

Name: _____ Date: _____

Close-Reading Questions

"Thirteen and a Half"

1. What does the narrator mean? (interpreting text, page 23)
2. Look for other places where the narrator shrugs. What do these shrugs reveal about her? (character, page 23)
3. What is the narrator's attitude about Ashley's house? What is her attitude about her own house? (tone, page 25)
4. Why is Ashley so into the idea that Sweet Pea is a budgie? (Budgies and parakeets are actually the same thing.) (inference, page 25)

5. Compare the feelings about growing up that Ashley expresses here with those she expresses earlier in the story. (theme, page 25)

6. What emotions are the two girls feeling in this moment? Explain. (inference, page 26)

7. Has Ashley changed over the course of her half-birthday? Explain. (theme, page 26)

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Critical-Thinking Questions

"Thirteen and a Half"

1. Describe the personalities of the two main characters—the narrator and Ashley. Support your ideas with details from the text.
2. Describe the point of view from which the story is told—that is, who is telling the story? Do you think the portrayal of Ashley can be trusted?
3. Do you think Ashley's mom was right to hide the parakeets' deaths from Ashley? Explain.
4. Do you think the narrator and Ashley will become friends?