KEMENTERIAN PENDIDIKAN MALAYSIA

PROGRAM PENSISWAZAHAN GURU (PPG)

MOD PENDIDIKAN JARAK JAUH

IJAZAH SARJANA MUDA PERGURUAN DENGAN KEPUJIAN

MODUL LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

TSL3023

BAHASA INGGERIS MAJOR

INSTITUT PENDIDIKAN GURU
KEMENTERIAN PENDIDIKAN MALAYSIA
ARAS 1, ENTERPRISE BUILDING 3,
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MODUL INI DIEDARKAN UNTUK KEGUNAAN PELAJAR-PELAJAR YANG BERDAFTAR DENGAN INSTITUT PENDIDIKAN GURU, KEMENTERIAN PENDIDIKAN MALAYSIA BAGI MENGIKUTI PROGRAM PENSISWAZAHAN GURU (PPG) SEKOLAH RENDAH IJAZAH SARJANA MUDA PERGURUAN DENGAN KEPUJIAN.

MODUL INI HANYA DIGUNAKAN SEBAGAI BAHAN PENGAJARAN DAN PEMBELAJARAN BAGI PROGRAM-PROGRAM TERSEBUT.

Edisi September 2014
Institut Pendidikan Guru
Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia

KEMENTERIAN PENDIDIKAN MALAYSIA

Falsafah Pendidikan Kebangsaan

Pendidikan di Malaysia adalah suatu usaha berterusan ke arah memperkembangkan lagi potensi individu secara menyeluruh dan bersepadu untuk mewujudkan insan yang seimbang dan harmonis dari segi intelek, rohani, emosi, dan jasmani berdasarkan kepercayaan dan kepatuhan kepada Tuhan. Usaha ini adalah bagi melahirkan rakyat Malaysia yang berilmu pengetahuan, berketrampilan, berakhlak mulia, bertanggungjawab, dan berkeupayaan mencapai kesejahteraan diri serta memberi sumbangan terhadap keharmonian dan kemakmuran keluarga, masyarakat, dan negara.

Falsafah Pendidikan Guru

Guru yang berpekerti mulia, berpandangan progresif dan saintifik, bersedia menjunjung aspirasi negara serta menyanjung warisan kebudayaan negara, menjamin perkembangan individu, dan memelihara suatu masyarakat yang bersatu padu, demokratik, progresif, dan berdisiplin.

Edisi September 2014
Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia

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LEARNER'S GUIDE

This module has been prepared to assist you in organizing your own learning so that you may learn more effectively and resourcefully. You may be returning to study after many years from formal education or you may possibly be unfamiliar with a self-directed learning mode. This module gives you the opportunity to manage your own learning and to manage the way in which you use your resources and time effectively.

Self-directed learning requires that you make decisions about your own learning. You must recognize your own pattern and style of learning. It might be useful if you were to set your own personal study goals and standard of achievement. In this way you will be able to proceed through the course quite systematically. Asking for help when you need it, ought to be viewed as creating new opportunities for learning rather than as a sign of weakness.

The module is written in Topics. A Topic usually covers a certain number of sub-topics. How long you take to go through a Session or a topic clearly depends on your own learning style and your personal study goals. There are tasks set within a Session to help you recall what you have learnt or to make you think about what you have read. Some of these tasks will have answers and or suggested answers. For tasks that do not provide answers you might find it helpful to discuss them with someone like a colleague or a classmate. Or, make notes of your answers and take them along to the next Tutorial Session and confer with others.

Tasks that have been set for Tutorial discussion or to be handed in during Tutorial Sessions will need to be completed before the tutorial takes place. Assignments that have to be handed in must be handed in according to schedule given This will be a means for you (and your Tutor) to know how much progress you have made in your course. You should bear in mind that the process of learning that you go through is as important as any assignment you hand in or any task that you have completed. So, instead of racing through the tasks and the reading, do take time to reflect on them and learn through yhe process.

You will find that the various icons have been used to capture your attention so that at a glance you will know what you have to do. Appendix A gives you an explanation of what the icons mean.

Another important component of this course is the project for School-based Assignment for the Major courses only. This component recognizes the fact that teaching in the classroom is an important aspect of learning to become a teacher. Hence, the assignments that you do for this component will form part of the overall assessment of your performance. It is therefore important that you approach this assignment and all other coursework assignment with the right attitude. The School-based Assignment will be given in a separate document.

There is an end of course examination that you will be required to sit for. The date and time will be made known to you when you sign up for the course. The written examination is expected to take place in an examination venue to be identified later.

Here are some useful hints for you to get you going.

1. Find a quiet study corner so that you may set down your books and yourself to study. Do the same when you visit a library.

2. Set a time every day to begin and to end your study. Once you have committed a set time, keep to it! When you have finished your module, continue to read prescribed books or internet materials and resources recommended.

3. Spend as much time as you possibly can on each task without compromising your study goal

4. Revise and review what you read. Take time to recollect what you have read. Make notes if necessary.

5. Consult sources other than what have been given to you.

6. Start a filing system so that you know where you have kept that insightful article!

7. Find a friend who could help you study.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to English! Teaching English is fun. What you need is to be skilful in using the language.

Program Pensiswazahan Guru (PPG) Mod Pendidikan Jarak Jauh (PPJ) English Language (Major) for Primary Schools, is one of the major subjects offered by the Institut Pendidikan Guru Malaysia (IPGM). It is offered to English language teachers who want to upgrade and enhance themselves in teaching English as a subject. There are seven modules offered for English Language (Major) for Primary Schools.

This Module TSL3102 – Literature in English is a 3-credit hour module that will cover 45 hours. It has 5 main topics: Theories of literary criticism, critical analysis of short stories, forms of poetry, analyzing themes in short plays and novels, and are spread across five 2-hour sessions.

In Session 1, you will learn 6 theories of Literary Criticism and be able to apply these theories in criticizing a piece of literary work.

In Session 2, you will learn to criticize a collection of short stories using the 6 theories of literary criticism.

In Session 3, you will learn about the different forms of poetry, how to identify the features of each type of poem and the literary devices used in the poems.

In Session 4, you will learn to analyse themes in an Asian short play and a Malaysian short play.

In Session 5, you will be required to analyse themes in an Asian novel and a Malaysian novel.

By going through all the sessions diligently and doing the tasks given, you will be able to enhance your knowledge in Literature in English and become more skilful in reading any literary texts. Before you begin working on the content of these sessions, it is essential to do the necessary background research for more information related to each of the literary texts used for this course. This is to enhance your understanding of the knowledge of the content and ease your acquisition of the literary skills. Good luck and enjoy learning literature!

We are sure that you are intrigued to begin this module and see what Literature in English is all about. It will be interesting to refresh your memory and obtain new ideas, skills and knowledge.

There are no prescribed course books and the sessions are designed to be self-contained. However, we highly recommend that you have access to certain reference materials (both printed and online types) and dictionary. It would be useful if you have a copy of *Access Literature: an introduction to fiction, poetry and drama* by Barbara Barnard and David F. Winn.

You should read the input notes carefully. You should also do all the exercises and then check your answers against the key provided (if available). When you have checked and revised your answers, go on to do the tutorial questions. Prepare a list of questions to ask your tutor later during tutorial.

All the best! Hope you will enjoy Literature in English. Remember, **literature in English is not as scary as you think; a little imagination and a lot of reading helps!**

TOPIC 1	INTRODUCTION TO THEORIES OF LITERARY CRITICISM

SYNOPSIS

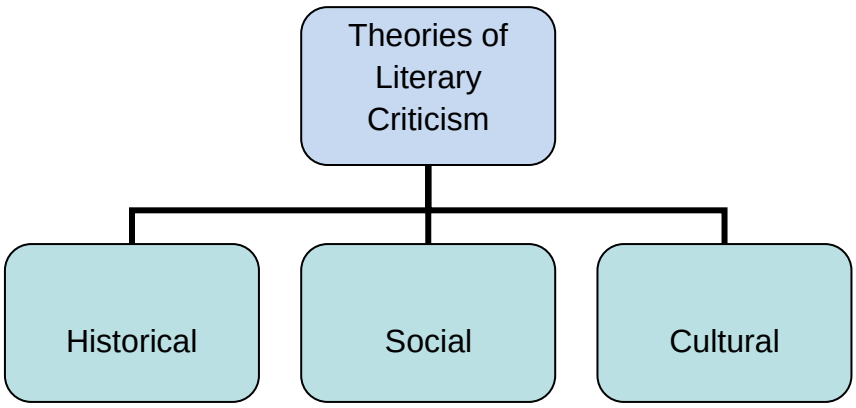
In this unit, you will learn about the various theories of literary criticism and apply these forms of criticism whilst anlysing a number of literary texts.You will also see how a text can be interpreted in many ways based on the critical theory applied and the context in which the text is read.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to

- Explain the concepts of historical, cultural and social literary criticism
- Analyse short texts based on these forms of criticism

FRAMEWORK



Literature

Before we look at the various forms of literary criticism, let us look at some views on literature.

Literature adds to reality, it does not simply describe it. It enriches the necessary competencies that daily life requires and provides; and in this respect, it irrigates the deserts that our lives have already become.

C. S. Lewis

Even in literature and art, no man who bothers about originality will ever be original: whereas if you simply try to tell the truth (without caring two pence how often it has been told before) you will, nine times out of ten, become original without ever having noticed it.

C. S. Lewis

The difference between literature and journalism is that journalism is unreadable and literature is not read.

Oscar Wilde

Literature is my Utopia. Here I am not disenfranchised. No barrier of the senses shuts me out from the sweet, gracious discourses of my book friends. They talk to me without embarrassment or awkwardness.

Helen Keller

All modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called *Huckleberry Finn*.

Ernest Hemingway

Do you agree with the views above? Which suits your view of literature best? Look up other views on literature. Collect at least 5 and add them to your portfolio.

In literature, there are many genres. Some are listed below.
The two main categories separating the different genres of literature are fiction and nonfiction.

Let's look at non-fiction first.

1 **Narrative Nonfiction** is information based on fact that is presented in a format which tells a story.
2 A **Biography** is a written account of another person's life.
3 An **Autobiography** gives the history of a person's life, written or told by that person.

Now let's look at some examples of fiction.

1 **Drama** is stories composed in verse or prose, usually for theatrical performance.
2 **Poetry** is verse and rhythmic writing with imagery that evokes an emotional response from the reader.
3 **Fantasy** is the forming of mental images with strange or other worldly settings or characters; fiction which invites suspension of reality.
4 A **Fable** is a story about supernatural or extraordinary people usually in the form of narration that demonstrates a useful truth.
5 **Fairy Tales** or wonder tales are a kind of folktale or fable. Sometimes the stories are about fairies or other magical creatures, usually for children.
6 **Science Fiction** is a story based on impact of potential science, either actual or imagined.
7 **Realistic Fiction** is a story that can actually happen and is true to real life.

8 **Folklore** are songs, stories, myths, and proverbs that were handed down by word of mouth.

9 **Historical Fiction** is a story with fictional characters and events in a historical setting.

10 **Horror** is fiction in which events evoke a feeling of dread in both the characters and the reader.

Refer to the *Oxford English Dictionary* for further definitions of different genres of literature.

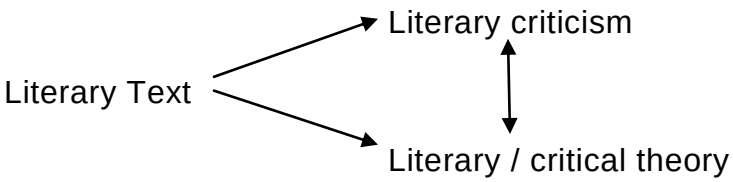
Refer to various sources to collect examples of various literary genres. Add these to your portfolio.

Compare your collection with your course-mates.

What is literary criticism?

According to Roger Webster (1996),

- Literary criticism involves reading, interpretation of and commentary on a specific text or texts which have been designated as literature.
- Literary theory provides us with a range of criteria for identifying literature and an awareness of these criteria should inform our critical practice.



Literary critics ask these questions:

- Does a text have only one correct meaning?
- Is a text always didactic?
- Can a text be read only for enjoyment?
- Does a text affect readers in the same way?
- How is a text influenced by the culture of its author and the culture in which it is written?
- Can a text become a catalyst for change in a given culture?

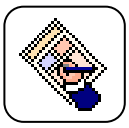
"The most valuable criticism is not that which shakes its finger at faults but that which calls our attention to interesting things going on in the work of art."

W.H. Auden:


Do you agree with Auden? Why or why not?

Compare your views with those of your friends.

Summarise what you have learnt so far in graphic form.



Some of the functions of a critic are to

- introduce us to authors we don't know
- encourage us to re-evaluate a work
- compare different works / ages / cultures
- increase our understanding of a work
- relate art to life / religion etc.

Lets look at some of the differences between layman critics and professional critics.

Layman critics read literature to	Professional critics read literature to
• kill time • enjoy fanciful visions • be amused • explore different ways of feeling • learn about self	• work from assumptions that are highly conscious • read through the lens of a particular theory • focus on particular details

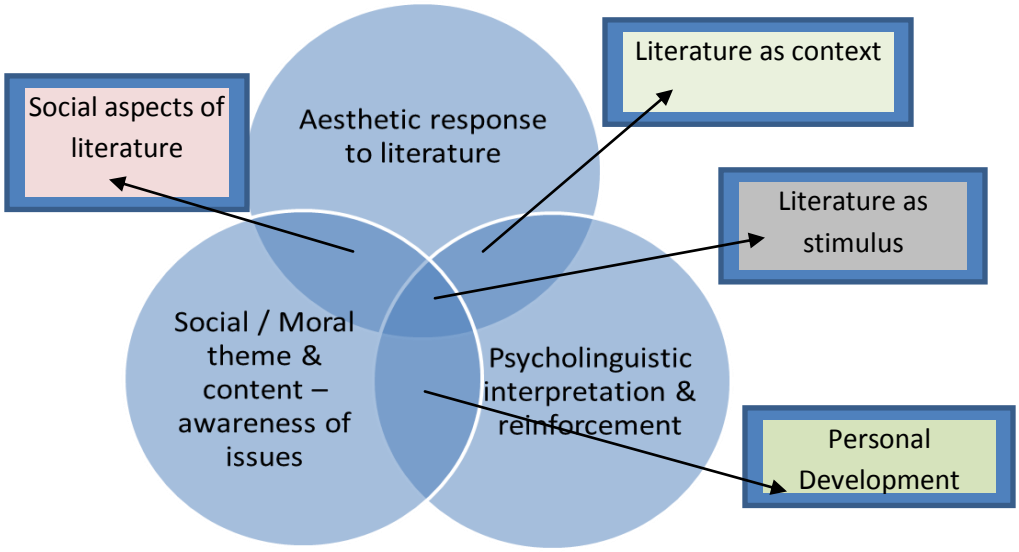
If we are reading a novel, we are more often than not, reading it as a layman. However, if we are reading it based on a particular theory, then we must be more conscious of that particular theory and focus on particular aspects and details.

Now, let us look at how we can summarize the views above

- Literary criticism is mainly concerned with interpretation (meaning) and analysis (relationship among the parts, causes & effects)
- Evaluation can be conveyed through words (successful, trivial, weak …)

Standards of truth

- Personal truth
- Realism
- Moral content
- Aesthetic qualities



Let us look at some of the theories in greater detail.

Historical Criticism

In Historical criticism,

- Studies work within historical context (e.g. attitude towards women during Austen's time, Shakespeare's world of fairies etc.)
- Belief that the writer is influenced by social context of the time (BUT we need to ask ourselves: what if the writer has a different attitude reflected in his work but it doesn't reflect his society?)

New Historicism

- No "history" – only our version / narrative of past events
- How do we view colonial rule today? Did Columbus discover America? (Stephen Greenblatt: 1982)

- Works of literature used as a basis for a criticism of a society
- Connected past and present / offered value judgement
- Consider

  "The only thing more uncertain than the future is the past."

Cultural criticism

Cultural critics want to make the term *culture* refer to popular culture as well as to that culture we associate with the so-called classics. Cultural critics are as likely to write about "Star Trek" as they are to analyze James Joyce's *Ulysses*. They want to break down the boundary between high and low, and to dismantle the hierarchy that the distinction implies. They also want to discover the (often political) reasons why a certain kind of aesthetic product is more valued than others.

The emergence and evolution of cultural studies or criticism are difficult to separate entirely from the development of Marxist thought. Marxism is, in a sense, the background of most cultural criticism, and some contemporary cultural critics consider themselves Marxist critics as well. (Johanna M. Smith & Ross C. Murfin)

The State of Literary Criticism. Roger Shattuck. Oct. 1995.
http://www.mrbauld.com/Shatuck1.html.

Approaches to Reading and Interpretation.
http://www.assumption.edu/users/ady/HHGateway/ Gateway/Approaches.html.

Now read up in Marxist theories.

http://www.subverbis.com/essays/marxistlitcrit.rtf.

Social Criticism (Marxism)

- Sees history as a struggle between socioeconomic classes and literature is a product of economic forces of the period
- Belief that literature is a material product for consumption in a particular society (comics, westerns, romantic novels …)
- Literature celebrates the values of the society it represents e.g. bourgeois values
- Marxist critic exposes the fallacy of these values and replaces them with 'Marxist Truths' – to change society
- For Marxist critics, works of literature often mirror the creator's own place in society, and they interpret most texts in relation to their relevance regarding issues of class struggle as depicted in a work of fiction
- Although Marx did not write extensively on literature, he did detail the relationship between economic determinism and the social superstructure
- Most scholars view the relationship between literary activity and the economic center of society as an interactive process

Take a break before you continue!

TOPIC 2	INTRODUCTION TO THEORIES OF LITERARY CRITICISM

SYNOPSIS

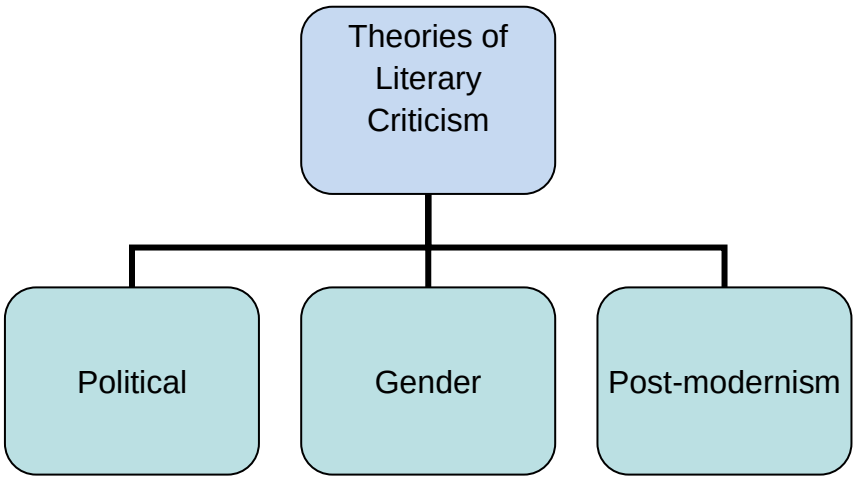
In this unit, you will learn about the various theories of literary criticism and apply these forms of criticism whilst anlysing a number of literary texts.You will also see how a text can be interpreted in many ways based on the critical theory applied and the context in which the text is read.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to

- Explain the concepts of political, gender and post-modern criticism
- Analyse short texts based on these forms of criticism

FRAMEWORK



Political criticism

New Criticism, in some sense, can become political because it makes the readers realize that meaning is not always found outside of the text, but inside. Furthermore, it forces readers' imaginativeness to expand by making them to focus and create commentaries about a little material and thus the readers become aware how much they can produce from less data. A work can be political in three different ways: culturally, formally or textually.

A literature that does not discuss political issues, gender issues, racial issues, class issues is not really about politics. Simultaneously, because it does not talk about it, it then also becomes political because it does not talk about it. Why does it not want to talk about?—because it does not want to disturb the peaceful order of the society, does not want to disturb the ruling class's power. (Dr. Rodney Sharkey)

Gender Criticism (Lesbian/Gay & Feminist)

There are two main issues

1. Do men and women read in different ways?
2. Do they write in different ways?

This critical theory grew out of the Women's Movement in 1960s where equality was an issue. Today, it explores the differences between men and women (different experiences / values / sensibilities / responses).

Feminist criticism states that men have established the literary conventions / canons etc. Men are expected to be strong / active (Jack & the Beanstalk) while women are seen as weak / passive (Cinderella). So you would

have to ask yourself the question, is “Cinderella” a tale of oppression or a romantic tale?

Gender

(as opposed to *sex* – biological differences)

- Signifies the socially constructed differences between men and women which operate in most societies and which lead to forms of inequality, oppression and exploitation between the sexes.
- Literature has arguably tended to subordinate or marginalize the position of women
- There are many facets to *feminism*
- Works of writers like Kate Chopin were banned as they presented a viewpoint not acceptable to critics then.

Feminism

To speak of "Feminism" as a theory is already a reduction. However, in terms of its theory (rather than as its reality as a historical movement in effect for some centuries) feminism might be categorized into three general groups:

- theories having an essentialist focus (including psychoanalytic and French feminism);
- theories aimed at defining or establishing a feminist literary canon or theories seeking to re-interpret and re-vision literature (and culture and history and so forth) from a less patriarchal slant (including gynocriticism, liberal feminism); and
- theories focusing on sexual difference and sexual politics (including gender studies, lesbian studies, cultural feminism, radical feminism, and socialist/materialist feminism).
- Further, women (and men) needed to consider what it meant to be a woman, to consider how much of what society has often deemed inherently female traits, are culturally and socially constructed.

- Simone de Beauvoir's study served as a groundbreaking book of feminism, that questioned the "othering" of women by western philosophy.
- Early projects in feminist theory included resurrecting women's literature that in many cases had never been considered seriously or had been erased over.
- Since the 1960s the writings of many women have been rediscovered, reconsidered, and collected in large anthologies such as *The Norton Anthology of Literature by Women.*

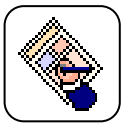
Lesbian & Gay Criticism

- Do gays/lesbians read differently from straight people?
- Do they write differently?
- How do they make their work acceptable?
- Can they portray straight people?
- Can straight people portray them?

  Some critics question sexual categorizing – see it as a historical construct rather than a biological /psychological absolute

Structuralism

- Structuralism is a way of thinking about the world which is predominantly concerned with the perceptions and description of structures.
- At its simplest, structuralism claims that the nature of every element in any given situation has no significance by itself, and in fact is determined by all the other elements involved in that situation.
- The full significance of any entity cannot be perceived unless and until it is integrated into the structure of which it forms a part
- Structuralists believe that all human activity is constructed, not natural or "essential."




Task1:

Refer to reliable internet resources and identify the key features of Historical, Cultural, Social, Political, Gender and Post-modern theories of literary criticism. Present the information in the form of a mind-map.

Task 2:

Discuss the importance of literary theory for readers.


You have completed this unit!

TOPIC 3	CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF SHORT STORIES (20th & 21st Century Fiction)

SYNOPSIS

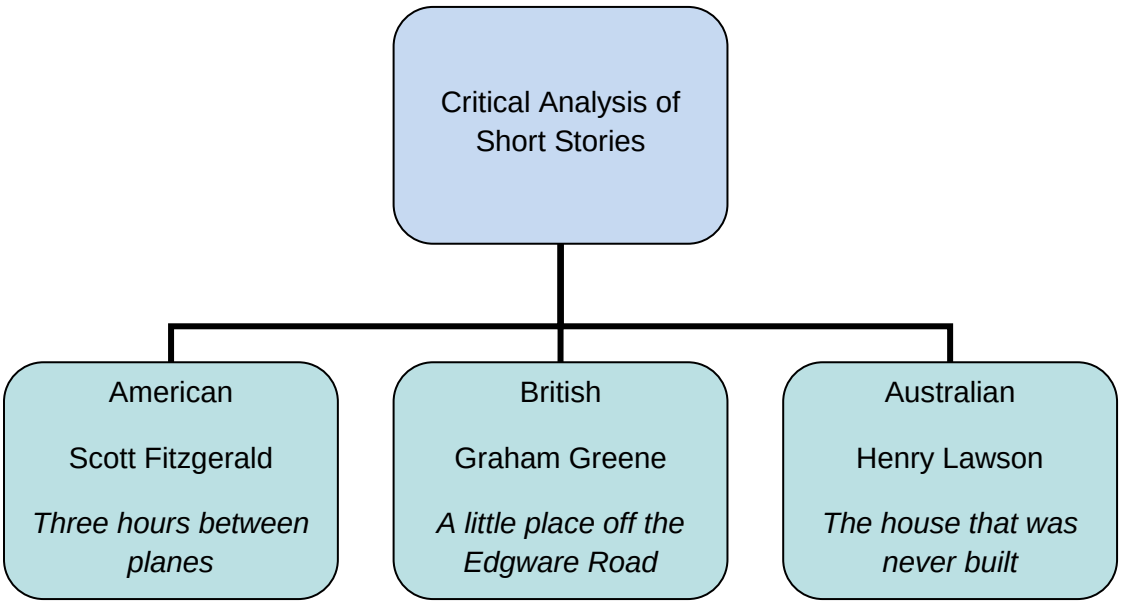
In this unit, you will read short stories written by American, British and Australia writers. You will use some of the literary criticism theories you have studied to analyse the texts. You will also have the opportunity to read other stories to make comparisons.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to

- Demonstrate an understanding of theories of literary criticism
- Analyse short stories based on various theories of literary criticism
- Analyse the differences that historical perspective, literary form and culture generate.

FRAMEWORK



You are going to read three short stories in this unit. After you have read each short story, work on the task sheet given. You will need to bring these to your tutorial session.

Read the short story below.

THREE HOURS BETWEEN PLANES (Scott Fitzgerald)

It was a wild chance but Donald was in the mood, healthy and bored, with a sense of tiresome duty done. He was now rewarding himself. Maybe.

When the plane landed he stepped out into a midwestern summer night and headed for the isolated pueblo airport, conventionalized as an old red "railway depot." He did not know whether she was alive, or living in this town, or whether that was her present name. With mounting excitement he looked through the phone book for her father who might be dead too, somewhere in these twenty years.

No. Judge Harmon Holmes – Hillside 3194.

A woman's amused voice answered his inquiry for Miss Nancy Holmes.

"Nancy is Mrs. Walter Gifford now. Who is this?"

But Donald hung up without answering. He had found out what he wanted to know and he had only three hours. He did not remember any Walter Gifford and there was another suspended moment while he scanned the phone book. She might have married out of town.

No. Walter Gifford-Hillside 1191. Blood flowed back into his fingertips.

"Hello?"

"Hello. Is Mrs. Gifford there - this is an old friend of hers."

"This is Mrs. Gifford."

He remembered, or thought that he remembered the funny magic in the voice.

"This is Donald Plant. I haven't seen you since I was twelve years old.

"Oh-h-h!" The note was utterly surprised, very polite, but he could distinguish in it neither joy nor certain recognition.

"- *Don*ald!" added the voice. This time there was something more in it than struggling memory.

". . . when did you come back to town?" Then cordially, "Where *are* you?"

"I'm out at the airport - for just a few hours."

"Well, come up and see me."

"Sure, you're not just going to bed."

"Heavens, no!" she exclaimed. "I was sitting here-having a highball by myself. Just tell your taxi man . . ."

On his way he analyzed the conversation. His words "at the airport" established that he had retained his position in the upper bourgeoisie. Her aloneness might indicate that she had matured into an unattractive woman without friends. 'Her husband might either be away or in bed. And-because she was always ten years old in his dreams-the highball shocked him. But he adjusted himself with a smile. She was almost close to thirty.

At the end of a curved drive he saw a dark-haired little beauty standing against the lighted door, a glass in her hand. Startled by her materialization, Donald got out of the cab, saying:

"Mrs. Gifford?"

She turned on the porch light and stared at him wide-eyed and tentative. A smile broke through the puzzled expression.

"Donald, it *is* you. We all change so. Oh, this is re*mark*able!"

As they walked inside, their voices jingled the words "all these years," and Donald felt a sinking in his stomach. "This derived in part from their last meeting-when she rode past him on a bicycle, cutting him dead-and from the fear that lest they have nothing to say. It was like a college reunion-but there the failure to find the past was disguised by the hurried boisterous occasion. Aghast, he realized that this might be a long and empty hour. He plunged in desperately.

"You were always a lovely person. But I'm a little shocked to find you as beautiful as you are."

It worked. The immediate recognition of their changed state, the bold complement, made them interesting strangers instead of fumbling childhood friends.

"Have a highball?" she asked. "No? Please don't think I've become a secret drinker, but tonight was a blue night. I expected my husband but he wired that he'd be two days longer. He's very nice, Donald and very attractive. Rather your type and coloring." She hesitated, "- and I think he's interested in someone in New York-and I don't know."

"After seeing you it sounds impossible," he assured her. "I was married for six years, and there was a time I tortured myself that way. Then one day I put jealousy out of my life forever. After my wife died, I was very glad of that. It left a very rich memory-nothing marred or spoiled or hard to think over."

She looked at him attentively, then sympathetically as he spoke.

"I'm very sorry," she said. And after a proper moment, "You've changed a lot. Turn you head. I remember father saying, 'That boy has a brain.'"

"You probably argued against it."

"I was impressed. Up to then I thought that everybody had a brain. That's why it sticks in my mind."

"What else sticks in your mind," he asked smiling.

Suddenly Nancy got up and walked quickly a little away.

"Ah, now," she reproached him. "That isn't fair. I suppose I was a naughty girl."

"You were not," he said stoutly. "And I *will* have a drink now."

As she poured it, her face still turned from him, he continued:

"Do you think you were the only little girl who was ever kissed?"

"Do you like the subject?" she demanded. Her momentary irritation melted and she said: "What the hell! We *did* have fun. Like in the song."

"On the sleigh ride."

"Yes - and somebody's picnic -Trudy James'. And at Frontenac that - those summers."

It was the sleigh ride he remembered the most and kissing her cool cheeks in the straw in one corner while she laughed up at the cold white stars. The couple next to them had their backs turned and he kissed her little neck and

her ears and never her lips.

"And the Macks' party where they played post office and I couldn't go because I had the mumps," he said.

“I don’t remember that.”

“Oh, you were there. And you were kissed and I was crazy with jealousy like I never have been since.”

"Funny, I don't remember. Maybe I wanted to forget."

"But why?" he asked in amusement. "We were two perfectly innocent kids. Nancy, whenever I talked to my wife about the past, I told her you were the girl I loved *al*most as much as I loved her. But I think I loved you just as much. When we moved out of town I carried you like a cannonball in my insides."

"Were you *that* much stirred up?"

"My God, yes! I - " He suddenly realized that they were standing just two feet from each other, and he was talking as if he loved her in the present, that she was looking up at him with her lips half-parted and a clouded look in her eyes.

"Go on," she said, "I'm ashamed to say - I like it. I didn't know you were upset *then*. I thought that it was *me* who was upset."

"You!" he exclaimed. "Don't you remember throwing me over at the drugstore." He laughed. "You stuck your tongue out at me."

"I don't remember at all. It seemed to me *you* did the throwing over." Her hand fell slightly, almost consolingly on his arm. "I've got a photograph book upstairs I haven't looked at for years. I'll dig it out."

Donald sat for five minutes with two thoughts - first the hopeless impossibility of reconciling what different people remembered about the same event - and secondly that in a frightening way Nancy moved him as a woman as she had moved him as a child. Half an hour had developed an emotion that he had not known since the death of his wife - that he had never hoped to know again.

Side by side on the couch they opened the book between them. Nancy looked at him, smiling and very happy.

"Oh this is *such* fun, she said. Such fun that you're so nice, that you remember me so-beautifully. Let me tell you -I wish I'd known it then! After you'd gone I hated you."

"What a pity," he said gently.

"But not now," she reassured him, and then impulsively, "Kiss and make up."

". . . that isn't being a good wife," she said after a minute. "I really don't think I've kissed two men since I was married."

He was excited-but most of all confused. Had he kissed Nancy? Or a memory? Or this lovely trembly stranger who looked away from him quickly and turned a page of the book?

"Wait!" he said. I don't think I could *see* for a few seconds."

"We won't do this again. I don't feel so very calm myself."

Donald said one of those trivial things that cover so much ground.

"Wouldn't it be awful if we fell in love again?"

"Stop it!" She laughed, but very breathlessly, "It's all over. It was a moment. A moment I'll have to forget."

"Don't tell your husband."

"Why not? Usually I tell him everything."

"It'll hurt him. Don't ever tell a man such things."

"All right I won't."

"Kiss me once more," he said inconsistently, but Nancy had turned a page and was pointing eagerly at a picture.

"Here's you," she cried. "Right away!"

He looked. It was a little boy in shorts standing on a pier with a sailboat in the background.

"I remember - " she laughed triumphantly, " - the very day it was taken. Kitty took it and I stole it from her."

For a moment Donald failed to recognize himself in the photo-then, bending closer-he failed to utterly recognize himself.

"That's not me," he said.

"Oh yes. It was Frontenac - the summer we - we used to go to the cave."

"What cave? I was only three days in Frontenac." Again he strained his eyes at the slightly yellowed picture. "And that isn't me. That's Donald *Bowers*. We did look rather alike.

Now she was staring at him - leaning back, seeming to lift away from him.

"But you're Donald Bowers!" she exclaimed; her voice rose a little. "No, you're not. "You're Donald *Plant*."

"I told you on the phone."

She was on her feet-her face faintly horrified.

"Plant! Bowers! I must be crazy. Or it was that drink? I was mixed up a little when I first saw you. Look here! What have I told you?"

He tried for a monkish calm as he turned a page of the book.

"Nothing at all," he said. Pictures that did not include him formed and reformed before his eyes – Frontenac - a cave - Donald Bowers - "You threw *me* over!"

Nancy spoke from the other side of the room.

"You'll never tell this story," she said. "Stories have a way of getting around."

"There isn't any story," he hesitated. But he thought: so she *was* a bad little girl.

And now he was full of wild raging jealousy of Donald Bowers - he who had banished jealousy from his life forever. And in the five steps he took across the room he crushed out twenty years and the existence of Walter Gifford with his stride.

"Kiss me again, Nancy," he said, sinking to one knee beside her chair, putting his head on her shoulder. But Nancy strained away.

"You said you had to catch a plane."

"It's nothing. I can miss it. It's of no importance."

"Please go," she said in a cool voice. "And please try to imagine how I feel."

"But you act as if you don't remember me," he cried, "- as if you don't remember Donald *Plant!*"

"I do. I remember you too ... But it was all so long ago." Her voice grew hard again. The taxi number is Crestwood 8484."

On his way to the airport Donald shook his head from side to side. He was

completely himself now but he could not digest the experience. Only as the plane roared up into the dark sky and its passengers became a different entity from the corporate world below did he draw a parallel from the fact of its flight. For five blinking minutes he had lived like a madman in two worlds at once. He had been a boy of twelve and a man of thirty-two,
indissolubly and hopelessly commingled.

Donald had lost a great deal, too, in those hours between plan - but since the second half of life is a long process of getting rid of things, that part of the experience probably didn't matter.

Scott Fitzgerald

Look at the questions that follow. Try to answer these questions. You will need to present your answers during your tutorial session.

A woman's amused voice answered his inquiry for Miss Nancy Holmes. "Nancy is Mrs. Walter Gifford now. Who is this?"
But Donald hung up without answering. He had found out what he wanted to know and he had only three hours. He did not remember any Walter Gifford
and there was another suspended moment while he scanned the phone book. She might have married out of town.

1. Donald hangs up quickly. Why? What does the reader learn about him?

He remembered, or thought that he remembered the funny magic in the voice.

2. What does the narrator imply?

> *His words "at the airport" established that he had retained his position in the upper bourgeoisie. Her aloneness might indicate that she had matured into an unattractive woman without friends. 'Her husband might either be away or in*
> *bed. And-because she was always ten years old in his dreams-the highball shocked him. But he adjusted himself with a smile. She was almost close to thirty.*

3. The narrator analyses Donald's thoughts. What effect does this have on the reader? Do we know Nancy's?

> *"Donald, it is you. We all change so. Oh, this is remarkable!"…*
> *"But you're Donald Bowers!" she exclaimed; her voice rose a little. "No, you're not. "You're Donald Plant."…*
> *"Plant! Bowers! I must be crazy. Or it was that drink? I was mixed up a little*
> *when I first saw you. Look here! What have I told you?"*

4. Does Nancy remember Donald Plant? What did Donald Bowers mean to her? What did Donald Plant mean to her? Why is Nancy suddenly worried?

> *"You were always a lovely person. But I'm a little shocked to find you as beautiful as you are."*

5. What was Donald's intention in saying these words? What was Nancy's reaction? Was Donald's intention realized?

"Have a highball?" she asked. "No? Please don't think I've become a secret drinker, but tonight was a blue night. I expected my husband but he wired that he'd be two days longer. He's very nice, Donald and very attractive. Rather
your type and coloring." She hesitated, "- and I think he's interested in someone in New York-and I don't know."

6. Why does Nancy talk about her husband's 'New York interest'? What effect will the comparison between himself and her husband have on Donald?

"I suppose I was a naughty girl."

7. What new information does the reader get of Nancy? Is that how Donald remembers her?

"Do you think you were the only little girl who was ever kissed?"
"Do you like the subject?" she demanded. Her momentary irritation melted and she said: "What the hell! We did have fun. Like in the song."

8. Why does Donald make this comment? Why is Nancy initially irritated? What can we make of her *"What the hell?"* remark?

"Funny, I don't remember. Maybe I wanted to forget."
"But why?" he asked in amusement. "We were two perfectly innocent kids. Nancy, whenever I talked to my wife about the past, I told her you were he girl I loved almost as much as I loved her. But I think I loved you just as much. When we moved out of town I carried you <u>like a cannonball</u> in my insides."

9. What doesn't Nancy remember the things that Donald did? Why does she say she 'wanted to forget'? Were Nancy and Donald perfectly innocent then? What about now? What effect does 'like a cannonball' have on the reader? Why did Donald use that simile to describe his feelings?

> *"I've got a photograph book upstairs I haven't looked at for years. I'll dig it out."*

10. How will this, change things?

> *"Oh this is such fun, she said. Such fun that you're so nice, that you remember me so - beautifully. Let me tell you - I wish I'd known it then! After you'd gone I hated you."*

11. How is this ironical?

> *"But not now," she reassured him, and then impulsively, "Kiss and make up."*
> *". . . that isn't being a good wife," she said after a minute. "I really don't think I've kissed two men since I was married."*

12. Is the narrator making a social commentary here? If so, what?

> *"Wouldn't it be awful if we fell in love again?"*
> *"Stop it!" She laughed, but very breathlessly, "It's all over. It was a moment. A moment I'll have to forget."*

13. Were they in love before? Provide evidence. Why does Nancy need to *forget the moment*?

"Don't tell your husband." …
"It'll hurt him. Don't ever tell a man such things."

14. Does this suggest that men and women see things differently? Elaborate.

"Plant! Bowers! I must be crazy. Or it was that drink? I was mixed up a little when I first saw you. Look here! What have I told you?"

15. What does tell this you about Nancy?

"You'll never tell this story," she said. "Stories have a way of getting around."
"There isn't any story," he hesitated. But he thought: so she was a bad little girl.

16. If Nancy was a 'bad' girl', what was Donald? Elaborate.

"I do. I remember you too ... But it was all so long ago." Her voice grew hard again. The taxi number is Crestwood 8484."

17. Do you think Nancy ever intended carrying through with the dalliance? Elaborate.


Look up the internet for information on Scott Fitzgerald.

Do you think his life experiences influenced his writing?

You should also read *Hills like elephants* by Ernest Hemingway. Compare the way the two writers use dialogue.

Take a break before you move on to the next section of this unit.

Now, let us look at another writer, this time, British. Read *A little place off the Edgware Road*.

Graham Greene

A Little Place off the Edgware Road

Craven came up past the Achilles statue in the thin summer rain. It was only just after lighting-up time, but already the cars were lined up all the way to the Marble Arch, and the sharp acquisitive Jewish faces peered out ready for a good time with anything possible which came along. Craven went bitterly by with the collar of his mackintosh tight round his throat: it was one of his bad days.

All the way up the park he was reminded of passion, but you needed money for love. All that a poor man could get was lust. Love needed a good suit, a car, a flat somewhere, or a good hotel. It needed to be wrapped in cellophane. He was aware all the time of the stringy tie beneath the mackintosh, and the frayed sleeves: he carried his body about with him like something he hated. (There were moments of happiness in the British Museum reading-room, but the body called him back.) He bore, as his only sentiment, the memory of ugly deeds committed on park chairs. People talked as if the body died too soon, that wasn't the trouble, to Craven, at all. The body kept alive--and through the glittering tinselly rain, on his way to a rostrum, passed a little man in a black suit carrying a banner, "The Body shall rise again." He remembered a dream he had three times woken trembling from: He had been alone in the huge dark cavernous burying ground of all the world. Every grave was connected to another under the ground: the globe was honeycombed for the sake of the dead, and on each occasion of dreaming he had discovered anew the horrifying fact that the body doesn't decay. There are no worms and dissolution. Under the ground the world was littered with masses of dead flesh ready to rise again with their warts and boils and eruptions. He had lain in bed and remembered as "tidings of great joy"--that the body after all was corrupt.

He came up into the Edgware Road walking fast--the Guardsmen were out in couples, great languid elongated beasts--the bodies like worms in their tight trousers. He hated them, and hated his hatred because he knew what it was, envy. He was aware that every one of them had a better body than himself: indigestion creased his stomach: he felt sure that his breath was foul--but who could he ask? Sometimes he secretly touched himself here and there with scent: it was one of his ugliest secrets. Why should he be asked to believe in the resurrection of this body he wanted to
forget? Sometimes he prayed at night (a hint of religious belief was lodged in his breast like a worm in a nut) that his body at any rate should never rise again.

He knew all the side streets round the Edgware Road only too well
: when a mood was on, he simply walked until he tired, squinting at his own image in the windows of Salmon & Gluckstein and the A.B.C.'s. So he noticed at once the posters outside the disused theatre in Culpar Road. They were not unusual, for sometimes Barclays Bank Dramatic Society would hire the place for an evening, or an obscure film would be trade-shown there. The theatre had been built in 1920 by an optimist who thought the cheapness of the site would more than counter-balance its disadvantage of lying a mile outside the conventional

theatre zone. But no play had ever succeeded, and it was soon left to gather rat-holes and spider webs. The covering of the seats was never renewed, and all that ever happened to the place was the temporary false life of an amateur's play or a trade show.

Craven stopped and read--there were still optimists it appeared, even in 1939, for nobody but the blindest optimist could hope to make money out of the place as "The Home of the Silent Film." The first season of "primitives" was announced (a high-brow phrase): there would never be a second. Well, the seats were cheap, and it was perhaps worth a shilling to him, now that he was tired, to get in somewhere out of the rain. Craven bought a ticket and went in to the darkness of the stalls.

In the dead darkness a piano tinkled something monotonously recalling Mendelssohn: he sat down in a gangway seat, and could immediately feel the emptiness all round him. No, there would never be another season. On the screen a large woman in a kind of toga wrung her hands, then wobbled with curious jerky movements towards a couch. There she sat and stared out like a sheep-dog distractedly through her loose and black and stringy hair. Sometimes she seemed to dissolve altogether into dots and flashes and wiggly lines. A sub-title said, "Pompilia betrayed by her beloved Augustus seeks an end to her troubles."

Craven began at last to see--a dim waste of stalls. There were not twenty people in the place--a few couples whispering with their heads touching, and a number of lonely men like himself wearing the same uniform of the cheap mackintosh. They lay about at intervals like corpses--and again Craven's obsession returned: the toothache of horror. He thought miserably--I am going mad: other people don't feel like this. Even a disused theatre reminded him of those interminable caverns where the bodies were waiting for resurrection.

"A slave to his passion Augustus calls for yet more wine."

A gross middle-aged Teutonic actor lay on an elbow with his arm round a large woman in a shift. The "Spring Song" tinkled ineptly on, and the screen flickered like indigestion. Somebody felt his way through the darkness, scrabbling past Craven's knees--a small man: Craven experienced the unpleasant feeling of a large beard brushing his mouth. Then there was a long sigh as the newcomer found the next chair, and on the screen events had moved with such rapidity that Pompilia had already stabbed herself--or so Craven supposed--and lay still and buxom among her weeping slaves.

A low breathless voice sighed out close to Craven's ear, "What's happened? Is she asleep?"

"No. Dead."

"Murdered?" the voice asked with a keen interest.

"I don't think so. Stabbed herself."

Nobody said "Hush": nobody was enough interested to object to a voice: they drooped among the empty chairs in attitudes of weary inattention.

The film wasn't nearly over yet: there were children somehow to be considered: was it all going on to a second generation? But the small bearded man in the next seat seemed to be interested only in Pompilia's death. The fact that he had come in at that moment apparently fascinated him. Craven heard the word "coincidence" twice, and he went on talking to himself about it in low out-of

breath tones. "Absurd when you come to think of it," and then "no blood at all." Craven didn't listen: he sat with his hands clasped between his knees, facing the fact as he had faced it so often before, that he was in danger of going mad. He had to pull himself up, take a holiday, see a doctor (God knew what infection moved in his veins). He became aware that his bearded neighbour had addressed him directly. "What?" he asked impatiently, "what did you say?"

"There would be more blood than you can imagine."

"What are you talking about?"

When the man spoke to him, he sprayed him with damp breath. There was a little bubble in his speech like an impediment. He said, "When you murder a man--"

"This was a woman," Craven said impatiently.

"That wouldn't make any difference."

"And it's got nothing to do with murder anyway."

"That doesn't signify." They seemed to have got into an absurd and meaningless wrangle in the dark.

"I know, you see," the little bearded man said in a tone of enormous conceit.

"Know what?"

"About such things," he said with guarded ambiguity.

Craven turned and tried to see him clearly. Was he mad? Was this a warning of what he might become- babbling incomprehensibly to strangers in cinemas? He thought, By God, no, trying to see: I'll be sane yet. I will be sane. He could make out nothing but a small black hump of body. The man was talking to himself again. He said, "Talk. Such talk. They'll say it was all for fifty pounds. But that's a lie. Reasons and reasons. They always take the first reason. Never look behind. Thirty years of reasons. Such simpletons," he added again in that tone of breathless and unbounded conceit. So this was madness. So long as he could realize that, he must be sane himself--relatively speaking. Not so sane perhaps as the Jews in the park or the Guardsmen in the Edgware Road, but saner than this. It was like a message of encouragement as the piano tinkled on.

Then again the little man turned and sprayed him. "Killed herself, you say? But who's to know that? It's not a mere question of what hand holds the knife." He laid a hand suddenly and confidingly on Craven's: it was damp and sticky: Craven said with horror as a possible meaning came to him, "What are you talking about?"

"I know," the little man said. "A man in my position gets to know almost everything."

"What is your position?" Craven said, feeling the sticky hand on his, trying to make up his mind whether he was being hysterical or not; after all, there were a dozen explanations--it might be treacle.

"A pretty desperate one you'd say." Sometimes the voice almost died in the throat altogether. Something incomprehensible had happened on the screen- take your eyes from these early pictures for a moment and the plot had proceeded on at such a pace! Only the actors moved slowly and jerkily. A young woman in a night dress seemed to be weeping in the arms of a Roman centurion: Craven hadn't seen either of them before. "I am not afraid of death, Lucius--in your arms."

The little man began to titter, knowingly. He was talking to himself again. It would have been easy to ignore him altogether if it had not been for those sticky hands which he now removed; he seemed to be fumbling at the seat in front of him. His head had a habit of lolling suddenly sideways, like an idiot child's. He said distinctly and irrelevantly, "Bayswater Tragedy."

"What was that?" Craven said sharply. He had seen those words on a poster before he entered the park.

"What?"

"About the tragedy."

"To think they call Cullen Mews Bayswater." Suddenly the little man began to cough, turning his face towards Craven and coughing right at him: it was like vindictiveness. The voice said brokenly, "Let me see. My umbrella." He was getting up.

"You didn't have an umbrella."

"My umbrella," he repeated. "My--" and seemed to lose the word altogether. He went scrabbling out past Craven's knees.

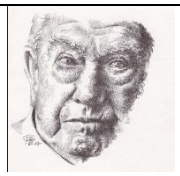
Craven let him go, but before he had reached the billowy dusty
curtains of the exit the screen went blank and bright--the film had broken, and somebody immediately turned up one dirt-choked chandelier above the circle. It shone down just enough for Craven to see the smear on his hands. This wasn't hysteria: this was a fact. He wasn't mad: he had sat next a madman who in some mews--what was the name Colon, Collin... Craven jumped up and made his own way out: the black curtain flapped in
his mouth. But he was too late: the man had gone and there were three turnings to choose from. He chose instead a telephone box and dialled, with an odd sense for him of sanity and decision, 999.

It didn't take two minutes to get the right department. They were interested and very kind. Yes, there had been a murder in a mews, Cullen Mews. A man's neck has been cut from ear to ear with a bread knife--a horrid crime. He began to tell them how he had sat next the murderer in a cinema: it couldn't be anyone else: there was blood now on his hands--and he remembered with repulsion as he spoke the damp beard. There must have been a terrible lot of blood. But the voice from the Yard interrupted him. "Oh, no," it was saying, "we have the murderer-no doubt of it at all. It's the body that's disappeared."

Craven put down the receiver. He said to himself aloud, "Why should this happen to me? Why to me?" He was back in the horror of his dream --the squalid darkening street outside was only one of the innumerable tunnels connecting grave to grave where the imperishable bodies lay. He said, "It was a dream, a dream," and leaning forward he saw in the mirror above the telephone his own face sprinkled by tiny drops of blood like dew from a scent-spray. He began to scream, "I won't go mad. Won't go mad. I'm sane. I won't go mad." Presently a little crowd began to collect, and soon a policeman came.

1939

Now look at the questions below. Try to answer these questions and then compare your answers with those of your coursemates.



1. Why is the name “Craven” significant?
2. In the first two paragraphs, the narrator sets the scene. How does this prepare the reader for the events that unfold?
3. Craven does not seem to be a happy person. Provide evidence of this.

4. What is the significance of the banner “The Body shall rise again.”
5. “He hated them, and hated and his hatred because he knew what it was, envy.” What does this tell us about Craven?

6. We are aware of what Craven thinks and feels. How does this influence our reading of the story?

7. “… - there were still optimists it appeared, even in 1939, …” From a historical perspective, how is this comment significant?

8. Craven seems to be obsessed by the dead and dying and a fear of going mad. Comment on this based on a psychological perspective.

9. “… the tooth-ache of horror.”; “… the screen flickered like indigestion.” – are some of the images described by Craven. How effective are images used in this story in setting the scene

and developing the plot?

10. "Oh no, … we have the murderer – no doubt of it at all. It's the body that's disappeared." What effect does this statement have on Craven and on the reader?
11. "I won't go mad. I won't go mad. I'm sane. I won't go mad." What were Craven's thoughts at this time?
12. Comment on the use of irony and suspense in this short story.

Look up the internet for information on Graham Greene.
You might want to read stories by other British writers. You could read from the works of Somerset Maugham, Sylvia Townsend Warner and Anthony Burgess.


Analyse this story based on psychological criticism. Prepare your answer for your tutorial session.

Take a break before you go on to the next section.

In this section, you are going to read a story by Henry Lawson, an Australian writer. Before that, read a little about the writer below. The information is from Wikipedia.

Early life

Henry Lawson was born in a town on the Grenfell goldfields of New South Wales. His father was Niels Herzberg Larsen, a Norwegian-born miner who went to sea at 21, arrived in Melbourne in 1855 to join the gold rush. Lawson's parents met at the goldfields of Pipeclay (now Eurunderee, New South Wales) Niels and Louisa married on 7 July 1866; he was 32 and she, 18. On Henry's birth, the family surname was anglicised and Niels became Peter Lawson. The newly-married couple were to have an unhappy marriage. Peter Larsen's grave (with headstone) is in the little private cemetery at Hartley Vale New South Wales a few minutes walk behind what was Collitt's Inn.

Henry Lawson attended school at Eurunderee from 2 October 1876 but suffered an ear infection at around this time. It left him with partial deafness and by the age of fourteen he had lost his hearing entirely. He later attended a Catholic school at Mudgee, New South Wales around 8 km away; the master there, Mr. Kevan, would teach Lawson about poetry. He was a keen reader of Dickens and Marryat and serialised novels such as Robbery under Arms and For the Term of his Natural Life; an aunt had also given him a volume by Bret Harte. Reading became a major source of his education because, due to his deafness, he had trouble learning in the classroom.

In 1883, after working on building jobs with his father and in the Blue Mountains, Lawson joined his mother in Sydney at her request. Louisa was then living with Henry's sister and brother. At this time, Lawson was working during

the day and studying at night for his matriculation in the hopes of receiving a university education. However, he failed his exams.

In 1896, he married Bertha Bredt Jr., daughter of Bertha Bredt, the prominent socialist. They had two children, son Jim (Joseph) and daughter Bertha. However, the marriage ended unhappily.

Poetry and prose writing

Lawson's first published poem was 'A Song of the Republic' which appeared in The Bulletin, 1 October 1887; his mother's radical friends were an influence. This was followed by 'The Wreck of the Derry Castle' and then 'Golden Gully.'

In 1890-1891 Lawson worked in Albany. He then received an offer to write for the Brisbane Boomerang in 1891, but he lasted only around 7-8 months as the Boomerang was soon in trouble. He returned to Sydney and continued to write for the Bulletin which, in 1892, paid for an inland trip where he experienced the harsh realities of drought-affected New South Wales. This resulted in his contributions to the Bulletin Debate and became a source for many of his stories in subsequent years. Elder writes of the trek Lawson took between Hungerford and Bourke as "the most important trek in Australian literary history" and says that "it confirmed all his prejudices about the Australian bush. Lawson had no romantic illusions about a 'rural idyll'." As Elder continues, his grim view of the outback was far removed from "the romantic idyll of brave horsemen and beautiful scenery depicted in the poetry of 'The Banjo' [Paterson]".

His most successful prose collection is While the Billy Boils, published in 1896. In it he "continued his assault on Paterson and the romantics, and in the process, virtually reinvented Australian realism". Elder writes that "he used short, sharp sentences, with language as raw as Ernest Hemingway or Raymond Carver. With sparse adjectives and honed-to-the-bone description, Lawson created a style and defined Australians: dryly laconic, passionately egalitarian and deeply humane." Most of his work focuses on the Australian bush, such as the desolate "Past Carin"', and is considered by some to be among the first

accurate descriptions of Australian life as it was at the time.[citation needed] "The Drover's Wife" with its "heart-breaking depiction of bleakness and loneliness" is regarded as one of his finest short stories. It is regularly studied in schools and has often been adapted for film and theatre.

Lawson was a firm believer in the merits of the sketch story, commonly known simply as 'the sketch,' claiming that "the sketch story is best of all. Lawson's Jack Mitchell story, On The Edge Of A Plain, is often cited as one of the most accomplished examples of the sketch.

Like the majority of Australians, Lawson lived in a city, but had had plenty of experience in outback life, in fact, many of his stories reflected his experiences in real life. In Sydney in 1898 he was a prominent member of the Dawn and Dusk Club, a bohemian club of writer friends who met for drinks and conversation.

Later years

During his later life, the alcohol-addicted writer was probably Australia's best-known celebrity. At the same time, he was also a frequent beggar on the streets of Sydney, notably at the Circular Quay ferry turnstiles.

In 1903 he sought a room at Mrs Isabella Byers' Coffee Palace in North Sydney. This marked the beginning of a 20 year friendship between Mrs Byers and Lawson. Despite his position as the most celebrated Australian writer of the time, Lawson was deeply depressed and perpetually poor. He lacked money due to unfortunate royalty deals with publishers. His ex-wife repeatedly reported him for non-payment of child maintenance, resulting in gaol terms. He was gaoled at Darlinghurst Gaol for drunkenness and non-payment of alimony, and recorded his experience in the haunting poem "One Hundred and Three" - his prison number - which was published in 1908. He refers to the prison as "Starvinghurst Gaol" because of the meagre rations given to the inmates.

At this time, Lawson became withdrawn, alcoholic, and unable to carry on the usual routine of life. Mrs Byers (nee Ward) was an excellent poet herself and although of modest education, had been writing vivid poetry since her teens in a similar style to Lawson's. Long separated from her husband and elderly, Mrs

Bryers was, at the time she met Lawson, a woman of independent means looking forward to retirement. Bryers regarded Lawson as Australia's greatest living poet, and hoped to sustain him well enough to keep him writing. She negotiated on his behalf with publishers, helped to arrange contact with his children, contacted friends and supporters to help him financially, and assisted and nursed him through his mental and alcohol problems. She wrote countless letters on his behalf and knocked on any doors that could provide Henry with financial assistance or a publishing deal.

It was in Mrs Isabella Bryers' home that Henry Lawson died, of cerebral haemorrhage, in Abbotsford, Sydney in 1922. He was given a state funeral. His death registration on the NSW Births, Deaths & Marriages index is ref. 10451/1922 and was recorded at the Petersham Registration District. It shows his parents as Peter and Louisa. His funeral was attended by the Prime Minister W. M. Hughes and the Premier of New South Wales Jack Lang (who was the husband of Lawson's sister-in-law Hilda Bredt), as well as thousands of citizens. He is interred at Waverley Cemetery. Lawson was the first person to be granted a state funeral.

Henry Lawson was featured on the first (paper) Australian ten dollar note issued in 1966 when decimal currency was first introduced into Australia. This note was replaced by a polymer note in 1993. Lawson was pictured against scenes from the town of Gulgong in NSW.

Now read the story. Based on yur knowledge of the writer, do you think his own experiences influenced his writing?

The House that was Never Built

Henry Lawson

THERE had been heavy rain and landslips all along the branch railway which left the Great Western Line from Sydney just beyond the Blue Mountains, and ran through thick bush and scrubby ridgy country and along great alluvial sidings—where the hills on the opposite side of the wide valleys (misty in depths) faded from deep blue into the pale azure of the sky—and over the ends of western spurs to the little farming, mining and pastoral town of Solong, situated in a circle of blue hills on the banks of the willow-fringed Cudgegong River.

The line was hopelessly blocked, and some publicans at Solong had put on the old coach-road a couple of buggies, a wagonette, and an old mail coach—relic of the days of Cobb & Co., which had been resurrected from some backyard and tinkered up—to bring the train passengers on from the first break in the line over the remaining distance of forty miles or so. Capertee Station (old time, "Capertee Camp"—a teamster's camp) was the last station before the first washout, and there the railway line and the old road parted company for the last time before reaching Solong—the one to run round by the ends of the western spurs that spread fanlike, and the other to go through and over the rough country.

The train reached Capertee about midnight in broad moonlight that was misty in the valleys and round the blue of Crown Ridge. I got a "box-seat" beside the driver on the old coach. It was a grand old road—one of the old main coach-roads of New South Wales—broad and white, metalled nearly all the way, and in nearly as good condition as on the day when the first passenger train ran into Solong and the last-used section of the old road was abandoned. It dated back to the bushranging days—right back to convict times: it ran through tall dark bush, up over gaps or "saddles" in high ridges, down across deep dark gullies, and here and there across grey, marshy, curlew-haunted flats. Cobb & Co's coach-and-six, with "Royal Mail" gilded on the panels, had dashed over it in ten and twelve-mile stages in the old days, the three head-lamps flashing on the wild dark bush at night, and maybe twenty-four passengers on board. The biggest rushes to richest goldfields in the west had gone over this old road on coaches, on carts, on drays, on horse and bullock wagons, on horseback, and on foot; new chums from all the world and from all stations in life.When many a step was on the mountains, Marching west to the land of gold.

And a few came back rich—red, round-faced and jolly—on the box-seat of Cobb & Co's, treating the driver and all hands, "going home" to sweethearts or families. (Home people will never feel the meaning of those two words, "going home," as it is felt in a new land.) And many came back broken men, tramping in rags, and carrying their swags through the dusty heat of the drought in

December or the bitter, pelting rain in the mountains in June. Some came back grey who went as boys; and there were many who never came back.

I remembered the old mile-trees, with a section of bark cut away and the distances cut in Roman letters in the hardened sap—the distance from Bowenfels, the railway terminus then. It was a ghostly old road, and if it wasn't haunted it should have been. There was an old decaying and nearly deserted coaching town or two; there were abandoned farms and halfway inns, built of stone, with the roofs gone and nettles growing high between the walls; the remains of an orchard here and there—a few gnarled quince-trees—and the bush reclaiming its own again. It was a haunted ride for me, because I had last ridden over this old road long ago when I was young—going to see the city for the first time—and because I was now on my way to attend the funeral of one of my father's blood from whom I had parted in anger.

We slowly climbed, and almost as slowly descended, the steep siding of a great hill called Aaron's Pass, and about a mile beyond the foot of the hill I saw a spot I remembered passing on the last journey down, long ago. Rising back from the road, and walled by heavy bush, was a square clearing, and in the background I saw plainly, by the broad moonlight, the stone foundations for a large house; from the front an avenue of grown pines came down to the road.

*"Why!" I exclaimed, turning to the driver, "w*as that house burnt down?"

"No," he said slowly. "That house was never built."

I stared at the place again and caught sight of a ghostly-looking light between the lines of the foundations, which I presently made out to be a light in a tent.

"There's someone camping there," I said.

"Yes," said the driver, "some old swaggy or 'hatter.' I seen him comin' down. I don't know nothing about that there place." (I hadn't "shouted" for him yet.)

I thought and remembered. I remembered myself, as a boy, being sent a coach journey along this road to visit some relatives in Sydney. We passed this place, and the women in the coach began to talk of the fine house that was going to be built there. The ground was being levelled for the foundations, and young pines had been planted, with stakes round them to protect them from the cattle. I remembered being mightily interested in the place, for the women said that the house was to be a two-storied one. I thought it would be a wonderful thing to see a two-storied house there in the bush. The height of my ambition was to live in a house with stairs in it. The women said that this house was being built for young Brassington, the son of the biggest squatter then in the district, who was going to marry the daughter of the next biggest squatter. That was all I remember hearing the women say.

Three or four miles along the road was a public-house, with a post office, general store, and blacksmith shop attached, as is usual in such places—all that was left of the old pastoral and coaching town of Ilford. I "shouted" for the driver at the shanty, but got nothing further out of him concerning the fate of the house that was never built. I wanted that house for a story.

However, while yarning with some old residents at Solong, I mentioned the Brassingtons, and picked up a few first links in the story. The young couple

were married and went to Sydney for their honeymoon. The story went that they intended to take a trip to the old country and Paris, to be away a twelve-month, and the house was to be finished and ready for them on their return. Young Brassington himself had a big sheep-run round there. The railway wasn't thought of in those days, or if it was, no Brassington could have dreamed that the line could have been brought to Solong in any other direction than through the property of the "Big Brassingtons," as they were called. Well, the young couple went to Sydney, but whether they went farther the old residents did not know. All they knew was that within a few weeks, and before the stone foundations for the brick walls of the house were completed, the building contract was cancelled, the workmen were dismissed, and the place was left as I last saw it; only the ornamental pines had now grown to trees. The Brassingtons and the bride's people were English families and reserved. They kept the story, if there was a story, to themselves. The girl's people left the district and squatted on new stations up-country. The Big Brassingtons came down in the world and drifted to the city, as many
smaller people do, more and more every year. Neither young Brassington nor his wife was ever again seen or heard of in the district.

I attended my relative's funeral, and next day started back for Sydney. Just as we reached Ilford, as it happened, the pin of the fore under-carriage of the coach broke, and it took the blacksmith several hours to set it right. The place was dull, the publican was not communicative—or else he harped on the old local grievance of the railway not having come that way—so about half an hour before I thought

the coach would be ready, I walked on along the road to stretch by legs. I walked on and on until I came, almost unaware, to the site of the house that was never built. The tent was still there, in fact, it was a permanent camp, and I was rather surprised to see the man working with a trowel on a corner of the unfinished foundations of the house. At first I thought he
was going to build a stone hut in the corner, but when I got close to him I saw that he was working carefully on the original plan of the building: he was building the unfinished parts of the foundation walls up to the required height. He had bricklayer's tools, a bag of lime, and a heap of sand, and had worked up a considerable quantity of mortar. It was a rubble foundation: he was knocking off the thin end of a piece of stone to make it fit, and the clanging of the trowel prevented his hearing my footsteps.

"Good day, mate," I said, close beside him. I half expected he'd start when I spoke, but he didn't: he looked round slowly, but with a haunted look in his eyes as if I might have been one of his ghosts. He was a tall man, gaunt and haggard-eyed, as many men are in the bush; he may have been but little past middle age, and grey before his time.

"Good day," he said, and he set the stone in its place, carefully flush with the outer edge of the wall, before he spoke again. Then he looked at the sun, which was low, laid down his trowel, and asked me to come to the tent-fire. "It's turning chilly," he said. It was a model camp, everything clean and neat both inside the tent and out; he had made a stone fireplace with a bark shelter over it, and a table and bench under another little shed, with shelves for his tin cups and

plates and cooking utensils. He put a box in front of the fire and folded a flour-bag on top of it for a seat for me, and hung the billy over the fire. He sat on his heels and poked the burning sticks, abstractedly I thought, or to keep his hands and thoughts steady.

"I see you're doing a bit of building," I said.

"Yes," he said, keeping his eyes on the fire; "I'm getting on with it slowly."

I don't suppose he looked at me half a dozen times the whole while I was is his camp. When he spoke he talked just as if he were sitting yarning in a row of half a dozen of us. Presently he said suddenly, and giving the fire a vicious dig with his poker:

"That house must be finished by Christmas."

"Why?" I asked, taken by surprise. "What's the hurry?"

"Because," he said, "I'm going to be married in the New Year—to the best and dearest girl in the bush."

There was an awkward pause on my part, but presently I pulled myself together.

"You'll never finish it by yourself," I said. "Why don't you put on some men?"

"Because," he said, "I can't trust them. Besides, how am I to get bricklayers and carpenters in a place like this?"

I noticed all through that his madness or the past in his mind was mixed up with the real and the present.

"Couldn't you postpone the marriage?" I asked.

"No!" he exclaimed, starting to his feet. "No!" and he looked round wildly on the darkening bush. There was madness in his tone that time, the last "No!" sounding as if from a man who was begging for his life.

"Couldn't you run up a shanty then, to live in until the house is ready?" I suggested, to soothe him.

He gave his arm an impatient swing. "Do you think I'd ask that girl to live in a hut?" he said. "She ought to live in a palace!"

There seemed no way out of it, so I said nothing: he turned his back and stood looking away over the dark, low-lying sweep of bush towards sunset. He folded his arms tight, and seemed to me to be holding himself. After a while he let fall his arms and turned and blinked at me and the fire like a man just woke from a daze or rousing himself out of a deep reverie.

"Oh, I almost forgot the billy!" he said. "I'll make some tea—you must be hungry."

He made the tea and fried a couple of slices of ham; he laid the biggest slice on a thick slice of white baker's bread on a tin plate, and put it and a pint-pot full of tea on a box by my side. "Have it here, by the fire," he said; "it's warmer and more comfortable."

I took the plate on my knee, and I must say I thoroughly enjoyed that meal. The bracing mountain air and the walk had made me hungry. The hatter had his meal standing up, cutting his ham on a slice of bread with a clasp-knife. It was bush fashion, and set me thinking of some old times. He ate very little, and, as far as I saw, he didn't smoke. Non-smokers are very scarce in the bush.

I saw by the way his tent was pitched and his camp arranged generally, and by the way he managed the cooking, that he must have knocked about the

bush for some years.

He put the plates and things away and came and sat down on the other empty gin-case by my side, and fell to poking the fire again. He never showed the least curiosity as to who I was, or where I came from, or what I was doing on this deserted track: he seemed to take me as a matter of course—but all this was in keeping with bush life in general.

Presently he got up and stood looking upwards over the place where the house should have been.

"I think now," he said slowly, "I made a mistake in not having the verandas carried all round the house."

"I—I beg pardon!"

"I should have had the balcony all round instead of on two sides only, as the man who made the plan suggested; it would have looked
better and made the house cooler in summer."

I thought as I listened, and presently I saw that it was a case of madness within madness, so to speak: he was mad on the idea that he could build the house himself, and then he had moods when he imagined
that the house had been built and he had been married and had reared a family.

"You could easily get the balcony carried round," I said; "it wouldn't cost much—you can get good carpenters at Solong. "

"Yes," he said. "I'll have it done after Christmas." Then he turned from the house and blinked down at me.

"I am sorry," he said, "that there's no one at home. I sent the wife and family to Sydney for a change. I've got the two boys at the Sydney Grammar School. I think I'll send the eldest to King's School at Parramatta. The girls will have to get along with a governess at home and learn to help their mother."

And so he went on talking away just as a man who has made money in the bush, and is married and settled down, might yarn to an old bachelor bush mate.

"I suppose I'll have to get a good piano," he went on. "The girls must have some amusement: there'll be no end of balls and parties. I suppose the boys will soon be talking of getting 'fivers' and 'tenners' out of the 'guvner' or 'old man.' It's the way of the world. And they'll marry and leave us. It's the way of the world."

It was awful to hear him go on like this, the more so because he never smiled—just talked on as if he had said the same thing over and over again. Presently he stopped, and his eyes and hands began to wander: he sat down on his heel to the fire again and started poking it. I began to feel uneasy; I didn't know what other sides there might be to his madness, and wished the coach would come along.

"You've knocked about the bush a good deal?" I asked. I couldn't think of anything else to say, and I thought he might break loose if I let him brood too long.

"Yes," he said, "I have."

"Been in Queensland and the Gulf country, I suppose?"

"I have."

His tone and manner seemed a bit more natural. He had knockedabout pretty well all over Australia, and had been in many places where I had been. I

had got him on the right track, and after a bit he started telling bush yarns and experiences, some of them awful, some of them very funny, and all of them short and good; and now and then, looking at the side of his face, which was all he turned to me, I thought I detected the ghost of a smile.

One thing I noticed about him; when he spoke as a madman, he talked like a man who had been fairly well educated (or sometimes, I fancied, like a young fellow who was studying to be a school-teacher); his speech was deliberate and his grammar painfully correct—far more so than I have made it; but when he spoke as an old bushman, he dropped his *g's* and often turned his grammar back to front. But that reminds me that I have met English college men who did the same thing after being a few years in the bush; either they dropped their particular way of speaking because it was mimicked, because they were laughed and chaffed out of it, or they fell gradually into the habit of talking as rough bushmen do (they learnt Australian), as clean-mouthed men fall, in spite of themselves, into the habit of swearing in the heat and hurry and rough life of a shearing-shed. And, coming back into civilized life, these men, who had been well brought up, drop into their old manner and style of speaking as readily as the foulest-mouthed man in a shed or camp—who, amongst his fellows, cannot say three words without an oath—can, when he finds himself in a decent home in the woman-and-girl world, yarn by the hour without letting slip a solitary little damn.

The hatter warmed up the tea-billy again, got out some currant buns, which he had baked himself in the camp-oven, and we were yarning comfortably like two old bushmen, and I had almost forgotten that he was "ratty," when we heard the coach coming. I jumped up to hurry down to the road. This seemed to shake him up. He gripped my hand hard and glanced round in his frightened, haunted way. I never saw the eyes of a man look so hopeless and helpless as his did just then.

"I'm sorry you're going," he said, in a hurried way. "I'm sorry you're going. But—but they all go. Come again, come again—we'll all be glad to see you."

I had to hurry off and leave him. "We all," I suppose, meant himself and his ghosts. I ran down between the two rows of pines and reached the road just as the coach came up. I found the publican from Ilford aboard—he was taking a trip to Sydney. As the coach went on I looked up the clearing and saw the hatter standing straight behind the fire, with his arms folded and his face turned in our direction. He looked ghastly in the firelight, and at that distance his face seemed to have an expression of listening blindness. I looked round on the dark bush, with, away to the left, the last glow of sunset fading from the bed of it, like a bed of reddening coals, and I looked up at the black loom of Aaron's Pass, and thought that never a man, sane or mad, was left in such a depth of gloomy loneliness.

"I see you've been yarning with him yonder," said the publican, who seemed to have relaxed wonderfully.

"Yes."

"You know these parts, don't you?"

"Yes. I was about here as a boy."

He asked me what my name might be. I told him it was Smith. He blinked a while.

"I never heard of anyone by the name of Smith in the district," he said.

Neither had I. I told him that we lived at Solong, and didn't stay long. It saved time.

"Ever heard of the Big Brassingtons?"

'Yes."

"Ever heard the yarn of the house that wasn't built?"

I told him how much I had heard of it.

"And that's about all any of 'em knows. Have you any idea who that man back yonder is?"

"Yes, I have."

"Well, who do you think it is?"

"He is, or rather he was, young Brassington."

"You've hit it!" said the publican. "I know—and a few others."

"And do you know what became of his wife?" I asked.

"I do," said the shanty-keeper, who had a generous supply of whisky with him, and seemed to have begun to fill himself up for the trip. He said no more for a while, and when I had remained silent long enough, he went on, very deliberately and impressively.

"One yarn is that the girl wasn't any good; that when she was married to Brassington, and as soon as they got to Sydney, she met a chap she'd been carrying on with before she married Brassington (or that she'd been married to in secret), an' she cleared off with him, leaving her fortnight-old husband. That was one yarn."

"Was it?" I said.

"Yes," said the publican. "That yarn was a lie." He opened a flask of whisky and passed it round.

"There was madness in the family," he said, after a nip.

"Whose?" I asked. "Brassington's?"

"No," said the publican, in a tone that implied contempt at my ignorance, in spite of its innocence, "the girl's. Her mother had been in a 'sylum, and so had her grandmother. It was—it was heridited. Some madnesses is heridited, an' some comes through worry and hard graft (that's mine), an' some comes through drink, and some through worse, and, but as far as I've heard, all madnesses is pretty much the same. My old man was a warder in a 'sylum. They have their madnesses a bit different, the same as boozers has their d.t's different; but, takin' it by the lump, it's pretty much all the same. The difference is accordin' to their natures when they're sane. All men are——"

"But about young Mrs Brassington," I interrupted.

"Young Mrs Brassington? Rosy Webb she was, daughter of Webb the squatter. Rosy was the brightest, best, good-heartedest, an' most ladylike little girl in the district, an' the heriditry business come on her in Sydney, about a week after she was married to young Brassington. She was only twenty. Here—" He passed the flask round.

"And what happened?" I asked.

"What happened?" he repeated. Then he pulled himself together, as if conscious that he had shown signs of whisky. "Everything was done, but it was no use. She died in a year in a 'sylum."

"How do you know that?"

"How do I know that?" he repeated in a tone of contempt. "How do I know that? Well, I'll tell you how. My old wife was in service at Brassington's station at the time—the oldest servant—an' young Brassington wired to her from Sydney to come and help him in his trouble. Old Mrs Brassington was bedridden, an' they kep' it from her."

"And about young Brassington?"

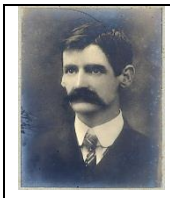
"About young Brassington? He took a swag an' wandered through the bush. We've had him at our place several times all these years, but he always wandered off again. My old woman tried everything with him, but it was all no use. Years ago she used to get him to talk of things as they was, in hopes of bringin' his mind back, but he was always worse after. She does all she can for him even now, but he's mighty independent. The last five or six years he's been taken with the idea of buildin' that cursed house. He'll stay there till he gets short of money, an' then he'll go out back, shearin', stock-ridin', drovin', cookin', fencin'—anything till he gets a few pounds. Then he'll settle down and build away at that bloody house. He's knocked about so much that he's a regular old bushman. While he's an old bushman he's all right an' amusin' an' good company; but when he's Brassington he's mad—Don't you ever let on to my old woman that I told you. I allers let my tongue run a bit when I get out of that hole we're living in. We've kept the secret all these years, but what does it matter now?—I ask you."

"It doesn't matter much," I said.

"Nothing matters much, it seems to me, nothing matters a damn. The Big Brassingtons come down years ago; the old people's gone, and the young scattered God knows where or how. The Webbs (the girl's people) are away up in new country, an' the girls (they was mostly all girls) are married an' settled down by this time. We kept the secret, an' the Webbs kept the secret—even when the dirty yarns was goin' round—so's not to spoil the chances of the other girls. What about the chances of their husbands? Some on 'em might be in the same hell as Brassington for all I know. The Brassingtons kept the secret because I suppose they reckoned it didn't matter much. Nothing matters much in this world—"

But I was thinking of another young couple who had married long ago, whose married life was twenty long years of shameful quarrels, of useless brutal recrimination—not because either was bad, but because
their natures were too much alike; of the house that was built, of the family that was reared, of the sons and daughters who "went wrong," of the father and mother separated after twenty years, of the mother dead of a broken heart, of the father (in a lunatic asylum), whose mania was not
to build houses, but to obtain and secrete matches for the purpose of burning houses down.

Now look at the questions below. Try to answer them. Refer to the text.



1. Who is the narrator? What details do we get that help us establish a 'picture' of him?
2. How does the narrator present the setting? Does this description help us understand the characters and the events better? If so, how?
3. "Home people will never feel the meaning of those two words, 'going home', as it is felt in a new land."
   Considering the time in which this was written, explain this line.
4. "And a few came back rich - … and many came back broken men, … and there were many who never came back." Analyse this comment from a historical perspective.
5. What does the narrator learn about the 'house' from people in Solong? Was it enough to satisfy him? How can you tell?
6. "I walked on along the road to stretch my legs. I walked on and on until I came, *almost unaware*, to the site of the house that was never built."
   From a psychological perspective, do you think the narrator was unaware of his actions? Justify your view.

7. “That house must be finished by Christmas. … Because … I’m going to be married in the New Year – to the best and dearest girl in the bush.” What do you think the narrator felt on hearing this? What effect do these words have on you as the reader? Elaborate.
8. The narrator gives some ‘characteristics’ of bush people. What are they?
9. “… it was a case of madness within madness, …” What does the narrator mean?
10. “I sent the wife and family to Sydney for a change.” What does this tell you about the house builder?
11. “… when he spoke as a madman, he talked like a man who had been fairly well educated, … but when he spoke as an old bushman, he dropped his *g’s* and often turned his grammar back to front.” What do you understand from this?
12. Why is the narrator unwilling to give his true identity to the publican?
13. What are the various versions to the story about the young Brassingtons?
14. Comment on the last paragraph of this story? Read up on Henry Lawson to see if you understand this last paragraph better.

Analyse this story based on one of the literary perspectives you studied earlier. Provide textual support for your answer.

You have come to the end of this unit. If you have been able to answer the questions, Good! If not, you might want to go through this unit again.

TOPIC 4	CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF SHORT STORIES (20th & 21st Century Fiction)

SYNOPSIS

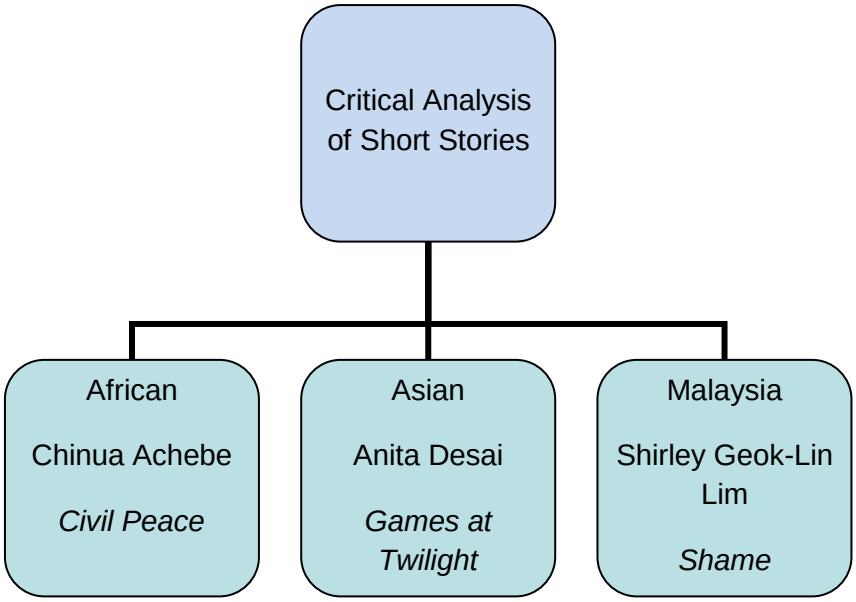
In this unit, you will read short stories written by African, Asian and Malaysian writers. You will use some of the literary criticism theories you have studied to analyse the texts. You will also have the opportunity to read other stories to make comparisons.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to

- Demonstrate an understanding of theories of literary criticism
- Analyse and evaluate short stories based on various theories of literary criticism
- Analyse the differences that historical perspective, literary form and culture generate.

FRAMEWORK



Read the short story below.

Civil Peace
Chinua Achebe

Jonathan Iwegbu counted himself extra-ordinarily lucky. 'Happy survival!' meant so much more to him than just a current fashion of greeting old friends in the first hazy days of peace. It went deep to his heart. He had come out of the war with five inestimable blessings--his head, his wife Maria's head and the heads of three out of their four children. As a bonus he also had his old bicycle--a miracle too but naturally not to be compared to the safety of five human heads.

The bicycle had a little history of its own. One day at the height of the war it was commandeered 'for urgent military action'. Hard as its loss would have been to him he would still have let it go without a thought had he not had some doubts about the genuineness of the officer. It wasn't his disreputable rags, nor the toes peeping out of one blue and one brown canvas shoes, nor yet the two stars of his rank done obviously in a hurry in biro, that troubled Jonathan; many good and heroic soldiers looked the same or worse. It was rather a certain lack of grip and firmness in his manner. So Jonathan, suspecting he might be amenable to influence, rummaged in his raffia bag and produced the two pounds with which he had been going to buy firewood which his wife, Maria, retailed to camp officials for extra stock-fish and corn meal, and got his bicycle back. That night he buried it in the little clearing in the bush where the dead of the camp, including his own youngest son, were buried. When he dug it up again a year later after the surrender all it needed was a little palm-oil greasing. 'Nothing puzzles God,' he said in wonder.

He put it to immediate use as a taxi and accumulated a small pile of Biafran money ferrying camp officials and their families across the four-mile stretch to the nearest tarred road. His standard charge per trip was six pounds and those who had the money were only glad to be rid of some of it in this way. At the end of a fortnight he had made a small fortune of one hundred and fifteen pounds.

Then he made the journey to Enugu and found another miracle waiting for him. It was unbelievable. He rubbed his eyes and looked again and it was still standing there before him. But, needless to say, even that monumental blessing must be accounted also totally inferior to the five heads in the family. This newest miracle was his little house in Ogui Overside. Indeed nothing puzzles God! Only two houses away a huge concrete edifice some wealthy contractor had put up just before the war was a mountain of rubble. And here was Jonathan's little zinc house of no regrets built with mud blocks quite intact! Of course the doors and

windows were missing and five sheets off the roof.

But what was that? And anyhow he had returned to Enugu early enough to pick up bits of old zinc and wood and soggy sheets of cardboard lying around the neighbourhood before thousands more came out of their forest holes looking for the same things. He got a destitute carpenter with one old hammer, a blunt plane and a few bent and rusty nails in his tool bag to turn this assortment of wood, paper and metal into door and window shutters for five Nigerian shillings or fifty Biafran pounds. He paid the pounds, and moved in with his overjoyed family carrying five heads on their shoulders.

His children picked mangoes near the military cemetery and sold them to soldiers' wives for a few pennies--real pennies this time--and his wife started making breakfast akara balls for neighbours in a hurry to start life again. With his family earnings he took his bicycle to the villages around and bought fresh palm-wine which he mixed generously in his rooms with the water which had recently started running again in the public tap down the road, and opened up a bar for soldiers and other lucky people with good money.

At first he went daily, then every other day and finally once a week, to the offices of the Coal Corporation where he used to be a miner, to find out what was what. The only thing he did find out in the end was that that little house of his was even a greater blessing than he had thought. Some of his fellow ex-miners who had nowhere to return at the end of the day's waiting just slept outside the doors of the offices and cooked what meal they could scrounge together in Bournvita tins. As the weeks lengthened and still nobody could say what was what Jonathan discontinued his weekly visits altogether and faced his palm-wine bar.

But nothing puzzles God. Came the day of the windfall when after five days of endless scuffles in queues and counter-queues in the sun outside the Treasury he had twenty pounds counted into his palms as exgratia award for the rebel money he had turned in. It was like Christmas for him and for many others like him when the payments began. They called it (since few could manage its proper official name) _egg-rasher_.

As soon as the pound notes were placed in his palm Jonathan simply closed it tight over them and buried fist and money inside his trouser pocket. He had to be extra careful because he had seen a man a couple of days earlier collapse into near-madness in an instant before that oceanic crowd because no sooner had he got his twenty pounds than some heartless ruffian picked it off him. Though it was not right that a man in such an extremity of agony should be blamed yet many in the queues that day were able to remark quietly on the victim's carelessness, especially after he pulled out the innards of his pocket and revealed a hole in it big enough to pass a thief's head. But of course he had insisted that the money had been in the other pocket, pulling it out too to show its comparative wholeness. So one had to be careful.

Jonathan soon transferred the money to his left hand and pocket so as to leave his right free for shaking hands should the need arise, though by fixing his gaze at such an elevation as to miss all approaching human faces he made sure that the need did not arise, until he got home.

He was normally a heavy sleeper but that night he heard all the neighbourhood noises die down one after another. Even the night watchman who knocked the hour on some metal somewhere in the distance had fallen silent after

knocking one o'clock. That must have been the last thought in Jonathan's mind before he was finally carried away himself. He couldn't have been gone for long, though, when he was violently awakened again.

'Who is knocking?' whispered his wife lying beside him on the floor.

'I don't know,' he whispered back breathlessly.

The second time the knocking came it was so loud and imperious that the rickety old door could have fallen down.

'Who is knocking?' he asked then, his voice parched and trembling.

'Na tief-man and him people,' came the cool reply. 'Make you hopen de door.' This was followed by the heaviest knocking of all.

Maria was the first to raise the alarm, then he followed and all their children.

'Police-o! Thieves-o! Neighbours-o! Police-o! We are lost! We are dead! Neighbours, are you asleep? Wake up! Police-o!'

This went on for a long time and then stopped suddenly. Perhaps they had scared the thief away. There was total silence. But only for a short while.

'You done finish?' asked the voice outside. 'Make we help you small. Oya, everybody!'

'Police-o! Tief-man-o! Neighbours-o! we done loss-o! Police-o!...'

There were at least five other voices besides the leader's.

Jonathan and his family were now completely paralysed by terror. Maria and the children sobbed inaudibly like lost souls. Jonathan groaned continuously.

The silence that followed the thieves' alarm vibrated horribly. Jonathan all but begged their leader to speak again and be done with it.

'My frien,' said he at long last, 'we don try our best for call dem but I tink say dem all done sleep-o... So wetin we go do now? Sometaim you wan call soja? Or you wan make we call dem for you? Soja better pass police. No be so?'

'Na so!' replied his men. Jonathan thought he heard even more voices now than before and groaned heavily. His legs were sagging under him and his throat felt like sand-paper.

'My frien, why you no de talk again. I de ask you say you wan make we call soja?'

'No'.

'Awrighto. Now make we talk business. We no be bad tief. We no like for make trouble. Trouble done finish. War done finish and all the katakata wey de for inside. No Civil War again. This time na Civil Peace. No be so?'

'Na so!' answered the horrible chorus.

'What do you want from me? I am a poor man. Everything I had went with this war. Why do you come to me? You know people who have money. We...'

'Awright! We know say you no get plenty money. But we sef no get even anini. So derefore make you open dis window and give us one hundred pound and we go commot. Orderwise we de come for inside now to show you guitar-boy like dis...'

A volley of automatic fire rang through the sky. Maria and the children began to weep aloud again.

'Ah, missisi de cry again. No need for dat. We done talk say we na good tief. We just take our small money and go nwayorly. No molest. Abi we de molest?'

'At all!' sang the chorus.

'My friends,' began Jonathan hoarsely. 'I hear what you say and I thank you. If I had one hundred pounds...'

'Lookia my frien, no be play we come play for your house. If we make mistake and step for inside you no go like am-o. So derefore...'

'To God who made me; if you come inside and find one hundred pounds, take it and shoot me and shoot my wife and children. I swear to God. The only money I have in this life is this twenty-pounds - egg-rasher they gave me today...'

'OK. Time de go. Make you open dis window and bring the twenty pound. We go manage am like dat.'

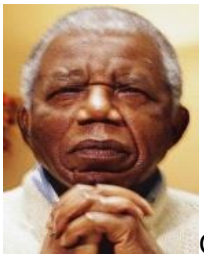
There were now loud murmurs of dissent among the chorus: 'Na lie de man de lie; e get plenty money... Make we go inside and search properly well... Wetin be twenty pound?...'

'Shurrup!' rang the leader's voice like a lone shot in the sky and silenced the murmuring at once. 'Are you dere? Bring the money quick!'

'I am coming,' said Jonathan fumbling in the darkness with the key of the small wooden box he kept by his side on the mat.

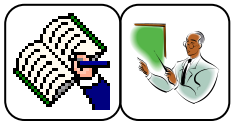
At the first sign of light as neighbours and others assembled to commiserate with him he was already strapping his five-gallon demijohn to his bicycle carrier and his wife, sweating in the open fire, was turning over akara balls in a wide clay bowl of boiling oil. In the corner his eldest son was rinsing out dregs of yesterday's palm wine from old beer bottles.

'I count it as nothing,' he told his sympathizers, his eyes on the rope he was tying. 'What is _egg-rasher_? Did I depend on it last week? Or is it greater than other things that went with the war? I say, let _egg-rasher_ perish in the flames! Let it go where everything else has gone. Nothing puzzles God.'


Chinua Achebe

Read up on the Civil War in Biafra that Jonathan Iwegbu talks about. Briefly describe the conflict.

Biafran refugees returning home.



Try to answer these questions. Discuss them with your coursemates during yor tutorial session.

1. Does understanding the conflict help you understand the character of Jonathan? Why?
2. What do you think is the theme in this short story?
3. Jonathan repeatedly says, “Nothing puzzles God.” What does he mean? How does this help him survive?
4. Describe the setting. Does it help you understand the events? How?
5. Besides Jonathan and his family, we are also introduced to the neighbours and the thieves. How do they add to the theme?

6. Jonathan buried his bicycle near his youngest son. He digs out the bicycle a year later but does not mention his son. Why? What does this tell the reader about Jonathan and about his life?

7. “Who is knocking?” … “Na tief-man and him people. … Make you hopen de door.” Comment on the use of native language. How does it add to the story? OR Does it distract the reader? Elaborate.

8. In the episode with the thieves, it is almost comically described. Yet, the reader sympathizes with Jonathan. Why?

9. The leader of the thieves describes his band as “good tief”. Do you agree? Why?

Akara balls made from black eyed peas.

Biography, books and musing about Achebe's politics and contribution to African literature can be found at

http://www.albany.edu/writers-inst/achebe.html

Take a break before you go on to the next section.

In this section, you are going to read a story by Anita Desai.

Games at Twilight
Anita Desai

It was still too hot to play outdoors. They had had their tea, they had been washed and had their hair brushed, and after the long day of confinement in the house that was not cool but at least a protection from the sun, the children strained to get out. Their faces were red and bloated with the effort, but their mother would not open the door, everything was still curtained and shuttered in a way that stifled the children, made them feel that their lungs were stuffed with cotton wool and their noses with dust and if they didn't burst out into the light and see the sun and feel the air, they would choke.

"Please, ma, please," they begged. "We'll play in the veranda and porch—we won't go a step out of the porch."

"You will, I know you will, and then——"

"No—we won't, we won't," they wailed so horrendously that she actually let down the bolt of the front door so that they burst out like seeds from a crackling, overripe pod into the veranda, with such wild, maniacal yells that she retreated to her bath and the shower of talcum powder and the fresh sari that were to help her face the summer evening.

They faced the afternoon. It was too hot. Too bright. The white walls of the veranda glared stridently in the sun. The bougainvillea hung about it, purple and magenta, in livid balloons. The garden outside was like a tray made of beaten brass, flattened out on the red gravel and the stony soil in all shades of metal—aluminum, tin, copper, and brass. No life stirred at this arid time of day—the birds still drooped, like dead fruit, in the papery tents of the trees; some squirrels lay limp on the wet earth under the garden tap. The outdoor dog lay stretched as if dead on the veranda mat, his paws and ears and tail all reaching out like dying travelers in search of water. He rolled his eyes at the children—two white marbles rolling in the purple sockets, begging for sympathy—and attempted to lift his tail in a wag but could not. It only twitched and lay still.

Then, perhaps roused by the shrieks of the children, a band of parrots suddenly fell out of the eucalyptus tree, tumbled frantically in the still, sizzling air, then sorted themselves out into battle formation and streaked away across the white sky.

The children, too, felt released. They too began tumbling, shoving, pushing against each other, frantic to start. Start what? Start their business. The business of the children's day which is—play.

"Let's play hide-and-seek."

"Who'll be It?"

"You be It."

"Why should I? You be——"

"You're the eldest——"

"That doesn't mean——"

The shoves became harder. Some kicked out. The motherly Mira intervened. She pulled the boys roughly apart. There was a tearing sound of cloth, but it was lost in the heavy panting and angry grumbling, and no one paid attention to the small sleeve hanging loosely off a shoulder.

"Make a circle, make a circle!" she shouted, firmly pulling and pushing till a kind of vague circle was formed. "Now clap!" she roared, and, clapping, they all chanted in melancholy unison: "Dip, dip, dip—my blue ship——" and every now and then one or the other saw he was safe by the way his hands fell at the crucial moment—palm on palm, or back of hand on palm—and dropped out of the circle with a yell and a jump of relief and jubilation.

Raghu was It. He started to protest, to cry "You cheated—Mira cheated—Anu cheated——" but it was too late, the others had all already streaked away. There was no one to hear when he called out, "Only in the veranda—the porch—Ma said—Ma *said* to stay in the porch!" No one had stopped to listen, all he saw were their brown legs flashing through the dusty shrubs, scrambling up brick walls, leaping over compost heaps and hedges, and then the porch stood empty in the purple shade of the bougainvillea, and the garden was as empty as before; even the limp squirrels had whisked away, leaving everything gleaming, brassy, and bare.

Only small Manu suddenly reappeared, as if he had dropped out of an invisible cloud or from a bird's claws, and stood for a moment in the center of the yellow lawn, chewing his finger and near to tears as he heard Raghu shouting, with his head pressed against the veranda wall, "Eighty-three, eighty-five, eighty-nine, ninety . . ." and then made off in a panic, half of him wanting to fly north, the other half counseling south. Raghu turned just in time to see the flash of his white shorts and the uncertain skittering of his red sandals, and charged after him with such a bloodcurdling yell that Manu stumbled over the hosepipe, fell into its rubber coils, and lay there weeping, "I won't be It—you have to find them all—all—All!"

"I know I have to, idiot," Raghu said, superciliously kicking him with his toe. "You're dead," he said with satisfaction, licking the beads of perspiration off his upper lip, and then stalked off in search of worthier prey, whistling spiritedly so that the hiders should hear and tremble.

Ravi heard the whistling and picked his nose in a panic, trying to find comfort by burrowing the finger deep—deep into that soft tunnel. He felt himself too exposed, sitting on an upturned flowerpot behind the garage. Where could he burrow? He could run around the garage if he heard Raghu come—around and around and around—but he hadn't much faith in his short legs when matched against Raghu's long, hefty, hairy footballer legs. Ravi had a

frightening glimpse of them as Raghu combed the hedge of crotons and hibiscus, trampling delicate ferns underfoot as he did so. Ravi looked about him desperately, swallowing a small ball of snot in his fear.

The garage was locked with a great heavy lock to which the driver had the key in his room, hanging from a nail on the wall under his work shirt. Ravi had peeped in and seen him still sprawling on his string cot in his vest and striped underpants, the hair on his chest and the hair in his nose shaking with the vibrations of his phlegm-obstructed snores. Ravi had wished he were tall enough, big enough to reach the key on the nail, but it was impossible, beyond his reach for years to come. He had sidled away and sat dejectedly on the flowerpot. That at least was cut to his own size.

But next to the garage was another shed with a big green door. Also locked. No one even knew who had the key to the lock. That shed wasn't opened more than once a year, when Ma turned out all the old broken bits of furniture and rolls of matting and leaking buckets, and the white anthills were broken and swept away and Flit sprayed into the spider webs and rat holes so that the whole operation was like the looting of a poor, ruined, and conquered city. The green leaves of the door sagged. They were nearly off their rusty hinges. The hinges were large and made a small gap between the door and the walls—only just large enough for rats, dogs, and, possibly, Ravi to slip through.

Ravi had never cared to enter such a dark and depressing mortuary of defunct household goods seething with such unspeakable and alarming animal life but, as Raghu's whistling grew angrier and sharper and his crashing and storming in the hedge wilder, Ravi suddenly slipped off the flowerpot and through the crack and was gone. He chuckled aloud with astonishment at his own temerity so that Raghu came out of the hedge, stood silent with his hands on his hips, listening, and finally shouted, "I heard you! I'm coming! *Got* you——" and came charging round the garage only to find the upturned flowerpot, the yellow dust, the crawling of white ants in a mud hill against the closed shed door—nothing. Snarling, he bent to pick up a stick and went off, whacking it against the garage and shed walls as if to beat out his prey.

Ravi shook, then shivered with delight, with self-congratulation. Also with fear. It was dark, spooky in the shed. It had a muffled smell, as of graves. Ravi had once got locked into the linen cupboard and sat there
weeping for half an hour before he was rescued. But at least that had been a familiar place, and even smelled pleasantly of starch, laundry, and, reassuringly, of his mother. But the shed smelled of rats, anthills, dust, and spider webs. Also of less definable, less recognizable horrors. And it was dark. Except for the white-hot cracks along the door, there was no light. The roof was very low. Although Ravi was small, he felt as if he could reach up and touch it with his fingertips. But he didn't stretch. He hunched himself into a ball so as not to bump into anything, touch or feel anything. What might there not be to touch him and

feel him as he stood there, trying to see in the dark? Something cold, or slimy—like a snake. Snakes! He leapt up as Raghu whacked the wall with his stick—then, quickly realizing what it was, felt almost relieved to hear Raghu, hear his stick. It made him feel protected.

But Raghu soon moved away. There wasn't a sound once his footsteps had gone around the garage and disappeared. Ravi stood frozen inside the shed. Then he shivered all over. Something had tickled the back of his neck. It took him a while to pick up the courage to lift his hand and explore. It was an insect—perhaps a spider—exploring *him*. He squashed it and wondered how many more creatures were watching him, waiting to reach out and touch him, the stranger.

There was nothing now. After standing in that position—his hand still on his neck, feeling the wet splodge of the squashed spider gradually dry—for minutes, hours, his legs began to tremble with the effort, the inaction. By now he could see enough in the dark to make out the large solid shapes of old wardrobes, broken buckets, and bedsteads piled on top of each other around him. He recognized an old bathtub—patches of enamel glimmered at him, and at last he lowered himself onto its edge.

He contemplated slipping out of the shed and into the fray. He wondered if it would not be better to be captured by Raghu and be returned to the milling crowd as long as he could be in the sun, the light, the free spaces of the garden, and the familiarity of his brothers, sisters, and cousins. It would be evening soon. Their games would become legitimate. The parents would sit out on the lawn on cane basket chairs and watch them as they tore around the garden or gathered in knots to share a loot of mulberries or black, teeth-splitting *jamun* from the garden trees. The gardener would fix the hosepipe to the water tap, and water would fall lavishly through the air to the ground, soaking the dry yellow grass and the red gravel and arousing the sweet, the intoxicating scent of water on dry earth—that loveliest scent in the world. Ravi sniffed for a whiff of it. He half-rose from the bathtub, then heard the despairing scream of one of the girls as Raghu bore down upon her. There was the sound of a crash, and of rolling about in the bushes, the shrubs, then screams and accusing sobs of "I touched the den——" "You did not——" "I did——" "You liar, you did *not*" and then a fading away and silence again.

Ravi sat back on the harsh edge of the tub, deciding to hold out a bit longer. What fun if they were all found and caught—he alone left unconquered! He had never known that sensation. Nothing more wonderful had ever happened to him than being taken out by an uncle and bought a whole slab of chocolate all to himself, or being flung into the soda man's pony cart and driven up to the gate by the friendly driver with the red beard and pointed ears. To defeat Raghu—that hirsute, hoarse-voiced football champion—and to be the winner in a circle of older, bigger, luckier children—that would be thrilling beyond

imagination. He hugged his knees together and smiled to himself almost shyly at the thought of so much victory, such laurels.

There he sat smiling, knocking his heels against the bathtub, now and then getting up and going to the door to put his ear to the broad crack and listening for sounds of the game, the pursuer and the pursued, and then returning to his seat with the dogged determination of the true winner, a breaker of records, a champion.

It grew darker in the shed as the light at the door grew softer, fuzzier, turned to a kind of crumbling yellow pollen that turned to yellow fur, blue fur, gray fur. Evening. Twilight. The sound of water gushing, falling. The scent of earth receiving water, slaking its thirst in great gulps and releasing that green scent of freshness, coolness. Through the crack Ravi saw the long purple shadows of the shed and the garage lying still across the yard. Beyond that, the white walls of the house. The bougainvillea had lost its lividity, hung in dark bundles that quaked and twittered and seethed with masses of homing sparrows. The lawn was shut off from his view. Could he hear the children's voices? It seemed to him that he could. It seemed to him that he could hear them chanting, singing, laughing. But what about the game? What had happened? Could it be over? How could it when he was still not found?

It then occurred to him that he could have slipped out long ago, dashed across the yard to the veranda, and touched the "den." It was necessary to do that to win. He had forgotten. He had only remembered the part of hiding and trying to elude the seeker. He had done that so successfully, his success had occupied him so wholly, that he had quite forgotten that success had to be clinched by that final dash to victory and the ringing cry of "Den!"

With a whimper he burst through the crack, fell on his knees, got up, and stumbled on stiff, benumbed legs across the shadowy yard, crying heartily by the time he reached the veranda so that when he flung himself at the white pillar and bawled, "Den! Den! Den!" his voice broke with rage and pity at the disgrace of it all, and he felt himself flooded with tears and misery.

Out on the lawn, the children stopped chanting. They all turned to stare at him in amazement. Their faces were pale and triangular in the dusk. The trees and bushes around them stood inky and sepulchral, spilling long shadows across them. They stared, wondering at his reappearance, his passion, his wild animal howling. Their mother rose from her basket chair and came toward him, worried, annoyed, saying, "Stop it, stop it, Ravi. Don't be a baby. Have you hurt yourself?" Seeing him attended to, the children went back to clasping their hands and chanting, "The grass is green, the rose is red. . . ."

But Ravi would not let them. He tore himself out of his mother's grasp and pounded across the lawn into their midst, charging at them with his head lowered so that they scattered in surprise. "I won, I won, I won," he bawled, shaking his head so that the big tears flew. "Raghu didn't find me. I won, I won—

—"

It took them a minute to grasp what he was saying, even who he was. They had quite forgotten him. Raghu had found all the others long ago. There had been a fight about who was to be It next. It had been so fierce that their mother had emerged from her bath and made them change to another game. Then they had played another and another. Broken mulberries from the tree and eaten them. Helped the driver wash the car when their father returned from work. Helped the gardener water the beds till he roared at them and swore he would complain to their parents. The parents had come out, taken up their positions on the cane chairs. They had begun to play again, sing and chant. All this time no one had remembered Ravi. Having disappeared from the scene, he had disappeared from their minds. Clean.

"Don't be a fool," Raghu said roughly, pushing him aside, and even Mira said, "Stop howling, Ravi. If you want to play, you can stand at the end of the line," and she put him there very firmly.

The game proceeded. Two pairs of arms reached up and met in an arc. The children trooped under it again and again in a lugubrious circle, ducking their heads and intoning

"The grass is green,
The rose is red;
Remember me
When I am dead, dead, dead, dead . . ."

And the arc of thin arms trembled in the twilight, and the heads were bowed so sadly, and their feet tramped to that melancholy refrain so mournfully, so helplessly, that Ravi could not bear it. He would not follow them, he would not be included in this funereal game. He had wanted victory and triumph—not a funeral. But he had been forgotten, left out, and he would not join them now. The ignominy of being forgotten—how could he face it? He felt his heart go heavy and ache inside him unbearably. He lay down full length on the damp grass, crushing his face into it, no longer crying, silenced by a terrible sense of his insignificance.


Anita Desai

Think about this.

1 Do you empathize with Ravi? Have you had similar experiences? What literary theory would this be related to?

2 If you were to visualize this story, what words would help you do so? Why?

3 How are loss and death presented in this short story? Do you think they are effective? Elaborate.

4 Why is everyone so surprised to see Ravi when he finally comes out of his hiding place? How would you describe their game?

5 What is Ravi's discovery? Support your answer with evidence from the text.

6 Identify the theme in this story. Do you think the title supports the theme?

7 What other meanings do you think are attached to the word "games" in this story? Elaborate.

8 Ravi's experiences are central to the story. Are his experiences common to all?

Take a break before you go on the next section.

Read about the author of the next short story before you read the story.

The information is from Wikipedia.

Shirley Geok-lin Lim (born 1944) was born in Malacca Malaysia. She is an American writer of poetry, fiction, and criticism. Her first collection of poems, *Crossing The Peninsula*, published in 1980, won her the Commonwealth Poetry Prize, a first both for an Asian and for a woman. Among several other awards that she has received, her memoir, *Among the White Moon Faces*, received the 1997 American Book Award.

Born in Melaka, Malaysia into a life of poverty, deprivation, parental violence, and abandonment in a culture that, at that time, rarely recognised girls as individuals, Lim had a pretty unhappy childhood. Reading was a huge solace, retreat, and escape for her. Scorned by teachers for her love of English over her "native" tongue, she was looked down upon for her pursuit of English literature. Her first poem was published in the *Malacca Times* when she was ten. By the age of eleven, she knew that she wanted to be a poet.

Lim had her early education at Infant Jesus Convent under the then British colonial education system. She won a federal scholarship to the University of Malaya, where she earned a B.A. first class honours degree in English at University of Malaya. In 1969, at the age of twenty-four, she entered graduate school at Brandeis University in Waltham, Massachusetts under a Fulbright scholarship, and received a Ph.D. in English and American Literature in 1973.
Lim is married to Charles Bazerman, also a professor and chair of the Education Department at University of California, Santa Barbara.

Lim is a professor in the English Department at the University of California, Santa Barbara. She has also taught internationally at the National University of Singapore, the National Institute Education of Nanyang

Technological University, and was the Chair Professor at the University of Hong Kong where she also taught poetry and creative writing. She has authored several books of poems, short stories, and criticism, and serves as editor and co-editor of numerous scholarly works. Lim is a cross-genre writer, although she identifies herself as a poet. Her research interests include:

- 20th century American literature;
- Asian American cultural studies;
- Post-colonial and Southeast Asian literature;
- ethnic and feminist writing and theory; and
- creative writing.

Lim has received numerous literary awards, among which are:

- "Fulbright Distinguished Lecturer Award" in 1996;
- American Book Award which she won twice, once with her co-edited anthology, *The Forbidden Stitch: An Asian American Women's Anthology* (1989), and the second time, with her memoir, *Among the White Moon Faces* (1997); and
- Asiaweek Short Story award for "Mr. Tang's Uncles" (Feminist Press, 1997).

Shame
Shirley Geok-lin Lim

"*Ta' malu!*"

Mei Sim wriggled at her mother's words.

"You no shame! Close your legs."

Mother was standing five steps below the landing, the soft straw broom in one hand and her head on a level with Mei Sim's shoulders.

Mei Sim stared down her legs which she had spread apart the better to balance her body as she half-lay on the smooth wooden landing and thought her thoughts to herself.

Up came the broom and thumped against her knees. She pulled them together and tugged at her short skirt.

"What you do here all day? Go ask Ah Kim to give you a bath." Her mother's round pretty face was troubled. She had had a perm just last week, and the fat curls sat like waxed waves over her brow, wrinkled with vexation. "We're going to visit *Tua Ee*. And don't sit with your legs open there. She think I bring you up with no shame."

"Ya, ma." Mei Sim sidled past her mother's solid body down the stairs, glad for something to do. Every day was a problem for her until her brothers came home from school at three when they would shout at her to go away but still could be persuaded to give her a piggy-back ride or to let her hold their legs in a wheel-barrow run. The house was empty and dull until then containing only chairs, tables, beds, cupboards, photographs and such like, but no one to play with.

Ah Kim was scrubbing her brother's uniform on the ridged washboard. Drub, drub, drub, slosh, slosh, slosh. Mei Sim squatted beside her. Ah Kim's stool was only a few inches high and she had her legs thrust straight in front with the wooden board held firmly in between. Her samfoo sleeves were rolled up high and the pale arms were wet and soapy up to the elbows. Taking the chunk of yellow laundry soap in her right hand, Ah Kim scrubbed it over a soiled collar. Then, seizing the collar in a fist, she pushed the cloth vigorously up and down the ridges. Her knuckles were red and swollen, but her face was peaceful. "You wait," she said, not turning away from the washboard. "I wash you next."

Bath-time was directly under the tall tap in the corner of the open-roofed bathroom. Mei Sim was just short enough to stand under the full flow of water pouring in a steady stream from the greenish brass tap while Ah Kim scrubbed her chest, legs and armpits with Lifebuoy. She was six and would soon be too tall for this manoeuvre. Soon, Ah Kim said, she would have to bathe herself with scoops of water from the clay jar in the other corner of the bathroom. Dodging in and out of the water, Mei Sim thought she would not like to have to work at her bath.

Mother dressed her in her New Year's party frock, an organdy material of pink and purple tuberoses with frills down the bib and four stiff layers gathered in descending for a skirt. She picked a red and green plaid ribbon which Ah Kim threaded through her plaits and, her face and neck powdered with Johnson Talc, she waited for the trishaw, pleased with herself and her appearance.

Mother had put on her gold bangles, gold earrings, and a long heavy chain of platinum with a cross and a pendant. Her kebaya was a pale blue, starched and ironed to a gleaming transparency under which her white lace chemise showed

clearly. Gold and diamond kerosang pinned the kebaya tightly together, and the gold-brown sarong was wrapped tightly around her pump hips and stomach. She had to hitch herself up onto the trishaw and, once seated, carefully smoothed the sarong over her knees. When Mei Sim climbed in, Mother gave her a push to keep her from crushing her sarong.

Grand-aunty's house was all the way in Klebang. Usually Father took them there for visits in the evening after their meal. It was enough of a long way off for Mei Sim to always fall asleep in the car before they reached home.

The trishaw man pedalled vigorously for the first part, ringing his bell smartly at slow crossing pedestrians and hardly pausing to look before turning a corner into another narrow road. At Tranquerah he began to slow down. There was much less motor traffic, a few bicycles, and now and again a hawker's cart got in his way. Green snaky veins zigzagged up his calves. His shaven coconut-round head was dripping with sweat. He didn't stop to wipe it, so the sweat ran down his forehead and got into his eyes, which were deep-set and empty, staring vaguely down the long road.

After a while, Mei Sim grew bored with watching the trishaw man pump the pedals. She leaned forward to stare at the houses on both sides of the road. What interesting things to see that she had missed on their evening car rides! Here was a small stall with bottles of *chinchaloh* and *blachan* neatly mounded on shelves. She glimpsed through an open door a red and gold altar cloth and bowls of oranges and apples before a dim sepia portrait. Two *neneks* in shabby sarong and *kebaya* sat on a long bench by the covered front of another house. Each woman had a leg pulled up under her sarong, like one-legged idols set for worship. Here was a pushcart with a tall, dark *mamak* frying red-brown noodles in a heavy *kwali*. How good it smelled. Mei Sim's stomach gave a little grumble.

Now they were passing the Baptist Gospel Hall where on Sunday evenings she had seen many people standing in rows singing sweetly. In the morning glare the shuttered windows were peeling paint and a crack showed clearly on the closed front door which had a huge chain and lock on it.

"Hoy!" the trishaw man shouted. The wheels swerved suddenly and bumped over something uneven. Mei Sim hadn't seen anything.

Her mother gripped her arm and said aloud, "You bodoh. Almost fall off the trishaw. Sit inside all the way."

"What was that, ma?"

"A puppy dog."

She turned her head to peer behind but the canvas flaps were down.

The trishaw man was talking to himself in Hokkien. A small trail of saliva was trickling down the side of his mouth. Mei Sim could only hear mumbles like, "hey…*yau soo…*chei…"

"What is he saying, ma?" she whispered.

"Never mind what he say. He angry at puppy dog, bring him bad luck."

Mei Sim looked at the bare brown legs again. They were moving much more slowly, and the mumbles continued, sometimes louder, sometimes quieting to a slippery whisper. Her mother didn't seem to mind the trishaw's pace or the man's crazy talk. She had been frowning to herself all this time and turning the three thick bangles round and round her right wrist. Her agitated motions made a gentle jingle as the bangles fell against each other, like chimes accompanying the slow

movements of the trishaw pedals.

They were on a deserted stretch of Klebang before the sandy rutted path on the left that led to Grand-aunty's house and the shallow sloping beach facing the Malacca Straits. Wood-planked shacks roofed with rusty galvanized iron alternated with common lots on which grew a wild profusion of morning glory, lallang, mimosa and sea-grape. A few coconut and areca palms leaned in jumbled lines away from the hot tarmac. The sky was a blinding blue, barren of clouds, and arching in a vast depth of heat under which the dripping trishaw man mumbled and cursed. The bicycle lurched forward and the attached carriage, on which Mei Sim crouched as if to make herself lighter, moved forward jerkily with it.

"Aiyah! *Sini boleh,*" her mother said sharply, and almost at the same moment the man's legs stopped and dangled over the wheels. She pushed Mei Sim off the sticky plastic seat and stepped down carefully so as not to disarrange the elaborately folded pleats of her skirt.

The man took a ragged face towel from his pocket and mopped his face. Mrs. Cheung clicked the metal snap of her black handbag, zipped open an inner compartment, extracted a beaded purse from it, unbuttoned a flap and counted some coins which she clinked impatiently in one hand, waiting for him to take the change. She poured the different coins into his calloused palm, then walked up the path without a word. Mei Sim stood for a moment watching him count the coins and, at her mother's annoyed call, ran up the narrow lane just wide enough for a car to go through.

Waddling ahead of her, her mother was singing out, "*Tua Ee, Tua Ee.*" A wooden fence, newly whitewashed, separated, separated Grand-aunty's house from the lane which suddenly petered out into a littered common compound shared with some Malay houses on low stilts. Beneath the houses and through the spaces between the concrete blocks on which the wood stilts were anchored, Mei Sim could see the grey coarse sand grading to a chalky white for yards ahead clumped by tough beach grass and outlined at stages by the ark, uneven markings of tidal remains, broken driftwood, crab shells, splinters of glass, red-rust cans, and black hair of seaweed.

Grand-aunty came out through the gap in the fence in flurry of kebaya lace. Her gleaming hair was coiffed in a twist, and a long gold pin sat on top of her head, like a nail on the fearsome Pontianak, Mei Sim thought.

"What's this?" she said in fluent Malay. "Why are you here so early without informing me? You must stay for lunch, I have already told that prostitute daughter of mine to boil the rice, so we have to cook another pot."

Grand-aunty had four sons, of whom she loved only the youngest, and a daughter whom she treated as a bought slave. She was not a woman for young girls and gave Mei Sim no attention, but she tolerated Jeng Chung as the niece whose successful marriage to a rich towkay's son she had arranged ten years before.

Mei Sim's mother visited her at least once a week with gifts of fruits, *pulot* and *ang-pows*, and consulted her on every matter in the Chung family's life. At six, Mei Sim was allowed to listen to all discussions; she was, after all, too young to understand.

It was in this way she learned what men liked their women to do in bed, how babies were made and how awful giving birth was. She knew the fluctuations in the

price of gold and what herbs to boil and drink to protect oneself from colds, rheumatism, overheat, smallpox, diarrhoea, or female exhaustion. It was in this way she found out that women were different from men who were *bodoh* and had to be trained to be what women wanted them to be. If women were carts, men were like *kerbau* hitched to them.

This morning she settled on the kitchen bench behind the cane chairs on which her mother and grand-aunt were sitting close to each other sharing the *sireh* box between them, chatting and scolding in Malay and snatches of English, and she listened and listened without saying a word to remind them of her presence.

"…and Bee Lian saw Hin at the cloth shop …she told me he's been going there every afternoon when he's supposed to be at the bank…that slut is probably taking all his money but I haven't said a word to him. I thought maybe you can help me what should I say to him. Oh, that swine, useless good-for-nothing. I scratch his eyes out, better still if I take a knife and cut her heart. These men always walking with legs apart, what does he want from me? Three children not enough, but she is a bitch – black as a Tamil and hairy all over. I keep myself clean and sweet-smelling, a wife he can be proud of. So itchified, never enough, always wanting more, more. That's why now he won't give me more money, say business bad, ha, bad! We know what's bad, I'll get some poison and put it in her food, and all my friends talking behind my back. She's making a fool out of me, but what can I do? I tell them better than a second wide, not even a mistress, just loose woman smelling like a bitch any man can take, so why not my Peng Ho."

It was Father Mother was complaining about! Mei Sim scrubbed her ears to clear them of wax, but quick tears had risen and clogged her nostrils, so her ears were filled with a thick sorrow. She knew all about second wives. Hadn't Second Uncle left his family to live in Ipoh because their Cantonese servant had bewitched him, and now he had three boys with her and second Aunty is always coming to their house to borrow money and to beg for the clothes they'd outgrown for her own children? And little Gek Yeo's mother had gone mad because her father had taken another wife, and she is now Tanjong Rambutan where Mother says she screams and tears off her clothes and has no hair left. Poor Gek Yeo had to go to her grandmother's house and her grandmother refuses to let her see her father.

Mei Sim wiped her nose on her gathered puff sleeve. Grand-aunty had risen from her chair and was shaking the folds of her thickly flowered sarong. Her Malay speech was loud and decisive. "All this scolding will do you no good. Men are all alike, itchy and hot. You cannot stop him by showing a dirty face or talking bad all the time. You will drive him away. The only thing that women have is their cunning. You must think hard. What do you want, a faithful man or a man who will support you and your children? Why should you care if he plays with this or that woman? Better for you, he won't ask so much from you in bed. No, you must be as sweet to him as when you were first courting. Talk to him sweet-sweet every time he comes home late. This will make him feel guilty and he will be nicer to you. Make him open the purse-strings. Tell him you need money for prayers at Hoon Temple to bring luck to his business. He will appreciate you for your efforts. Some men have to be bullied like your uncle, but…"

She stopped to take a breath, and Siew Eng, her skinny dark daughter, crept up beside and whispered, "Na' makan,'mak?"

"*Sundal!"* Grand-aunty shouted and slapped her sharply on her thin bare

arm. "Who asked you to startle me? You know how bad my heart is. You want me to die?"

Siew Eng hung her head. Her samfoo was faded and worn at the trouser bottoms, and the thin cotton print didn't hide her strange absence of breasts. She was already sixteen, had never been sent to school but had worked at home washing, cleaning and cooking since she was seven. All her strength seemed to have gone into her work, because her body itself was emaciated, her smile frail, and her face peaked and shrivelled like a *chiku* picked before its season and incapable of ripening, drying up to a small brown hardness.

Mei Sim had never heard her cousin laugh, had never seen her eat at the table. She served the food, cleaned the kitchen and ate standing up by the wood stove when everyone had finished.

Mother said Siew Eng was cursed. The fortune teller had told Grand-aunty after her birth that the girl would eat her blood, so she wouldn't nurse or hold the baby, had sent her to a foster mother, and had taken her back at seven to send her off to the kitchen where she slept on a camp bed. Mei Sim was glad she wasn't cursed! Her father loved her best, and Mother bought her the prettiest dresses and even let her use her lipstick.

"Now your uncle…" Grand-aunty stopped and her face reddened. "What are you waiting for, you stupid girl? Go serve the rice. We are coming to the table right away. Make sure there are no flies on the food."

Her daughter's scrawny chest seemed to shiver under the loose blouse.

"Ya 'mak, she mumbled and slipped off to the kitchen.

"Come, let's eat. I have *sambal blachan* just the way you like it, with sweet lime. The soy pork is fresh, steaming all morning and delicious."

Grand-aunty gobbled the heap of hot white rice which was served on her best blue china plates. She talked as she ate, pinching balls of rice flavoured with chillies and soy with her right hand and throwing the balls into her large wet mouth with a flick of her wrist and thumb. Mother ate more slowly, unaccustomed to manipulating such hot rice with her hand, while Mei Sim used a soup spoon on her tin plate.

"Your uncle," Grand-aunty said in between swallows of food and water, "is a timid man, a mouse. I used to think how to get male children with a man like that! I had to put fire into him, everyday must push him. Otherwise he cannot be a man."

"Huh, huh," Mother said, picking a succulent piece of the stewed pork and popping it into her mouth whole.

"But Peng Ho, he is an educated man, and he cannot be pushed. You must lead him gently, gently so he doesn't know what you are doing. Three children, you cannot expect him to stay by your side all the time. Let him have fun."

"Wha…" Mother said, chewing the meat hard.

"Yes, we women must accept our fate. If we want to have some fun also, stomach will explode. Where can we hide our shame? But men, they think they are datoks because they can do things without being punished. But we must control them, and to do that we must control their money."

Mei Sim thought Grand-aunty was very experienced. She was so old, yet her hair was still black, and her sons and husband did everything she told them. She was rich; the knitted purse looped to her string bag under her *kebaya* was alaways bulging with money. Father had to borrow money from her once when

some people didn't pay for his goods, and she had charged him a lot for it. He still complained about it to Mother each time they drove home from Grand-aunty's house.

"But how?" protested Mother, a faint gleam of sweat appearing on her forehead and upper lip as she ate more and more of the pork.

Grand-aunty began to whisper and Mei Sim didn't dare ask her to speak up nor could she move from her seat as she hadn't finished her lunch.

Mother kept nodding and nodding her head. She was no longer interested in the food but continued to put it in her mouth without paying attention to it until her plate was clear. "Yah, yah. Huh, huh. Yah, yah," she repeated like a trance-medium, while Grand-aunty talked softly about accounts and ton-tins and rubber lands in Jasin. Mei Sim burped and began to feel sleepy.

"Eng!" Grand-aunty called harshly. "Clear up the table you lazy girl. Sleeping in the kitchen, nothing to do. Come here."

Siew Eng walked slowly towards her mother, pulling at her blouse nervously.

"Come here quickly, I say." Grand-aunty's mouth was dribbling with saliva. She appeared enraged, her fleshy nose quivering under narrowed eyes. As Siew Eng stood quietly beside her chair, she took the sparse flesh above her elbow between thumb and forefinger and twisted it viciously, breathing hard. A purple bruise bloomed on the arm. "I'll punish you for walking so slowly when I call you," she huffed. "You think you can be so proud in my house."

Siew Eng said nothing. A slight twitch of her mouth quickly pressed down as the only sign that the pinch had hurt.

"What do you say? What do you say, you prostitute?"

"Sorry, 'mak," Siew Eng whispered, hanging her head lower and twisting the cloth of her blouse.

Only then did Grand-aunty get up from the table. The two women returned to the chairs beside the *sireh* table, where two neat green packages of *sireh* rested. Sighing happily, Grand-aunty put the large wad in her mouth and began to chew. Mother followed suit, but she had a harder time with the generous size of the sireh and had to keep pushing it in her mouth as parts popped out from the corners.

Mei Sim sat on her stool, but her head was growing heavier, her eyes kept dropping as if they wanted to fall to the floor. She could hear the women chewing and grunting; it seemed as if she could feel the bitter green leaves tearing in her own mouth and dissolving with the tart lime and sharp crunchy betel nut and sweet-smelling cinnamon. Her mouth was dissolving into an aromatic dream when she heard chimes ringing sharply in the heavy noon air.

For the briefest moment Mei Sim saw her father smiling beside her, one hand in his pocket jingling the loose change, and the other hand gently steering an ice cream bicycle from whose opened box delicious vapours were floating. "Vanilla! She heard herself cry out, at the same moment that Grand-aunty called out, "Aiyoh! What do you want?" and she woke up.

A very dark man with close-cropped hair was carefully leaning an old bicycle against the open door jamb. Two shiny brown hens, legs tied with rope and hanging upside down by the bicycle handles blinked nervously, and standing shyly behind the man was an equally dark and shiny boy dressed in starched white shirt and pressed khaki shorts.

"Nya, the man said respectfully, bowing a little and scraping his rubber thongs on the cement floor as if to ask permission to come in.

"Aiyah, Uncle Muti, apa buat? You come for business or just for visit?"

"Ha, I bring two hens. My wife say must to puan, this year we have many chickens."

"Also, you bring the rent?" Grand-aunty was smiling broadly, the sireh tucked to one side of her mouth like a girlish pucker. "Come, come and sit down. Eng, Eng!" Her voice raised to a shriek till Eng came running from behind the garden. "Bring tea for Uncle Muti. Also, take the hens into the kitchen. Stupid girl! Must tell you everything."

The boy stayed by the bicycle staring at the women inside with bright frank eyes.

Curious, Mei Sim went out. He was clean, his hair still wet from a bath. "What school you?" she asked. He was older, she knew, because he was in a school uniform.

He gave her a blank stare.

"You speak English?"

He nodded.

"You want play a game?" she ran out into the compound, motioning for him to follow.

Mei Sim had no idea what she wanted to play, but she was oh so tired of sitting still, and the white sand and brown sea-nuts and blue flowers on the leafy green creepers on the fence seemed so delicious after the crunch, crunch, crunch of Grand-aunty's lunch that she spread her arms and flew through the sky. "Whee, whee," she laughed.

But the boy wouldn't play. He stood by the sweet-smelling *tanjong bunga* and stared at her.

"What you stare at?" she asked huffily. "Something wrong with me?"

"Your dress," he answered without the least bit of annoyance.

"What to stare?" Mei Sim was suddenly uncomfortable and bent down to look for snails.

"So pretty. *Macham bungah.*"

She looked up quickly to see if he was making fun of her, but his brown round face was earnestly staring at the tiers of ruffles on her skirt.

"Want play a game?" she asked again.

But he said, "My sister no got such dress."

Mei Sim laughed, "You *orang jakun*," she said, "but never mind. You want feel my dress? Go on. I never mind."

He went nearer to her and stretched out his hand. He clutched at the frills around the bib, staring at the pink and purple tuberoses painted on the thin organdy.

"Mei Si-i-m!" Her mother's voice brayed across the compound. There was a confusion as the boy rushed away and the woman came running, panting in the sun, and pulled her at her arm. "What you do? Why you let the boy touch you? You no shame?"

Grand-aunty stood by the door, while the dark man had seized his son by the shoulder and was talking to him in furious low tones.

Mei Sim felt tears in her mouth, and wondered why she was crying, why her

mother was shaking her. Then she saw the man pushing his rusty old Raleigh through the gate, without the hens, still holding the boy by his shoulder. She saw the look of hate which the boy threw at her, and she felt a hot pain in her chest as if she knew why he must hate her. A huge shame filled her and she was just about to burst into noisy weeping when she saw her mother's red, red eyes. "He did it, he pulled at my dress," she screamed, stretching her body straight as an arrow, confronting her lie.


Try answering these questions. Bring your answers to the tutorial session.

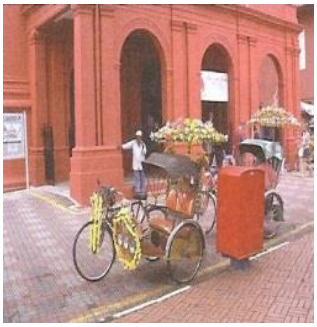
Comment on the setting. How effective is it in giving the reader a glimpse into the life of Mei Sim and her family?

How would a reader react to the description of the trishaw man? Would a reader of an earlier era have reacted differently? Why?

The narrator makes use of images to get a feel of Malacca. Identify some of these images.

Mei Sim's mother's English is far from perfect. Why does the writer chose to leave it so?

How does Mee Sim's description of her Grand Aunt influence the reader?



"She was not a woman for young girls … but she tolerated Jeng Chung as the niece whose successful marriage to a rich towkay's son she had arranged … ." From a feminist point of view, what can be said about the Grand Aunt?

"If women were carts, men were like the *kerbau* hitched to them." What do you understand by this?

What is the shocking piece of news that Mei Sim hears?

“The only thing that women have is their cunning. … What do you want, a faithful husband or a man who will support you and your children?” Do you think that the Grand Aunt was speaking for all women of her community? How

What else about Peranakan culture does the narrator share with the reader?

The Grand Aunt and Jeng Chung seem to forget Mei Sim’s presence. What does this tell the reader about them?

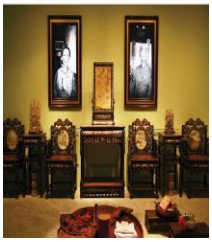
would women today react to a similar situation? Why?

Why do you think the writer choses to include the story of Siew Eng? Comment from a social and cultural perspective.

"Yes, we women must accept out fate." Do you think the Grand Aunt accepted her *fate*? Elaborate.

Mei Sim's mother does not do anything about Siew Eng's plight. Why?

"What you do? Why you let the boy touch you? You no shame?" What do you think the children will feel about this incident? What was their *crime*?



Why was Mei Sim ashamed? What does this tell you about her? Why did she feel compelled to lie?

Identify a theme in this short story. Show how the theme is developed.

Analyze this short story from a gender and cultural perspective.

You have come to the end of this unit. Congratulations!

TOPIC 5	ANALYSING VARIOUS FORMS OF POETRY

SYNOPSIS:

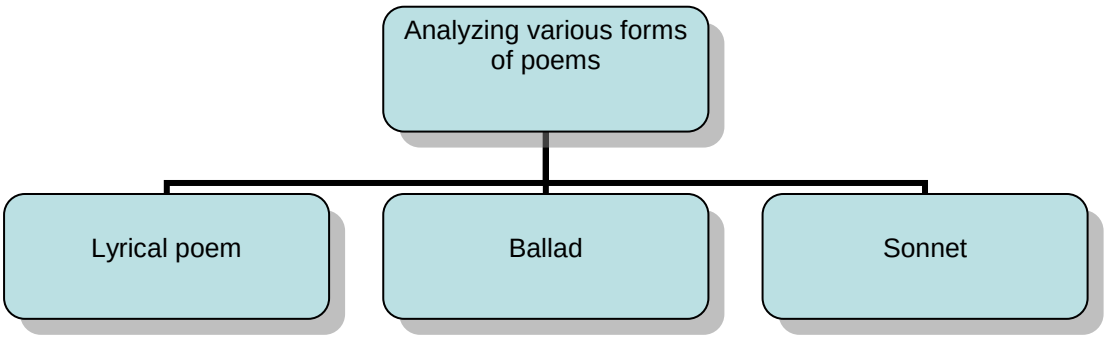
Topic 5 introduces you to lyric poems, ballads and sonnets. It seeks to show you the different forms and features of each poem. Samples of each poetry will be given and from here, you will work on a few exercises to enable you to understand the various poetic devices found in the poem. By working on these exercises, you will have a better understanding of the forms and features of each form.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of topic 5, you should be able to identify and analyse the form and features of:

- lyrical poems
- ballads
- sonnets
- poetic devices used in poems

FRAMEWORK



Let us begin by answering the following question:

What is poetry?

There are as many definitions of poetry. These are the different ideas on poetry given by several poets:

William Wordsworth: "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings"

Emily Dickinson : "If I read a book and it makes my body so cold no fire ever can warm me, I know that is poetry"

Dylan Thomas: " what makes me laugh or cry or yawn, what makes my toenails twinkle, what makes me want to do this or that or nothing."

Robert Frost : "A poem begins with a lump in the throat, a home-sickness or a love-sickness. It is a reaching-out toward expression; an effort to find fulfillment. A complete poem is one where the emotion has found its thought and the thought has found the words."

In essence, poetry is a piece of literature written by a poet in meter or verse expressing various emotions which are expressed by the use of variety of techniques including metaphors, similes and onomatopoeia. The emphasis on the aesthetics of language and the use of techniques such as repetition, meter and rhyme are what are commonly used to distinguish poetry from prose. Poems often make heavy use of imagery and word association to quickly convey emotions. Many poems use words to paint a picture in your head.

Forms of poetry

In this section, you will be introduced to lyrical poems, ballads and sonnets.

Lyrical Poetry

Lyrical Poetry consists of a poem, such as a sonnet or an ode, that expresses the thoughts and feelings of the poet. The term lyric is now commonly referred to as the words to a song. Lyric poetry does not tell a story which portrays characters and actions. The lyric poet addresses the reader directly, portraying his or her own feeling, state of mind, and perceptions. T. S. Eliot is one of the prominent names in lyric poetry.

Example of a Lyric Poem

Emily Dickinson's poem "I heard a fly buzz when I died" is an example of a lyric poem. it is a reflection of what happens when one dies. In the poem, the persona is waiting to die. It seems as though they are expecting something spectacular to happen at the moment of their death. This spectacular event they are expecting does not happen.

Dying
(aka I heard a fly buzz when I died)
by Emily Dickinson

I heard a fly buzz when I died;
The stillness round my form
Was like the stillness in the air
Between the heaves of storm.

The eyes beside had wrung them dry,
And breaths were gathering sure
For that last onset, when the king
Be witnessed in his power.

I willed my keepsakes, signed away
What portion of me I
Could make assignable,-and then
There interposed a fly,

With blue, uncertain, stumbling buzz,
Between the light and me;
And then the windows failed, and then
I could not see to see.

Emily Dickinson

In analyzing poems, poetic devices such as

- stanza
- ryhme scheme
- quatrain
- couplet will be analyzed in greater detail.

Some of these devices can be identified in the poem *Dying* aka *I heard a fly buzz when I died.*

In general, the poem is made up of four stanzas, which act like paragraphs in a poem. It is in the stanza that we find the rhyme scheme of the poem: the end rhyme—or the rhyming of the words at the end of lines—follows the pattern: **abcb**. This means that the words at the end of the first and third lines do NOT rhyme, but the second and fourth lines DO rhyme at the end. For example, in the first stanza, "form" and "storm" rhyme. In the second stanza, "sure" and "power" rhyme (though "power" is closer to a "near-rhyme," also known as "slant rhyme"). The third stanza shows the second and fourth lines rhyming with "I" and "fly" and so forth.

The *rhythmic* structure in the stanzas, for the most part, seems to show three stressed syllables in the second and fourth lines (called "trimeter"), and four stressed syllables in the first and third lines (called "tetrameter"). The meter represents a certain number of paired syllables for each line, also called "feet." The stress usually falls on the second syllable. For example, in the following line, see where the stress lies—this stress creates the rocking motion of the poem, especially when read out loud: I heard a fly buzz when I died

The stress lies on "heard," "fly," "when," and "died." When scanning the line, it would look like this: ^ / ^ / ^ / ^ / (where the caret "^" shows an unstressed syllable, and the slash "/" shows a stressed syllable).
Onomatopoeia is used with the world "buzz" and "breaths." And imagery, another poetic device, is vividly rendered in the line "There interposed a fly, / With blue, uncertain, stumbling buzz..."

from:
http://highered.mcgraw- hill.com/sites/0072405228/ student_view0/poetic _glossary. html
For further references on poetic devices, you can go to this website:

http://storytrail.com/poetry/poeticdevices.htm

These questions are based on the poem *Dying (I heard a fly buzz when I died).*

1. How many stanza does the poem have?
2. What is the rhyme scheme?
3. Provide an example of assonance.
4. What effect does the repetition of the words "... and then ..." have on te reader?

Ballads

According to the Oxford Dictionary of Literary terms a ballad is "a folk song or orally transmitted poem telling in a direct and dramatic manner some popular story usually derived from a tragic incident in local history or legend. The story is told simply, impersonally, and often with vivid dialogue.
Ballads are normally composed in *quatrains* with alternating *four-stress* and *three-stress* lines, the *second* and *fourth* lines *rhyming* but some ballads are in *couplet* form, and some others have *six-line stanzas.*

Ballads made its appearance in many parts of Europe in the late Middle Ages, they flourished particularly strongly in Scotland from the 15th century onward. Since the 18th century, educated poets outside the folk-song tradition—

notably Coleridge and Goethe— have written imitations of the popular ballad's form and style: Coleridge's *'Rime of the Ancient Mariner'* (1798) is a celebrated example.

Before you proceed to read the summary of Coleridge's "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" download his poem from this website:
http://www.bartleby.com/101/549.html

In order to further understand the poem, you are also advised to read the biography of the poet and you can find it from here:
http://www.victorianweb.org/previctorian/stc/bio.html

Summary of "Rime of the Ancient Mariner"

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner is the longest major poem by the English poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, written in 1797–98 and was published in 1798 in the first edition of *Lyrical Ballads*. Along with other poems in *Lyrical Ballads*, it was a signal shift to modern poetry and the beginning of British Romantic literature.

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner relates the events experienced by a mariner who has returned from a long sea voyage. The Mariner stops a man who is on the way to a wedding ceremony and begins to narrate a story. The Wedding-Guest's reaction turns from bemusement to impatience and fear to fascination as the Mariner's story progresses, as can be seen in the language style: for example, Coleridge uses narrative techniques such as *personification* and *repetition* to create either a sense of danger, of the supernatural or of serenity, depending on the mood of each of the different parts of the poem.

The Mariner's tale begins with his ship departing on its journey. Despite initial good fortune, the ship is driven south off course by a storm and eventually reaches Antarctica. A bird called an albatross (symbolizing the Christian soul) appears and leads them out of the Antarctic, but, even as the albatross is praised by the ship's crew, the Mariner shoots the bird ("with my cross-bow / I shot the albatross"). The crew is angry with the Mariner, believing the albatross brought the south wind that led them out of the Antarctic.

However, the sailors change their minds when the weather becomes warmer and the mist disappears ("'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay / that bring the fog and mist"). The crime arouses the wrath of spirits who then pursue the ship "from the land of mist and snow"; the south wind that had initially led them from the land of ice now sends the ship into uncharted waters, where it is becalmed.

The poem on the surface explores violation of nature and its resulting psychological effects on the Mariner, who interprets the fates of his crew to be a direct result of his having shot down an albatross. The poem is often read as a Christian allegory. The structure of the poem, according to McGann, is influenced by Coleridge's interest in higher criticism, and its function "was to illustrate a significant continuity of meaning between cultural phenomena that seemed as diverse as pagan superstitions, Catholic theology, Aristotelian science, and contemporary philological theory, to name only a few of the work's ostentatiously present materials.

adapted from: http://poetry.eserver.org/ancient-mariner.html.

Below is an extract from *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (Samuel Taylor Coleridge)

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner
(text of 1834)
By Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Argument

How a Ship having passed the Line was driven by storms to the cold Country towards the South Pole; and how from thence she made her course to the tropical Latitude of the Great Pacific Ocean; and of the strange things that befell; and in what manner the Ancyent Marinere came back to his own Country.

PART 1

It is an ancient Mariner,
And he stoppeth one of three.
'By thy long grey beard and glittering eye,
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?

The Bridegroom's doors are opened wide,
And I am next of kin;
The guests are met, the feast is set:
May'st hear the merry din.'

He holds him with his skinny hand,
'There was a ship,' quoth he.
'Hold off! unhand me, grey-beard loon!'
Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

He holds him with his glittering eye—
The Wedding-Guest stood still,
And listens like a three years' child:
The Mariner hath his will.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone:
He cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

'The ship was cheered, the harbour cleared,
Merrily did we drop
Below the kirk, below the hill,
Below the lighthouse top.

And now the STORM-BLAST came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong:
He struck with his o'ertaking wings,
And chased us south along.

With sloping masts and dipping prow,
As who pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head,
The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,
And southward aye we fled.

And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold:
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

And through the drifts the snowy clifts
Did send a dismal sheen:
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken—
The ice was all between.

The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around:
It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,
Like noises in a swound!

At length did cross an Albatross,

The Sun came up upon the left, Out of the sea came he! And he shone bright, and on the right Went down into the sea. Higher and higher every day, Till over the mast at noon—' The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast, For he heard the loud bassoon. The bride hath paced into the hall, Red as a rose is she; Nodding their heads before her goes The merry minstrelsy. The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast, Yet he cannot choose but hear; And thus spake on that ancient man, The bright-eyed Mariner.	Thorough the fog it came; As if it had been a Christian soul, We hailed it in God's name. It ate the food it ne'er had eat, And round and round it flew. The ice did split with a thunder-fit; The helmsman steered us through! And a good south wind sprung up behind; The Albatross did follow, And every day, for food or play, Came to the mariner's hollo! In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud, It perched for vespers nine; Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white, Glimmered the white Moon-shine.' 'God save thee, ancient Mariner! From the fiends, that plague thee thus!— Why look'st thou so?'—With my cross-bow I shot the ALBATROSS.

To check your understanding of the poem, go to the website below and try the quiz.

http://www.gradesaver.com/the-rime-of-the-ancient-mariner/study-guide/quiz1/

You may refer to this website for notes on poetic devices:

http://storytrail.com/poetry/poeticdevices.htm

Take a break before moving on to the next topic.

Sonnets

A sonnet is a lyrical poem of a single stanza which consists of fourteen lines. There are two types of sonnets. They are:

- Italian or Petrarchan sonnets, and
- English sonnets or Shakespearean sonnets

Petrarchan Sonnet

Italian or Petrarchan sonnets are divided into two main parts; an *octave* and *sestet*. An octave consists of eight lines rhyming *abbaabba* whereas a sestet involves six lines rhyming either *cdecde* or *cdccdc*. Moreover, the rhyme pattern involves the expression or the statement of problem or situation in the octave and a resolution in the sestet.

Shakespearean Sonnets or English Sonnets

The Earl of Surrey was the chief motive behind the introduction and development of this English sonnet. It consists of three quatrains and a concluding *couplet* rhyming *abab cdcd efef gg*. It often presents repetition of statement in each of the three quatrains and the final couplet enforces an epigrammatic turn at the end. One of the famous poets who wrote sonnets was John Donne, who covered a variety of religious themes in his "Holy Sonnets" in the seventeenth century. Milton then fashioned sonnets with more serious themes. In the 19th century, Wordsworth, Keats, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Christina Rossetti, D. G. Rossetti wrote sonnets.

After reading the notes on sonnets, try to identify the features of a sonnet from Shakespeare's *Sonnet 18.* Discuss with your friends.

Sonnet 18

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate;
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date;
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st;
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st:
So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

—William Shakespeare

Provide examples of the following features found in *Sonnet 18*

1. quatrains
2. couplet
3. personification
4. repetition
5. metaphor

The answers to these questions will be discussed in class.

Congratulations!

TOPIC 6	ANALYZING THE VARIOUS FORMS OF POETRY

SYNOPSIS

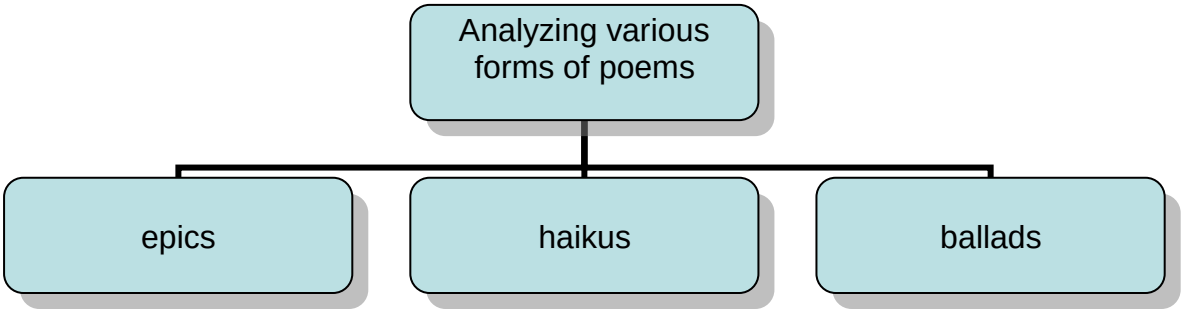
In topic 6, you will be introduced to three other forms of poem namely epics, haikus and ballads. You will also learn the forms and features of these poems. In addition, you will practise writing a simple haiku and a limerick.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of Topic 6, you should be able to identify, differentiate and explain the forms and features of

- epics
- haikus
- limericks

FRAMEWORK



Epics

Generally defined, an epic is a long narrative poem on a great and serious subject, related in an elevated style, and centered on a heroic or quasi-divine figure on whose actions depend the fate of a tribe, a nation, or the human race. The traditional epics were shaped by a literary artist from historical and legendary materials which had developed in the oral traditions of his nation during a period of expansion and warfare (*Beowulf*, *The Odyssey*, *The Iliad*).

Traditional (primary) epics are shaped from the legends and traditions of a heroic age and are part of oral tradition; while secondary (or literary) epics are written down from the beginning, and their poets adapt aspects of traditional epics. The poems written by Homer are usually regarded as the first important epics and the main source of epic conventions in western Europe.

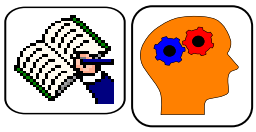
The conventions of epics include:

1. Centrality of a hero, sometimes semi-divine. He has an imposing physical stature and is greater in all ways than the common man.
2. The setting is extensive. It covers great geographical distances, perhaps even visiting the underworld; at times, cosmic.
3. The action consists of deeds of valor or superhuman courage (especially in battle).
4. Supernatural forces interest themselves in the action and intervene at times. The intervention of the gods is called "machinery.
5. The style of writing is elevated, even ceremonial.

Some of the most famous epic poems are the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* by Homer and the epic poem of *The Song of Hiawatha* by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807 -1882). It is believed, for example, that there were epics covering the entire ten year period of the Trojan war, but of these only the *Iliad*, covering a relatively short period during the last year of the war, has survived in more than fragmentary form.

Other primary epics you may have read or at least have probably heard of are *Gilgamesh* and *Beowulf.*

Visit this website: http://www.lone-star.net/literature/beowulf/index.html. Click "The adventure begins here". Copy and paste the "Early History of the Danes". Read this epic. Use the notes on the conventions of epic to further help you to understand the form of this poem and to answer questions in the Exercise.



Based on *Early History of the Danes*, answer the following questions:

1. Based on the title of this epic, which country are the Danes from?
2. Who is the warrior?
3. Based on the information in stanza 1, describe the hero/king?
4. Which words are used to describe Grain?
5. Who ruled the country after Grain's death? List down the good deeds that the new king did his country.
6. When Hrothgar became the ruler of the country, his citizens obeyed him. Why?
7. List down the forces that helped Hrothgar rule the country.
8. Is Grendel a friend or enemy? State your reasons.

To further enhance your understanding of *Beowulf*, read the rest of the epic from here: http://www.lonestar.net/literature/beowulf/index.html.

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Haikus

Haiku is a poetic form and a type of poetry from the Japanese culture. Haiku combines form, content, and language in a meaningful, yet compact form. Haiku poets, write about everyday things. Many themes include nature, feelings, or experiences. Usually they use simple words and grammar. The most common form for Haiku is three short lines. The first line usually contains five (5) syllables, the second line seven (7) syllables, and the third line contains five (5) syllables.

With Haiku, rhyme is not as important as the form. A Haiku must "paint" a mental image in the reader's mind. This is the challenge of Haiku - to put the poem's meaning and imagery in the reader's mind in ONLY 17 syllables over just three (3) lines of poetry!

Here's a Haiku to help you remember:

I am first with ***five***
Then ***seven*** *in the middle –*
Five *again to end.*


Visit this website for samples of haikus:

http://teacher2b.com/creative/haiku1.htm.

Select one that you like. As you read the haiku, mark the syllables.

Which words found in the haiku help paint a mental image?

Discuss in groups.

This is an example of a “What am I” haiku.

Green and speckled legs,
Hop on logs and lily pads
Splash in cool water.

Now that you have analyzed the form of haikus, try writing a “what am I” haiku.

For further reading about haikus, you can check this website:
http://www.ahapoetry.com/haiartjr.htm

Beaches

By Kaitlyn Guenther

Sand scatters the beach
Waves crash on the sandy shore
Blue water shimmers

Limericks

A limerick is a five-line poem written with one couplet and one triplet. If a couplet is a two-line rhymed poem, then a triplet would be a three-line rhymed poem. The rhyme pattern is a a b b a with lines 1, 2 and 5 containing 3 beats and rhyming, and lines 3 and 4 having two beats and rhyming. Some people

say that the limerick was invented by soldiers returning from France to the Irish town of Limerick in the 1700's.

Limericks are meant to be funny. They often contain *hyperbole, onomatopoeia, idioms, puns*, and other figurative devices. The last line of a good limerick contains the PUNCH LINE or "heart of the joke." Thus when you work with limericks, remember to have a pun, to inject the element of FUN! Here is an example of limerick.

A flea and a fly in a flue
Were caught, so what could they do?
Said the fly, "Let us flee."
"Let us fly," said the flea.
So they flew through a flaw in the flue.
-Anonymous

You might need to refer to this website: http://ezinearticles.com/?Poetic-Devices-in-Poetry&id=110584, for definitions of poetic devices such as onomatopoeia, idioms and puns.

Try completing this limerick.

There once was a pauper named Meg
Who accidentally broke her _____.
She slipped on the _____.
Not once, but thrice
Take no pity on her, I _____.

The answers to the questions in this unit will be discussed in Session 2.

Well done!

TOPIC 7 ANALYZING THEMES IN ASIAN SHORT PLAYS

SYNOPSIS

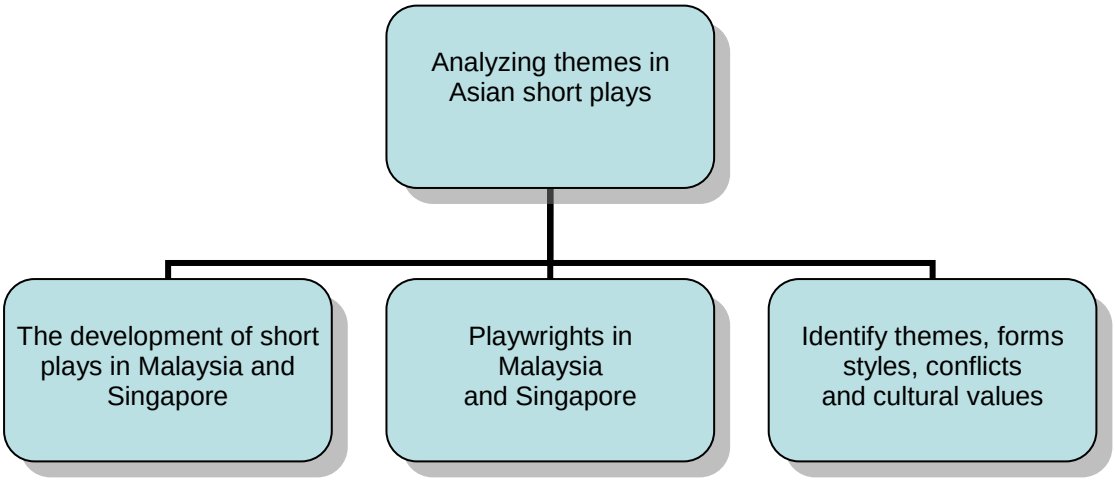
Topic 7 discusses the development of short plays and dramas in English in both Malaysia and Singapore. You will be introduced to a few Malaysian and Singapore playwrights. You will read a summary on the drama *We Could *... You Mr Birch*, produced by Kee Thuan Chye, a Malaysian playwright. But you will particularly focus on Kuo Pao Kun's *The Coffin is too Big for the Hole* in this topic.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of topic 7, you should be able to:

- trace the development of short plays and drama in English in Malaysia and Singapore
- recognize and compare the works of the playwrights
- identify and analyse the various themes, forms, styles and cultural values in the selected plays
- identify and analyse the conflicts in the play and relate the conflicts to the political scenario of the region

FRAMEWORK



The development of short plays in Malaysia and Singapore

In this section, you will read a brief history of the development of drama in Malaysia and Singapore. You will discover reasons for the rapid development of drama in the region especially during the post colonial period.

Malaysian drama in English

The discussion on the development of short plays in Asia will largely focus on Malaysia and Singapore as both countries share a similar historical background.

Records on the development of Asian short plays are not well documented. One of the reasons for this is because dramas in English, especially in Malaysia developed rather slowly in the last 25 years. One of the reasons for the slow progress in Malaysian is because English lost its status as the official language when it gained independence in 1957. The government, in an effort to foster unity made Bahasa Malaysia the medium of instruction in schools, hence reducing the significance of the English Language.

Efforts to revive drama in English were an uphill task. The language policies adopted by the government namely the National Language Act 1967 and the Amendment Act 1971 did not augur well for writers in English. It created a feeling of alienation and marginalization among English educated writers and further threatened their creativity which resulted in a number of them leaving the country to seek their fortune abroad.

The raised status of Bahasa Malaysia as the national language also meant that Malay literature or Sastera Melayu would become the national literature, while other literatures in other language including English as “sectional literature” or “Kesusasteraan sukuan” This further hampered the spirit of creativity of those writing in English.

Another reason for the slow development of literature in English in Malaysia is the loss of convictions among English writers. There was no channel for them to deliver their work as the education policy had somewhat restricted them.

This was seen particularly in 1983 when students were educated entirely in Bahasa Malaysia. A significant consequence was that the reduced role of English resulted in reduced exposure to English literature. Thus, writers in English did not find it rewarding to continue writing as there would be few who would appreciate their work.

Interestingly, a quarter of a century ago, there was an increased awareness of Southeast Asian cultures, especially the cultures of the Malay Indonesian world. An interesting point to note was that, Malaysian drama in English, in the last decade has reflected a detached influence from the British sources, but instead showed signs of deliberate efforts to turn to Asian forms of theatre.

According to Yong (2001), the status of Malaysian drama in English is assumed to be post-colonial, since it did not develop based on any roots in local or regional theatre traditions. Although it was superimposed on a region that already possessed three Asian theatres, Malay, Chinese and Indian, in the initial stage, little effort was made to start a dialogue with these Asian forms of drama. Thus, Malaysian drama in English was a self-enclosed imitation of the British original, and one of the sources of its weakness up until the present is due to its indifference to its region's theatre traditions. Efforts have been made to reduce the colonial variety of Malaysian drama in English but such attempts are limited to domestic comedies and musicals.

The few who remain active in elevating the status of drama in English believe that there is a need to fill local needs, and that theatre in this region should serve a serious purpose. The printed media, in particular the New Straits Times between the years 1972-1980 was instrumental in accelerating the process of change in Malaysian theatres by providing a public theory of Malaysian drama. Its columnist, Utih, convinced many beyond the converted and undoubtedly enunciated the changed awareness of Malaysian drama in English.

The general desire to rediscover the past is clear enough among the theatre groups that re-dedicated themselves to the task of forging a tradition. The Malaysian Arts Theatre Group (MATG) illustrates the outcome of this search. The MATG's early effort to discover a Malaysian voice in theatre in English has led the group to pioneer such plays as K. Das's "Lela Mayang" and "All the Perfumes", Syed Alwi's "The More We are Together", and Patrick Yeoh's "The Need to Be". MATG staged "Genta Rasa" in May 1971. The drama was a conscious attempt to break down cultural barriers in ethnic and economic groups. The open air staging of the drama, and by combining turns in English and Bahasa Malaysia, apart from not charging admission fee, were part of MATG's effort to create a revolutionary moment in Malaysian theatre.

One of the chief characteristics of Malaysian drama in English is fragmentation.
However it is possible to discern an emerging pattern in the work of playwrights and directors such as Chin San Sooi, Vijaya Samarawickrama, Thor Kah Hoong, Stella Kon, Karen Kraal and M. Manivasan. They have demonstrated that a locally and regionally based tradition could be forged. This is seen in such productions as Syed Alwi's "Going North", Edward Dorrall's "The Hour of the Dog"; Stella Kon's "Z is for Zygote", "To Hatch a Swan", "Birds of a Feather" and "The Bridge"; Chin San Sooi's "Lady White and Refugees: Images"; Lee Joo For's "When the Sun Sits on that Branches of the Jambu Tree"; "The Propitious Kidnapping of the Cultured Daughter"; and "The Halter".

The transition from the early, intensely nationalistic phase, (leading up to "Genta Rasa") to the preoccupations of the 1980s has witnessed a decreasing role for language in Malaysian drama in English. In the early examples of the Malaysian plays in English such as Patrick Yeoh's " The Need to Be" and K. Das's "Lela Mayang", the prominent variety of English gives to the work a kind of documentary validity. In the "Need to Be", the basic situation is the problems of a squatter family, which allows for naturalistic use of sufficient indexes of the habitual of language spoken by the class of people in the play.

For example, habitual usage suggests Cantonese interference in the following exchanges:

Ma Wong: *Don't stare at me-I didn't give him.*
Kok Weng: *Give me my money.*
Pa Wong: *Where did you get this two dollars?*
Kok Weng: *What for you want to know? I didn't steal your money.*
Pa Wong: *You better tell me.*
Kok Weng: *I…my…my friend gave me.*

In its effort of an Asian or Southeast Asian located idiom, Malaysian drama in English has brought into its range resources such as "wayang kulit", the "prop man" of Cantonese opera, the myths of the Hindu Ramayana and all other traditional dance and music known in the Southeast Asia.

The attempt to bring in traditional elements of Asian theater into its own repertoire of dramatic action is illustrated in the plays of Lee Joo For and Stella Kon. Lee's use of mimed movement, stark lighting contrasted to moments of complete darkness on stage and minimal props all represent a theatrical vision inconsistent with the older variety of realistic theatre that had been the norm prior to 1969.

In essence, "Genta Rasa" and "The Need to Be" are examples of Malaysian drama in English which are experimental in nature. Their symbolic function suggests that English language drama in Malaysia has often spoken with a regional accent, crossing many cultures which have made an imprint in the minds of many Southeast Asians.

After reading the notes on the development of drama in English in Malaysia, make notes on the prominent features of Malaysian drama in English.
What were the main constraints for drama to develop in the early years?

Ta break before you continue.

S ore Drama in English

The drama scene in Singapore in the early 50s and 60s was dominated by the production of Western plays by theatre groups on campus and from the British Armed Forces based in Singapore. Indigenous Singapore theatre in English began in 1958, with the formation of Drama Society of the University of Malaya (Singapore). In the early 60s, plays were performed by various groups- The Stage Club, the clubs of British Armed Forces stationed in Singapore and students of the University. According to Robert Yeo, the production of Lim Chor Pee's "Mimi Fan" (1962) and "A White Midnight Rose" (1964) by the Experiment Club "represented probably the first conscious attempt to demonstrate that it was possible to create a Singapore theatre in English".

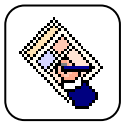
During this period of realization that Singaporean theatre must work its own path, three plays by Goh Poh Seng were staged. "The Moon is Less Bright" (1964), "When Smiles are Done" (1965) and "The Elder Brother" (1965) were confronted by the challenge of creating authentic, credible English dialogues, and compounded by the problem of getting the cast to speak English to one another.

Robert Yeo's staging of "Are You There Singapore" (1974) and "One Year Ba ome" (1980) succeeded in engaging the audience in Singaporean speech and themes. "One Year Back Home" proved that theatre in Singapore could be a source of intellectual and political debate.

Since the 80s, the rapid growth of drama has been fuelled by the corresponding growth of theatre companies interested in staging plays written by and for a

Singaporean audience. One of the most memorable plays to emerge in the 80s was Stella Kon's "Emily on Emerald Hill" (1985) a monodrama set against a colonial and post-independence period of Singapore's history, with a complex woman as protagonist. The stage became an ideal medium for Singapore's multilingual, multiethnic realities as in Kuo Pao Kun's " Mama Looking for Her Cat" (1988).

Today drama occupies a pre-eminent position in Singaporean literature in English. The perfomative and public aspects of drama encouraged its accessibility and exposure to a wider audience than either poetry or fiction. The 90s saw drama take a great leap forward over the other genres aided by a more liberal attitude towards censorship. Initiatives taken by professional theatre companies like Theatreworks, ACTION! Theatre, The Necessary Stage and W!ld Rice to nurture aspiring playwrights through writing workshops, Playwrights-in Residence schemes and playwriting competitions have produced playwrights such as Desmond Sim, Eleanor Wong, Tan Tran How, Ovidia Yu, Robin Loon and Alfian Sa'at.



Now that you have read about the development of drama in Malaysia and Singapore, can you identify the similarities and differences?

Present this in a table or graphic organizer. This will discussed during your interaction session.

Take a break!

Kee Thuan Chye – A Malaysian Playwright

In this section, you will read a summary on Kee Thuan Chye's *We Could *... Mr Birch.* You should go to the following website to know more about the playwright.

http://www.doollee.com/PlaywrightsC/chye-kee-thuan.html. Read Kee Thuan Chye's biography.

Introduction

*We Could **** You, Mr Birch* , is a journey into history; the history of British intervention in Perak. Problems arose when the Malays, namely the chiefs not only had to fight the Chinamen, the British, but also their own kind who had gone over to the British for their own personal gains. Power jockeying in domestic and state politics (which eventually affected the whole peninsula), race, gender and media, and the power play for the enhancement of self-interest is glaringly shown in the play.

To know more about the issues, you should read the play.

Kuo Pao Kun- A Singapore Playwright

You will now be introduced to a Singapore playwright, Kuo Pao Kun. His play "The Coffin is too Big for the Hole" will be extensively discussed for this topic on Asian plays. To know more about this playwright, you can go to this website: infopediatalk.nl.sg/?s=Kuo+Pao+Kun

Introduction

Kuo Pao Kun's *The Coffin is Too Big for the Hole* engages a few social concerns specific to Singapore. In the play, the eldest grandson of the family is telling the story of his grandfather's burial. The problem was that his grandfather, a man who prized tradition over the efficiency characteristic of contemporary Singapore, had chosen a very large coffin. The coffin was so large that it could not fit inside the standard size hole that had been prepared for it. The hole could not be made bigger without encroaching on the adjacent graves, but the eldest grandson insisted that his grandfather and his large coffin must have a second plot.

The play also introduces the staff of the cemetery. One of them is the powerless gravesite worker, who repeats his employer's words, "one man, one plot." Another character is the whiny officer, who refuses to violate "national planning" to accommodate the unusually large coffin.

Though the play is concerned with issues specific to Singapore, whose population density and corporate culture create the kind of bureaucracy the grandson encounters, it also resonates concerns many of us have about our own increasingly corporate culture unique to our countries. The play invites us to examine the lines between sacred and secular, and to what extent we are willing to compromise between the two.

To further assist you with the discussion in class, you should read the play before your scheduled session. The questions below serve as a guide for you to further understand the play.

1. Why is the grandson making a fuss about the coffin?
2. What impact did the funeral have on the grandson?
3. What underlying message is the grandson trying to convey?
4. When the grandson said "…why grandfather had to get such a big heavy thing…" What does it imply?
5. Despite cursing the heavy coffin, the grandson wanted to ensure that it was properly handled. What does this show?
6. What do the cemetery worker and the whiny officer represent?
7. When the protagonist says …"My folks are drifting apart, one after the other when they got married. Grandfather was very cross at first, about the breaking up of the extended family ..." What does this show about then family relationship?

The following questions will be discussed with your classmates and tutor. So make sure you come prepared.

1. One of the key themes of both plays is the conflict between the
2. Are there incidents in your own personal life that mirror the circumstances described in the play? To what extent do you feel that the play is specific to Singapore?
3. How do you think the plays would translate overseas, such as the Malaysian context?

You can watch this play here:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UTlKhKmSk5w

Well done! I hope that after the discussion you fully understandd the message of the play and hence appreciate the playwright's creativity even more!


Great job!

TOPIC 8	ANALYSING THEMES IN SHORT PLAYS: MALAYSIAN SHORT PLAYS

SYNOPSIS

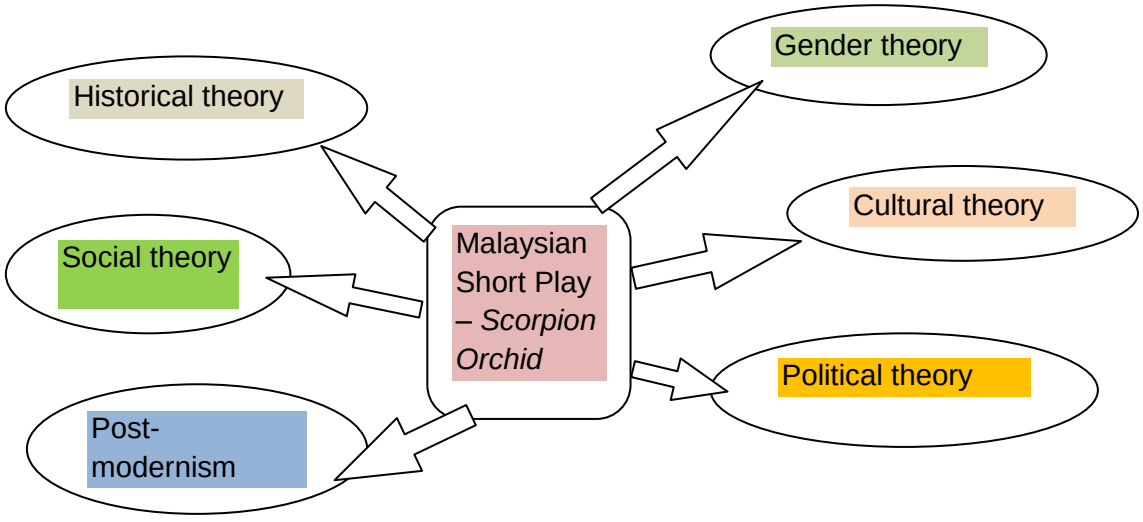
This topic aims to enhance your skill in analysing themes in Malaysian short plays. It provides some information on the background of the plays including the writers, the plays and their themes. The exercises that follow should provide some practice in applying the knowledge learnt. You will also need to apply the knowledge gained on the theories of Literary Criticism (Topics 1 and 2) to the analysis of Malaysian short plays. The Malaysian short play studied in this course is *Scorpion Orchid* by Lloyd Fernando published in 1976.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this topic, you should be able to:

- Discuss and analyse themes in selected Malaysian plays.
- Analyse the short play based on plot, setting, characters and structure of the play.
- Analyse and critique short plays based on various theories of literary criticism.

FRAMEWORK



Theme can be defined as the central meaning or dominant idea in a piece of literary work and provides a unifying point around which the plot, characters, setting, point of view, symbols, and other elements of a work are organized. A theme refers to the abstract concept that is made concrete through the images, characterization, and action of the text.

(For more details, access this website:-
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theme_%28literature%29)

Toscan (2007) believes that different people derive themes of the same play differently depending on their personal (social, moral, political) values. He adds that the playwrights' personal values are integrated into how they live their lives and these values are reflected in the plays they write.

A theme is the underlying meaning of the play and can be derived by studying the characters, conflicts, and scenes. Some themes are the alienation of youth in modern society, conflict between appearance and reality, search for personal identity, man's inhumanity to man, and breaking from social conventions.

In this course, the Malaysian play you will be studying is Lloyd Fernando's *Scorpion Orchid* (1976). Ang (2003) raised the concept of a "national symbolic field," the intertwining of history to create a symbolic field of feelings and experiences that can be called national imagination. Ang added that Fernando

expresses this vision in a modernist novel that brings together historical, cultural, and fictional narratives in fractured synthesis

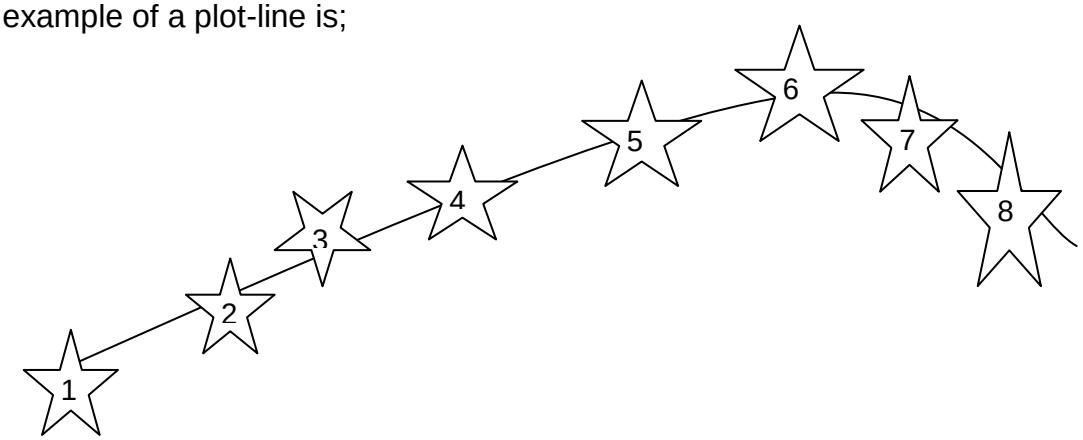
Chiu (2003) states that *Scorpion Orchid* is remarkable for its experimental form, combining Western and Asian narratives, and for its comprehensive vision of a postcolonial society, set in the 1950s, a time of racial tension and nationalistic fervour in an atmosphere charged with the exhilarating anticipation of decolonisation. From a historical point of view, the theme of *Scorpion Orchid* is the theme of national birth, racial conflict and ethnic self-interest. This play is about four young men of different ethnicities who go through racial riots that opened their eyes to their ethnic identities and in the process of growing up from adolescents to adults, their simple, innocent friendship changed forever.

Research for more information about *Scorpion Orchid* from various sources (books, journals, articles, internet). Keep both hardcopies and softcopies of the references in your course portfolio.

Before attempting the tasks below, read the short play, *Scorpion Orchid* first. Using the references you have collected, complete the following tasks.

Draw a plot-line and clearly plot the sequence of important events that take place from the beginning until the end of the play. Draw your detailed plot-line on drawing block. During the tutorial, check the accuracy of your plot-line.

An example of a plot-line is;



The plot starts with ”exposition” where characters and setting are introduced. In *Scorpion Orchid,* the four young men are introduced in the Prologue, set at a later time. Who are they? Where are they and where are they going? Answers to these questions should be written in Star 1. Stars 2 – 5 should be filled with events that lead to the climax of the play, represented by Star 6. You may add a few more important / significant events that lead to the climax.

After the Prologue, the play continues with Scene 1 with Santinathan and his family. What are they doing? Why? Where are they and where are they going? Answers to these questions should be written in Star 2.

After Scene 1, Scene 2 introduces Guan Kheng, Peter, Sabran and Santinathan. Where are they? When does this scene happen? What are the important events happening here in this scene? Answers to these questions should be written in Star 3 and maybe Star 4.

In Scene 3, something important happens. What happened? Who are involved? Why does this happen? Answers to these questions should be written in the following Star(s).

In Scene 4, the main characters are getting more and more involved in chaotic events. What happened? Who are involved? Why does this happen? Answers to these questions should be written in the following Star(s).

Continue to do the same with the following scenes and complete the ”rising action” stars. Then, decide where the climax of this play is. Is it in Scene 4? Or is it in Scene 5? Could it be in Scene 6? Again, by answering these questions, complete the ”climax star”:- What happened? Who are involved? Why does this happen?

In the star before the last one, fill in the resolution. What happened? Who are involved? Why does this happen? How does this event or the events resolve the conflicts experienced till the climax?

Finally, in the last star, the ”denouement” is how the play ends. Again, What happened? Who are involved? Where are the characters and where are they going? How have they changed? Do you realise that the characters are portrayed at the same place and time as in the Prologue?

Now, you have completed your plot-line. Congratulations!

1. Summarise the play in about 200 words. Only summarise the main ideas. Minor details such as the characters long dialogues need not be included. Use the plot-line to help you write this summary. By paraphrasing the play, it makes it easier for you to remember the play. Read out your summary to the class during tutorial.

2. The short play, *Scorpion Orchid* can be analysed based on several perspectives. Select ONE theory of literary criticism. One of the suitable choices would be the historical theory of literary criticism.
   Using the selected theory, analyse the play and write your critical analysis in about 250 words. Use these questions to guide you.
   - What theory have you selected to analyse the play?
   - Why did you choose this theory to analyse the play?
   - How do the characters, setting and events in the play reflect the theory? For example, if you have selected the historical theory, then how do the characters, setting and events reflect the history of the country – the historical facts compared to the ones in the play?
   - What evidence from the text can you find to support your analysis?

3. From the play, identify the theme. Then, discuss how the theme is developed by the setting and the characters.

4. Characters can be categorised as round characters and flat characters. Round characters are characters who undergo changes in the play whereas flat characters do not change from the beginning until the end of a play. Identify the round characters in *Scorpion Orchid.* Discuss their changes and what made them change.

5. There are several settings in the play, *Scorpion Orchid.* Describe the settings and discuss how far the settings reflect the history of the country the play is set in.

6. The play is set in a multi-racial country during a chaotic time. What are the social issues raised in this play?

7. The play is written in several parts. It starts with the Prologue. Discuss the structure of the play and the effectiveness of using this structure to develop the theme, plot and characters.

Congratulations on your success in completing the tasks above. These questions will be discussed in the interaction session.

Well done!

TOPIC 9	ANALYSING THEMES IN NOVELS: ASIAN NOVELS

SYNOPSIS

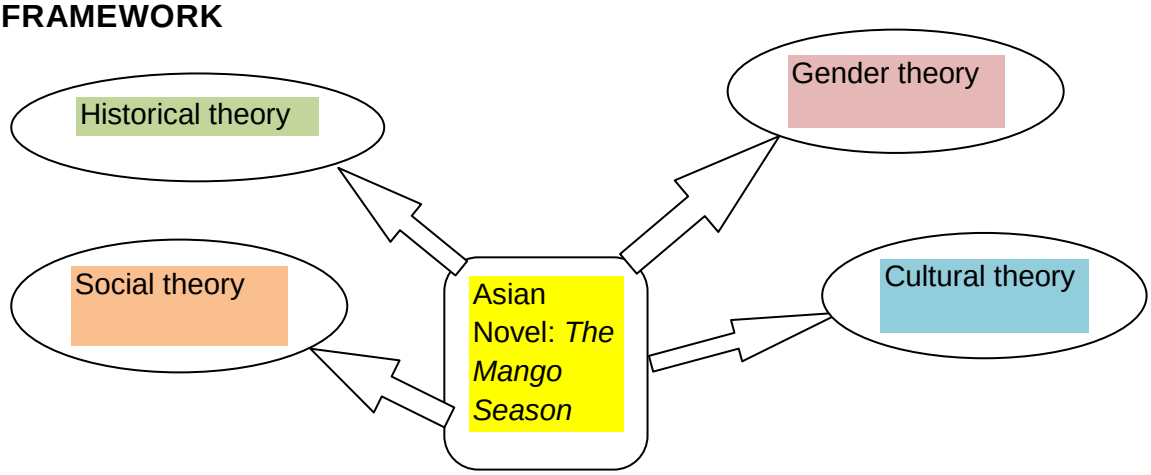
This topic aims to enhance your skill in analysing themes in selected Asian novels. It provides some explanation on the background of the novels including the writers, the novels and their themes. The exercises that follow will provide some practice in applying the knowledge learnt. You will also need to apply the knowledge gained on the theories of Literary Criticism (Topics 1 and 2) to the analysis of the selected Asian novels. The selected Asian novel you will be studying for this course is *The Mango Season* by Amulya Malladi, published in 2003.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this topic, you should be able to:

1. Discuss themes in the selected Asian novels.
2. Analyse the theme(s) of selected novel based on plot, setting, characters and structure of the novel.
3. Analyse novels based on various theories of literary criticism.

FRAMEWORK



Introduction

The Mango Season by Amulya Malladi is a story about the relationship between mothers and their daughters, set mainly in India, specifically Hyderabad. Amulya Malladi, moved from India to America and is currently in Denmark with her Danish husband, SØren and a young son, Tobias. She started writing at a young age, and in her teens, wrote about the Indian woman. *The Mango Season* is another novel about anIndian woman, Priya Rao.

The novel is divided into five parts that are further divided into three to four chapters. It begins with a Prologue and ends with an Epilogue. This particular structure of the novel develops the plot, theme and characters in a unique way. It is interesting to note that Amulya Malladi titles each part and chapter using literary devices like metaphor and symbolism. The title of the novel itself is significant as the mango fruit is used as a symbol of happiness to the protagonist, Priya Rao.

The plot starts with the introduction to 27-year old Priya Rao who has left her home in India to further her studies in America and later found a job in San Francisco. She is engaged to and has been living with an African American accountant, Nicholas Collins for two years. However, this is very much against her family's culture and traditions. In order to achieve happiness, she braves many conflicts with her family members. Happiness to her is to marry the man she loves with the blessing of her family.

The Mango Season highlights various themes that are universal including the process of growing up, generation gap, happiness and love in arranged marriages and social discrimination. These themes are developed via the plot,

characters, and settings. Understanding the cultural, social and historical background of India helps the reader to identify the themes, issues raised and develop empathy for the characters. An added point of interest is that Amulya Malladi includes recipes of several Indian dishes at the beginning of each part of the novel.

The telugu brahmins in India

Telugu Brahmin is a sub-caste of the greater Brahmin community whose native language is Telugu. They hail from the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh. A Brahmin is a member of a caste of priests within the Hindu society. The Brahmins constitute the community of scholars, priests and teachers, and consider themselves responsible, broadly speaking, for the society's spiritual progress.

Mango season in India

In a newspaper article dated April 20, 2010 written by Eric Bellman, titled ***Don't sweat, it's mango season,*** the temperature rises steadily in India at this time of year – even as high as 44°C in Delhi. Prices of Badami, Banganpalli and Alphonso mangoes in the street stalls and markets of Mumbai seem to be a bit higher than 2009. In south Delhi, a box of a dozen Alphonsos, packaged in a sturdy box, was being offered for 400 rupees.

Hierarchy in India

An understanding of hierarchy in India is equally important in order to fully comprehend the conflicts within the family of the protagonist, Priya. In India, individuals can be ranked according to their wealth and power. Within the families and kinship groupings, men outrank women of the same or similar age, while the senior relatives outrank the junior relatives.

In the novel, *The Mango Season* Priya's family is of a higher social status and are wealthy. Her grandfather's house is located on a piece of prized land in the middle of the town. Priya's mother, Radha and her aunt, Lata are always bickering to be on her grandfather's side. Priya's grandfather and her father, Ashwin also reflect hierarchy where Ashwin, out of formal respect, never raises his voice or is rude to his father-in-law despite being treated coldly. Priya faced conflicts with her mother and grandfather when she was very rude, raising her voice while arguing with them about various issues such as racism and arranged marriage.

Research for more information on *The Mango Season* from various sources (books, journals, articles, internet). Keep both hardcopies and softcopies of the references in your course portfolio.

Before attempting the tasks below, carefully read the novel, *The Mango Season* first. Then, using the references you have collected, complete the following tasks.

The completed tasks must be kept in your course portfolio.

Draw a plot-line and clearly plot the sequence of important events that take place from the beginning until the end of the play. Draw your detailed plot-line on drawing block. During tutorial, check the accuracy of your plot-line.

An example of a plot-line is;

The plot starts with ”exposition” where the protagonist, Priya Rao is introduced. In *The Mango Season,* Priya Rao is introduced in the Prologue, set at a time when she is returning to India after seven years in America. Who are the other people mentioned? Where are they? What is Priya’s intention of returning to her homeland? What is she like? Answers to these questions should be written in Star 1. Stars 2 – 5 (or more) should be filled with events that lead to the climax of the play, represented by Star 6. You may add a few more important / significant events that lead to the climax.

After the Prologue, the play continues with Part One that consists of 4 chapters. For each chapter in Part One, answer the following questions. Who are the characters? What are they like (physical and personal traits)? What are they doing? Why? Where are they? Answers to these questions should be written in Star 2 (you may add more stars to represent the important events in each chapter).

After Part One, Part Two continues with another 3 chapters. Who are the characters: is there any new character being introduced? Where are they? What is the time setting? What are the important events happening here in this

Part? Answers to these questions should be written in Star 3 and maybe Star 4 (you may add more stars to represent the important events in each chapter).

In Part Three that has 3 chapters, the action picks up and the tensions increase. What happened? Who are involved? Why does this happen? Answers to these questions should be written in the following Star(s) (you may add more stars to represent the important events in each chapter).

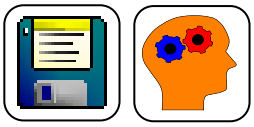
In Part Four with 4 chapters, the main characters are getting more and more involved in stressful events. What happened? Who are involved? Why does this happen? Answers to these questions should be written in the following Star(s) (you may add more stars to represent the important events in each chapter).

In Part Five with 3 chapters, the tensions start to ease and the main characters are resolving their conflicts. What happened? Who are involved? Why does this happen? What are the resolutions for the various characters? How does this event or the events resolve the conflicts experienced till the climax? Answers to these questions should be written in the Star before the last one.

Where do you think is the climax of this novel? Is it in Part Four or Five? In which chapter is the climax? What is the climax? Again, by answering these questions, complete the ”climax star”:- What happened? Who are involved? Why does this happen?

Finally, in the last star, the ”denouement” is how the novel ends. By studying the Epilogue, state what happened or is happening. Who are involved? Where are the characters? How have they changed?

 Now, you have completed your plot-line. Congratulations!



1. Summarise the novel in about 500 words. In your summary, summarise the main ideas. Minor details such as the descriptions of the mango seller, the chaotic traffic conditions, and the flashbacks / digressions from the main plot need not be included. Use the plot-line to help you write this summary. By summarising the novel, it makes it easier for you to remember the plot. Read out your summary to the class during tutorial.

2. The novel, *The Mango Season* can be analysed based on several perspectives. You can analyse it based on ONE or MORE theories of literary criticism learnt in Topics 1 and 2. So, to complete this task, first of all, select ONE theory of literary criticism. One of the suitable choices would be the social theory of literary criticism.

   With the selected theory, analyse the play and write your critical analysis in about 500 words. Use these questions to guide you.

   i. What theory have you selected to analyse the novel?
   ii. Why did you choose this theory to analyse the novel?
   iii. How do the characters, settings and events in the novel reflect the theory? For example, if you have selected the social theory, then how do the characters, settings and events reflect the society of the country?
   iv. What evidence from the text can you find to support your analysis?

3. From the novel, identify the theme or themes. Then, discuss how the theme or each theme is developed by the setting and the characters. Support your answer with evidence from the text.

4. Characters can be categorised as round characters and flat characters. Round characters are characters who undergo changes in the story whereas flat characters do not change from the beginning until the end of a story. Identify the round characters in *The Mango Season.* Discuss their changes and what made them change. Support your answer with evidence from the text.

5. There are several settings in the novel, *The Mango Season*; main and supporting settings. Identify the main and supporting settings. Describe these settings and discuss how far the settings reflect the societies of the countries the story are set in. Support your answer with evidence from the text.

6. The novel is set in an Asian country once colonised by the British. What are the social issues raised in this novel? How has colonization influenced the characters in the novel? Support your answer with evidence from the text.

7. The novel is written in several parts and chapters. It starts with the Prologue and ends with an Epilogue. Discuss the structure of the novel and the effectiveness of using this structure to develop the theme, plot and characters.

Congratulations on your success in completing the tasks above.

TOPIC 10	ANALYSING THEMES IN NOVELS: MALAYSIAN NOVELS

SYNOPSIS

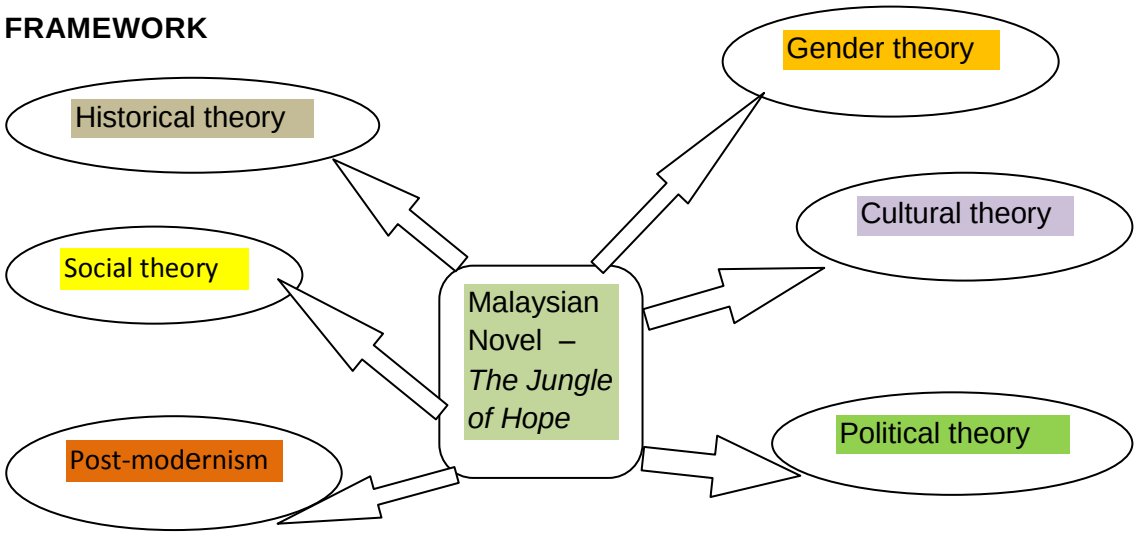
This topic aims to enhance your skills in analysing themes in selected Malaysian novels. It provides some explanation on the background of the novels including the writers, the novels and their themes. The exercises that follow provide some practice in applying the knowledge learnt. You will also need to apply the knowledge gained on the theories of Literary Criticism (Topics 1 and 2) to the analysis of selected Malaysian novels. The Malaysian novel that will be studied in this course is *The Jungle of Hope* by Keris Mas.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this topic, you should be able to:

- Discuss and analyse themes in selected Malaysian novels.
- Analyse the novel based on plot, setting, characters and structure of the novel.
- Analyse and evaluate novels based on various theories of literary criticism.

FRAMEWORK



Background

Jungle of Hope by Keris Mas (pseudonym) is translated from the original Malay version *Rimba Harapan*. It is a story about the traditional Malay farmers in Pahang at a time when there were economic pressures to change and natural disasters in the 1920s and 1930s.

This story highlights the life of pioneers opening new lands to retain their tradition of padi planting while some other characters gave in to modern economic pressures to change from padi planting to rubber planting and tin mining, some selling their lands. These traditional Malay farmers were compelled to sell their padi land due to an unfortunate combination of natural disasters and modern economic pressures, and moved far into the jungle to open up new land and start a new life. The title of this novel is significant especially towards the end of the novel. After lots of disasters, failures and hardships, the main character, Pak Kia and his family enjoy physical and spiritual triumphs.

The author writes in detail the terrain, vegetation, procedures, skills, tools, nature, daily routine, progress and setbacks in vivid descriptions that the reader are transported to that time of post-World War One and British policy of encouraging rubber planting and tin mining on a large scale. Keris Mas portrays the traditional Malay farmers of places around Pahang – Ketari, Benus, Bentong and Janda Baik. The drought experienced by the farmers followed by floods, devastated the vegetation and many are thrown into a dilemma – to sell off the land to “Tuan Pekok” a white man who paid Pendekar Atan to negotiate with the farmers to sell their lands.

The culture, traditions and beliefs of the characters in the novel are described in detail throughout the novel. There is the conflict between the adamant hold Pak Kia has on the tradition of padi planting practised by his forefathers and his brother, Zaidi who gives it up to change to rubber planting which profits him greatly to enable him to venture into other businesses. There is also the conflict between those who still practise the traditional magic and others like Jusuh who reject it for more modern medical treatment. The novel portrays Malays who defend their own people and traditions and those who let themselves influenced by the “white man” like Pendekar Atan, Tapa and Tutung.

Themes that run through the novel include the process of growing up, tradition versus modernization, and perseverance. Pak Kia’s son, Karim undergoes various experiences that change him from a young boy playing with catapults into a young, strong farmer. Pak Kia himself, despite having to leave home to Janda Baik, to open new land and start a new life, manages to keep to the traditions practised by his forefathers and triumphs in his life in Janda Baik.

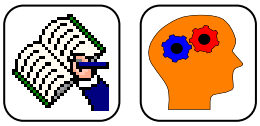
This novel is structured in four Parts and each part consists of several chapters. Parts One and Four are made up of seven chapters each while Parts Two and Three are made up of ten chapters each.

Janda Baik

A simple Malay kampong or village with a population of approximately 1000 people. Janda Baik is set amidst a small valley bounded by thick rainforest laced together with picturesque streams and cool rushing brooks of waterfalls. Located approximately 45km and about an hour’s drive from Kuala Lumpur, the place is a popular holiday and recreational destination for city folks, not to mention foreign visitors especially global backpackers.

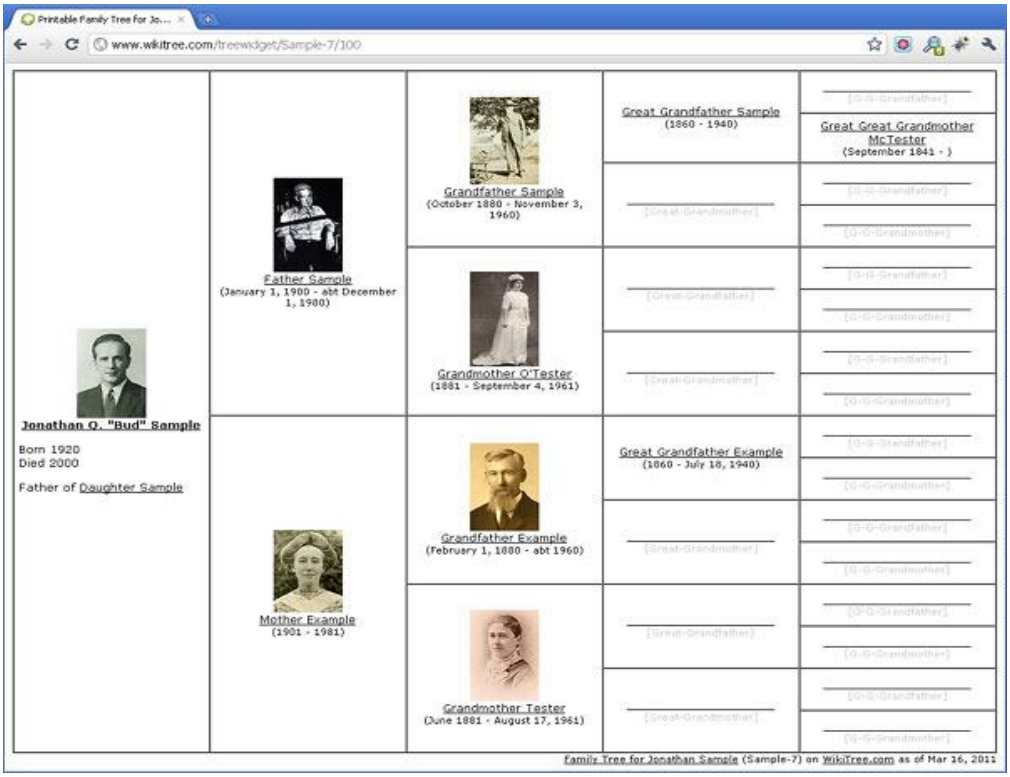
"Janda Baik" means "the good widow" in Malay. As the story is told by local folks, in the old days a path that connects Selangor and Pahang beats its way through the village. It was said that a mercenary, who was returning after fighting in a civil war in Selangor stopped at the village for a rest and to nurse some wounds he had sustained in battle. Upon seeing this ragtag team in the vicinity, a kindly widow immediately offered help and tended to the mercenary's wounds. The man was thankful and deeply cherished the kindness. As a mark of respect for this kind widow, the leader of the warrior pack would always advise his men to call on the woman whenever they were in the vicinity.

Search for more information about *Jungle of Hope* from various sources (books, journals, articles, internet). Keep the references in your course portfolio.



Before attempting the tasks below, carefully read the novel, *Jungle of Hope* first. Then, using the references you have collected, complete the following tasks.

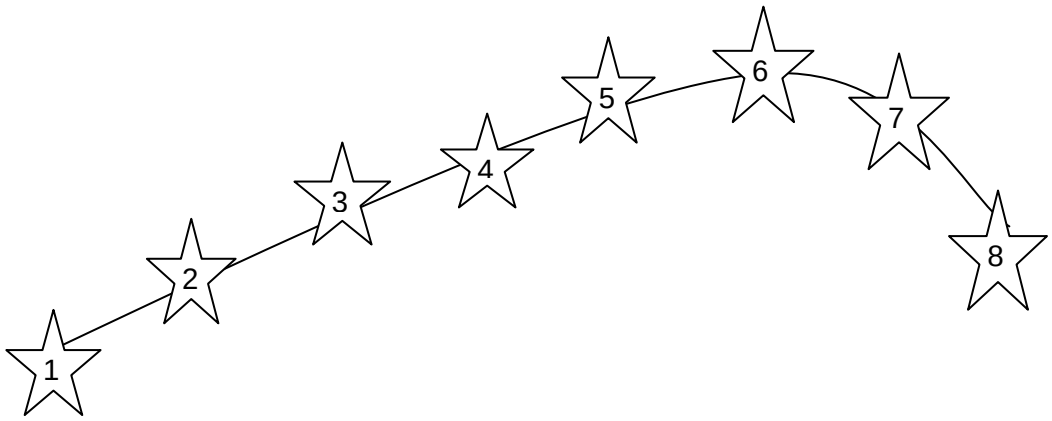
1. There are many characters related by familial and social ties. Select a suitable graphic organiser such as ”family tree” diagram, and complete it with details from the novel such as the characters, how they are related and brief descriptions of each character. Some of the characters are Pak Kia and his family, Zaidi (Pak Kia’s brother) and his family, the penghulu and his family (most prominently is Nazri who loves Pak Kia’s daughter, Rahimah), villagers like Tapa and Tutung, and Pendekar Atan.



This is an example of a family tree diagram to give you an idea of how to get the tree diagram ready for the novel, *Jungle of Hope.*

2. Draw a plot-line and clearly plot the sequence of important events that take place from the beginning until the end of the play.

An example of a plot-line is;



Part One has 7 chapters introducing the characters and the situation they are in – facing natural disasters and talk about the white man buying their lands. Who are the other people mentioned? Where are they? What are they like? What are the issues raised here? Answers to these questions should be written in Star 1. Stars 2 – 5 (or more) should be filled with events that lead to the climax of the play, represented by Star 6. You may add a few more important / significant events that lead to the climax.

Part Two consists of 10 chapters. For each chapter in Part Two, answer the following questions. Who are the characters? What are they like (physical and personal traits)? What are they doing? Why? Where are they? What are the issues raised here? Answers to these questions should be written in Star 2 (you may add more stars to represent the important events in each chapter).

Part Three continues with another 10 chapters and the action picks up and the tensions increase. Who are the characters: is there any new character being introduced? Where are they? What is the time setting? What are the important events happening here in this Part? Answers to these questions should be written in Star 3 and maybe Star 4 (you may add more stars to represent the important events in each chapter).

In Part Four that has 7 chapters, things start to ease. What happened? Who are involved? Why does this happen? The main characters are resolving their conflicts. What happened? Who are involved? Why does this happen? What are the resolutions for the various characters? How does this event or the events resolve the conflicts experienced till the climax? Answers to these questions should be written in the Star before the last one.

Where do you think is the climax of this novel? Is it in Part Four or Five? In which chapter is the climax? What is the climax? Again, by answering these questions, complete the ”climax star”:- What happened? Who are involved? Why does this happen?

3. This task requires you to analyse the novel. The novel, *Jungle of Hope* can be analysed based on several perspectives. You can analyse it based on ONE or MORE theories of literary criticism learnt in Topics 1 and 2. So, to complete this task, first of all, select ONE theory of literary criticism. One of the suitable choices would be the post-modernism or maybe the social theory of literary criticism.

   With the selected theory, analyse the play and write your critical analysis in about 400 words. Use these questions to guide you.

   i. What theory have you selected to analyse the novel?
   ii. Why did you choose this theory to analyse the novel?
   iii. How do the characters, settings and events in the novel reflect the theory? For example, if you have selected the social theory, then how do the characters, settings and events reflect the society of the country?
   iv. What evidence from the text can you find to support your analysis?

4. From the novel, identify the theme or themes. Then, discuss how the theme or each theme is developed by the setting and the characters. Support your answer with evidence from the text.

5. Characters can be categorised as round characters and flat characters. Round characters are characters who undergo changes in the story whereas flat characters do not change from the beginning until the end of a story. Identify the round characters in *Jungle of Hope.* Discuss their

changes and what made them change. Support your answer with evidence from the text.

6. There are several settings in the novel, *Jungle of Hope*; Ketari, Janda Baik, etc. Identify them and describe them. Discuss how far the settings reflect the society of the country the story are set in. Support your answer with evidence from the text.

7. The novel is set in Malaysia at a time when it was still colonised by the British. What are the social issues raised in this novel? How has colonization influenced the characters in the novel? Support your answer with evidence from the text.
8. The novel is written in several parts and chapters. Discuss the structure of the novel and the effectiveness of using this structure to develop the theme, plot and characters.

9. There are many characters in this novel. Who are the characters you like and why do you like them? Who are the characters you don't like and why not? How do these characters reflect the theory you have selected?

You have reached the end of this module. We hope you have developed a thirst for more literature!

ALLOCATION OF TOPICS

Code & Name of Course: TSL3023 – Literature in English

There are ten topics in this module and they are divided into five sessions. The table below shows the allocation of topics through modular learning or/and face-to-face-interaction.

Session	Topic	Sub-Topic	Int. hrs.	Total no. of hrs.
1 (2 hours)	Introduction to theories of Literary Criticism	• Historical • Cultural • Social	3	3
		• Political • Gender • Post-modernism	3	3
2 (2 hours)	Critical analysis of short stories (20th and 21st century fiction)	• American writers • British writers • Australian writers	5	5
		• African writers • Asian writers • Malaysian writers	5	5
3 (2 hours)	Analysing the various forms of poetry	• Overview • Lyrical poems • Ballads • Sonnets	5	5
		• Epics • Haiku • Limericks	5	5
	Analysing themes in short plays	• Asian short plays	5	5

4 (2 hours)		• Malaysian short plays	5	5
5 (2 hours)	Analysing themes in novels	• Asian novels	4	4
		• Malaysian novels	4	4
10 hours	**TOTAL**			**45 hrs**

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