ESSAY 1 PHASE 2

Student 3 ● Prof. Mani ● Fall 2020

The cool breeze rushes past, leaving little goosebumps on my arm. A salty smell wafts through my nostrils. As the chilled air flows through my dark brown hair, a loud squawk moves closer to me. My toes squirm and stretch across the soft, squishy floor. I take a deep breath of air, allowing the warmth of the bright afternoon sun to run through me. I am in paradise. But just like a sweet dream, it's over too soon. My eyes widen as I realize that I am not on a beach; instead, I'm faced with four baby blue walls and shimmering lights. Disoriented, I roll over and lean towards that obnoxious sound. Of course, it's my phone. The white numbers read, "6:30". Oh my god. Where did the time go? All I remember is lying on my bed for one quick minute… Yet, here I am. My legs are sprawled across my ivory comforter, wrinkling the green palm leaves. I look over to the right window where the sun is peeking through my white blinds. I slide off my bed, causing my fuzzy blanket to fall. As I look around the room, I see the beach-my cozy world.

Social media (thank you, internet) has heightened our awareness of things we never gave second thoughts to. Our ideas of what cozy is or what represents coziness are affected by our experiences and the communities we engage in. Take the subreddit r/cozyplaces. This particular forum seeks to promote and identify "cozy" places by allowing members to share photos. The community relies on specific terms, such as amazing, awesome, cozy, and lovely. These critical words enable the discourse to uphold its most prominent value, the creation of cozy places. Although the language used in r/cozyplaces seems general and nonspecific, it helps create a community that shares ideas about individuals' unique cozy locations, allowing users to fully embrace their own cozy place.

The words, amazing and awesome, appear to be a contradiction to coziness. In the English language, amazing typically refers to great surprise, while awesome refers to something impressive or causes great admiration. Redditors like u/Mazon_Del will compliment the original poster (OP) on their cozy place using such words and include suggestions, "Amazing! The only thing I might consider doing would be to put some form of shroud around the lights for the dart board. The first reason to perhaps make it a little easier to see at night (not so much glare in your face) …" u/Mazon_Del is using the word amazing to emphasize his/her

appreciation for the content poster's work. The commenter even adds an exclamation point to emphasize how excited they are about the content. This one-character changes the entire tone of the statement, as it creates a more genuine response to the original content. After congratulating the OP on their work, u/Mazon_Del offers a suggestion to help make the original poster's cozy bar/shed more functional and practical. This reflects the subreddit's goal of helping others create their own cozy places and improve upon them. Another Redditor, u/stecklese, commented, "Awesome!! Perfect dog for the backyard bar." The user expresses their appreciation for the original poster's efforts, adding not one but two exclamation points. The following statement, after awesome, shows the commenter's desire to have a similar cozy place. U/stecklese is excited about this cozy place and wants not only the entire cozy area but also the dog. The word, perfect, (capitalized) indicates this as the Redditor believes that the dog included in the picture adds to the cozy place's aesthetic. Ultimately both words, amazing and awesome, highlight the community's most important value: the creation of cozy places.

Another essential word to the subreddit is lovely. This word has a feminine tone and is generally used to describe items associated with women. For example, u/Kfurt13 commented on a post of a small NYC bedroom apartment, "It's lovely!! I think you need a bigger rug though 😄." The commenter is not only complimenting the OP but also providing users with an insight into his/her fond memories. To enumerate, most mothers and grandmothers do a majority of the child-rearing. They hold us when we're scared of the monsters under our bed, make our favorite dishes, and take care of us. Therefore, by describing this photo using a gendered word, the commenter displays positive emotions towards women, ones that were probably formed while they were a child by a prominent figure(s) in their lives. Significantly, this informs the audience that the commenter associates coziness with femininity. The cat, pink fuzzy blanket, and several plants featured in this post are feminine, even girly. The commenter emphasizes this feeling by adding two exclamation points and suggesting how to make the cozy place better. Adding a larger rug would add more femininity to the room, resulting in a more "cozy" space.

U/Honest-Improvement22 commented on a home office, "That's a lovely mirror. Where is it from? Also, liking the motivational sign!" This Redditor also displays a positive outlook regarding women, as they assign a gendered based word to the mirror featured in the photo. The mirror is a unique piece of artwork, as little reflective pieces are joined together with gold etchings. These gold details represent gold jewelry- a luxury that women would wear around their necks, on their fingers, or their wrists to signify their wealth. Additionally, the plants featured in the photo add a colorful pop of green and are typically associated with a woman's image. The letterboard underneath the mirror displays a motivational sign- a signal of femininity as women are viewed as society's caretakers. Women take care of others not only physically, but mentally as well. This mental support may include thoughtful advice, motivational phrases or words, or simply listening to others' woes. U/Honest-Improvement22's comment even questions where the OP purchased the mirror in an effort to create their cozy place.

Arguably the most important lexis in r/cozyplaces is cozy. Each "cozy" photo is radically different from the one before it and can encompass almost anything. One user posted an image of a driveway, causing quite the controversy. U/felinemooddisorder commented on the photo, "I love those trees at the end of the driveway. What a cozy peaceful place." The commenter emphasizes the importance of greenery and peacefulness in their perception of coziness. Without vegetation, this user might not have considered this particular place cozy. U/-iamyourgrandma- commented, "It's incredibly beautiful. However, when I think of a cozy place, I imagine a place where I'd like to snuggle up and relax or maybe take a nap. This isn't that. Still, gorgeous driveway and I am very jealous. Good job." This user compliments the OP and expresses their cozy ideal, a place where they can relax and take a nap. Thus, u/-iamyourgrandma- will perceive any area with lots of pillows, blankets, and somewhere to lie down as cozy. Essentially, anything can be deemed "cozy." People use their experiences, views, perceptions, and culture to shape their idea of what cozy is. As long as a particular place can invoke a relatable feeling in the viewer, it can be considered cozy.

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      As I lie down once again on my honey oak bed, I realize how lucky I am to have my own cozy place. It's a place where I can drift off into my little world, and for a moment, tune out all of my worries. I feel as though I can accomplish anything and everything, even if it once seemed impossible. Life becomes brighter, and the unknown scares me a little less. We all need a safe haven from the evils of the world, especially in these uncertain times. Areas that were once deemed "safe" are no longer, leaving many of us anxious. In the last few months, our homes have become more important than ever, making cozy places essential.

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