

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES
READ • LISTEN • TELL



“Never Marry a Mexican” by Sandra Cisneros

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REFLECTIVE WRITING

It is recommended that this exercise begin independently with at least 5 minutes of quiet reflection and writing, after which students may be instructed to either hand in their papers or discuss their thoughts in small groups. Optionally, each student may be asked to make a brief presentation to the class, then open the floor for a brief round of questions and/or comments related to their paper.

1. Paz asserts that “Cisneros pits her characters against mythical figures to not only allow us to question the characters themselves in relation to the myths, but to also reshuffle the conception of the myth itself” (25). Now that you are familiar with the myths which Cisneros draws upon, write a response to Paz’s assertion. In doing so, you may wish to consider the following questions: Do you think Cisneros was successful in deconstructing stereotypical perspectives on the female archetypes she referenced? Would you say your impression of Clemencia was positively or negatively affected by how Cisneros related her narrator to these archetypes? Explain.
2. The use of historical and mythical female archetypes as a socializing agent is a global phenomenon. While you may not be familiar with figures such as La Malinche and La Llorona, it is likely you know the stories behind names such as Eve and Jezebel. Take a moment to think about the most significant female role models (and cautionary tales) you’ve encountered growing up. Carefully consider how you were taught to relate to/think about these female archetypes versus how you conceive of them in the present. Are there any discrepancies? Has your perspective on them changed at all over time? Can you think of any ways in which these female archetypes have influenced either your own self-image or your understanding of women in general?