

Name: _____

Class: _____

Twister Hits Houston

By Sandra Cisneros
1987

Sandra Cisneros is a Mexican-American author who writes for young adults. A cyclone is a storm that forms over water with strong winds that go in a circle. This storm can form a twister, or tornado, that hits land and can cause a lot of damage to homes and properties. In this poem, the speaker shares their family's experience during a twister. As you read, take notes on where the characters are during the storm.

- [1] Papa was on the front porch.
Mama was in the kitchen.
Mama was trying
to screw a light bulb into a fixture.¹
- [5] Papa was watching the rain.
Mama, it's a cyclone for sure,
he shouted to his wife in the kitchen.
Papa who was sitting on his front porch
when the storm hit
- [10] said the twister ripped
the big black oak to splinter,²
tossed a green sedan³ into his garden,
and banged the back door
like a mad cat wanting in.
- [15] Mama who was in the kitchen
said Papa saw everything,
the big oak ripped to kindling,⁴
the green sedan land out back,
the back door slam and slam.
- [20] I missed it.
Mama was in the kitchen Papa explained.
Papa was sitting on the front porch.
The light bulb is still sitting
where I left it. Don't matter now.
- [25] Got no electricity anyway.



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1. the hole where a light bulb fits in
2. **Splinter (noun)** a small, sharp piece of wood that is broken off from a larger piece
3. a four-door car
4. dry material that sets on fire

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Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. What is the theme of the poem?
 - A. People can experience the same event differently.
 - B. Adults should include kids in important chores.
 - C. There is little to do when the electricity is off.
 - D. It is best to stay inside when it is storming.

2. The author repeats that Papa is sitting on the front porch to show that —
 - A. he is afraid of the many cats they have.
 - B. he does not like to be inside fixing things.
 - C. he sees exactly what happens during the storm.
 - D. he wants to rest after working all day in his garden.

3. What does this phrase mean as it is used in the poem?

"and banged the back door / like a mad cat wanting in." (Lines 13-14)

- A. The back door was open.
 - B. The speaker's cat was locked out.
 - C. The twister was inside of the house.
 - D. The winds from the storm were strong.

4. Why is the speaker's experience of the storm different from Mama and Papa's?

Name _____

Word Study

Suffixes *-able, -ible*

A suffix is added to the end of a base word. A suffix changes a word's part of speech. For example, the suffix *-able* changes a verb (*wash*) into an adjective (*washable*). The suffixes *-able* and *-ible* both mean "can be done."

My TURN Read the base word and its definition. Then, read each word with the suffix. Finally, use what you learned about suffixes to determine each word's meaning.

Base Word and Meaning	Word with Suffix
<i>justify</i> (verb) to prove to be right	<i>justifiable</i> (adjective) can be proven to be right
<i>digest</i> (verb) to break down food into absorbable form	<i>digestible</i> (adjective) _____ _____
<i>allow</i> (verb) to permit or make a possibility	<i>allowable</i> (adjective) _____ _____
<i>reduce</i> (verb) to decrease in size	<i>reducible</i> (adjective) _____ _____

High-Frequency Words

High-frequency words are words that you see often in texts.

TURN and TALK With a partner, read the high-frequency words aloud. Then take turns using each word in a sentence: *touch, practice, business, whose, yourself, woman*.