

Inside Out and Back Again  
Analysis Questions

1. Lai, the author, intentionally breaks some common writing conventions, or rules. How does Lai indicate something is dialogue rather than narration? Hint: the new “rule” that Lai uses is **always** true of all things said aloud.
  
2. In each different vignettes, or section, the narrator seems to feel like she doesn’t quite fit in to the world around her. In what ways does she seem to feel on the outside in each section. Give specific details from the text to support. (This doesn’t need to be quotes—you can also refer to specific lines and paraphrase them. Do *not* just give line numbers, however.)

The Outside

Answer:

Evidence:

Sadder Laugh

Answer:

Evidence:

Rainbow

Answer:

Evidence:

Black and White and Yellow and Red

Answer:

Evidence:

3. In “Black and White and Yellow and Red,” Lai makes interesting use of sentence structure. Look at lines 110-119, and see how they differ significantly from the rest of the section, which is more typical of the rest of the excerpt that we have. Why would Lai have used such short choppy sentences for that section only? (What effect was she trying to create?) Explain your reasoning.

Answer:

Explanation:

Comparing *The House on Mango Street* and *Inside Out and Back Again*

1. Both *The House on Mango Street* and *Inside Out and Back Again* share many similarities. Name one similarity for each category. Then use specific details from each story to show/support the similarity.

Character(s): \_\_\_\_\_

IO&BA:

HoMS:

Topic & Theme: \_\_\_\_\_

IO&BA:

HoMS:

Story Structure: \_\_\_\_\_

IO&BA:

HoMS:

2. Name at least additional/new important similarity that you see between the two stories (it can fit any category) . Again, support your answer with specific details from each story.

Similarity:

IO&BA:

HoMS:

3. One obvious difference between the two texts is that *The House on Mango Street* is written in traditional prose, whereas *Inside Out and Back Again* is written in verse. Why not write *Inside Out and Back Again* in prose? In other words, how does the verse/poetry shape the story in a potentially positive way?
4. Despite the many similarities, which of the two text excerpts do you find to be stronger, or more effective? Explain your reasoning.