

Sandra Cisneros Exercises

Comprehension

Complete the sentences. Use information from the reading.

1. Because Cisneros didn't like moving often, _____

_____.
2. In high school, Cisneros became more confident in her writing when _____

_____.
3. There was tension between Cisneros and her father because _____

_____.
4. At the University of Iowa Writers' Workshop, Cisneros decided _____

_____.
5. Cisneros's stories are about _____

_____.
6. At the end of *The House on Mango Street*, Esperanza plans _____

_____.
7. After reading some of his daughter's work, Cisneros's father _____

_____.

Fact or Opinion

Work with a partner. Decide if each sentence is a fact or an opinion. Then write *F* for *fact* or *O* for *opinion* in front of each sentence.

- _____ 1. It's good that Cisneros made peace with her father.
- _____ 2. As a child, Cisneros read many books.
- _____ 3. Cisneros found inspiration at the University of Iowa Writers' Workshop.
- _____ 4. Cultural pride was important in the Chicano movement.

Vocabulary

Look at these words from the reading. Put a check next to words that you know. Underline words that you don't know yet. Find the words in the reading. Try to guess their meanings.

betray
emerge

empower
feminist

inspiration
introverted

literary
touching

Match each word with its definition.

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| _____ 1. emerge | a. to give control or authority to |
| _____ 2. introverted | b. to appear |
| _____ 3. literary | c. emotionally moving |
| _____ 4. inspiration | d. related to literature |
| _____ 5. touching | e. to be disloyal to; to give away a secret |
| _____ 6. empower | f. shy |
| _____ 7. betray | g. a source of ideas |
| _____ 8. feminist | h. person who believes that men and women are equal |

Reading a Chart

A chart is a useful way to organize facts.

Important Chicano Writers

Writer	Type of writing	Other information
Luis Valdez	plays	He began El Teatro Campesino (The Farmworkers' Theater) in 1965. In 1978, he wrote <i>Zoot Suit</i> . In 1979, it became the first Chicano play on Broadway.
Denise Chávez	novels short stories plays children's books children's books	Her novel <i>Face of an Angel</i> won several awards in 1995. One of them was the American Book Award.
Rudolfo Anaya	novels	He was one of the first writers of the Chicano movement. His 1972 book, <i>Bless Me Ultima</i> , has sold more than 360,000 copies.
Gary Soto	poetry novels children's books	He has published many books of poetry. He has also won many awards. He received two grants from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Fill in the blanks. Use information from the chart.

1. _____ and _____ write books for children.
2. Rudolfo Anaya's best-known book is _____.
3. _____ wrote plays for farm workers.
4. Luis Valdez wrote a Broadway play called _____.
5. _____ won two National Endowment for the Arts grants.
6. Gary Soto writes novels and _____.
7. _____ was one of the first writers of the Chicano movement.
8. The novel _____ won the American Book Award.

In *The House on Mango Street*, Esperanza says, "One day I'll have my own house, but I won't forget who I am or where I came from."⁴

What does she mean?

Connecting Today and Yesterday

1. The Chicano movement used different art forms to show cultural pride. These art forms included writing, dance, theater, and painting. Do other ethnic groups today show cultural pride with art? If yes, which groups? How do they show pride in their culture?
2. Cisneros believes that Chicano culture values women less than men. Are women's roles valued as highly as men's in other cultures in the United States? Explain.

Group Activity

Research the Chicano movement in the United States. Bring information to class. In your group, discuss these questions.

1. Who led the Chicano movement? Were they men and women?
2. How did the movement improve job opportunities for Chicanos? For others?
3. How did the movement improve education for Chicanos? For others?

Class Discussion

1. Cisneros and her father expected different things for her life. Cisneros followed her own path. In a conflict like this one, should children follow their own ideas or their parents' ideas? Explain.
2. Cisneros writes about living in two cultures at once. Have you ever lived like this? If yes, what problems did it create?
3. Cisneros worried that she betrayed her culture. What do you think? Is it right to show others negative parts of your culture? Explain.

Reflections

1. What was the most interesting thing that you read in this lesson?
2. Can you use anything from Sandra Cisneros's story in your own life? Explain.

Adapted from *American Lives: Readings and Language Activities, Book 2* © 2005 New Readers Press, a Publishing Division of ProLiteracy. Used with permission.