Roma (2018)
Comprehension Questions
SPAN 325: Hispanic Cinema

Before Viewing
1. Where is the film set? What does the reading imply regarding the director's objective with the film?
    a. Roma, a neighborhood in Mexico City. Clean water and dirty water. Celebrates coming together.
2. How has the film been formally recognized for its artistic merit to Mexican cinema?
    a. Won awards.

Film Questions
1. How does the film open with the opening credits? What type of images can you observe? How does the audio contribute to this and what does this make you contemplate?
    a. Clean and dirty water. Could be seen as coming together.
2. Who is the protagonist and what does she do for a living? Where is the film set and when does the context of the film take place?
    a. Cleo, a maid in Mexico City. Works for a well off family. It's set in Mexico City. Set in the 1970s.
3. How are minority languages and cultures represented in this film? Name two specific examples or scenes that exemplify these concepts and intercultural dialog with the dominant culture(s) seen..
    a. Cleo and the other maid speak Mixtec to each other, but Spanish (the prominent language) to the family. Spanish is the dominant language and mixteco is an indigenous dialect. It's seen as inferior. At the end the children say they should visit Cleo's village. They don't speak in front of the mom because they'll likely get in trouble.
4. What does the film portray about socioeconomic class in Mexico? How is this visually represented in terms of race-ethnicity?

a. Even though the family loves Cleo, there's still a line separating them because Cleo is still a maid. The servants are excluded from the main property.

5. Why does Cleo mention "I like being dead" what does figuratively mean?
   a. Her "being dead" is just her not doing anything and resting up. It's a privilege. To just rest and be still while not having to do anything.

6. Who is Fermin? What is he passionate about and what cultural products does he consume? What does this sport mean to him?
   a. He was the ex/boyfriend of Cleo as well as the father of her child. He likes mixed martial arts. Bit of a narcissist. Hyper masculine.

7. How are gender roles represented in this film? What examples and/ or scenes can you identify that depict cultural beliefs and behaviors,, such as machismo.
   a. The men don't take accountability. The boys attack each other by calling them girls because they're seen as less than the other gender. Girls have their voice silenced.

8. Comment on the role of nursery rhymes/ childrens' games. When do these nursery rhymes and games appear? How can these depictions be interpreted?

9. What natural disasters are observed throughout this film? What do these events represent symbolically for the community involved?
   a. Earthquake. Even though it'll impact everyone, not everyone will be affected the same. Some people can be fine as they can financially fix what got destroyed, but the rest suffer a lot more due to that.

10. Who is Professor Zovek and what does he do for the community?
    a. Professional wrestler. They're looking for leadership.

11. What event takes place when Cleo goes into labor? What is the outcome of her newborn's health?
    a. Cleo had a stillbirth. A fight breaks out between the students and the Los Halcones.

12. What happens in the ocean with the two siblings and what role does Cleo play in the film?
    a. Two of the children get swept away and Cleo goes out to rescue them. Cleo was still their caretaker.

13. What is the director's intent with focusing on the role of the maid within Hispanic culture? What observations can be made regarding the interactions
    a. To show what is happening through a different perspective. They're the ones doing everything in comparison to the parents when it comes to raising their children.
14. Why is the film shot entirely in black and white cinematography? What is the director's aesthetic intent by using this technique?
    a. For nostalgia, or just a general technique to look back into his past.