

Close reading plan

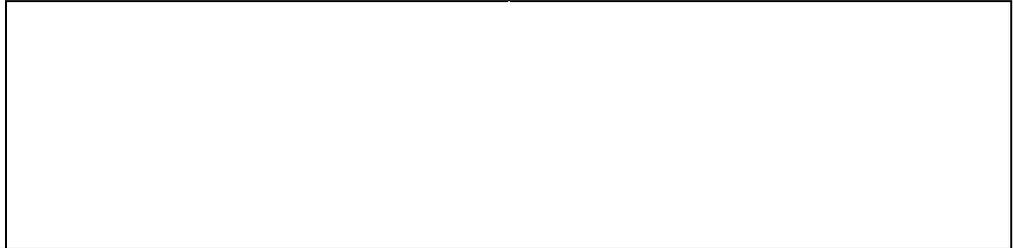
“**Eleven**” by Sandra Cisneros

Created by Marika Heughins, 2014 Connecticut Dream Team teacher

What makes this text complex?			
Text and Author	“Eleven” By Sandra Cisneros excerpted from <u>Woman Hollering Creek</u>	Where to Access Text	Woman Hollering Creek: And Other Stories by Sandra Cisneros at Amazon.com
Text Description			
<p><i>Eleven</i> is a short story about Rachel on her eleventh birthday. She has an experience that demonstrates the challenge of growing up. The setting is in her classroom. The story takes the reader through Rachel’s conversations with herself as she faces a situation with her teacher, Mrs. Price, when she is made to take an unwanted sweater that is not hers. Rachel struggles through her humiliation and upset as she is forced to wear “an ugly sweater like that, all raggedy and old.” <i>Eleven</i> is about transition, the struggle of growing up, and the realization that we all carry inside of us the years that came before as we move forward in life. Even though we get older, we still have moments when the child within us comes out.</p>			
Quantitative			
Lexile and Grade Level	960L Grade 5	Text Length	1,198
Qualitative			
Meaning/Central Ideas		Text Structure/Organization	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Author’s Message (theme) is that, as we move forward in life, we all carry the years that came before us. Even though we get older, we still have moments when the child within us comes out. There are times when life can be a struggle between remaining young and growing up. Sandra Cisneros, speaking through Rachel, tells us that life, and growing up, is like the layers of an onion, or the rings of a tree, or like little dolls, stacked one inside the other. You’re eleven, but inside of you is a layer that is ten, a layer that is nine, a layer that is eight...and even though you can’t see them, they’re still there, and they’ll always be there, a part of you. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The author repeats the central message throughout the piece: as you grow older, you have all facets of your younger self with you. Within the organizational structure is the central message, repeated in the first and last paragraph of the story, in the character’s repetition of the phrase “when you are eleven, you’re also ten, and nine, and eight, and seven, and six, and five, and four and three, and two and one.” The structure includes the repetition of the statement, “Not, mine, not mine, not mine.” 	
Prior Knowledge Demands		Language Features	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students should have some experience with point of view. Students should have basic understanding of theme. Students should know how to quote accurately. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Similes Repetition Figurative language 	
Vocabulary			
Tier Two Words (General academic vocabulary)		Tier Three Words (Domain-specific words)	
<p>“Words that is far more likely to appear in written texts than in speech. [They] often represent subtle or precise ways to say relatively simple things—saunter instead of walk, for example.” (CCSS ELA Appendix A)</p>		<p>“[Tier Three words]...are specific to a domain or field of study (lava, carburetor, legislature, circumference, aorta) and key to understanding a new concept within a text.” (CCSS ELA Appendix A)</p>	

Rings
Nonsense
Bury
Coatroom
Parking meter
runaway balloon

Rattling
Raggedy
Alley
Clown-sweater



Potential Reader/Task Challenges

The interpretation of the larger elements of the story could be a task challenge for some students. Also, the fact that there are so many elements of figurative language can make this text a potential challenge.

Text-dependent questions		
Question	Standard alignment	Page of this document
1) What does Rachel mean in the first paragraph of Eleven when she says “What they don’t understand about birthdays and what they never tell you is that when you’re eleven, you’re also ten, and nine, and eight, and seven, and six, and five, and four, and three, and two and one. And when you wake up on your eleventh birthday you expect to feel eleven, but you don’t. You open your eyes and everything’s just like yesterday, only it’s today. And you don’t feel eleven at all. You feel like you’re still ten.” Re-read to find evidence to prove your thinking.	<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.1</u> Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.	#6
2) Why did the author choose to tell the story through Rachel’s point of view? How would the story have been different if it had been told through Mrs. Price’s point of view?	<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.6</u> Describe how a narrator or speaker's point of view influences how events are described.	#11
3) Reread the first and last paragraph. Why does the story both begin and end with the narrator’s counting backwards from eleven to one: “you’re eleven, you’re also ten, and nine, and eight . . .”?	<u>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.5</u> Explain how a series of chapters, scenes, or stanzas fits together to provide the overall structure of a particular story, drama, or poem.	#19
4) Rachel says in the story, “...Because the way you grow old is kind of like an onion or like the rings inside a tree trunk or like my little wooden dolls that fit one inside the other, each year inside the next one.” Why does the author include this description to show how Rachel is feeling about turning eleven?	<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.4</u> Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as	#25

	metaphors and similes.	
5) How did Rachel respond when she was forced to admit the sweater was hers? How did having to acknowledge ownership of the sweater affect her feelings about her eleventh birthday/about growing older?	<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.2</u> Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.	#22
Target Standards		
<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.1</u> Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. <u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.2</u> Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text. <u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.4</u> Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes. <u>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.5</u> Explain how a series of chapters, scenes, or stanzas fits together to provide the overall structure of a particular story, drama, or poem. <u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.6</u> Describe how a narrator or speaker's point of view influences how events are described.		

Question 1

Question #1

What does Rachel mean in the first paragraph of *Eleven* when she says, “What they don’t understand about birthdays and what they never tell you is that when you’re eleven, you’re also ten, and nine, and eight, and seven, and six, and five, and four, and three, and two and one. And when you wake up on your eleventh birthday you expect to feel eleven, but you don’t. You open your eyes and everything’s just like yesterday, only it’s today. And you don’t feel eleven at all. You feel like you’re still ten.” Re-read to find evidence to prove your thinking about what Rachel means.

Standard(s) covered:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.1

Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

Example response that meets standard

In the first paragraph, Rachel means that even though she woke up a year older, she doesn’t feel any different. In the next paragraph, when she says, “Like some days you might say something stupid, and that’s the part of you that’s still ten.” She is giving an example of how she doesn’t feel any older. Another example is in the fourth paragraph when she says, “You don’t feel eleven. Not right away. It takes a few days, weeks even, sometimes even months before you say eleven when they ask you.” This shows that you don’t change overnight, and that you still have parts of you that are your younger self.

Look-fors

Evidence from the text could include:

- “Like some days you might say something stupid, and that’s the part of you that’s still ten.”
- “You don’t feel eleven. Not right away. It takes a few days, weeks even, sometimes even months before you say ‘eleven’ when they ask you.”
- “And maybe one day when you’re all grown up, maybe you will need to cry like if you’re three, and that’s okay. That’s what I tell Mama when she’s sad and needs to cry. Maybe she’s feeling three.”

If students are struggling to answer the text-dependent question, use this follow-up plan for modeling and practice:

Objective	In this lesson, you will learn how to draw an inference from a text by using background knowledge and quoting evidence from the text.
Prior knowledge to review	<p>Refer to what the text states explicitly to determine an inference. Ask and answer questions determine understanding of a text</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.</p>
Steps to achieve objective	Think aloud for direct instruction (reference the inference chart in extensions for this think aloud)
1) Reread the text and look for evidence to answer the question.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the question asking? The question is asking me to locate a specific section of the text. First, I am going to go back into the text, to that section, and reread it carefully. This is close reading. • However, I can't answer this question simply from reading the text. It is not a "right there" question. So I need to read on to find evidence to help me figure out what the author meant. I'll use this evidence, plus what I already know, to make an inference. • As I read, I will be looking for clues to help me understand what the author means and connect it to my thinking.
2) Highlight or underline evidence found within the text to support your thinking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When I get to the second paragraph, I see some evidence to form an inference. I look at the first two lines. "Like some days you might say something stupid, and that's the part of you that's still ten. Or maybe some days you might need to sit on your mama's lap because you're scared, and that's the part of you that's five." These are clues to help me prove my thinking about what Rachel means. • These clues are making me think that <i>Rachel is talking about times when you don't always feel grown-up. In certain situations, sometimes you feel younger than you are.</i> I am thinking about times when I have felt like my younger self, even though I am an adult. So I am connecting the words on the page and my own experiences to help me understand what the Rachel is saying.

<p>3) Construct a response, using evidence from the text, to answer the question in your own words.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now that I have made my inference about what Rachel means, I'm going to reread that section again to see if my inference makes sense with the text. When I reread, I'm asking myself if the message is: <i>when you get older, you still have times in your life when you feel like a younger child</i>. A clue in the text to support my inference is: "And maybe one day when you're all grown up, maybe you will need to cry like if you're three, and that's okay. That's what I tell Mama when she's sad and needs to cry. Maybe she's feeling three." This makes sense in the text and I can't find any evidence to prove it wrong. So, I'm thinking my inference is correct. • Now, I need to put all of my thoughts into writing. I am going to start off with answering the question and including the sentence that I am talking about. Here is how I would start it off: <i>In the first paragraph, Rachel means that even though she woke up a year older, she doesn't feel any different.</i> • Next, I want to explain where I found my evidence to support this inference. I want to either paraphrase or use quotes from the text. In the next paragraph, when she says, "<i>Like some days you might say something stupid, and that's the part of you that's still ten</i>" she is giving an example of how she doesn't feel any older. Another example is in the fourth paragraph when she says, "<i>You don't feel eleven. Not right away. It takes a few days, weeks even, sometimes even months before you say eleven when they ask you.</i>" I know this is true for me personally, because on the day after my birthday, I don't feel any older. Sometimes it takes awhile. • Finally, I want to explain my thinking. <i>This shows that you don't change overnight and that you still have parts of you that are your younger self.</i> This is what I think Rachel meant.
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Extension and practice

- QAR. In QAR, (Question Answer Relationships) two categories of questions are identified—*In the Book* and *In My Head*. These two categories are then broken down into four types of questions: Right There, Think and Search, Author and You and On My Own. QAR is the basis for locating information and determining when an inference would be required or invited. Right There questions help students in locating evidence that is explicitly stated in a text. Author and You questions help students identify inferences (Raphael, 1986).
- Inference Chart. Create a chart to help students understand the strategy of making inferences based on what is read. The chart should have three columns. Column headings should read: What happened? What does it mean? Why do you think that? In the last column, the student should be able to provide specific details, examples and quotations from the text to support their claims. Brief description of third extension or practice activity here, if applicable
- Five-Minute Inference Builder. Each day, read a short passage out loud using the Think-Aloud to share your inferences. Have students decide what kinds of inferences you are making as you model this process. The selections can be short passages from a literature book, a magazine, or a novel you are reading. Author Kylene Beers (2003) recommends *Two Minute Mysteries* by Donald Sobol and *Five Minute Mysteries* and *Even More Five Minute Mysteries* by Ken Weber. Make sure the text chosen offers opportunities for students to draw inferences.

What next?

For additional practice, with students or for students' independent work, apply this learning objective and set of steps to quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

See more examples of how to teach how to quote accurately when drawing inferences from the text, CCSS RL 5.1

Objective: In this lesson, you will learn how to draw an inference from a text by thinking about what you know and quoting evidence from the text.

1. Reread the text and look for evidence to answer the question. Read on to have understanding of the text. Use the text evidence and your own experiences to make an inference.
2. Highlight or underline evidence found within the text to support your thinking.
3. Construct a response, using evidence from the text, to answer the question in your own words.

<https://ctdreamteam.learnzillion.com/lessons/758-ask-and-answer-questions-about-the-text-while-reading>

<https://ctdreamteam.learnzillion.com/lessons/4186-expert-tutorial>

<https://ctdreamteam.learnzillion.com/lessons/1927-understand-how-an-author-develops-setting-by-using-words-and-phrases-in-the-text>

Question 2

Question #2	Why did the author choose to tell the story through Rachel’s point of view? How would the story have been different if it had been told through Mrs. Price’s point of view?	
Standard(s) covered:	<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.6</u> Describe how a narrator or speaker's point of view influences how events are described.	
	Example response that meets standard	Look-fors
	<p>The author told the story through Rachel’s point of view so that you could see the impact of the event on her life. When Mrs. Price embarrassed Rachel with the red sweater, it was a very upsetting experience for her. This ruined Rachel’s eleventh birthday.</p> <p>If the story were told through Mrs. Price’s point of view you would not hear how Rachel felt. Also, the theme of the story would change, because it would not be about Rachel’s eleventh birthday. The entire story would be different, including the title.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible change in theme • A different perspective on Rachel’s feelings, or her feelings would not be the focus • Focus would be on Mrs. Price’s point of view
If students are struggling to answer the text-dependent question, use this follow-up plan for modeling and practice:		
Objective	In this lesson you will learn how the author influences what you know in a story by examining the point of view that is used to describe events.	
Prior knowledge to review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point of view • Main idea/theme • Fact/opinion • First person/third person <p><u>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.6</u> Compare and contrast the point of view from which different stories are narrated, including the difference between first- and third-person narrations.</p>	

Steps to achieve objective	Think aloud for direct instruction
1) Identify the point of view of the story.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First, I want to determine the point of view of this story. In this story, you can't tell in the first paragraph who is telling the story. <i>What they don't understand about birthdays and what they never tell you is that when you're eleven, you're also ten, and nine, and eight, and seven, and six, and five, and four, and three, and two, and one. And when you wake up on your eleventh birthday you expect to feel eleven, but you don't. You open your eyes and everything's just like yesterday, only it's today. And you don't feel eleven at all. You feel like you're still ten. And you are—underneath the year that makes you eleven.</i> • I can tell it is a child who just had an eleventh birthday. Is it a boy or a girl? In this situation, I need to read on to confirm who is telling the story. In the fifth paragraph, it becomes clearer. <i>Only today I wish I didn't have only eleven years rattling inside me like pennies in a tin Band-Aid box. Today I wish I was one hundred and two instead of eleven because if I was one hundred and two I'd have known what to say when Mrs. Price put the red sweater on my desk. I would've known how to tell her it wasn't mine instead of just sitting there with that look on my face and nothing coming out of my mouth.</i> • The child is upset about a red sweater. I know the narrative is in the first person, but I don't know who the "I" is until I get until the ninth paragraph when Mrs. Price calls her by her name: <i>Maybe because I'm skinny, maybe because she doesn't like me, that stupid Sylvia Saldivar says, "I think it belongs to Rachel." An ugly sweater like that, all raggedy and old, but Mrs. Price believes her. Mrs. Price takes the sweater and puts it right on my desk, but when I open my mouth nothing comes out.</i>
2) Ask, "Which character's thoughts and feelings are shared with the reader?"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now I know that Rachel, a girl, is telling the story from her point of view. She is upset that her teacher, Mrs. Price, put an ugly, raggedy old red sweater on her desk after another student said it was Rachel's. • I am going to look for evidence to see how Rachel felt. In this, the ninth paragraph: "Not mine, not mine, not mine, but Mrs. Price is already turning to page thirty-two, and math problem number four. I don't know why, but all of a sudden I'm feeling sick inside, like the part of me that's three wants to come out of my eyes, only I squeeze them shut tight and bite down on my teeth real hard and try to remember today I am eleven, eleven. Mama is making a cake for me for tonight, and when Papa comes home everybody will sing Happy birthday, happy birthday to you." • When she says, "not mine, not mine, not mine", I can tell she feels upset and embarrassed. This is also supported by the fact she says, "All of a sudden, I'm feeling sick inside."

<p>3) Ask, “What information DO I know because the narrator has chosen that point of view?”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I now have information to help me determine what the author wanted me to know by choosing Rachel’s point of view. By sharing Rachel’s feelings, I DO know that she was upset by the actions of Sylvia Saldivar and Mrs. Price’s. I DO know that she was offended that Sylvia and Mrs. Price thought the ugly old sweater was hers. I DO know that she is so upset, she clenches her teeth, squeezes her eyes shut, she can’t talk and feels sick inside. I DO know that this embarrassing situation seems to be ruining her eleventh birthday.
<p>4) Ask, “What information would I NOT know if _____ told the story?”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What information would I NOT know? I would have to consider how the story would change if Mrs. Price told the story. That makes me wonder, how would the story be the same? How would the story be different? Would Mrs. Price see the events in the same way that Rachel did, or would she see the events differently? I think she’d see them differently. How would this change the events in the story? If I were Mrs. Price, I would NOT know what Rachel was thinking, because Rachel could barely speak. I would NOT know that this was such an important thing to Rachel, or that Rachel felt her birthday was ruined because of it. • With point of view, thinking about what I DO know and what I would NOT know, helps me look at the events from different perspectives. It helps me understand the point of view, and gives me an understanding about the characters and why the author wrote the story the way she did.

Extension and practice

- **Point, Counterpoint strategy**

This strategy allows students to hold a forum to discuss differing portrayals of a common story, as it is told from multiple points of view in a text. (Rogers, 1988)

- Students read a variety of accounts about a historical event from different viewpoints. They then create separate small boards with eyeglasses at the top featuring a different person's points of view. Each board has the person's name at the top and then several statements taken from the text (or inferences). After creating the multiple boards, the students create a compare and contrast chart with two or more of the characters. Ask the question: "Which are most similar, most divergent, and why do you think as you do.?" Students defend the answers that they make in comparisons orally or in writing. [Small group, pair, individual.]
- Students read about a historical event from two or more sources. Students then put themselves in the time of the event and write diary entries about the event as if they are present. They will reference the text in their entries and agree or disagree with those opinions. This could be presented as a reader's theater in small groups. [Pair, individual]

What next?

For additional practice, with students or for students' independent work, apply this learning objective and set of steps to describe how a narrator or speaker's point of view influences how events are described.

See more examples of how to teach how a narrator or speaker's point of view influences how events are described, CCSS RL 5.6

Objective: In this lesson you will learn how the author influences what you know in a story by examining the point of view that is used to describe events.

1. Identify the point of view of the story.
2. Ask, "Which character's thoughts and feelings are shared with the reader?"
3. Ask, "What information DO I know because the narrator has chosen that point of view?"
4. Ask, "What information would I NOT know because the author's choice of point of view keeps that information from me?"

See the lesson video: [Determine how the author influences what you know in a story.](#)

Question 3

Question #3	Reread the first and last paragraph. Why does the story both begin and end with the narrator’s counting backwards from eleven to one: “When you’re eleven, you’re also ten, and nine, and eight ...”?
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Standard(s) covered:	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.5 Explain how a series of chapters, scenes, or stanzas fits together to provide the overall structure of a particular story, drama, or poem.
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Example response that meets standard	Look-fors
The author starts and finishes the story by counting backwards as a way to connect the beginning and the end of the story together. It is part of her writing style to repeat these phrases, which also connect to the message of the story. When she states this phrase in the beginning of the story, it catches your attention. As you read on in the story, you see how Rachel felt embarrassed by her teacher and had moments where she felt like a little child. When she repeats the phrase at the end, you are shown that how Rachel felt at the beginning of the story is how she still feels at the end. This ties the story together.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An understanding of author style • An understanding of how an author uses repeated phrases to connect ideas • An understanding of why the author included that phrase-to show that Rachel felt many different ages on her eleventh birthday.

If students are struggling to answer the text-dependent question, use this follow-up plan for modeling and practice:

Objective	In this lesson you will, you will learn how repeated words and phrases add meaning by thinking about why the author chose to repeat them.
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Prior knowledge to review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Author’s style elements CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.5 Explain major differences between poems, drama, and prose, and refer to the structural elements of poems (e.g., verse, rhythm, meter) and drama (e.g., casts of characters, settings, descriptions, dialogue, stage directions) when writing or speaking about a text.
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Steps to achieve objective	Think aloud for direct instruction
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1) Reread the first and last paragraph.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first thing I need to do when I look at this question is to reread the first and last paragraph. As I am doing that I am reminding myself of the plot of the story. • The questions that I am asking myself as I read are why would the author repeat those phrases? What do I know about author’s style to help me understand why an author might start and end with the same phrase?
2) Analyze the phrase that is repeated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When I look at the phrase that is repeated I know that it has a direct connection to the message of the text. Rachel struggled with feeling <i>only</i> eleven, and instead had feelings of being younger when her teacher embarrassed her.
3) Analyze the author’s style by asking, “Why would the author repeat this phrase?”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I know that authors use their pens like artists use their paintbrushes in order to create their own “style.” I also know that authors will repeat phrases as part of their style. • One other element of author’s style that I know is that authors like to hook the reader in the lead and leave the reader thinking at the end. Sometimes the writer will do this by repeating words or phrases, like Sandra Cisneros did in <i>Eleven</i>. • I think that the repetition in Sandra Cisneros’s writing in this piece is to tie together Rachel’s thoughts in the beginning and the end of the story.
4) Write your answer using text evidence to support your thoughts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now I need to put all of my thoughts into writing. I’m going to start by explaining how the author starts and finishes the story in her style: The author starts and finishes the story by having Rachel count backwards as a way to connect the beginning and the end of the story together. It is part of her writing style to repeat these phrases, which also connect to the message of the story. • Next, I want to think about the connection between the first and last paragraph: When the phrase is stated in the beginning of the story, it catches your attention. As I read the story, I saw how Rachel felt embarrassed by her teacher and had moments where she felt like a little child. When the phrase is repeated at the end, the author reminds me of how Rachel felt at the beginning of the story, and ties the story together. The author’s use of this repetition is helping me as the reader develop a bigger understanding of the story. The author shows that Rachel’s feelings about another birthday are important, just as her feelings about the sweater are important. By connecting this phrase together at both the beginning and the end, the author shows that Rachel still feels this way (“When you’re eleven, you’re also ten, and nine, and eight . . .)

Extension and practice

- **Author Style Bookmark**

Students read independently and look for elements of style in their reading (see attached bookmark)

- **Appositive Activities**

Appositives are descriptive phrases, set off by commas that modify a noun or noun phrase. Using appositives helps writers create sentences that are smoother and less choppy. Have students combine 2 or more descriptive sentences and action sentences into one sentence with an appositive phrase.

- **Word Choice**

Precise word choice helps *show* the reader a story and not just *tell* a story. Have students work on improving their writing style by strengthening word choice at the word and sentence level by adding adverbs, precise verbs, and specific nouns.

What next?

For additional practice, with students or for students' independent work, apply this learning objective and set of steps to explain how a series of chapters, scenes, or stanzas fits together to provide the overall structure of a particular story, drama, or poem.

See more examples of how to teach explain how a series of chapters, scenes, or stanzas fits together to provide the overall structure of a particular story, drama, or poem, CCSS RL5.5

Objective: In this lesson you will, you will learn how repeated words and phrases add meaning by thinking about why the author chose to repeat them.

1. Reread the first and last paragraph.
2. Analyze the phrase that is repeated.
3. Analyze the author's style by asking, "Why would the author repeat this phrase?"
4. Write your answer using text evidence to support your thoughts.

<https://ctdreamteam.learnzillion.com/lessons/1826-interpret-the-structure-of-a-poem>

<https://ctdreamteam.learnzillion.com/lessons/2011-explain-how-a-playwright-tells-a-story-by-examining-structural-elements-of-a-drama>

Question 4

Question #4	Rachel says in the story, "...Because the way you grow old is kind of like an onion or like the rings inside a tree trunk or like my little wooden dolls that fit one inside the other, each year inside the next one." Why does the author include this description to show how Rachel is feeling about turning eleven?
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Standard(s) covered:	<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.4</u> Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes.
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Example response that meets standard	Look-fors
The author includes the sentence, "Because the way you grow old is kind of like an onion or like the rings inside a tree trunk or like my little wooden dolls that fit one inside the other, each year inside the next one," because she is using figurative language to show how your life experience builds up year after year. The example of the onion shows that when you peel back a layer, you can see the many different layers underneath that make up the top layer of the onion. Without those underneath layers, you wouldn't have the whole piece of the onion. This is a metaphor for how Rachel feels in <i>Eleven</i> . That without all the years behind you, you wouldn't be the complete person that you are today.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reference to tree rings, an onion or little dolls as a metaphor for maturation: life is made up of many experiences, or layers. • An understanding of figurative language, using examples from the text • An understanding of how the author links the figurative language to the girl's experience

If students are struggling to answer the text-dependent question, use this follow-up plan for modeling and practice:

Objective	In this lesson your will learn how to interpret figurative language by analyzing how literal words can have deeper meaning.
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Prior knowledge to review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Figurative language: similes, metaphors, etc. • Review of what "literal" means <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.4</u> Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text</p>
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Steps to achieve objective	Think aloud for direct instruction
<p>1) Reread the section of the text that is in the question. Ask yourself, “What is the author literally saying in that sentence?”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When I need to look at a specific sentence straight from the text, first I always go back into the text and reread that section. I want to make sure that I have a complete understanding of what the author is saying “literally,” which means the actual words that are written, before I try to figure out what the deeper meaning is. • When I read this paragraph, I can see some literal meaning. Remember, this means the “real meaning” of the words. Also, I like to think of “literal” as flat, or one-dimensional. I see that she is talking about an onion. What do I know about an onion? Well, I know that when you peel back an onion, there are many layers, and that these layers all look different. Some are thicker than others, some are thinner. And as you get closer to the center of the onion, the layers are usually tighter and smaller. • Then she talks about the tree trunk. Again, what do I know about a tree trunk? I know that the rings on a tree trunk show the age of the tree, that each year a tree lives, it grows another ring. I also know that some of the rings are like an onion, some are thicker and some are thinner. Some are spread apart wider and some are tighter, again depending where on the trunk you are looking. • Finally, she talks about something that not everyone knows about. I have an example here that I brought in (you could also show a picture). It is a child’s toy: stackable wooden dolls. When you look inside you see that each doll is smaller than the next so that they can stack inside each other. Each doll looks the same, but they are a smaller version of each other.
<p>2) Next, ask yourself, “What is the meaning of the figurative language in relation to the character? Since the text says_____, I think it means_____ about the character.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So now that I know what the literal, or real, meanings of the words are, it is time to see if there could be a deeper meaning to these words. I know that authors are artists, and that they use their words as their art. I am wondering how Sandra Cisneros might have used these words as her art. When authors use an object as a symbol of something bigger, it is called metaphor. (A metaphor is an example of figurative language.) I am going to see if the author is using the tree rings, the onion layers, and the stackable dolls as a metaphor. • Well, first I’m going to look for a connection between all three objects that she mentioned: the onion, the tree rings and the dolls. If I look carefully, I notice that all three show <i>layers</i> that are hidden. Once it is sliced, the onion has hidden layers that appear. Once it is cut, the tree has rings that show the passage of time. And once the first doll is opened, smaller and smaller dolls are shown to be stacked inside. • So, I think she is trying to say once you open something up, or look closely inside, you can see there are more layers than you can see on the outside. So, the onion, the tree rings and the dolls are each a metaphor for a hidden layer, deep inside. So...<i>I’m thinking that the hidden layers are the ages that Rachel has deep within herself, one for each year she’s been alive. Eleven, ten, nine, eight...</i>

3) Next, link the figurative language to the author's message by using text evidence: "Because the author wrote _____ and _____, I think the bigger meaning/message is _____."

- So now that I can see *what* the metaphor is, I'm going to try to see *why* the author used it in this piece. I'm rereading the text to see if I notice anything around the original sentence. When I go back and do a close reading of that paragraph, I notice that the next sentence is a big clue: "That's how being eleven years old is."
- I think that the author is giving us a clue. She is trying to compare growing old to the objects we looked at, the onion, tree rings and dolls. When she states, "When you're eleven, you're also ten, and nine, and eight...." That is text evidence to support the metaphor of the onion layers, the tree rings and the little dolls, one inside the other. Sandra Cisneros, speaking through Rachel, is telling us that life, and growing up, is like the layers of an onion, or the rings of a tree, or like little dolls, stacked one inside the other. You're eleven, but inside of you is a layer that is ten, a layer that is nine, a layer that is eight...and even though you can't see them, they're still there, they'll always be there, a part of you.

Extension and practice

Figurative Language Artwork (Adapted from The Topic: Figurative Language, n. d.)

1. Have students select a figurative speech phrase such as, “That person is ‘as smart as a whip’”

And create a drawing that illustrates it. Provide a place for students to display their artwork, along with the phrases that accompany it.

Variation: Have students find cartoons that depict figurative language. [Directed Reading and Thinking Activity (DRTA) (Adapted from Stauffer, 1969)]

- DRTA is used to teach procedures for inferring information and justifying responses, as well as developing metacognition and monitoring comprehension. Students draw on their prior knowledge and text information to hypothesize what the text is about. Students monitor their thinking by providing rationale for their predictions. As students read the text, they either verify or change their predictions. In this way, inferential comprehension and metacognition are practiced throughout the reading process.

Steps in the DRTA process:

Before:

1. Predict – develop purposes for reading.

Possible Questions:

What do you think the story might be about?

What do you think might happen next?

Why do you think so? (Relating prior knowledge to the problem or situation)

During:

2. Read – reason while reading (metacognition).

The teacher sets amount to be read before assessment.

3. Confirm – verify predictions.

Possible Questions:

Were you right?

Has something been added to your information that rules out your prediction?

Why won't that work?

After:

4. Reevaluate – reexamine purposes for reading.

Possible Questions:

Is your idea still possible?

Do you wish to change your prediction?

What do you think will happen next?

Note: Repeat steps 2-4, stopping at predetermined points, until the story is finished.

5. Extend – refine.

Extend concepts.

Vary rates.

Gather outside references.

Redirect students' thinking to a particular portion of the story.

Add additional skill instruction, if needed.

- Figurative Language Ads (Adapted from The Topic: Figurative Language, n. d.)

1. Instruct students to create an ad for a new product that incorporates a form of figurative speech they have been studying (in the advertising text).

2. Provide an opportunity for students to share their ads with classmates.

personification overstatement paradox apostrophe image symbolism hyperbole understatement anaphora anastrophe isocolon parable oxymoron onomatopoeia analogy personification extended metaphor allegory imagery idiom verbal picture figure of speech symbol language understatement overstatement irony allusion extended simile.

What next?

For additional practice, with students or for students' independent work, apply this learning objective and set of steps to determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes.

See more examples of how to teach determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes, CCSS RL 5.4

Objective: In this lesson you will learn how to interpret figurative language by analyzing how literal words can have deeper meaning.

1. Reread the section that the sentence was in. Ask yourself, "What is the author literally saying in that sentence?"
2. Next, ask yourself, "What is the meaning of the literal descriptions/phrases as they relate to the character? Since the text says_____, I think it means_____ about the character."
3. Next, link the figurative language to the author's message by using text evidence: Because the author wrote ____ and _____, I think the bigger meaning/message is _____."

<https://ctdreamteam.learnzillion.com/lessons/628-envision-the-setting-of-a-poem>

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<https://ctdreamteam.learnzillion.com/lessons/1914-determine-the-meaning-of-words-in-a-text-to-understand-how-an-author-creates-contrast>

Question 5

Question #5	How did Rachel respond when she was forced to admit the sweater was hers? How did having to acknowledge ownership of the sweater affect her feelings about her eleventh birthday and growing older?	
Standard(s) covered:	<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.2</u> Determine the theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.	
Example response that meets standard		Look-fors
<p>At first, Rachel took the sweater because Mrs. Price, who was older and the teacher, told her to. But inside she was saying to herself, “Not mine, not mine, not mine.” As the morning went on, she was getting more and more upset about the sweater and began to push it away from herself on the desk. Mrs. Price spoke sharply to her, and Rachel tried to speak up for herself. This is when she began to cry, and show her younger self.</p> <p>The sweater incident affected her feelings about her eleventh birthday, because she began to realize that even though she was a year older on this specific day, she still had the feelings and actions of a younger child inside her. This made her reflect on the fact that as you get older, you still have younger parts of yourself.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Originally, Rachel just took the sweater and thought “not mine” in her head. • Later, Rachel tried to speak up. • The embarrassment in having to acknowledge that a ratty old sweater was hers when it wasn’t made her feel her birthday was ruined. • The character realized that elements of her younger self would always be within her.
<p>If students are struggling to answer the text-dependent question, use this follow-up plan for modeling and practice:</p>		
Objective	In this lesson you will determine the theme of a story by examining how the main character responded to challenges.	

<p>Prior knowledge to review</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Message • Summarizing of a text • How a character responds to challenges in a story as it relates to theme <p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.2 Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.3.2 Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.</p>
<p>Steps to achieve objective</p>	<p>Think aloud for direct instruction</p>
<p>1) Reread the text and highlight or underline where characters interact in words or actions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm going to start by noting the parts of the text where Rachel and Mrs. Price interact. These events are in paragraphs 6-11. It was a challenge for Rachel to interact with Mrs. Price and be forced to accept the sweater from her. Rereading this is going to help me get a better idea of Rachel as a character and of her character traits. • I'm highlighting the section where Mrs. Price finds a red sweater and Sylvia Saldivar says it's Rachel's. Mrs. Price puts the sweater on Rachel's desk. Rachel tries to say it isn't hers, "but when I open my mouth nothing comes out." When she is unable to express herself, that tells me a little about her character. Maybe it is hard for her to speak up for herself. • Rachel tries to tell Mrs. Price it isn't her sweater. "That's not, I don't, you're not . . . Not mine." Yes, I think it must be hard for her to speak up for herself, because she seems tongue-tied here. • Mrs. Price says, "'Of course it's yours...I remember you wearing it once." • Rachel doesn't fight back, maybe because Mrs. Price is older and the teacher, and because it is hard for her to speak up for herself, even though it is not her sweater. • Rachel is upset and moves the sweater away on her desk. I'm noticing that she did with her actions what she couldn't do in words: she rejected the sweater by moving it away from her. • "Rachel," Mrs. Price says. She says it like she's getting mad. "You put that sweater on right now and no more nonsense." • Rachel starts to speak up, and says, "But it's not--" and then begins to cry. So, again, I'm noticing that Rachel had difficulty expressing herself and coming to her own defense. • Then, right after lunch, Phyllis Lopez remembers the sweater is hers.

<p>2) Look at the quotations that are in the story, and ask, “What does this say about the character?”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Another way to see how Rachel responded is by looking at the different words she spoke or thought. This tells me so much about her as a character. The words a character thinks or speaks is a way for an author to reveal very important clues about the character. • Some quotations that help me understand Rachel better are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Not mine, not mine, not mine,</i>” Rachel thinks as she is forced to have the sweater at her desk. This tells me that she wants to speak up, yet holds her words inside. • “<i>That’s not, I don’t, you’re not . . . Not mine,</i>” I finally say in a little voice that was maybe me when I was four.” The fact that she says these words in a little voice tells me that she is trying to stand up for herself, it is hard for her, and it makes her feel like a small child. This tells me so much about her as a person. This tells me that she is shy, and respects authority, but also wants to be heard at some level. • “<i>But it’s not--</i>” and when she does try to fight back, she is told by Mrs. Price, “Of course it’s yours. I remember you wearing it once.” This is when she begins to cry. I think it is because she tried to stand up for herself, to <i>speak up</i> for herself, but still was not heard. “
<p>3) Consider how the text ended, in relation to the characters’ actions, thoughts and words. Ask yourself, “What is the author trying to teach me through these characters?”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After I’ve looked at the events and character quotes, I can now look at how the story ended. In <u>Eleven</u>, the problem with the sweater—and not being listened to—was very upsetting to Rachel. I could even say that it is one of those moments that stick with you for a lifetime. The way the teacher treated her, and her reactions to the event, left a mark that she will never forget. I think it will always leave her with a bad feeling about her eleventh birthday. • Now I am going to ask myself the bigger question. What is the author trying to teach me through these characters? What is the message, or lesson? For Rachel, when she woke up on her eleventh birthday, I think she assumed she would feel different, older, wiser, smarter, stronger. But when she was faced with a very upsetting situation, it was like moved backwards to feeling like her younger self, like a little girl. This was almost the opposite of what she <i>thought</i> she was going to feel. • When I stretch my thinking, I think that the author was trying to teach me that as you get older, <i>you still have all of the years that came before you inside of yourself, years that make up who you are.</i> I think that is what the author is trying to say here.

Extension and practice

- **Framed Found Poem**

Create a found poem based on Eleven. A found poem is a poem that is constructed by combining meaningful phrases from the story. It gives students an opportunity to share some of their favorite words or phrases from the story—words that create vivid pictures or express significant ideas. Their poem should reflect their interpretation of the theme or mood of the book.

- **Split Open Mind**

Have students write in a blank, open faced diagram. Draw it in half/ one side says “Rachel Before” and the other side says “Rachel After”. Students fill in the sides from the event.

- **Character Evolution Timeline**

Break the story up by quotes and have students look for character traits. How does what Rachel says explain the traits of her character?

What next?

For additional practice, with students or for students' independent work, apply this learning objective and set of steps to determine the theme of a story from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges.

See more examples of how to teach determine the theme of a story from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges, CCSS RL 5.2

Objective: In this lesson you will determine the theme of a story by examining how the main character responded to challenges.

- 1) Reread the text and highlight or underline where characters interact in words or actions.
- 2) Look at the quotations that are in the story, and ask, “What does this say about the character?”
- 3) Consider how the text ended, in relation to the characters’ actions, thoughts and words. Ask yourself, “What is the author trying to teach me through these characters?”

See the lesson video: [Determine the theme of a story by comparing and contrasting character actions](#)

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<https://ctdreamteam.learnzillion.com/lessons/631-determine-the-theme-of-a-poem>