

Name: _____ Period: _____

The Family of Little Feet

(Excerpt from *The House on Mango Street*) by Sandra Cisneros

1 There was a family. All were little. Their arms were little, and their hands were little, and their height was not tall, and their feet very small.

5 The grandpa slept on the living room couch and snored through his teeth. His feet were fat and doughy like thick tamales, and these he powdered and stuffed into white socks and brown leather shoes.

10 The grandma's feet were lovely as pink pearls and dressed in velvety high heels that made her walk with a wooble, but she wore them anyway because they were pretty.

 The baby's feet had ten tiny toes, pale and see-through like a salamander's, and these he popped into his mouth whenever he was hungry.

15 The mother's feet, plump and polite, **descended** like white pigeons from the sea of pillow, across the linoleum roses, down down the wooden stairs, over the chalk hopscotch squares 5, 6, 7, blue sky.

20 Do you want this? And gave us a paper bag with one pair of lemon shoes and one red and one pair of dancing shoes that used to be white but were now pale blue. Here, and we said thank you and waited until she went upstairs.

25 Hurray! Today we are Cinderella because our feet fit exactly, and we laugh at Rachel's one foot with a girl's grey sock and a lady's high heel. Do you like these shoes? But the truth is it is scary to look down at your foot that is no longer yours and see attached a long long leg.

30 Everybody wants to trade. The lemon shoes for the red shoes, the red for the pair that were once white but are now pale blue for the lemon, and take them off and put them back on and keep on like this a long time until we are tired.

 The Lucy screams to take our socks off and yes, it's true. We have legs. Skinny and spotted with satin scars where scabs were picked, but legs, all our own, good to look at, and long.

35 It's Rachel who learns to walk the best all **strutted** in those magic high heels. She teaches us to cross and uncross our legs, and to run like a double-dutch rope, and how to walk down to the corner so that the shoes talk back to you with every step. Lucy, Rachel, me tee-tottering like so. Down to the corner where the men can't take their eyes off us. We must be Christmas.

40 Mr. Benny at the corner grocery puts down his important

While reading, you need to identify the key characteristics of a personal narrative:

Conflict	Point of View
Characters	Diction & Tone
Dialogue	Foreshadowing
Sensory Details	Audience Awareness
Imagery	Structure
Transitions	

cigar: Your mother know you got shoes like that? Who give you those?

Nobody.

45 They are dangerous, he says. You girls too young to be wearing shoes like that. Take them shoes off before I call the cops, but we just run.

On the avenue a boy on a homemade bicycle calls out:
Ladies, lead me to heaven.

But there is nobody around us.

50 Do you like these shoes? Rachel says yes, and Lucy says yes, and yes I say, these are the best shoes. We will never go back to wearing the other kind again. Do you like these shoes?

In front of the laundromat six girls with the same fat face pretend we are invisible. They are the cousins, Lucy says, and always jealous. We just keep strutting.

55 Across the street in front of the tavern a bum man on the stoop.

Do you like these shoes?

60 Bum man says, Yes, little girl. Your little lemon shoes are so beautiful. But come closer. I can't see very well. Come closer. Please.

You are a pretty girl, bum man continues. What's your name, pretty girl?

And Rachel says Rachel, just like that.

65 Now you know to talk to drunks is crazy and to tell them your name is worse, but who can blame her. She is young and dizzy to hear so many sweet things in one day, even if it is a bum man's whiskey words saying them.

Rachel, you are prettier than a yellow taxicab. You know that?

70 But we don't like it. We go to go, Lucy says.

If I give you a dollar will you kiss me? How about a dollar. I give you a dollar, and he looks in his pocket for wrinkled money.

We have to go right now, Lucy says taking Rachel's hand because she looks like she's thinking about that dollar.

75 Bum man is yelling something to the air but by now we are running fast and far away, our high heel shoes taking us all the way down the avenue and around the block, past the ugly cousins, past Mr. Benny's, up Mango Street, the back way, just in case.

80 We are tired of being beautiful. Lucy hides the lemon shoes and the red shoes and the shoes that used to be white but are now pale blue under the powerful bushel basket on the back porch, until one Tuesday her mother, who is very clean, throws them away. But no one complains.

