



In *Bruja*, Wendy C. Ortiz deftly navigates the land of dreams in what she calls a dreamoir. By telling us her dreams, by revealing her most unguarded and vulnerable self, Ortiz is, truly, offering readers the most intimate parts of herself—how she loves, how she wants, how she lives, who she is. *Bruja* is not just a book—it is an enigma and a wonder and utterly entrancing.”

—ROXANE GAY, author of *Bad Feminist*

TEACHING GUIDE

BRUJA

by Wendy C. Ortiz

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Recommended Classes:

- Creative Writing
- Hybrid Forms
- Creative Nonfiction & Memoir
- Experimental Writing
- Feminist Literature
- Gender Studies / Women's Studies
- Psychology
- Xicanx & Latinx Studies

Keywords:

Dreamoir / Experimental / Memoir / Autobiography /
Diary / Hybrid / Fiction / Psychology / Dreams / Literary
/ Xicanx / Latinx / Sexuality / Gender / Family /
Unconscious / Psychoanalysis

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. *Bruja* is described as a "dreamoir" or a "memoir in dreams." How is a memoir of dreams a memoir? How is it fiction?
2. What is the relationship between the narrator and the dreamer?
3. What do one's dreams tell us about their life? What does one's life tell us about their dreams?
4. With what lenses does the text explore the narrator's identity? What can be learned or gleaned from grappling with a writer's dreams versus the writer "in real life"?
5. What are some possible cultural influences on the author's dream life? Why might these be significant?

6. Carl Jung and other psychologists have written extensively about dreams. How might you apply dream theories and dream interpretations to a literary text?

7. How are stories and myths structured similarly or differently from dreams?

8. On the title, the author writes, "A bruja to me is one who can, among other things, live on other planes than just the one we think we know and refer to as reality." What is the relationship between the book and title for you? How does the book live on other planes? How does this relate to literature?

9. As a series of dreams and with your own possible urges or desires running parallel, how does the book feel like an interactive text? What else are you doing as a reader besides just reading the words?

10. What is the role of symbols in the text?

Possible Assignments:

- Devote a month to transcribing dreams and editing them into a zine. Take special note of your editing process.
- Apply a dream analysis technique to a story or poem you have already written.