

Literary Essay On "Eleven" by Sandra Cisneros Written By Jill

In my life, not everything ends up like a fairytale. I like to read books where characters are like me. They don't live fairytale lives. We have the same kinds of problems. Many people read Sandra Cisneros's essay "Eleven" and think it's about a girl who has to wear a sweater she doesn't want to wear. But I think the story is about a girl who struggles to hold onto herself when she is challenged by people who have power over her.

When Rachel's teacher, Mrs. Price, challenges Rachel, Rachel loses herself. One day Mrs. Price puts a stretched out, itchy, red sweater on Rachel's desk saying "I know this is yours. I saw you wearing it once." Rachel knows that the sweater isn't hers and tries to tell Mrs. Price, but Mrs. Price doesn't believe her. Rachel reacts to Mrs. Price's actions by losing herself "In my head, I'm thinking... how long till lunch time, how long till I can take the red sweater and throw it over the school

yard fence, or leave it hanging on a parking meter, or bunch it up into a little ball and toss it over the alley?" This shows that Rachel loses herself because she's not listening to her teacher, she's dreaming about a whole other place. It is also important to see that Rachel has all this good thinking about the sweater but when she wants to say the sweater isn't hers, she squeaks and stammers, unable to speak. "But it's not" Rachel says. "Now" Mrs. Price replies. Rachel loses herself by not finding complete words to say when Mrs. Price challenges her.

When Rachel's classmates challenge Rachel, Rachel loses herself. Sylvia Saldivar puts Rachel on the spot ^{light} when she says to Mrs. Price, "I think the sweater is Rachel's." Sylvia is challenging Rachel, she is being mean and she makes Rachel feel lost, Rachel cries to let her emotions out. Rachel feels sick from Sylvia. Rachel tries to cover herself up by putting her head in her sleeve. Tears stream down her face. She doesn't feel special like it's her birthday. Instead she feels

lost in Sylvia's challenge.

In "Eleven" Rachel is overpowered by both Mrs. Price and Sylvia Saldivar and this causes her to lose herself. I used to think that when people turn eleven they feel strong and have confidence but I have learned that when you're eleven you're also 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1.