and say I focus all of my time on school but that would be a lie. I love a good tiktok time before going to bed. I can also say that because of my slightly high screen time this in turn affects other things in my life such as friendships and the want to want to stay home instead of going out. I am happy with my choices, but I could definitely apply more of my attention in other places in my list to surpass my future goals.