

“Eleven” Discussion Prompts

Name_____ Period_____

Lines 1-13

The passage introduces the narrator and the story’s theme of what it means to pre-teen to get older.

~ How does the narrator feel about her birthday?

~How can you be different ages all at once?

~What do you know about the narrator so far?

Lines 14-16

~How is a person’s age “like an onion or like the rings inside a tree trunk”?

Lines 21-43

~Name three things that you have learned about the narrator so far?

~What does the sweater look like?

~ Reread lines 42-43. What do these lines tell you about Rachel?

Lines 44-62

This passage develops the main conflict—Rachel’s embarrassment in front of her classmates over an old sweater that her teacher says is hers.

~Why does Rachel feel sick inside?

~How does Rachel show that the sweater isn’t hers?

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~Why does Rachel feel so young?

~How do you think the conflict between Rachel and Mrs. Price will be resolved?

Lines 63-66

What impression of Mrs. Price does Rachel give the reader?

Lines 83-95

This passage concludes the story: it shows that growing up, or growing older, is complicated and often difficult.

~According to Rachel, what is the worst part of the sweater incident? Why?

~Why does Rachel say “its too late”?

~Why does Rachel wish that she were one hundred and two years old?

Reread line 83-86.

How does the first person point of view affect what you know about Sylvia and Phyllis?

Reflect on reading selection.

~How did Rachel’s description of the events on her birthday add to your understanding of what it means to grow older?
