

Real Women Have Curves - First Impressions

Pre-Show Activity for Grades 6-12

Goals

- Students will analyze character descriptions from *Real Women Have Curves*.
- Students will identify personal connections and points of interest within these characters.
- Students will engage in [Artful Thinking](#) routines to deepen perspective-taking.
- Students will demonstrate their understanding through multiple means of expression.

NOTE: This activity has been aligned with TEKS and [Universal Design for Learning](#). TEKS can be found at the end of this document.

Materials Needed

- Character descriptions from Alley Re-Sourced (printable handout included)
- Pencils or pens
- Optional: digital tools for audio-visual presentation options

Introduction- Meet the Characters

- Using Alley Re-Sourced, begin with a brief overview of *Real Women Have Curves*, including the time period and setting.
- Review the cast of characters and what information students can find in the “Who’s Who” section.
 - On the “Who’s Who” section of the Re-Sourced guide, we can see a picture of the actor, the character(s) they play, basic traits of that character, and a summary of what’s going on with them in world of the play.
- Offer multiple ways to access this information: review the material digitally, provide printed copies, read aloud descriptions or have students review the information in pairs.
- Encourage students to choose one character to focus on.

Same, Different, Connect, Engage

- This activity allows students to explore the characters in the show. Using the character descriptions and inferences students make, have students answer the following questions.
- Read the character description and discuss the traits and circumstances connected to the character.
 - **Same**- What traits, experiences, or qualities do you and this person share?
 - **Different**- What important differences do you notice between you and this person?
 - **Connect**- How do the values or tensions in this character’s life connect to how you think about your own life?
 - **Engage**- What would like to ask, say, or do with the person if you had the chance?

Creating a Response

Students may respond in a way that matches their strengths and preferences:

- **Write**: A journal entry, poem, or short script excerpt.

- **Visualize:** A sketch, storyboard, collage, or symbolic representation.
- **Perform:** A pose, tableau, mime, or short scene.
- **Record/Produce:** An audio podcast reflection, video response, or digital graphic.

Encourage students to capture how they see themselves in relation to the character through similarities, differences, and points of connection.

Sharing and Feedback

Offer varied ways for students to share:

- Pair-share or small group discussion.
- Gallery walk (physical or digital wall of responses).
- Anonymous posting (teacher reads aloud or shares highlights).
- Whole-class presentations (optional, not required).

Conclude with a reflection using **Connect-Extend-Challenge:**

- How did you connect with this character?
- How did this activity extend your thinking about them or about yourself?
- What challenged or surprised you?

Students can reflect through a quick-write, sketch-note, pair-share, or digital submission.

TEKS

Fine Arts- Theatre, Middle School 6-8

- Level 1- 2(B) imagine and clearly describe characters, their relationships, and their surroundings
- Level 2- 2(B) define characters by what they do, what they say, and what others say about them
- Level 3- 1(A) evaluate characterization using emotional and sensory recall

High School Levels I-IV

- Level I- 1(E) analyze characters by describing attributes such as physical, intellectual, emotional, and social dimensions through reading scripts of published plays;
- Level II- 3 (C) analyze characters, themes, duties, and elements of a script to determine artistic roles and technical assignments;
- Levels III-IV- 2(C) analyze and interpret characters from various genres and styles, describing physical, intellectual, emotional, and social dimensions;
- English Language Arts and Reading, Middle School 6-8
- 5(E): make connections to personal experiences, ideas in other texts, and society;

English Language Arts and Reading, High School- English I-IV

- English I- 6(B) analyze how authors develop complex yet believable characters in works of fiction through a range of literary devices, including character foils
- English II- 6(B) analyze how authors develop complex yet believable characters, including archetypes, through historical and cultural settings and events
- English III- 6(B) analyze how characters' behaviors and underlying motivations contribute to moral dilemmas that influence the plot and theme;
- English IV- 6(B) analyze how characters' behaviors and underlying motivations contribute to moral dilemmas that influence the plot and theme;

Who's Who: The Cast and Character Descriptions of Alley Theatre's *Real Women Have Curves*



Brenda Palestina
Ana

ANA – Recent high school graduate, feminist, aspiring writer, hates being underestimated, hides her journal behind the toilet. She's outspoken and idealistic, frustrated by her family's expectations but determined to shape her own future.

Key Traits:

- Smart
- Bold
- Independent

"I'm keeping a journal so when I become 'rich and famous' I can write my autobiography."



Angela Lanza
Carmen

CARMEN – Ana and Estela's mother, dramatic and opinionated, loves mole and gossip, fears aging and losing her identity. She's tough on her daughters but deeply loves them, struggling to balance tradition with change.

Key Traits:

- Funny
- Proud
- Maternal

"It's because I love you that I make your life so miserable."



Melinna Bobadilla
Estela

ESTELLA – Owner of the sewing factory, Ana's older sister, practical and stressed, secretly romantic, has a criminal record for stealing a lobster. She's overwhelmed by financial pressure but dreams of designing clothes and proving she's more than her mistakes.

Key Traits:

- Hardworking
- Ambitious
- Secretly tender

"I was arrested for illegal possession of... a lobster. Out of season!"



Xochitl Romero

Pancha

PANCHÁ – Mellow but sharp-tongued, struggles with infertility, loves snacks and sarcasm, doesn't trust easily. She's skeptical of Ana's ideas but slowly opens up, revealing her vulnerability and loyalty.

Key Traits:

- Witty
- Guarded
- Loyal

“Wind, that's what I am... Empty, like an old rag.”



Sophia Marcelle

Rosalí

ROSALÍ – Sweet and soft-spoken, obsessed with dieting, faints from heat and hunger, secretly takes diet pills. She wants to be accepted and seen as beautiful, but learns to value herself beyond appearances.

Key Traits:

- Kind
- Insecure
- Hopeful

“This is more important to me than being a size seven.”