“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. Prices 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?
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________