

Eleven, by Sandra Cisneros

Ideas for writer's/reader's notebook **Eleven as a mentor text for writing possibilities**

Figurative Language

Cisneros uses figurative language—especially similes and metaphors-- to make comparisons that describe how she feels on her eleventh birthday. Identify the similes and metaphors in her story, and explain the image that is created in your mind through these similes. How does Cisneros use figurative language in the ways Roni Schotter does in Nothing Ever Happens on 90th Street?

Internal Story

Read *Eleven* for a second time—or third or fourth time—and underline the internal story in her story. Internal story is what the story is really about. It is the inner thoughts and feelings of a character as s/he reacts to actions that occur in the story. These reactions strengthen a story and they are what good writers do when they tell their narrative.

Characterization

Characterization is the way a writer develops a character. It can be shown by a character's appearance, a character's actions, a character's thoughts, a character's words, and other character's reactions. Reread Cisneros' story *Eleven*, and chart in your notebook how Rachel's character and how it is revealed through her actions and thoughts. Collaborate with a partner and discuss obvious clues about Rachel's character (such as her physical appearance, words, actions, and thoughts) and discuss those not so obvious clues such as how others respond to her. What is Rachel's personality based on the author's descriptions? How is Rachel like you, how is Rachel different?

Extension

Write a letter to Rachel. In your letter, describe how you feel about her experience on her eleventh birthday. Describe your thoughts about her situation. Describe how you might feel in a similar situation; if you can, offer Rachel some advice. Would your responses be the same? Why or why not?