

Lesson 4

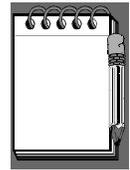
“Los Boxers”

Materials Needed:

- ▣ journal
- ✎ pen or pencil
- access to radio or television

Journal Entry

Think of a time when you encountered a talkative stranger. Describe the person, the setting and the content of the talk. Write for about ten minutes.



Vocabulary

Words to help you in your reading:

Word	Definition
Big Red	brand of soda pop
fifty-fifty shirts	shirts that are 50% cotton and 50% polyester

Narration: Fiction can be written from several points of view, including:

Point of View	Definition
1st person	a character tells the story from his or her point of view; “Blues Ain’t No Mockin’ Bird” was told in the 1 st person.
3rd person limited	the story is told from one character’s point of view.
3rd person omniscient	one speaker not involved in the story knows about all characters and events.

About the Author

Sandra Cisneros, the daughter of a Mexican father and a Mexican-American mother, was born in Chicago in 1954. She is the author of the novel, *The House on Mango Street*.

Reading Assignment: Read “Los Boxers.” Note the form of narration as you read.

Los Boxers

by Sandra Cisneros

Whoops! There goes your soda water. See. Now look. Mama, come get your little one. Watch her now, she's barefoot and could cut herself. Guess you get to mop it up, huh? I haven't dropped anything in a long time. Since I was a kid,
1 I guess. I can't remember the last time I dropped a soda water. Big Red sure is sticky, ain't it? Gets in the clothes and don't wash out, and leaves the kids' mouths painted like clowns, right? She sure is pretty. You betcha. But oh kids, they's cute when they're little, but by the time they start turning ugly, it's too late, you already love them.

Got to watch not to buy them soda water in a glass bottle next time. Specially
2 not Big Red. But that's the one they keep asking for the most, right? You betcha you can have my basket. My stuff ain't ready yet.

When my wife died I used to go to a place over on Calaveras way bigger than this. This ain't nothing. That place had twice as many machines. And they had
3 dryers that was fifteen minutes for a quarter, so you didn't have to waste an extra quarter for say polyester that dries real quick. There was only two of them, though - you had to be sharp and grab 'em soon as they was free.

Here everything's thirty minutes for fifty cents. 'Spensive when you got to keep dropping quarters and quarters and
4 quarters. Sometimes if you're lucky you could maybe get a machine that's got time on it, see. Throw in the light stuff that dries like that. Socks, washcloths, the fifty-fifty shirts maybe so they don't get wrinkled, right?

My jeans could use more than thirty

minutes, though. Thirty minutes ain't enough, but I'd rather take them home damp and hang them on the windowsill before I drop in another fifty cents. It's 'cause I dry them on low, see. Before I used to dry them on high, and they'd
5 always fit me tight later on. Lady at the K mart said, You gotta dry your jeans on low, otherwise they shrink on you. She's right. I always set them on low now, see even though it takes longer and they're still damp after thirty minutes. Least they fit right. I learned that much.

You know what else? When you wash, it ain't enough to separate the clothes by temperature. You need to separate them by weight. Towels with towels. Jeans with jeans. Sheets with sheets. And always
6 make sure you use plenty of water. That's the secret. Even if it's just a few things in the machine. Lots of water, got it? So's the clothes all wash better and don't take any wear and tear, see, and last longer. That's another trick I picked up too.

Make sure you don't let those clothes sit in that dryer now. You're welcome.
7 Gotta keep on top of them, right? Soon as they stop spinning, get 'em out of there. Otherwise it just means more work later.

My T-shirts get wrinkled even if I dry them fifteen minutes hot or cold. That's T-shirts for you. Always get a little wrinkled one way or another. They's funny, T-shirts.

You know how to keep a stain from setting? Guess. Ice cube. Yup. My wife taught me that one. I used to think she was crazy. Anytime I spilled something on the
9 tablecloth, off she'd go running to the ice box. Spot my shirts with *mole*, ice cube. Stain a towel with blood, ice cube. Kick over a beer on the living-room rug, you got it, ice cube.

Oh boy, she was clean. Everything in the house looked new even though it was old. Towels, sheets, embroidered
10 pillowcases, and them little table runners like doilies, them you put on chairs for your head, those, she had them white and stiff

like the collar of a nun. You betcha. Starched and ironed everything. My socks, my T-shirts. Even ironed *los* boxers. Yup, drove me crazy with her ice cubes. But now that she's dead, well, that's just how life is.

Reading Comprehension

1. What is the setting for this story? Where and when does it take place?

2. Who is the speaker? Describe the person.

3. What secrets has the speaker learned about washing clothes? Give specific details from the story.

4. What do you learn about the wife of the speaker? Describe her.

5. What do you learn about the people listening to the speaker?

6. What is the reason for the title of the story?

Reader Response

The plot of “*Los Boxers*” makes it unusual among the short stories in this unit. As you learned in **Lesson 2**, the plot of a story is the sequence of events, usually including an exposition (explanation of the setting and characters), events leading up to a crisis (the high point of the story), and events leading to a conclusion. Review this short story and write about the plot.

Story Outline

Title	
Author	
Setting	
Point of View	
Characters	
Plot	
Theme	

Thinking about Radio and Television Messages

Take a break from your short story reading to consider what you hear on radio and television. **Advertising** is one of the major factors for the success of any company. The advertisement should bring the awareness for the product or the service by attracting the attention of the reader. It should provide information regarding the use of the product and be so effective that the product should stick in the memory of the reader. The advertisement should gain the confidence of the consumer, but should avoid bold, misleading claims. Some ad writers say, “Make it simple; make it fun; make it memorable; make it appealing to the eye.”

1. Select one advertisement from either television or radio for a product, one you might consider buying.

a. Product or service advertised: _____

b. Was the ad clear or were you left with questions? If questions, what questions?

c. What reasons did the ad give for you to use their product or service?

d. Was the ad honest and fair? If your answer is no, why not?

e. Was the ad persuasive? Do you wish to do as the advertiser suggests? Why or why not? How would you change the ad?

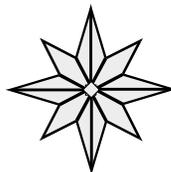
The Structure of a News Story

The structure of a **news story** is simple: a lead and the body. A news story should start with an appealing *lead*. The lead must *hook* the reader, and should include as many as possible of the 5 Ws of journalism (who, what, where, why, when). Good news stories have short paragraphs. The body of the story should have factual data of the account, and not the writer's opinion. A narrative helps the story flow. Photos help engage the reader, but are not necessary. Remember the basics: be accurate, be thorough, and be done.

2. Now find a news story or other informative message on radio or television.
- a. Topic of informative story: _____
 - b. Source of story: _____
 - c. Summarize the information given.

- d. Was the information complete? Do you have questions? If yes, list them.
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- e. Was the message honest and fair? If not, how do you think the message was slanted?
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End of Lesson 4