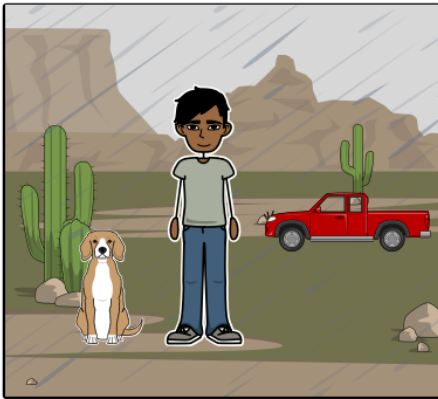

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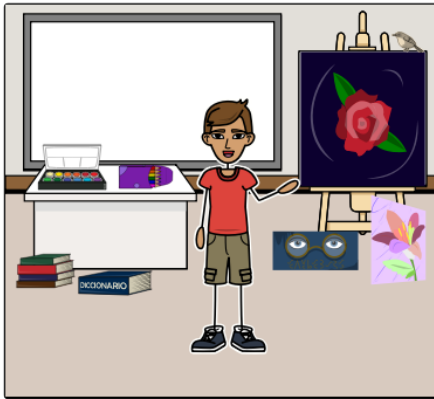
[Aristotle And Dante Discover The Secrets Of The Universe](#)

Characterization: Aristotle



Aristotle, or Ari, is a dynamic character who changes during the story. He starts as an angry teen who is questioning his identity as a Mexican-American and doesn't have any friends. Once he meets Dante he sees the world differently and through a more optimistic and thoughtful lens. Ari is round because readers see different sides of him. He can be happy and caring about his friends and family, but he can also be sad and emotional about growing up and the struggle to discover oneself.

Characterization: Dante



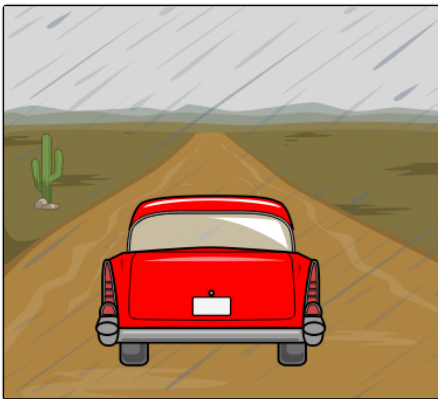
Dante is a mostly static character because throughout the story he remains a stubborn intellectual. Dante is mature and intelligent and shows compassion in everything he does. He has a good relationship with his parents and has confidence in himself. Dante is round because readers can see that he feels many emotions. He is kind and loving to his parents and friends but he also feels sadness for things like the dying bird that almost got him killed.

Theme



The theme is that it is important to be yourself and that pain and confusion are also parts of growing up. Aristotle and Dante don't realize that growing up isn't always as easy as it seems and they try to be things that they aren't which only brings them pain. Once they understand who they are and accept it, their previous pain is resolved and they realize that being themselves is the best thing they can do.

Imagery: "I looked out the window at the black clouds ahead of us. I opened the back window and smelled the rain. You could smell the rain in the desert even before a drop fell" (293).



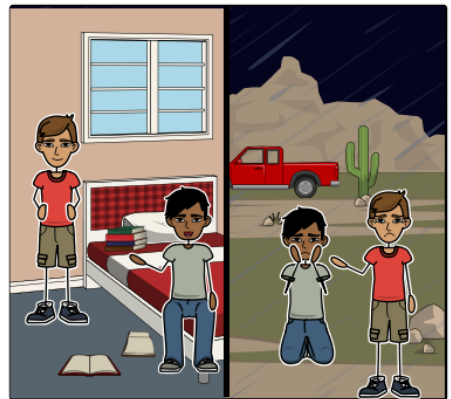
Sáenz uses imagery in this scene to describe the storm and make the setting feel more realistic for the readers. By appealing to the senses, Sáenz is able to create a picture in the reader's mind of the rain in the desert that immerses the reader into the story.

Symbol: "Something happened inside me as I looked out into the vast universe. Through that telescope, the world was closer and larger than I'd ever imagined... It made me aware that there was something inside of me that mattered" (42).



Looking at the stars and the universe in general symbolizes clarity. Throughout the story, Ari drives out into the desert to sit in his truck and look at the stars. It's a time for him to reflect and helps him clear his mind. He is also always searching for the "secrets of the universe" which are life lessons that he learns as he is growing up and help him to understand adulthood better.

Simile: "Another secret of the universe: Sometimes pain was like a storm that came out of nowhere. The clearest summer morning could end in a downpour. Could end in lightning and thunder" (261).



Sáenz uses figurative language to compare pain to a storm that comes out of nowhere. By using this comparison the reader understands that feelings aren't always predictable and sometimes pain and sadness can appear when it is least expected. This shows how even good days can quickly be turned into bad ones when pain is present.

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