

Questions for *Names/Nombres* by Julia Alvarez

1) Why does Julia's mother quote Shakespeare and say, 'A rose by any other name would smell as sweet?'

Why doesn't Julia's mother encourage her to correct others when they say her name incorrectly?

Can you remember a time when someone said your name incorrectly? Did you correct them? Why or why not?

2) Julia says, "I was Hoo-lee-tah only to Mami and Papi and uncles and aunts who came over to eat sancoco on Sunday afternoons...."

Why is it only Julia's family who pronounces her name correctly?

Does your family call you by a different name or a different pronunciation than others do? Explain.

3) Julia's friends have nicknames for her. "Friends called me Jules or Hey Jude and once a group of troublemaking friends my mother forbade me to hang out with called me Alcatraz." Does she like the nicknames her friends call her? Why or why not?

Have you ever had a nickname given to you by your friends? Did you like the name? Why or why not?

4) Julia shares the story of her mother telling the women in the hospital the story of her sister's name. "Her mother-in-law had recently died, she apologized, and her husband had insisted that the first daughter be named after his mother, Mauran. My mother thought it the ugliest name she had ever heard, and she talked my father into what she believed was an improvement, a combination of Mauran and her own mother's name, Felicia. 'Her name is Mao-ree-shee-ah,' my mother said to the group."

Why does Julia include the story of her sister's naming in the short story about her own name?

Is there a story behind how you got your name?

