

**Title:** *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter*

**Author:** Erika L. Sánchez

**Genre:** Young Adult - Race & Ethnicity

**Respondent's Name and Grade:** Zahra V., 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

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**Questions:**

1. *What is the main plot of this book?*

The main plot of this book follows a soon to be 15 year old Mexican girl named Julia, who is the opposite of her parents' favorite child Olga, who sadly passed away. To try to win her parents' love, Julia agrees to have a quinceañera, which Ama begged her to have, since she felt guilty for Olga not having one. Julia also finds shocking information about Olga's life, while later finding a sweet and wealthy boy named Conner to escape from her troubles and share happiness.

2. *Which character did you most identify with and why?*

I mostly identified with Julia because I understand how terrible she must feel that her parents are against her and why she is taking the blame for her own sister's death. I connected to her, and realized the struggles many Mexican-Americans have to face as they are often pushed aside and cannot speak out about their experiences.

3. *What do you believe is the main message of this book?*

I believe the main message of this book is that even in dark times, you will always be able to find happiness and light. To elaborate, even when Julia was at her lowest points, she persevered through it, and was eventually able to find an escape from her dark home life. In the end, she was able to move to Chicago for college and finally became happy with her new boyfriend Conner.

4. *Do you think the main message of this book was effectively integrated into the story, or did it come across as too "preachy"?*

I think the main message of this book was effectively integrated into the story. I believe this because throughout the entire novel, we are following the hard and strugglesome life of Julia, and are able to see in different chapters how the main message comes into play. While the messages may not have been clear in the beginning, as the story progressed it became clear, especially in the end.

5. *If two or more perspectives on an important topic were explored/presented in this book, which one did you agree with and why?*

The two perspectives in this book were that Julia could either not be invasive and look at Olga's past and life, or she could have seen what her sister was going through and what she was really like. I agree with the second, and the reason is because Julia would not have had closure if she didn't dig deeper into her sister's life before she died. She was able to find out sad truths such as that Olga was pregnant when she passed. Along with great things Olga had in her life, for example her relationships with her best friend and boyfriend.

6. *In what ways (if any) were your beliefs about a topic changed or reaffirmed through reading this book?*

My belief that most immigrants' lives are easy because they have a fresh start was changed when I read this book. I was able to see that even though people like Julia's

family moved to a new home, their past lives still haunted them and they were treated differently when they came to America. Julia's parents wanted her to have new opportunities unlike the experiences they had, and they wanted her to live peacefully. This is similar to many immigrants because while they may have struggled in their home country, they want a new and changed future in their new homes.

7. *What perspective, if any, do you think was missing from this book?*

I think that a missing perspective from this book is Olga's point of view when she was still alive. I think this because if Olga was still alive she would have been able to help her sister through rough times and prepare her more for when she was on her own. Also, I feel that it would have added a depth to the story, because Julia's sister was much different to the way she perceived her, and it would have been a bigger shock.

8. *Did this book encourage you to pursue any topics further through more reading, research, action, etc., and if so, how?*

This book encourages me to do more research on Mexican-American immigrants, and see how their lives have changed since they have come to America. I think it would be eye opening to see how far some families have come and how their lives have changed since immigrating to America.

9. *What type of reader (based on age, interests, perspectives, etc.) would you suggest this book to?*

I would suggest this book to older teens or young adults because it comes across mature and sensitive topics such as suicide, abuse, and depression. I would also recommend this to readers who are interested in culture, since you are able to see the background of Mexican heritage and culture.

10. *What other book(s) have you read that you think would make a good addition to this category of the Perspectives Bibliography, and why?*

Another book I have read that would make a good addition to this category is the novel *You Sound Like a White Girl* by Julissa Arce. I believe this because, like *I'm Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter*, it follows a high school Mexican-American girl named Julissa. Throughout the book, she tries to break stereotypes and prove racist Americans wrong. She also tries to show her true ethnicity and race, without being too "out of the ordinary".