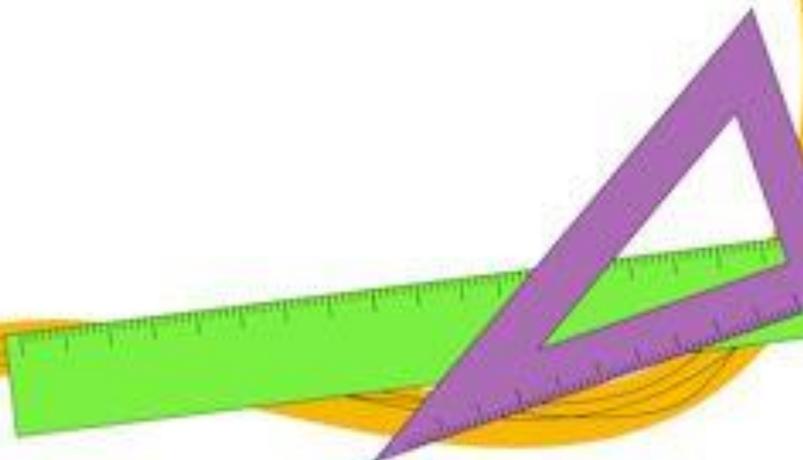




**Student Creativity**  
**English Literary Works**





## Lara's Camping Trip

Long ago, in a big forest in Australia, lived a young girl named Lara. She lived with her Mum and Dad, who went on a camping trip to the forest in Australia.

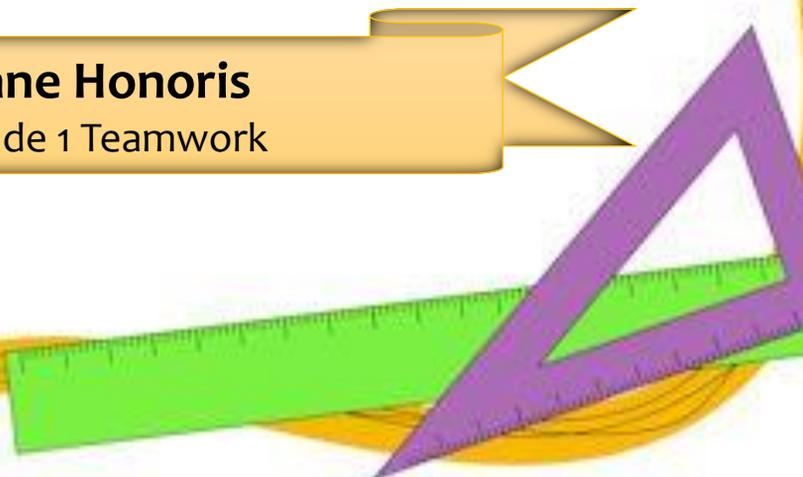
One day, Lara and her Mum and Dad were roasting marshmallows when a brown bear came and wanted to eat their marshmallows. Lara saw the brown bear and yelled. She was scared, so she went inside the tent. She told her Mum and Dad to come into the tent with her.

After the brown bear ate all their marshmallows, he forgot that Lara and her Mum and Dad were hiding inside the tent to keep safe. So, the brown bear just walked away, leaving them unharmed. Lara and her family were happy that they were safe.



## *Lara's Camping Trip*

**Jane Honoris**  
Grade 1 Teamwork





## Naomi and the Ski Sleds

Long ago, in a small village near Mount Fuji in Japan, there lived a little girl named Naomi. She loved the snow and cold weather. She learned "how to ski" obediently from her ski teacher. She listened well and obeyed her ski teacher.

Naomi liked to share her food with her teacher and other students. Her ski teacher liked her sharing. So, one day, her ski teacher decided to give her a pair of ski sleds. Naomi loved her new ski sleds and began to practice her skills. She became very good at it. Her neighbour was jealous and stole the sleds while Naomi was asleep. She tried them on, but she could not stop sledding.

When Naomi woke up, she realised that her ski sleds were missing. Naomi saw what happened to her neighbor and was scared that her neighbour would crash into a tree. The magic sleds could read Naomi's mind and knew that she did not want her neighbour to get hurt. So, the sleds stopped. Naomi's neighbour was saved, and she promised not to be jealous again.

## *Naomi and The Ski Sleds*

**Josh Yoncer**  
Grade 1 Respect



## The Hippo and the Bird

One bright sunny day, there was a hippo swimming in the river. He saw two birds flying around his body. The hippo said angrily, "Shoo bird, you are disturbing my swimming time."

"I want to eat the bugs on your body, can I?" said the bird.

"No! go away," replied the hippo and swam away.

A few days later, the hippo felt itchy on his body because there were many bugs on the hippo's body. There were two birds flying around the sky. "Birds, can you help me wash my back for me?" the hippo shouted.

"Sure, we can help you, but we need to get the big toothbrush and the broom."

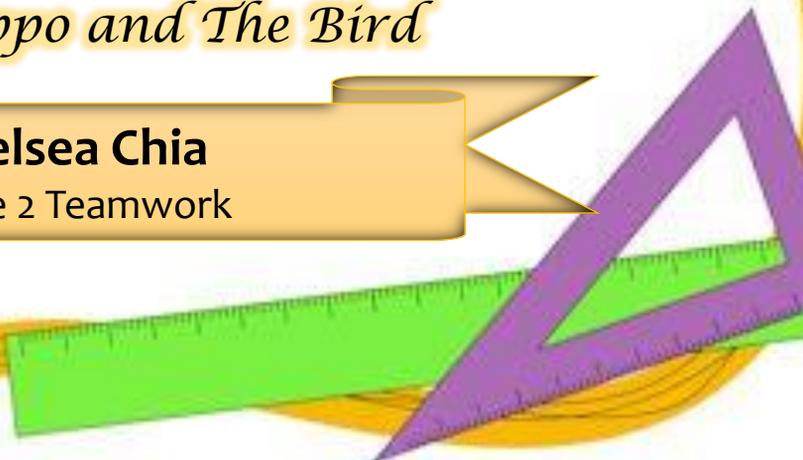
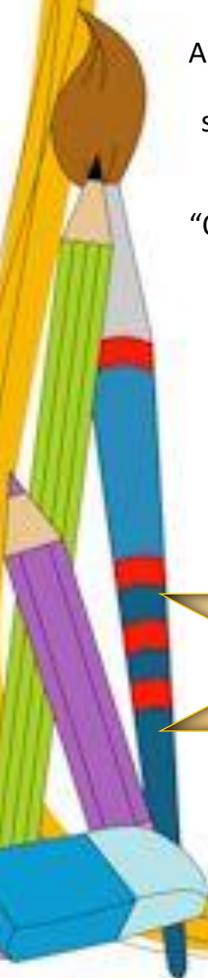
A few minutes later, the two birds came back to where the hippo lived and started washing the hippo's back. One bird brushed his teeth, and the second bird scrubbed his back. The hippo was happy and felt really clean. "Can you clean me every day, please?" said the hippo happily.

"Of course you can. We can come every day to clean you," the bird replied happily to the hippo.

The hippo happily swam back to his house, and the two birds flew back to a tree. The birds and hippo became best friends forever.

## *The Hippo and The Bird*

**Chelsea Chia**  
Grade 2 Teamwork





## The Lost Eraser

One rainy day Rayyan was studying in his study room, "Brrrrrr, the room is freezing. I should turn off the air conditioner." So Rayyan decided to turn off the air conditioner, but he accidentally knocked his eraser on the floor when he got off his chair. When he came back, he realized he had made a spelling mistake. "Oh no, I made a spelling mistake, and where is my eraser?"

Rayyan tried to find the eraser on his right side and his left side, but he couldn't find it anywhere. Rayyan also tried to find it under the chair, below the table, and under the carpet; he still couldn't find it anywhere. "Oh no, if I can't find my eraser, I can't do my homework properly!" cried Rayyan.

So Rayyan called his mom and dad to help him find his eraser. "Mom! Dad! Can you please help me find my eraser?"

*Kreeek* the door opened, and Rayyan's mom and dad come into the study room. Mom searched on the stack of old things from grandma's house, and dad looked carefully on the sofa behind the sofa and under the sofa. When mom was searching on dad's old typewriter, she recognised that black object on dad's old typewriter. She took a closer look at it and knew it was Rayyan's eraser "Rayyan, I found your eraser. It was on dad's old typewriter."

"Thank you, Mom, thank you Dad, for helping me find my eraser."

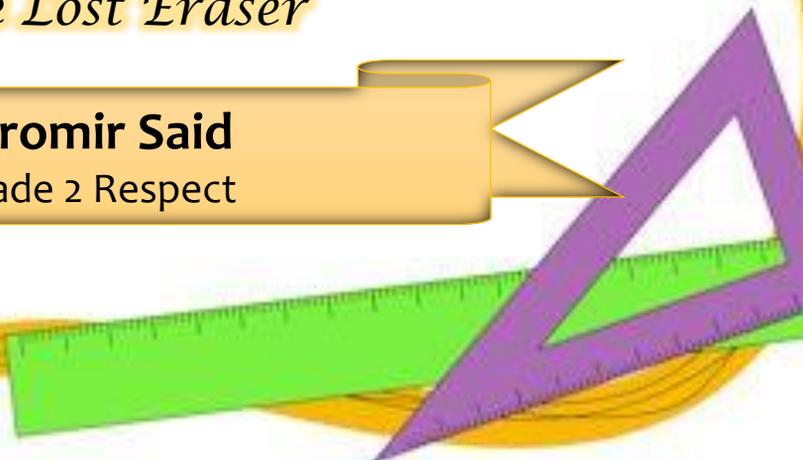
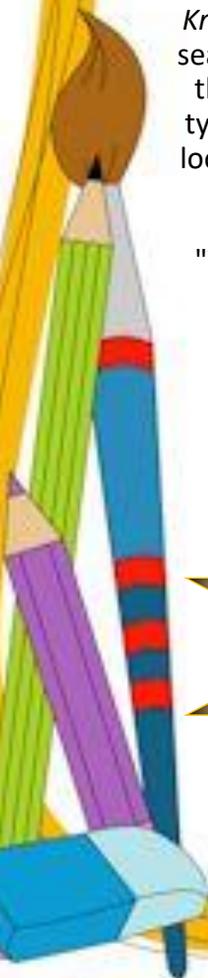
"Your welcome, but you need to be more responsible with your belongings and take care of them neatly!"

"Ok, Dad, I will."

## *The Lost Eraser*

**Jaromir Said**

Grade 2 Respect





## **Abdullah Catches a Butterfly**

Abdullah caught the butterfly and kept it in an empty water bottle. He was very happy, and he wanted to rush home. He was excited to meet his grandfather and give him the butterfly. Then suddenly he heard a voice, "Stop Abdullah, Don't do this!" Abdullah looked around and saw nobody was there. He wondered where the voice was coming from? He was very confused.

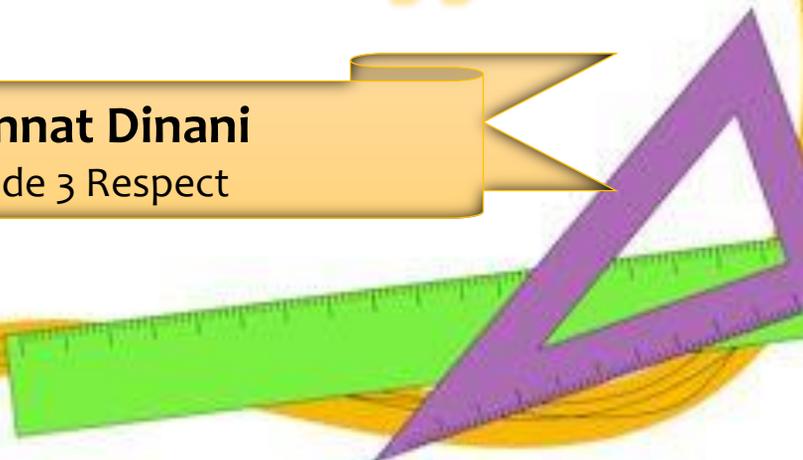
This voice was disturbing Abdullah. His heart started beating very fast. He was feeling very uneasy. Abdullah looked at the butterfly and saw the butterfly struggling to get out from the bottle. Abdullah felt sorry for the butterfly and felt guilty at the same time. He was feeling miserable. Abdullah said to himself, "I must let go of the butterfly."

He quickly opened the water bottle and let go of the butterfly. Seeing the butterfly fly away, Abdullah felt happy and had a smile on his face. Abdullah went home happily. He told his grandfather that he would never catch a butterfly and make it suffer again. Abdullah's mom heard this and said, "I am proud of you, my son." Abdullah felt happy that he had made the right decision.

## *Abdullah Catches a Butterfly*

**Mannat Dinani**

Grade 3 Respect





## Adventure in the Forest

Ivan and Stefania looked at each other. "Run!" Ivan shouted. They held hands while running towards a safe area. What could it be? They were curious and scared at the same time. Slowly, they moved towards the noise and discovered a huge machine roaring. The machine came towards them but then made a turn in a zigzag movement. It was cutting down the forest trees. Oh no!

"Stop! Stop it!" shouted Ivan to the driver of the machine. Stefania jumped up and down and waved at the driver. The driver noticed the children and stopped the machine.

"Why are you here, kids? This is a dangerous place.", questioned the driver. Both Ivan and Stefania explained to the driver that this forest was their hideout place. They often explored the area, but this time they had got lost.

"Why did you cut down the trees?" asked Stefania curiously.

"Well, we need to use the wood for making tables and chairs," explained the driver. Ivan listened to him in deep thought. He thought of the pretty flowers and animals he admired. Finally, he told the driver what he had in mind. He wished the driver wouldn't cut down too many trees because he didn't want the animals and plants to lose their habitat. Stefania nodded with agreement. She liked exploring in the forest with Ivan.

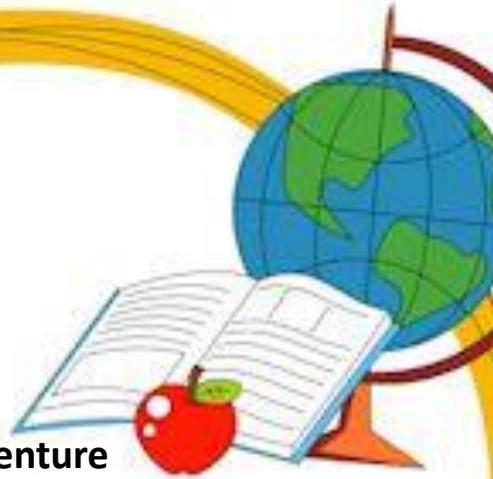
Finally, the driver promised to tell his boss what Ivan and Stefania had said to him. Ivan and Stefania were overjoyed! "Now, kids, it's time to go home. I will take you back to your parents.", said the driver kindly. The children were so happy and relieved. They did not forget to say thank you before the driver left.

Today, when Ivan and Stefania go exploring in the forest, they sometimes meet the driver because his house is also near the forest!

## *Adventure in The Forest*

**Paige Dirga**  
Grade 3 Teamwork





## Malik and his Amazing Adventure

In a small house, a boy named Malik was gazing out the window. He was very bored, and he begged for a magical adventure. He looked through his books and imagined where he would go and what it would look like.

All of a sudden, a puff of smoke came out of nowhere and, when the smoke was gone, he was in a forest. As he stood up, a fairy flew up to him and said, "Welcome to Alania – a home to trolls, elves, goblins, gnomes, crystal griffins - and others."

Malik asked, "What should I do?"

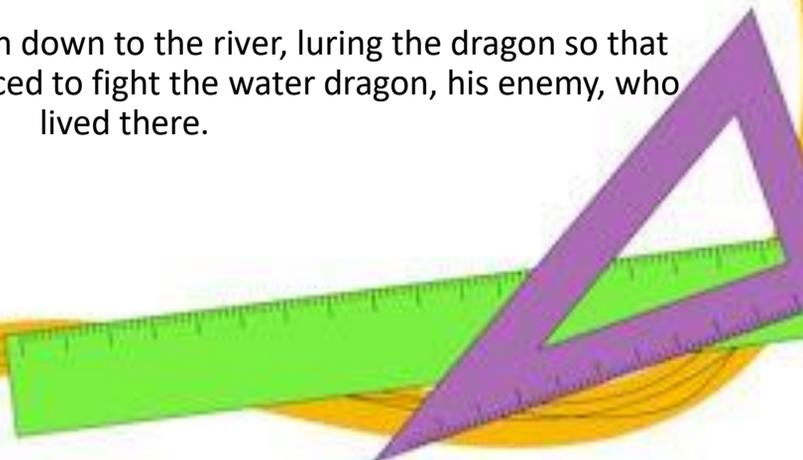
"You will need to slay the fire dragon and get the gold back for the king," said the fairy. "Here, take this fire sword to slay the dragon. Do you accept the journey?"

"Yes," said Malik.

Malik forgot to ask the fairy where to go, but suddenly a crystal griffin's feather fell out of the sky and drew a map out of thin air! He followed the map to a bridge, but there was an elf who said, "If you want to cross my bridge, you will need to solve three riddles." Malik was so stressed that he got two wrong. He was afraid if he got the third wrong, he would get punished, but luckily he got the last one correct and went on his way.

On his way, he saw the dragon's den heavily guarded by goblins, so he used the fire sword and took them down one by one. However, it made a loud sound and woke the dragon. Malik shouted desperately as the dragon began shooting fire at him.

Then he had an idea. He ran down to the river, luring the dragon so that the fire dragon would be forced to fight the water dragon, his enemy, who lived there.





While they were fighting, Malik went back to the lair, took the treasure, and ran away. Suddenly, the magic map changed and led Malik to the king.

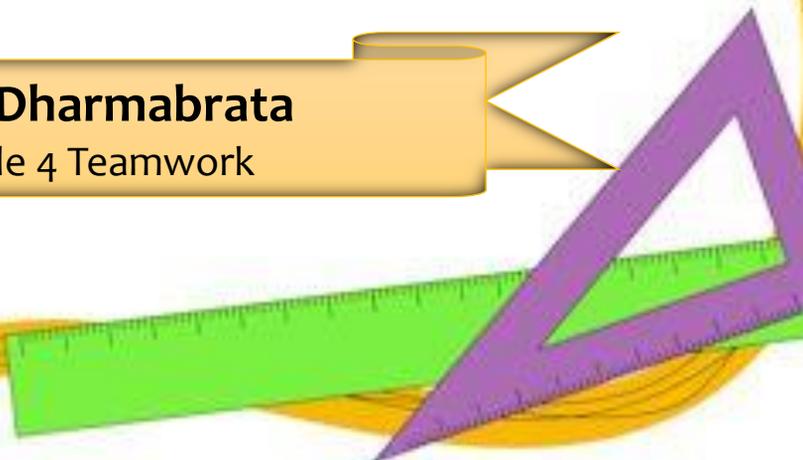
When he gave the treasure to the king, the king was so happy that he gave a lucky necklace to Malik and let him keep the magic sword.

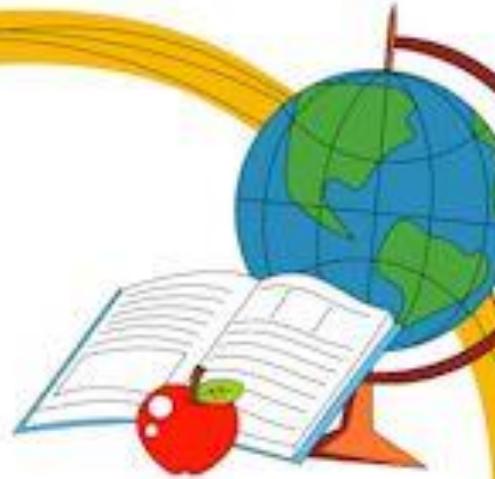
Malik then jumped into the portal, which appeared. He fell on his bed and then hid the gifts before writing what happened in an empty book. Photos appeared out of thin air. They were photos of his journey! He put them in the book and hid it under his bed so his mum wouldn't find it.

## *Malik and his Amazing Adventure*

**Kimi Dharmabrata**

Grade 4 Teamwork





## Quest for the Diamond Ring

One sunny day, a ten-year-old boy called Josh was exploring an old, abandoned house.

When he walked in through the front door, he got transported to a place that he never knew existed. There were gnomes there. He couldn't believe his eyes! The gnomes carefully approached him. "What are you?" the boy asked the creatures.

"We are gnomes," said the elder gnome. "Please help us," said the elder gnome desperately. "An ogre has stolen our magic diamond ring. Help to retrieve it from the ogre's cave."

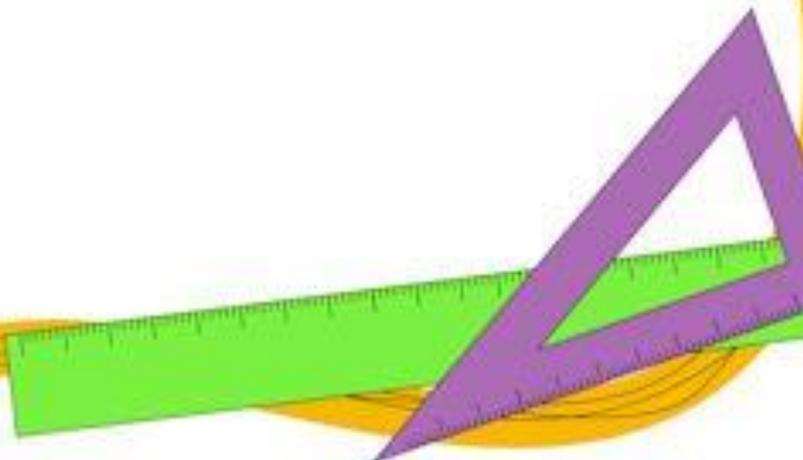
"Okay," replied the boy.

The elder gnome gave him a sword to kill the ogre and a map for directions. The boy then walked into the mysterious forest. He was getting tired, so he decided to rest for a while, then continued his quest to the ogre's cave.

Suddenly, as he was crossing the bridge to the ogre's cave, something grabbed his leg and pulled him down. "Ah, no!" he yelled. A goblin was pulling him down towards the water! He swiped his sword at the goblin, and, luckily, it ran away. He got back up and ran into the cave.

At the end of the cave, he saw the magic diamond ring on an altar. As he ran toward it, he heard the ogre bellow, "Not so fast!"

"Give back the ring!" replied Josh, yelling.





The ogre ran at Josh, swinging his club, but he missed. Josh lunged at the ogre with his sword, and the ogre died. The boy took the ring and ran back to the gnome village. The boy gave the diamond ring to the elder gnome.

“Thank you. Have this bag of gold as a reward,” said the elder gnome.

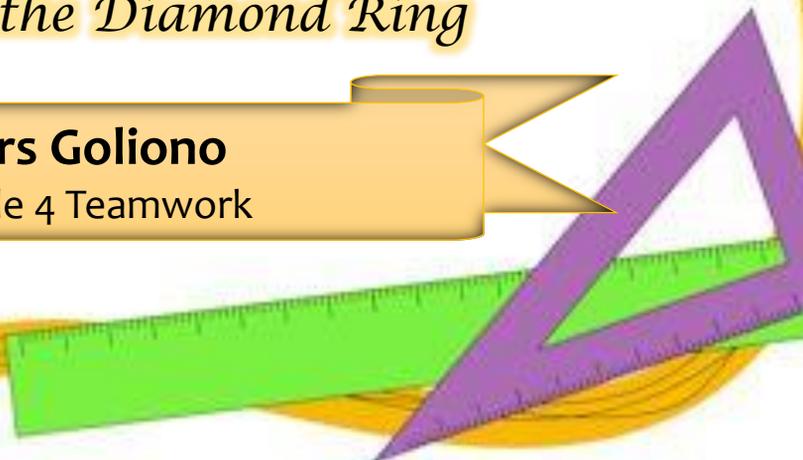
“You’re welcome,” said the boy.

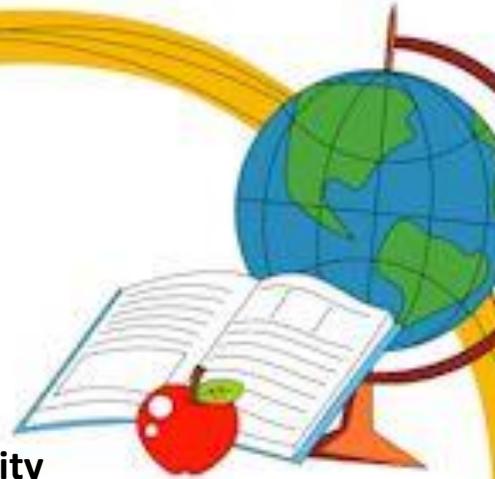
After that, the elder gnome made a portal, and Josh went back home with the gold.

## *Quest for the Diamond Ring*

**Lars Goliono**

Grade 4 Teamwork





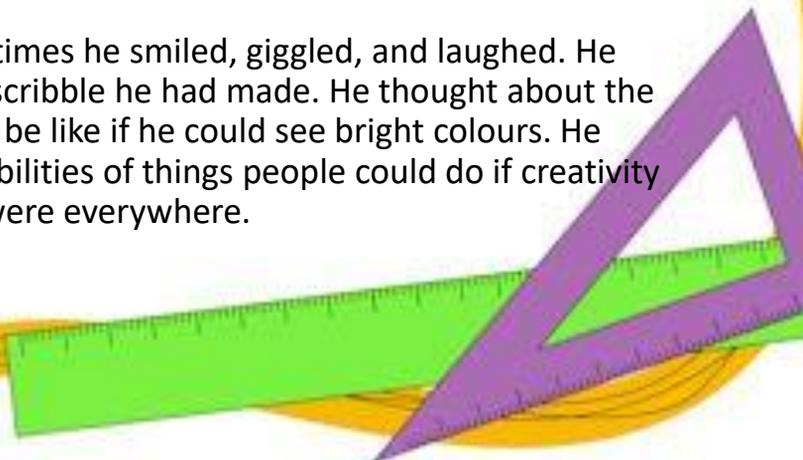
## The Beginning of Creativity

A long time ago, there was no creativity in the world. No one had names, bright colours had not been discovered, and art was not known either. Everyone's voice was the same, and no one smiled or laughed or showed emotions. Every aspect of creativity was not there. However, there was one particular boy who was born unusual. His mind was creative; everything about him glowed. Somehow the corners of his mouth went up sometimes, and he would open his mouth wide and make a sound. He was the strangest human or thing anyone had ever seen.

The boy was very disheartened about this world. He wanted someone else to be like him, maybe even lots of 'someones' like him. This world was boring, dull, and overall a horrendous place to be in he thought. He wanted to change the world. The obvious problem was he couldn't twist his mind to know how, so he waited for the day to come when he would know how to do it.

One day, the boy stumbled across a scroll next to an old wooden house. He assumed it was one of the usual scrolls that were dull, grey, and bleak. "What a waste of parchment," the boy muttered in disgust, looking down at the tattered, bleak, grey scroll, or so he thought. However, to his surprise, the scroll was full of writing that said whoever had creativity was worthy of being a king. The boy didn't know what a king was, so he kept reading. The scroll said that the person reading should think with every single drop of creativity they had. He started thinking about creativeness with all his might, something he had never thought to do.

He thought about all the times he smiled, giggled, and laughed. He thought about every single scribble he had made. He thought about the world and what it would be like if he could see bright colours. He thought of the endless possibilities of things people could do if creativity were everywhere.





Opening his eyes, he saw he was no longer on the left of the wooden house. It was a place full of colour and dazzling sunlight. He had freed creativity. The boy thought to himself, "Is my dream coming true before my very eyes? Will someone, or a lot of 'someones', be like me?"

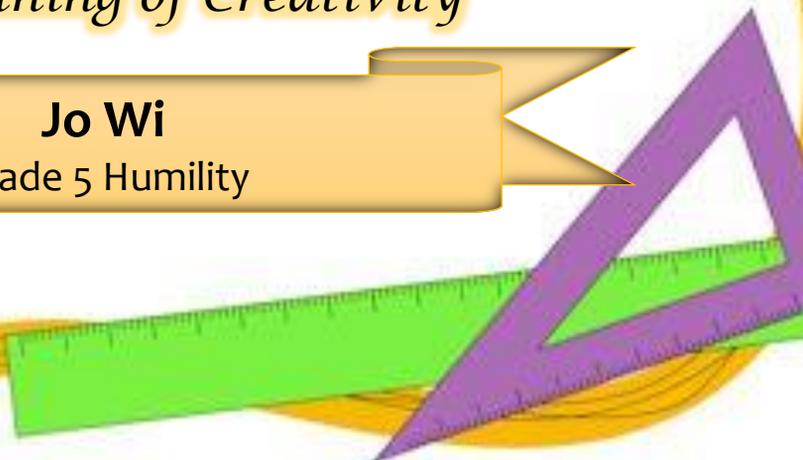
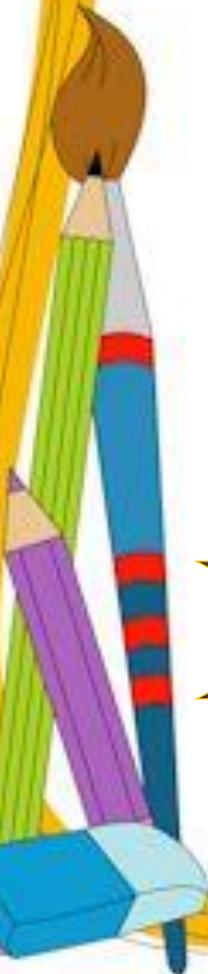
Sadly, the boy, inevitably and without meaning to, had let out the bad aspects of creativity and emotions that had never been known before. He unintentionally let out pain, sadness, anger, fear, and regret. He had released creativity into everyone's minds. Creativity that could be abused and that could do bad and horrible things. However, luckily for the boy, he mostly thought of good creativity.

The boy grew up to become the king of a whole kingdom and thought up creative, good ideas for all his people. These people thanked him for freeing them from the depths of boredom and for showing them creativity regardless of any bad creativity that had been released.

The boy, now king, would never forget the times he had seen bad creativity at its worst, and although he was filled with regret, ultimately, he knew he had done the world good by releasing creativity.

## *The Beginning of Creativity*

**Jo Wi**  
Grade 5 Humility





## The Angry Giant

Long ago, in a small village commonly known as 'God's Believers', there lived people who believed in their god so much that their god gave them a goddess called Fleur. Fleur would be their eternal protector.

Nearby, in a cave at the top of the mountain behind their village, lived a giant. This giant had not disturbed the villagers in over twenty centuries.

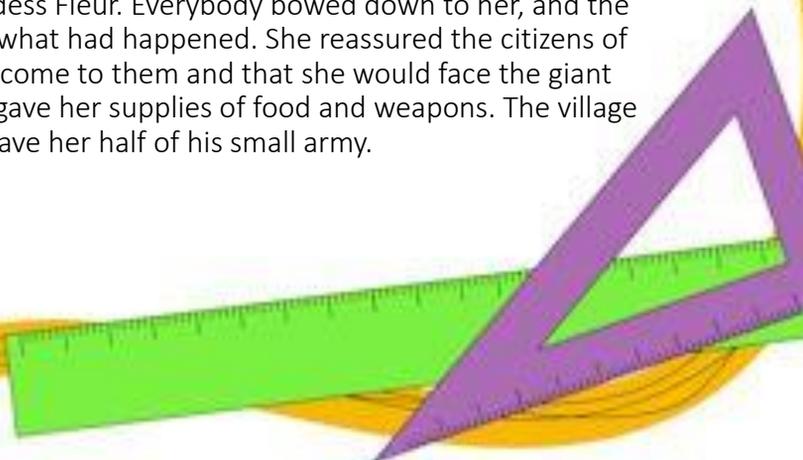
One fateful morning, the ugly, annoying, hot-tempered giant woke up. He was bored, stuck in his cave. "This is so boring," whined the giant.

He was walking around, thinking about what to do, when he accidentally tripped out of his cave and saw the sun and sky. For the first time in twenty centuries, he looked around and saw the village. As he was a mean giant, he thought, "I can capture the people in that village easily, and then they will all fear me. Yes, I will attack them!" He returned to his cave to create his plan.

The next day, as the people gathered for a speech from their village elder, they heard a sound as loud as the roars of a hundred lions. They saw the giant descending towards them. The villagers were shouting and panicking. The giant reached the village and immediately took twenty villagers, laughing as the remaining villagers ran away as fast as cheetahs.

After about an hour, when they were sure the giant was gone, the villagers returned to their village. The village elder climbed to the top of a huge stone to make an announcement. "Do not worry, because we will call our protector, the Goddess Fleur. She is the smartest, most beautiful, most noble and patient goddess to grace this land. Everybody needs to prepare for the ritual. We will summon her this very day," declared the village elder.

As the ritual was about to end, a bright light formed in the sky and there descending towards the village was the Goddess Fleur. Everybody bowed down to her, and the village elder enlightened her on what had happened. She reassured the citizens of the village that no harm would come to them and that she would face the giant personally. Gratefully, the village gave her supplies of food and weapons. The village elder even gave her half of his small army.





After a week of passing through forests, climbing mountains, and swimming through rivers and oceans, Fleur and half of the small army were finally in front of the giant's cave. "When we enter that cave, there is no turning back. If you want to go back, go back now," Fleur announced.

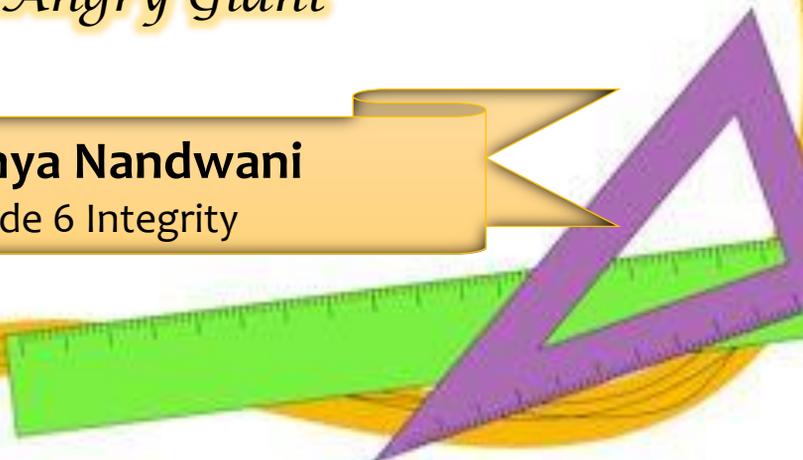
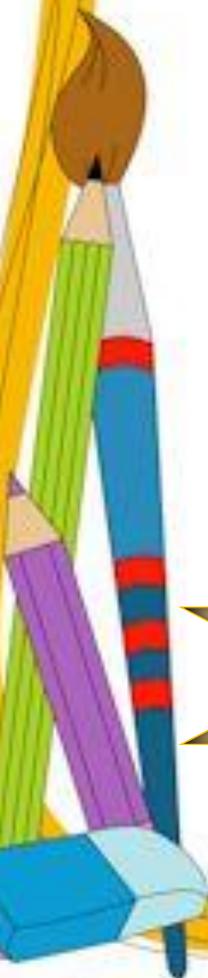
No one moved. They all approached the cave with caution. The giant was waiting for them. The moment they entered the cave, the giant caught hold of all of them except Fleur. She thought it was as if the giant knew they were coming. How could her future vision not have told her of this? She looked around the eerie, dark cave and noticed a small spot big enough to create a portal. She used her sacred rope and pushed the giant to the spot. She then opened a portal to the underworld. Fleur managed to defeat the giant by sending him through the portal to the underworld, but not before the giant swore he would return and have his revenge.

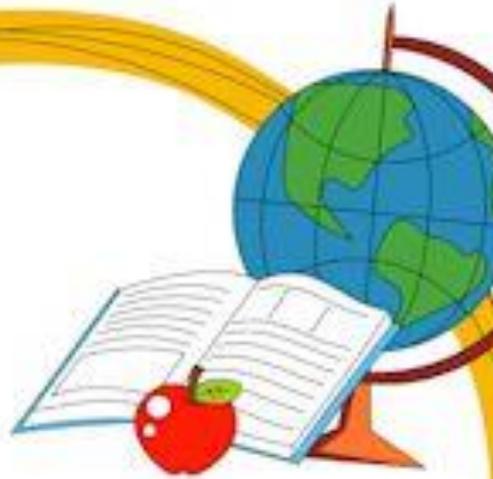
The giant never did return, but to this day, whenever the giant is angry, he will shout so loud and shake so much that the ground trembles causing earthquakes to happen.

## *The Angry Giant*

**Shaanya Nandwani**

Grade 6 Integrity





## An Eagle in the Snow

Soon enough, the train left the station. I sighed and took my coat off. The stranger was still buried in his paper. Remembering what ma said, I glanced at our suitcase. My eyes flitted back and forth between the neat man reading his paper and the suitcase filled with our lives. The man must've noticed my hesitation to leave the luggage unattended as he put himself as far away from our suitcase as possible.

Shooting a quick smile at the stranger, I fixed my gaze on the beautiful landscape outside the window. Everything from the majestic animals grazing on the grass to the beautiful plants that adorned the land was so stunning. They all brought me back to a time when everything was alright. When dad and ma hadn't divorced yet, and we were still one happy family. The goosebumps on my arms came back, and I had to force myself not to cry. My reminiscing was cut short to the sound of the stranger talking.

'The grassland sure is beautiful, ain't that right, kid?' My eyes quickly focused on the polished man. I was about to respond when he spoke again. 'Y'know I once took my missus to a meadow just like this one. We'd come across a cow, and the missus screamed bloody murder,' he chuckled at that last part.

'Well then, what did you do?' I responded. The stranger put his paper down and was now faced towards me, his hands acting out what had happened.

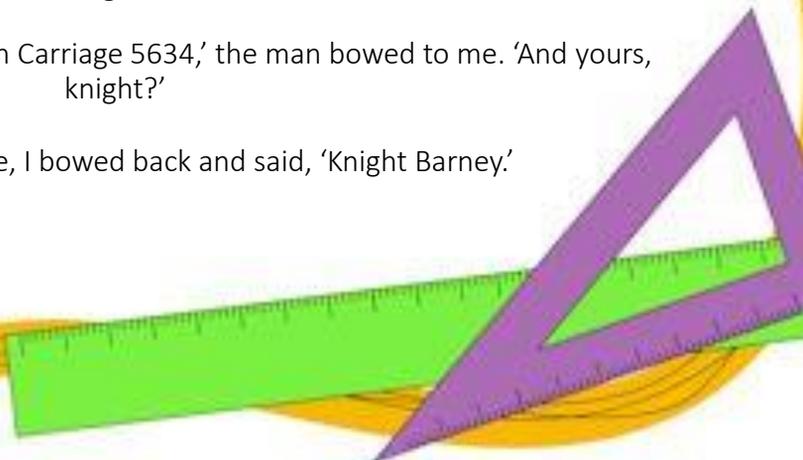
'Well, I did what any person would've done!' his eyes sparkled as he retold his story. 'I took a bucket full of water and splashed it onto the lassie while the cow stood and watched!'

I cackled so hard and held my hands to my stomach. Through tears, I looked back up at the man. 'What's your name?' I asked. The man buffed up his chest and put his arms to his heart.

'My name is King Brendan of Train Carriage 5634,' the man bowed to me. 'And yours, knight?'

My name is King Brendan of Train Carriage 5634,' the man bowed to me. 'And yours, knight?'

Giggling at his silly pose, I bowed back and said, 'Knight Barney.'





For so many hours during the train ride, we would share stories about each other's lives. I explained to Brendan why mom and I were on the train; to see my dad and to finalize the divorce. Brendan in turn told me how he was a single father and had to leave his baby girl to find a job. We both sympathized with each other but unlike everybody else, Brendan didn't act differently towards me after I told him that my parents were divorced.

My mom was still passed out from exhaustion on her seat. We talked and talked and talked until there was nothing else to talk about. In the middle of the journey, however, Brendan had announced he had to leave. I deflated a little, sinking back into my seat after he had exited the carriage. My eyes felt tired, and my mouth was chapped. Just then, my mom stirred and woke up.

'Did anyone try to steal our suitcase Barney?' Ma yawned and stretched her hands out.

'No ma,' I replied. 'But there was a neat bloke who came in here. His name was Brendan.' When my mom heard what I said, she shot up from her seat with her eyes wide. I continued, 'He was so funny, ma! He told me jokes and he says that he's a single father.'

Ma straightened up in her seat. Although my mom stared right into my eyes, I kept on talking. 'D'you know that he has 3 sibli-'

My mom latched her hands onto my shoulders. Her eyes were frantic and were all over the carriage. 'Barney,' her voice deep and serious. 'That man. That man was your grandpa. He was your grandpa Barney.'

## *An Eagle in the Snow*

**Anastasia Susanto**  
Grade 6 Integrity





## Stig of the Dump

The blink of daylight from above mirrored the walls of the cave and almost revealed the strange figure, but it quickly turned around and started to descend into the darkness of the cave. It slowly melted into the floor and eventually became a shadow, a shadow that was unnoticeable and blended with the dark. It quickly sprinted away and left a slimy, black, gooey substance in its tracks. Barney got on his legs toward the gooey substance, but before he could do anything, the mysterious substance charged up and entered his eyes which made it impossible to blink.

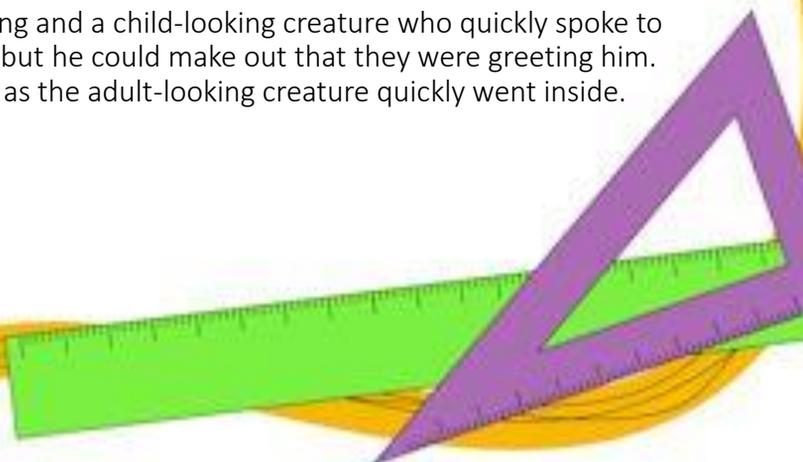
‘Blech, what was that?’ Barney thought to himself as he brushed the goo off his face. He struggled to adjust his vision. Instead of a dark cave that he had expected to see, it was now totally lit. Barney could see that the cave was a long, rocky hallway that led to something as bright as the sun, but he couldn't make out what it was.

Out of curiosity, Barney stood up and started walking towards the light. The long hallway appeared to be over many centuries old. Thick moss and long vines and creepers flooded the cave.

As he approached the end of the hallway, the light quickly adjusted his vision as he entered a gigantic cave that was filled to the brim with humongous, glowing mushrooms, a grassy floor, and an entire village from the floor to even the top of the mushrooms. Everywhere he could see multiples of the creatures he had seen in the entrance of the cave, but now, they were no longer dark and grim; they turned out to be human-looking creatures but as if they had evolved in a whole other branch of evolution. They had sharp and sleek ears and very short noses, with antlers as big as hands and sharp blue eyes.

When Barney got to the village, all eyes were averted to him. He walked down to what appeared to be the main path connecting the village to a small humble hut at the end of the path.

He was greeted by an adult-looking and a child-looking creature who quickly spoke to what Barney heard as gibberish, but he could make out that they were greeting him. Barney put on a confused face as the adult-looking creature quickly went inside.





A few minutes later, it came out holding a clear flask containing a weird glowing liquid. It gestured to urge Barney to drink the liquid. Suddenly, he could hear it speaking in perfect English.

“Who are you? What do you want?” Barney quickly spoke.

“We are the Tripitakaans., We are happy to meet you, Barney.” spoke the creature.

“Wait, how do you know my name?”

“We can read your mind. It's a feature that all of us have,”

“Please come in!”

Barney went inside the hut and sat down on a bench.

“So, you are probably wondering how to get out of this place?”

“Yes, that's right!”

“Well, we have this potion of teleportation for you, but it has its side effects.”

“Great! Can I have it?”

“Of course you can!”

And so Barney drank the potion. He became sleepy and started to close his eyes. All his worries were gone.

He woke up in a grassy field with no memory of what happened. In fact, he had no memory of anything!

“Hello? Anyone?” He couldn't remember a thing. He got up to his feet and started to walk into the breezy wind of the grassy plains. He was determined to find what had happened and who he was.

## *Stig of The Dump*

**Bradley Hawana**  
Grade 6 Respect

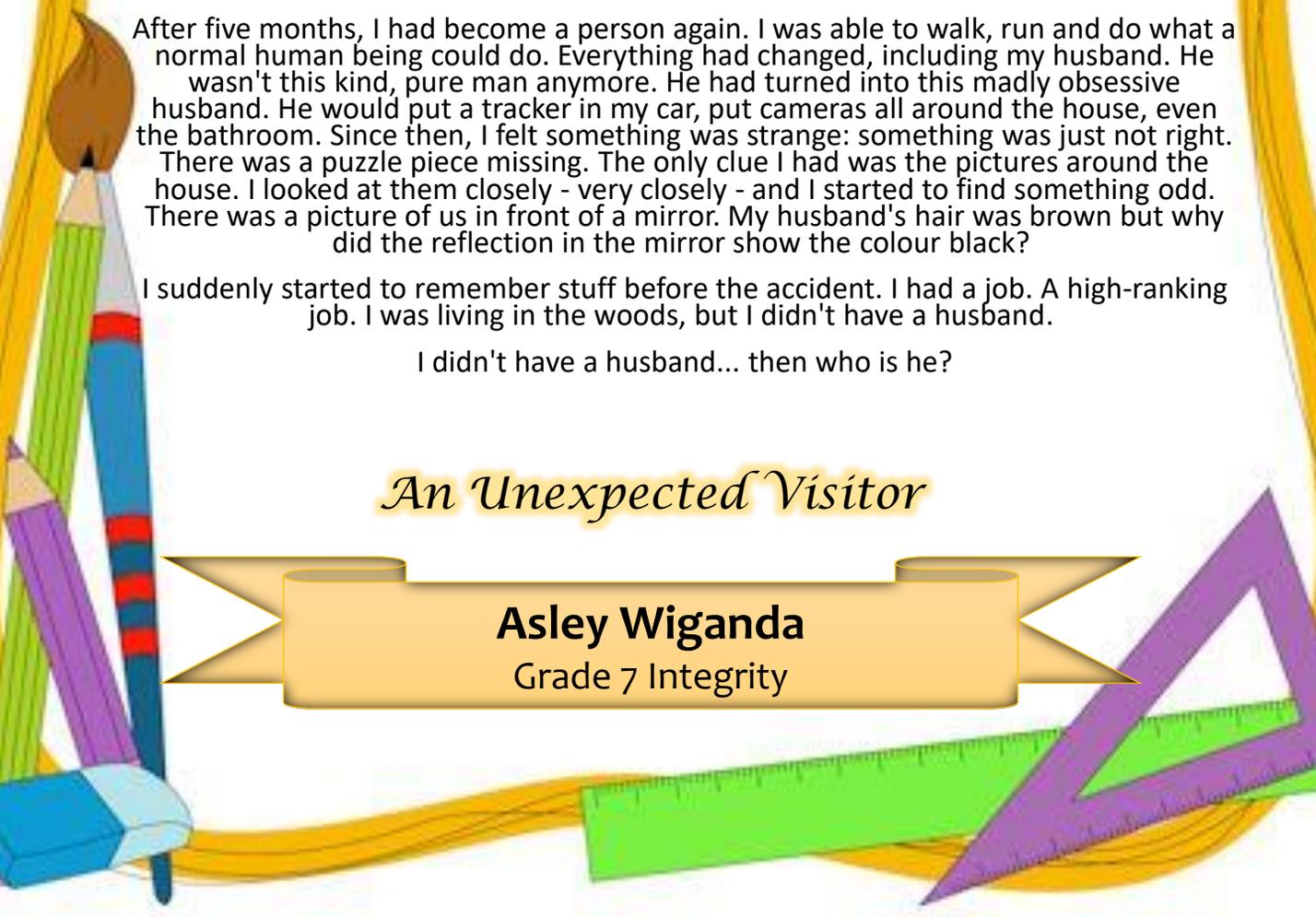


## An Unexpected Visitor

It was the worst day of my life. I had been in a car accident. I had just got out of seventeen-hour surgery and I was in severe pain. I had no one to help me get through the pain. I remembered nothing. Nothing before the accident; nothing after the accident. I knew no one: not even myself. I was sitting on my ICU bed when my husband came and gave me some flowers and warm milk, I was so happy that he was there for me.

One day went by. Then two, followed by a week. Two weeks past and I still remembered nothing before or after the accident. All I remembered was that my name was Jennifer. I had physically gotten better after three weeks in the hospital. I could go home. My husband drove us home. We reached home. We lived in the woods. It was a big house but I don't remember living in it at all. I was still paralyzed; still in a wheelchair.

I had been living in that house for two months. I loved the house but something strange kept bothering me; I didn't know what it was. I would walk around the house every evening, while he was at work. There were pictures of us around the house: pictures of our wedding day; pictures when we were on our honeymoon and pictures of our childhood too.



After five months, I had become a person again. I was able to walk, run and do what a normal human being could do. Everything had changed, including my husband. He wasn't this kind, pure man anymore. He had turned into this madly obsessive husband. He would put a tracker in my car, put cameras all around the house, even the bathroom. Since then, I felt something was strange: something was just not right. There was a puzzle piece missing. The only clue I had was the pictures around the house. I looked at them closely - very closely - and I started to find something odd. There was a picture of us in front of a mirror. My husband's hair was brown but why did the reflection in the mirror show the colour black?

I suddenly started to remember stuff before the accident. I had a job. A high-ranking job. I was living in the woods, but I didn't have a husband.

I didn't have a husband... then who is he?

## *An Unexpected Visitor*

**Asley Wiganda**  
Grade 7 Integrity



## At Death's Door

The clock struck three. It was still dark out as I peered through the wool curtains of my window. The sound of the icy wind howled and rattled the window panes and it was dead cold. A foggy mist was in the air and there were some slivers of moonlight that had managed to slip through the cracks of the dark clouds, but other than that, it was pitch black. I shivered and went back to bed.

My pillows were ruffled and my blanket was hanging askew from one edge of the mattress. I was supposed to be asleep right now but for some reason, I couldn't. My eyes were still wide open and every time I tried to close my eyes, they would always open up. It was as if my mind didn't want to sleep: as if my mind was telling me that something was coming.

Finally, after an hour, I accepted that I couldn't sleep. I stretched out of bed and started preparing for my day. I brushed my teeth and made an egg sandwich to fill my stomach. I looked out the window. The sun should've been rising and clearing the clouds at four o'clock, but on that day, it wasn't. It was still pitch black and the fog was getting thicker and thicker. Strange, I thought as I took a bite of my sandwich. The snow was now pounding hard on the earth.

I strolled to the living room and flicked on the television. I was going to check the weather report channel when someone knocked on my door four times.

*Knock! Knock! Knock! Knock!*

"Who would visit me in this hour and in this weather?" I said to myself. I ignored it and continued staring at the television.

*Knock! Knock! Knock! Knock!*

Again, another four knocks! I walked to my door, annoyed, and inspected my visitor through the keyhole. What I saw made my blood run cold. He was wearing a hooded robe and nothing else, but what was even more bizarre was when the wind blew at the hooded robe where his legs should have shown, there was nothing. Just thin air. What's more was he had the hands of a skeleton and was carrying a black scythe. I knew who he was, but I didn't think he'd come this early.

Death was knocking at my door!

## *At Death's Door*

**Justin Tjitra**  
Grade 7 Humility



## **The Analysis of the Character the Hitchhiker in “The Hitchhiker” by Roald Dahl**

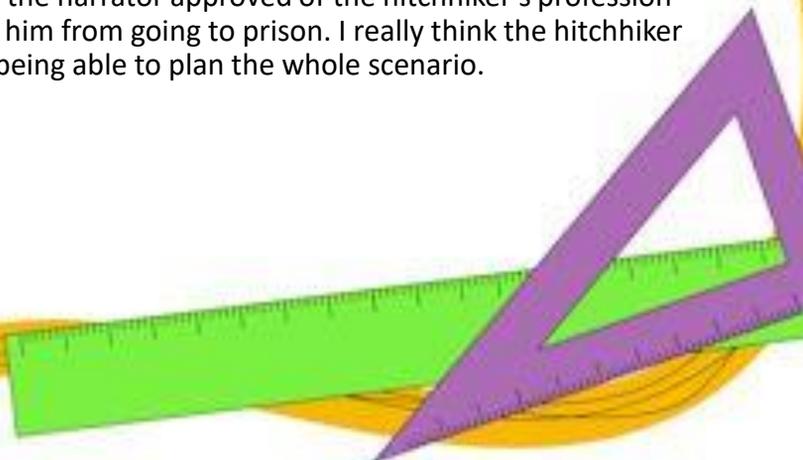
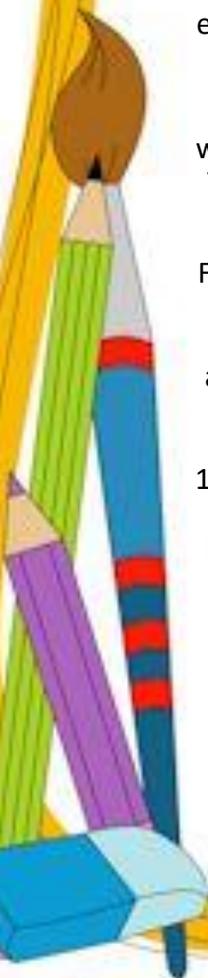
In the story of “The Hitchhiker”, the narrator picked up a hitchhiker and gave him a lift. Then, he proudly mentioned that his car can travel 129 miles per hour. The narrator hit the road at a high speed to prove it to the hitchhiker but got caught by the police. The narrator was worried about the ticket, but the hitchhiker assured him that everything would be fine. The hitchhiker said he was a "fingersmith." At the end of the story, the hitchhiker revealed that he had stolen the book of their criminal record from the police.

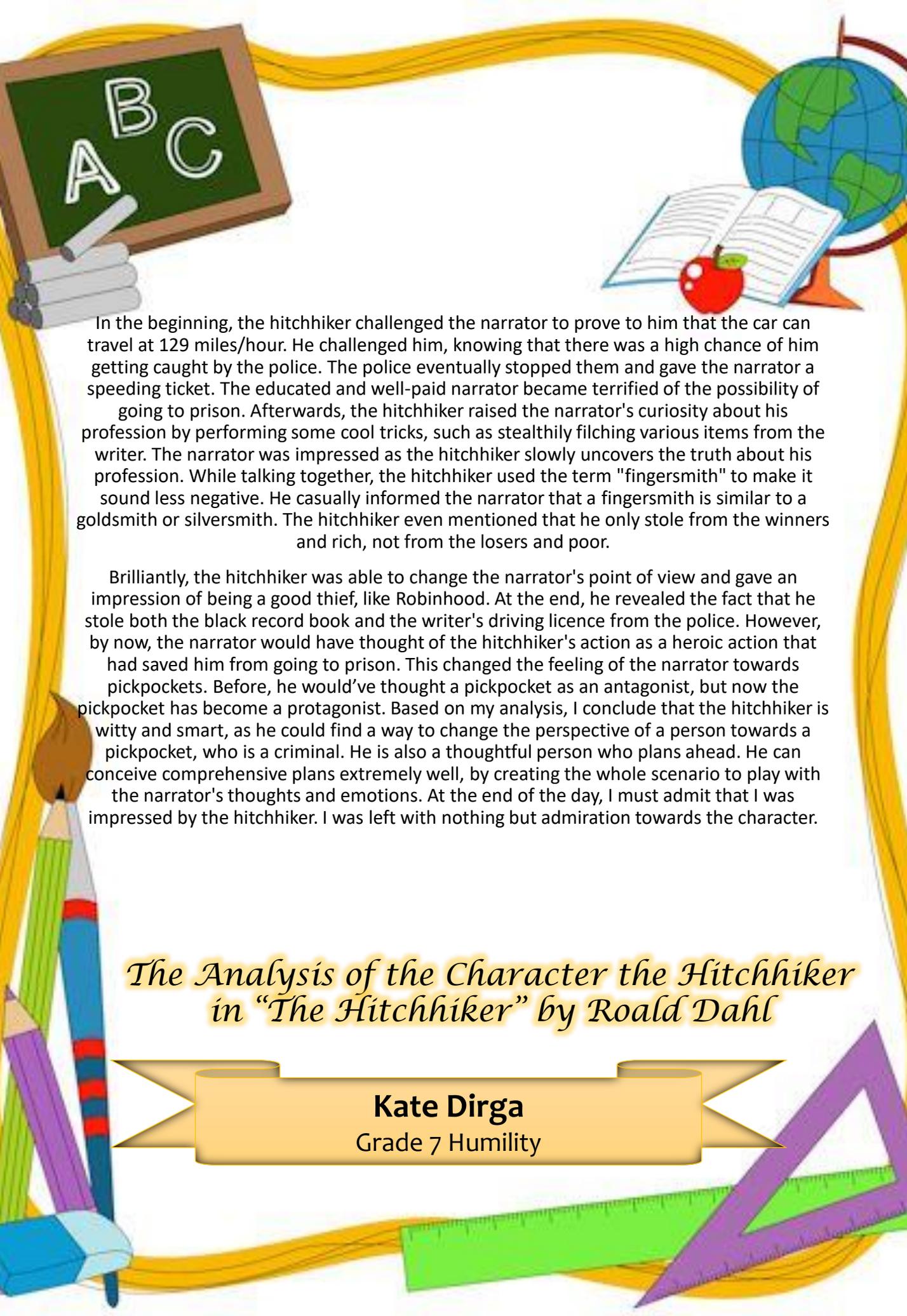
The witty hitchhiker twisted the narrator's point of view of a pickpocket by purposely getting the narrator into trouble and eventually getting him out of that situation using his profession as a fingersmith, which is the same as a pickpocket.

By the end of the story, the narrator viewed the hitchhiker's profession differently, especially because the hitchhiker's profession saved him. So, the hitchhiker successfully completed his plan to influence the narrator's point of view on him.

There was some textual evidence on the page 28, line 13, when he said 'I'll bet she won't do it.', and also on page 28, line 18 when he said, 'Open 'er up then and prove it'. These sentences proved that the hitchhiker was provoking the narrator to go over the speed limit, so he would get caught by the cop, which was part of his conspiracy.

Further evidence was mentioned on page 33, line 21-23, and line 28 when the narrator said '... the speed with which he performed this rather difficult operation was incredible. The cigarette was rolled and ready in about five seconds. I've never seen anyone roll a cigarette as fast as that...'. These sentences refer to one of the incredible tricks that the hitchhiker performed as a fingersmith. The narrator admired the hitchhiker's pickpocketing skills and felt astonished. Finally, on page 38, line 6, 9, and 13, the narrator exclaimed... "You're a genius!"... "You're brilliant!" ... "You're a fantastic fellow!" By the end of the story, the narrator approved of the hitchhiker's profession because the "fingersmith" saved him from going to prison. I really think the hitchhiker was a genius for being able to plan the whole scenario.





In the beginning, the hitchhiker challenged the narrator to prove to him that the car can travel at 129 miles/hour. He challenged him, knowing that there was a high chance of him getting caught by the police. The police eventually stopped them and gave the narrator a speeding ticket. The educated and well-paid narrator became terrified of the possibility of going to prison. Afterwards, the hitchhiker raised the narrator's curiosity about his profession by performing some cool tricks, such as stealthily filching various items from the writer. The narrator was impressed as the hitchhiker slowly uncovers the truth about his profession. While talking together, the hitchhiker used the term "fingersmith" to make it sound less negative. He casually informed the narrator that a fingersmith is similar to a goldsmith or silversmith. The hitchhiker even mentioned that he only stole from the winners and rich, not from the losers and poor.

Brilliantly, the hitchhiker was able to change the narrator's point of view and gave an impression of being a good thief, like Robinhood. At the end, he revealed the fact that he stole both the black record book and the writer's driving licence from the police. However, by now, the narrator would have thought of the hitchhiker's action as a heroic action that had saved him from going to prison. This changed the feeling of the narrator towards pickpockets. Before, he would've thought a pickpocket as an antagonist, but now the pickpocket has become a protagonist. Based on my analysis, I conclude that the hitchhiker is witty and smart, as he could find a way to change the perspective of a person towards a pickpocket, who is a criminal. He is also a thoughtful person who plans ahead. He can conceive comprehensive plans extremely well, by creating the whole scenario to play with the narrator's thoughts and emotions. At the end of the day, I must admit that I was impressed by the hitchhiker. I was left with nothing but admiration towards the character.

## *The Analysis of the Character the Hitchhiker in "The Hitchhiker" by Roald Dahl*

**Kate Dirga**  
Grade 7 Humility



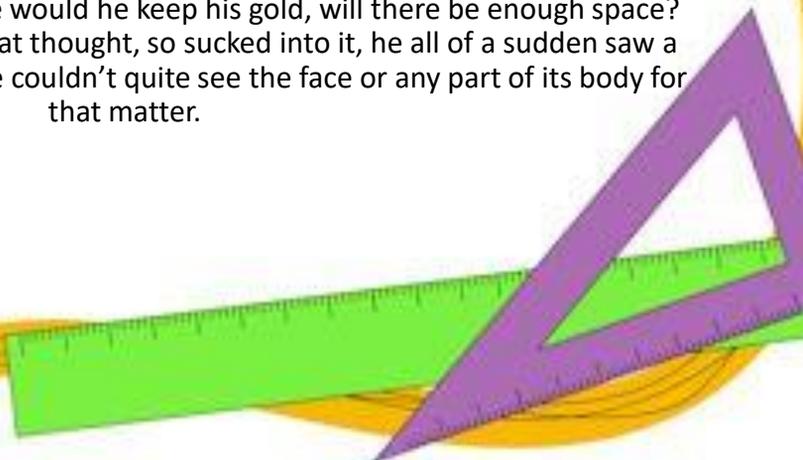
## Greed

There he was, only a door separating him. He thought that the place was hard to find, but it never crossed his mind that it would take half his lifetime to find it. He put all his blood, sweat, and well, life into this thing that apparently was impossible to find. So, you would guess that this was a moment of satisfaction and contentment. But it was far from it. He was petrified, he just couldn't stand still, he was pacing back and forth. People say that even if you managed to flee with all the gold, you would still weep about your sin that you had just fulfilled, death itself would come after you for this was his gold. But he convinced himself, "hah, those fairy tales, why in the world should I believe a thing they say... Devil's going to come after me?! What a cliché".

But he wasn't as confident. He was all drenched in sweat, hands were shaking, the vision was blurry, starting to hyperventilate, the stomach was folding itself performing triple axles, but he didn't care at this point, his mind and soul were crowded with dreams of all the riches he would get. He approached the enormous, old, silver engraved door. The door was heavy, and it took quite an amount of effort to open it. He looked around for any traps of some sort. He stomped on every single tile closest to him, he checked for some arrows, or a flying ax to split his face. But unexpectedly nothing happened, it was inconceivable, unfathomable to him.

With his smile reaching his ears, he took his bag and filled it up with all the gold that he could carry. He was overjoyed. The stubby man went back to his camel and trodden away. Looking at all the gold almost blinded him. But the boiling sun was sucking all the energy out of him, tongue felt like sandpaper, it evaporated his saliva completely.

After a while, he was drained. He couldn't even lift his hand up. His face was bright yellow with a bilious fever, and his large, dark eyes stood nearly out of his head, for all the flesh had gone. There was nothing but yellow parchment-like skin. He needed help urgently. But no one was around in the desolate desert. The place was in dead silence. He started to hear this ringing sound in his ears, he didn't know what it was, but he had more pressing problems, such as where would he keep his gold, will there be enough space? While he was wrapped around that thought, so sucked into it, he all of a sudden saw a black figure run in front of him. He couldn't quite see the face or any part of its body for that matter.



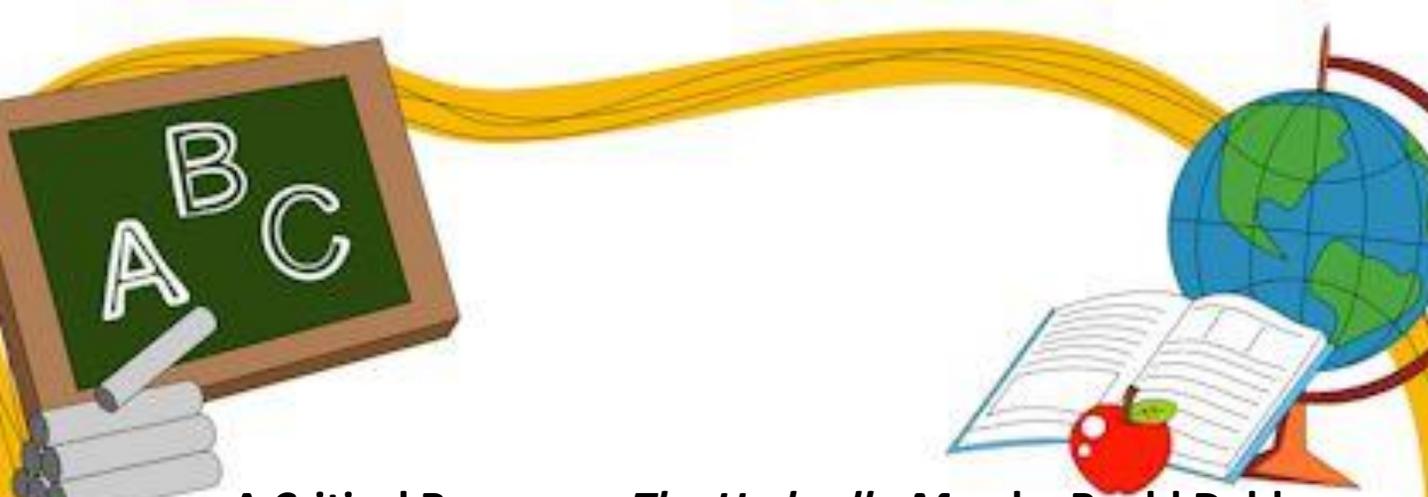


It was getting dark, and the temperature was dropping. He felt a zephyr down his back. Then all of a sudden, he felt this gush of wind. It was so violent that it blew him right off his camel. He laid on the ground scurrying for some protection as he saw his camel run away. His lips were cracked, his tongue was black, sticking out his mouth.

He saw a figure crept along on its hands and knees, then it got up and staggered along a few yards on its legs, only to fall and crawl again. Then it popped up right in front of him, death himself. "You shall pay for your sins," the devil said as he stuck his reaper right in the center of his stomach, dragging it through the rest of his body. The last words of the man were, not surprisingly, "I want my treasure, I just want my treasure".

*Greed*

**Atharva Shukla**  
Grade 8 Respect



## A Critical Response: *The Umbrella Man* by Roald Dahl

### The Umbrella Man - a Suspicious Character

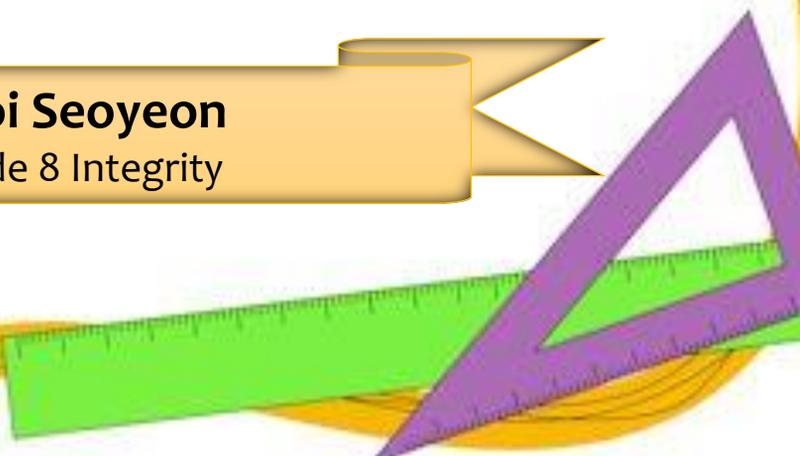
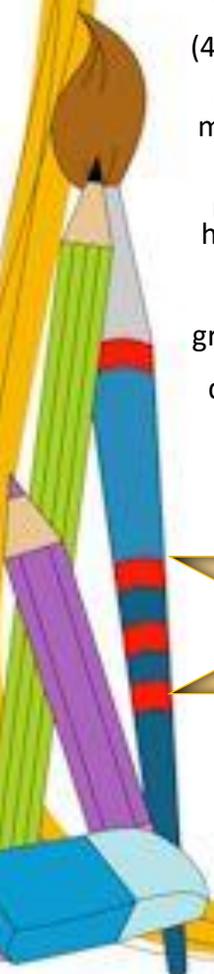
At first glance, the umbrella man seems to be a perfectly respectable and well-mannered gentleman - namely, just a nice old person desperate for a ride back home. He seems like the perfect character to gain sympathy from the audience; however, if one reads the story closely, they can see that the umbrella man's introduction was anything short of normal.

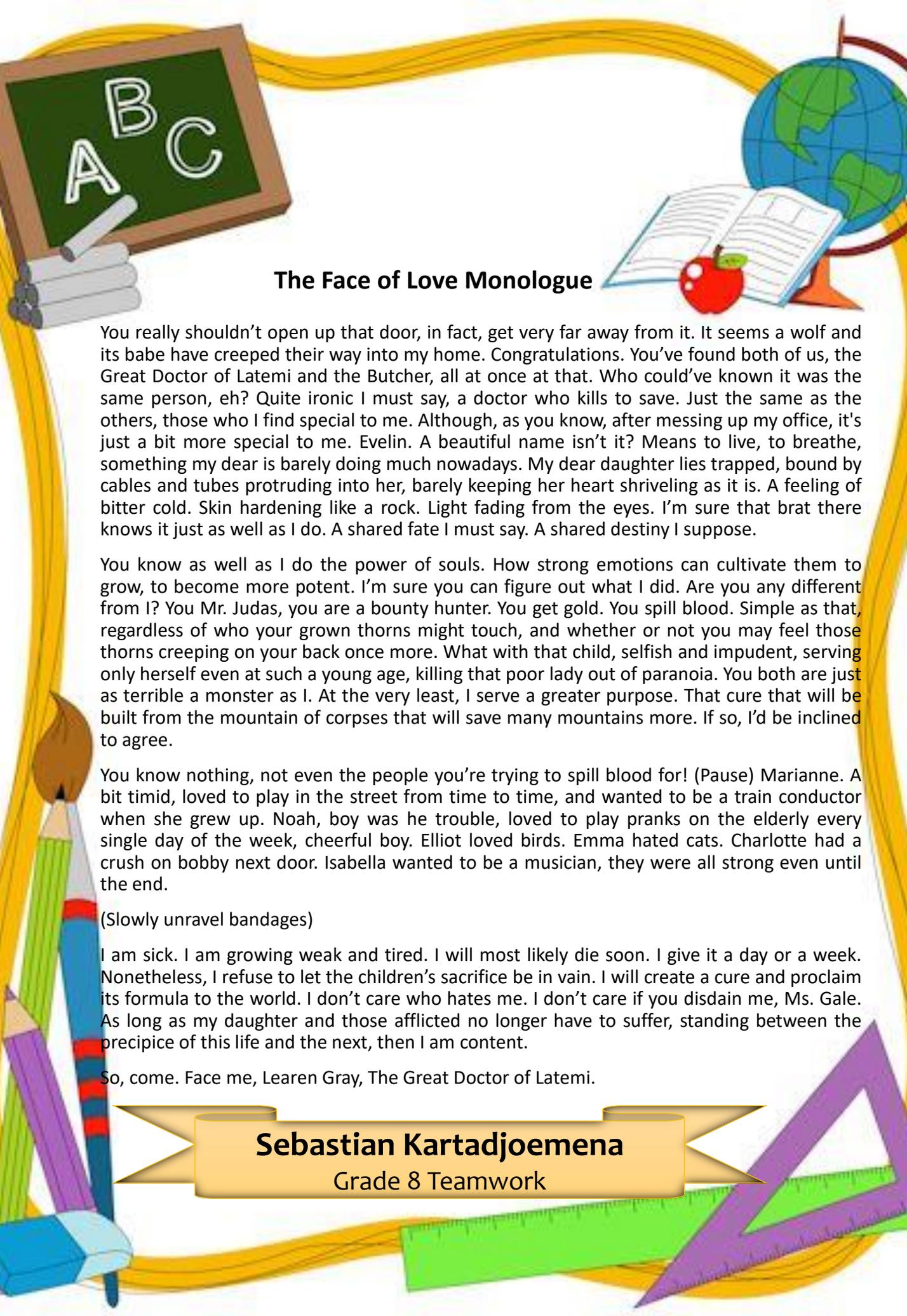
At the beginning of the story, the umbrella man is introduced as a 'little old man' who was 'particularly nice.' (4.6) This is partially due to the way he is dressed, with his 'beautiful brown shoes,' (4.10-11) which the mother believes is how to tell a gentleman apart. However, one finds that this man is simply a bit *too* perfect - his manner of speech, with his 'madams' and perfect grammar, has absolutely no flaws in them, and each and every one of his actions, such as his 'gentle smile' (4.22) are so well-mannered to the point that he seems like a magnificent actor in a play. Furthermore, the very fact that this umbrella man is so nice and well-mannered towards a stranger - this fact might not be odd, but combined with other elements in his introduction, this fact causes a seed of suspicion to slowly start growing within the readers.

Secondly, the mother's suspicion also plays a part - as she starts doubting the man in front of him, and starts acting 'staring down at him along the full length of her nose,' (4.16-17) she seems to only strengthen the reader's suspicion of the umbrella man - and thus, the use of the mother's personality as a naturally suspicious person is what influences the readers, and causes them to start doubting the nature of the umbrella man. Another thing was the timing of the umbrella man - he appeared exactly after the mother complained that 'I wish we had a car with a chauffeur,' (3.16-17) - and the timing of his appearance, as well as his offer - it seems to perfectly match what the mother needed, thus building another small seed of suspicion that the umbrella man had been listening to their conversation, thus being able to know exactly what to do to make the mother accept the offer.

Lastly, the umbrella man's manner of speech. Although yes, it is perfect in terms of grammar and wording, he repeats himself quite often, 'if... if only...' (5.6-7) and blabbers words that need not be added, he gives off a feeling of talking rapidly, like he's desperate - thus, again building up the suspicion that he actually needs the mother to quickly accept his offer.

**Choi Seoyeon**  
Grade 8 Integrity





## The Face of Love Monologue

You really shouldn't open up that door, in fact, get very far away from it. It seems a wolf and its babe have crept their way into my home. Congratulations. You've found both of us, the Great Doctor of Latemi and the Butcher, all at once at that. Who could've known it was the same person, eh? Quite ironic I must say, a doctor who kills to save. Just the same as the others, those who I find special to me. Although, as you know, after messing up my office, it's just a bit more special to me. Evelin. A beautiful name isn't it? Means to live, to breathe, something my dear is barely doing much nowadays. My dear daughter lies trapped, bound by cables and tubes protruding into her, barely keeping her heart shriveling as it is. A feeling of bitter cold. Skin hardening like a rock. Light fading from the eyes. I'm sure that brat there knows it just as well as I do. A shared fate I must say. A shared destiny I suppose.

You know as well as I do the power of souls. How strong emotions can cultivate them to grow, to become more potent. I'm sure you can figure out what I did. Are you any different from I? You Mr. Judas, you are a bounty hunter. You get gold. You spill blood. Simple as that, regardless of who your grown thorns might touch, and whether or not you may feel those thorns creeping on your back once more. What with that child, selfish and impudent, serving only herself even at such a young age, killing that poor lady out of paranoia. You both are just as terrible a monster as I. At the very least, I serve a greater purpose. That cure that will be built from the mountain of corpses that will save many mountains more. If so, I'd be inclined to agree.

You know nothing, not even the people you're trying to spill blood for! (Pause) Marianne. A bit timid, loved to play in the street from time to time, and wanted to be a train conductor when she grew up. Noah, boy was he trouble, loved to play pranks on the elderly every single day of the week, cheerful boy. Elliot loved birds. Emma hated cats. Charlotte had a crush on bobby next door. Isabella wanted to be a musician, they were all strong even until the end.

(Slowly unravel bandages)

I am sick. I am growing weak and tired. I will most likely die soon. I give it a day or a week. Nonetheless, I refuse to let the children's sacrifice be in vain. I will create a cure and proclaim its formula to the world. I don't care who hates me. I don't care if you disdain me, Ms. Gale. As long as my daughter and those afflicted no longer have to suffer, standing between the precipice of this life and the next, then I am content.

So, come. Face me, Learen Gray, The Great Doctor of Latemi.

**Sebastian Kartadjoemena**

Grade 8 Teamwork



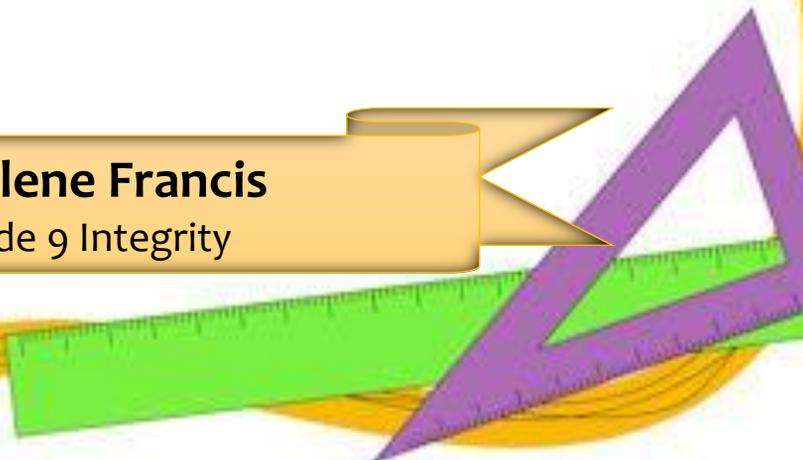
## Food Court

Towering ivory-coloured pillars stretched up to hold the wide canopy of a ceiling. Attached to it were blinding white lights, fixed in place with what seemed like rusted bolts. Surrounding us were walls embellished with tints of blue and gold, swirling into wave-like patterns. My insides felt as if they were bound to erupt should I not slurp down a bowl of ramen right now. The wooden sole of my left shoe made rapid tapping noises against the hard, crisp cement floor which sprawled across the entire room, extending to the entrance of my favourite place in the world: Central Food Court. Ah, the familiar aroma: a fusion of steamy soups, freshly plated fried rice and the occasional whiff of a massive chocolate lava cake.

While scanning through this ethereal place, one would find hundreds of red and orange seats made of plastic, which would make a loud whining noise every single time they were dragged. Peeking amongst the wooden tables, were hints of green and yellow from the display of potted plants, with shiny leaves, resembling those of a palm tree. In each corner of the room were collections of vibrant, colour-coded trash bins, each labelled delicately with laminated paper with printed-on symbols. Right next to them was a tall pile of tall chairs, which had a smooth and visibly shiny finish. Directly perpendicular to me, was a family of six, clearly struggling to keep their children in place while feeding to them what seemed like five cheeseburger servings and heaps of greasy French fries. While many were seated at their own tables, the remainder of the crowd was speeding in and out, the entrance and exit doors swinging every passing second.

Panning over to the vendors and tiny stalls, there was a combination of fast-food workers, professional sushi chefs, and many other employees, constantly switching back and forth from the kitchen to the cashier, attending to the hundreds of starving visitors. Amongst the resounding chatter, one would be able to hear bits of gossip, project ideas, the laughter of friends, all of which I couldn't help but eavesdrop on. Studying the vast spread of the food court, my mind began to spin and my stomach was beginning to feel more and more barren. Instinctively, I laid my heavy head on my empty table and shut my eyes. Suddenly, I heard a bowl being placed gently on its surface. Finally...my warm bowl of ramen, with assorted toppings. As my eyes met those of my best friend's, who looked just as eager to eat as I did, I took the pair of chopsticks and dug in.

**Charlene Francis**  
Grade 9 Integrity





Dear Sirs,

### **Issues - The Impacts of Lowton's Developments**

Regarding the developments you have proposed, I am writing to express my heavy concerns about how this issue affects us Lowton residents and the environment. We really need you to stop this from happening.

Firstly, these changes pose numerous problems for us residents. Lowton's community identity is disappearing. These over-developments lead to losses in our territories that we value very much. Moreover, our village experiences so much traffic everyday - and this is due to previous improvements from a couple of years ago. Imagine the traffic after your proposed changes! This extreme traffic leads to the slowing down of emergency services - many residents are ageing and are at risk of contracting many health problems. Our children are also facing much trouble going to and from school. Again, imagine how much these issues will escalate once your developments are implemented!

Not just that, but it will not be safe for children - or anyone - to go outside. Air pollution would be much worse than the conditions now. Think of the potential health problems, specifically respiratory illnesses, that Lowton's residents could catch due to the worsening of our environment. Many trees are going to be cut down, and this affects, again, our lands and farms that we value very much, and also the biodiversity of organisms, water catchment areas and temperature rising. This leads to many problems that affect the residents' lives and everyday activities.

Moreover, Oaklands should not be demolished. It is an asset to Lowton. The building is stunning; you should maintain and conserve this for our grandchildren. Oaklands has a great amount of historical value - your developments will cause a huge loss of a crucial heritage asset. History would be gone and our village's pride would go away with it too. It should not have been sold in the first place.

Your developments cause countless environmental, social, health and psychological problems to Lowton and its residents. Therefore, I ask you to halt these improvements and maintain this valued village of ours.

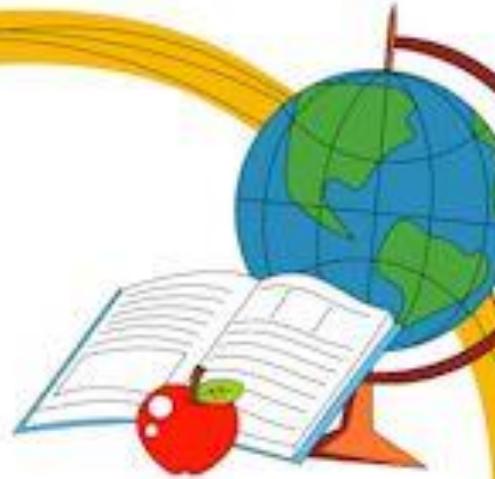
Yours faithfully,

Alisya

Farah Mundzir

Lowton Village Chief

**Farah Mundzir**  
Grade 9 Integrity



## Alien World

The ground was covered in a layer of a mixture of brown, green, and cyan dust. Underneath it was a hard surface, but rough, like rock covered metal. Mountains, ledges, and cliffs rose from the distance, like giant arms reaching for the heavens above. A large and vast valley was between these giant landscapes, glittering as if the ground was studded by an endless amount of diamonds, or if stars were located in it. Around, there were many crevices, nooks, and crannies. A hillside, looking like molten rock rapidly cooled down, creating a shape like flowing liquid. Holes, caves, disappearing to the unknown darkness of the underground.

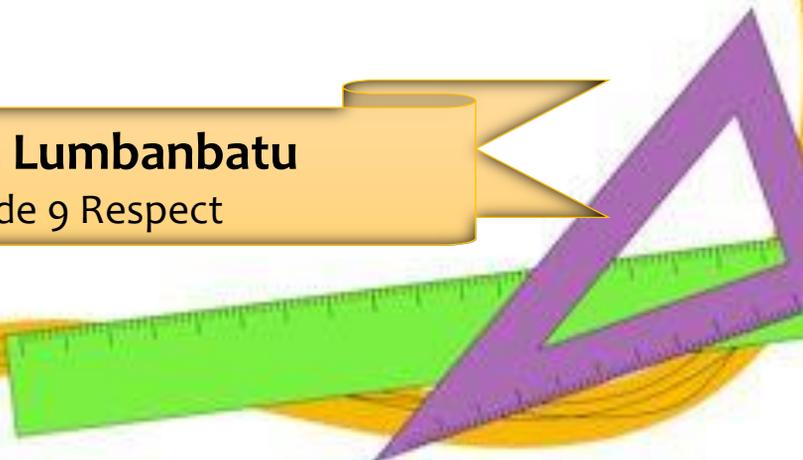
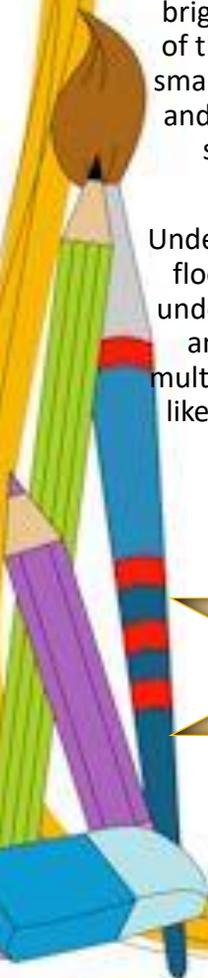
The air around was very thin, like the atmosphere at very high altitudes. There was almost no heat given off by the dying star. The skies were clear, and the hundreds of moons orbiting this massive planet were visible. The galaxy was seen clearly, the trillions of stars, cloud nebulas, and constellations were easily identifiable. Many miles away, storm clouds had gathered, pouring rain onto a vast landscape of rocks. Bright green lightning struck multiple times, like deadly bright fingers from the sky.

Far beyond was a great ocean, dark green in some parts, bright blue in others. Spears of bright yellow rocks cut through the raging waves close to the shore. Waves, twice the size of the cliffs, grew far beyond the horizon, eventually reaching the rocky shore many times smaller. In the rocky pools nearby, alien sea creatures swam in the shallows. They were flat and horizontal, with eyes wide apart, and had spinning fins under their bodies. One could say they looked like a race car. Others looked like jet planes, with a cylindrical body, triangular fins going horizontal, and a bigger fin at the back.

Under the ocean, a big civilization existed. Buildings made out of metal rose from the ocean floor, spewing blue light. Submarines and underwater gliders filled the waters, driven by underwater humanoids, with blue and green scales, giant bug eyes, gills on the chest area, and fan-like structures on the backside of their heads. Their city was constructed with multiple tiers and levels. Great big sea monsters swam around the city, one of them looking like a serpent with bright sapphire scales, and another that looked similar to a giant crab, with a ruby shell.

**Tobias Lumbanbatu**

Grade 9 Respect





## Beauty

I peered through the window to a fraction of the world's immense beauty, but all I saw was my reflection staring back at me. In front of me stood a vast palette of pinks and purples as the orange star set over hills and yet all I could see was the blue eyes, the rosy lips, the fair face. Looking away, I smiled to myself knowing nothing on this earth could measure up to the beauty that I possess.

"Lilian!" erupted a flock of screaming children.

In a matter of seconds, I was drowning in a pile of sweaty, filthy midgets clawing at the lush red velvet that covered me.

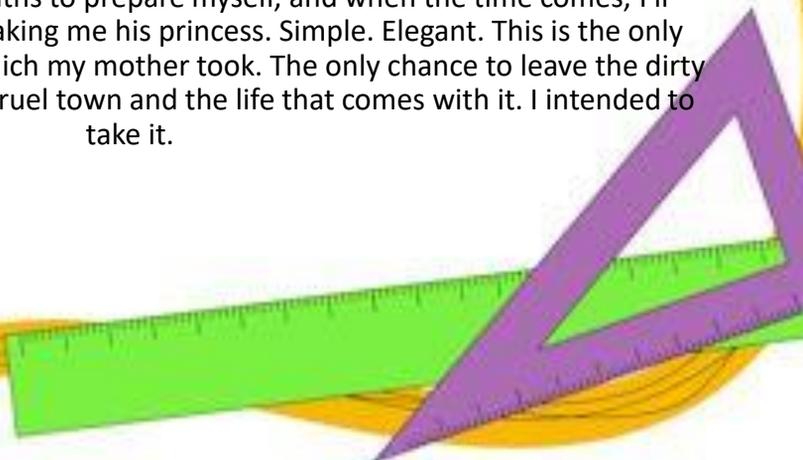
"Enough!" I yelled exasperatedly, "You barbaric rats!"

"Lili, be nice please. They are your family after all. You don't want to anger the Gods."

I looked up to see my mother pushing the kids away, with a stirring bowl in hand. She was a beautiful woman. Auburn hair and dark green eyes. Her voice, which moved like the ocean, could calm a thousand storms and a thousand more wars. It was a blessing from the Gods, she always said. However, she was as beautiful as she was foolish. Wasting her life away as a peasant in a vile village where she could've been a star amongst the kings. Now I look at her with spite, in the rags she calls a dress and the bird's nest she calls her hair.

Standing up, I brushed off the dirt that clung helplessly to my supple skin and headed for my room. I stood tall and proud, reminding myself poise was the difference between nobility and peasantry, and I refused to be the latter. My family and I are not the same. We could never be. They chose their fate and I chose mine. The only real difference between us was that I knew my worth, and my beauty was worth more riches than anything else in the world.

I sat down in the centre of my room and practised my smile in the small mirror which hung across the stone wall. Living in this pig's den made it difficult for me to maximize my untouched potential, but I managed with what I had. The prince was to visit this fall on his annual trip to ensure unity across the kingdom and I intend to be this dreaded town's main attraction. I have two months to prepare myself, and when the time comes, I'll quietly seduce the prince into making me his princess. Simple. Elegant. This is the only chance I have to escape the life which my mother took. The only chance to leave the dirty people, the barbaric streets, the cruel town and the life that comes with it. I intended to take it.





"Lili, can you help me look pretty for tonight please?" a soft voice came from the doorway.

I moved back, the pungent smell of onions and garlic clogging up my nose.

"S-step away from the door!" I managed to say without gagging.

"Sorry," the little girl reddened, moving away. "Will you help me?"

I took in her appearance and frowned. She was wearing a lumpy brown frock that stuck out on the sides like a potato sack. Her brown hair which stuck to her scalp like glue, made it evident that she hadn't bathed or combed her hair for I'm guessing three months and her plump face was freckled with specks of dirt and soot. For a girl with a missing tooth, she had a hideously wide grin. It was impossible for someone like me to be related with something like that.

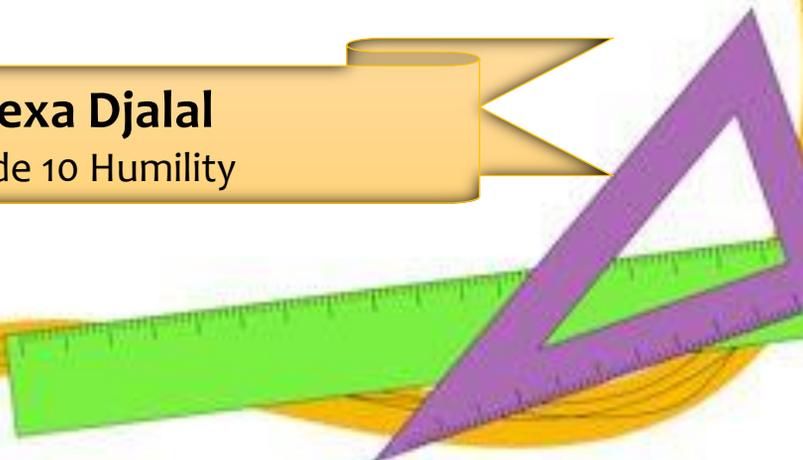
"You're hopeless. I don't think even Aphrodite can fix that."

In heaps of tears, the creature ran away, wailing out blasphemy of my sickening truth. I watched her until she was out of sight, nothing but cold in my heart.

Thunder suddenly erupted in the sky as rain started to pour heavily, drowning out the quiet tears of an ungrateful little girl. The earth shook and rumbled and I held on to the bedframe unwavering. In the midst of the storm, a pair of glowing red eyes appeared in the darkness of the corner of the stone wall. Wrapped in a flowing white dress, the stranger stepped out in ethereal glory, and appeared to be emitting some sort of yellow glow. She was the most beautiful woman I've ever seen, her soft face changing with the pitter patter of the rain, so that I never got a clear look of what's in front of me. Golden crown in hand, she opened her mouth to speak.

"I am the Goddess Aphrodite," she bellowed in a booming voice. "You have wronged us."

**Alexa Djalal**  
Grade 10 Humility





“The Honeymoon” is a short story that describes the events that occur right after Lady Olivia and Sebastian’s wedding at the end of Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night*. The newlywed couple travelled to a beautiful tropical island near Illyria called “Cupid’s Key”. “Cupid’s Key” is a popular honeymoon spot for rich, newly wedded couples. In this short story, the theme of romantic love is showcased with the awkward yet loving interactions between Olivia and Sebastian. However, the story also showcases the theme of self-deception wherein Olivia confuses Sebastian with Cesario / Viola, creating more awkwardness and a greater divide in the relationship. Additionally, it shows how Olivia and Sebastian’s relationship is a backwards one.

## The Honeymoon

The doors of the beautiful and grand beach house burst open as the newlywed couple stumbled in, giggling, as they tried finding their way to their bedroom, completely blind from being entranced in one another.

“Sebastian, stop. We should stop.” The tone of Olivia’s breathy voice surprised Sebastian, causing him to immediately be stopped. He cocked an eyebrow, worried.

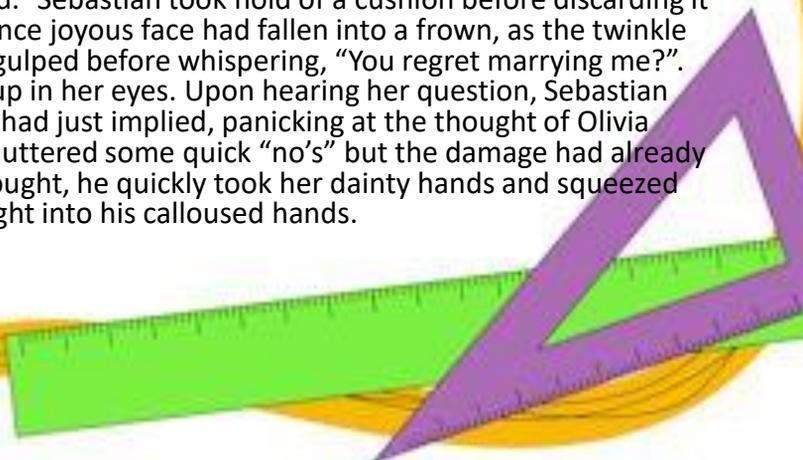
“Oh, you did nothing wrong, my dear husband. I just thought we had to stop! After all, it is our honeymoon and I plan on crossing lots of things off my bucket list.” She continued sweetly. Sebastian let out a breath he didn’t even realise he had been holding. With Olivia, he never knew what to expect. He figured this out after accidentally insulting his bride on the long trip to “Cupid’s Key”.

“That’s wonderful, Olivia. However, I was thinking that we could just relax here. I’ve seen enough of the sea and I’m not too eager to return yet.”

For a second, Olivia looked surprised that he dared suggest something, especially after she had just revealed their plans. Then, she giggled.. “Of course, Seb! I’m sorry, I forgot about your experiences with the sea... I presume we could just stay here... this whole trip.” Sebastian stayed quiet. He fidgeted about his seat, nervousness evident among his sweat-stricken face. “Is there something wrong?” Now it was Olivia’s turn to look confused and worried. Sebastian let out a sigh and plopped himself deep into the velvet couch.

“Nothing is of the matter. Perhaps it is possible that we just don’t know each other too well. But alas, here we are. Married.” Sebastian took hold of a cushion before discarding it upon his wife’s expression. Her once joyous face had fallen into a frown, as the twinkle disappeared from her eyes. She gulped before whispering, “You regret marrying me?”.

Her lips wobbled as tears built up in her eyes. Upon hearing her question, Sebastian immediately realised what he had just implied, panicking at the thought of Olivia heartbroken because of him. He muttered some quick “no’s” but the damage had already been done. Without another thought, he quickly took her dainty hands and squeezed them tight into his calloused hands.





"No. I don't regret marrying you. When I said I loved you on the altar, I meant it with every fibre of my bones. But, it doesn't hide the fact that we don't know each other too well. Funnily enough, I'm sure you know my sister more than you know me." He watched as she blinked in reply. She didn't know what to say because deep down, she knew it was true. Yet, she still disagreed with him.

Silence flooded the room - a tense and awkward silence. The pair stared at each other, not knowing what to say or do. Having had enough, Olivia spoke up. "I'm normally not one to be at a loss of words but here I am." She laughed, almost maniacally. "That's what you do to me. You make me speechless. But, if you truly are worried about us not knowing each other then test me. I know more than what I'm letting on."

Taken aback by the challenge Olivia had set foot for herself, Sebastian thought quietly before asking her some personal questions. To his surprise, she was able to answer him without any hesitation. The awkward silence that had dominated the room before had diminished and was now replaced with warm and joyful chatter. Olivia had even started asking Sebastian questions about herself. But then, it happened.

"So, what has been your most favourite memory with me so far?" Sebastian asked excitedly.

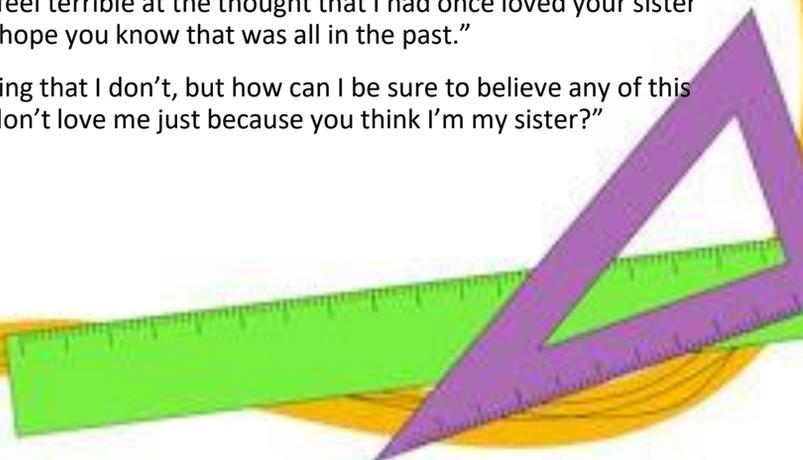
Olivia laughed in glee at the thought of the memory. "Every memory with you, my husband, will forever be cherished. Although, a memory that I would call one of my favourites is that time we both pranked Uncle Toby. The look on his face was absolutely priceless!" Olivia burst into laughter, her hair bouncing on her petite shoulders as she tried to contain her happiness.

However, Sebastian did not laugh as she did. After a moment of laughing by herself, Olivia paused, taking note of Sebastian's shifted expression. "Was that not funny to you? I thought you had enjoyed pranking dear Toby."

"That was not me, Olivia. I think you have mistaken me for my sister." He replied, curtly. Her mouth pursed to form an 'o'. Sebastian awkwardly straightened his back on the couch while Olivia looked down in shame. She couldn't believe she had made such a silly mistake like that.

"Apologies, my dear husband. I can assure you that, even though me and Viola have had our share of fun times, we will have those fun times too. Besides, you shouldn't be jealous of her. Any feelings I have ever had for her disappeared once I proclaimed my undying love to you on the altar." Even after her proclamation, Sebastian still looked uneasy. Olivia sighed and squeezed his hand in reassurance. "I know you may feel terrible at the thought that I had once loved your sister - I would too - but I hope you know that was all in the past."

Sebastian shook his head. "I'm not saying that I don't, but how can I be sure to believe any of this that you are saying? That you don't love me just because you think I'm my sister?"





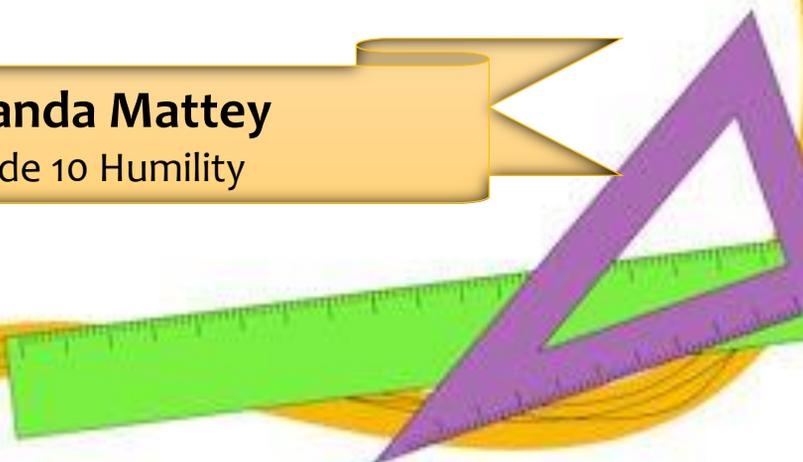
Olivia hesitated before taking a deep breath, “When I first saw you, I’ll admit, I thought you were your sister.” A soft smile then appeared on her face and her eyes found the comfort in his starry blue ones. “But it’s different with you. It’s more. I’d always had a sort of attraction to Viola but after meeting you, the attraction I felt was stronger - it was love. I knew right then and there that I wanted to marry you - a man I had just met - even if you weren’t a duke or a rich count. Because Sebastian, I didn’t feel that way with Viola. She was never going to love me the way that you can - the way that you do. Just the mere sight of you, standing on the altar with your dorky smile made my heart beat so fast that I could feel the rush through my fingers - it was enough to tell me that I had fallen hard for you. My love, I only ask now that you trust me.” She had finished her rambling and let out a breath of relief. Letting out all that proved to be easier and nicer than she expected.

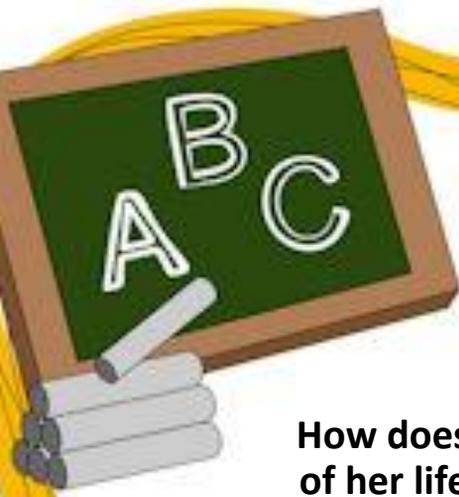
Sebastian hugged the velvet cushions like an innocent child. You could almost see the gears turning in his head as he processed everything Olivia revealed to him, before smiling a wide and relieved smile. He dropped the cushion and squeezed Olivia in a fierce embrace. Olivia felt a fiery red spread throughout her face, but lovingly held him back. The pair stayed that way for a while, soaking in the moment before Sebastian cleared his throat and joked, “Well, this is sweet but I believe we haven’t introduced ourselves. I’m sorry madame, but do I know you?”

Olivia let out a hearty laugh before replying in a posh voice, “No, I don’t believe so. After all, I think I would remember a handsome gentleman like yourself. My name is Lady Olivia... it is quite a pleasure to meet you. And you are?” She offered her hand and Sebastian lifted his eyebrow before taking her hand and replying smugly,

“Sebastian. Charmed, my Lady.”

**Amanda Matthey**  
Grade 10 Humility





## Recognition

### How does Duffy portray her feelings of her life in the poem Recognition?

Things get away from one.  
I've let myself go, I know.  
Children? I've had three  
and don't even know them.

I strain to remember a time  
when my body felt lighter.  
Years. My face is swollen  
with regrets. I put powder on,

but it flakes off. I love him,  
through habit., but the proof  
has evaporated. He gets upset.  
I tried to do all the essentials.

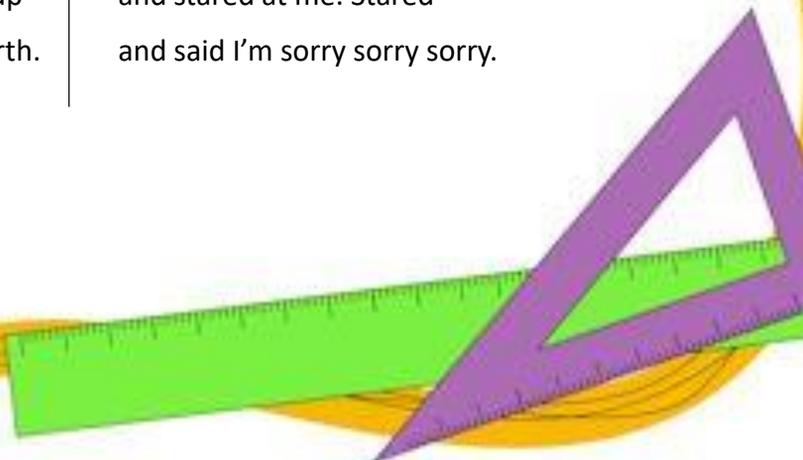
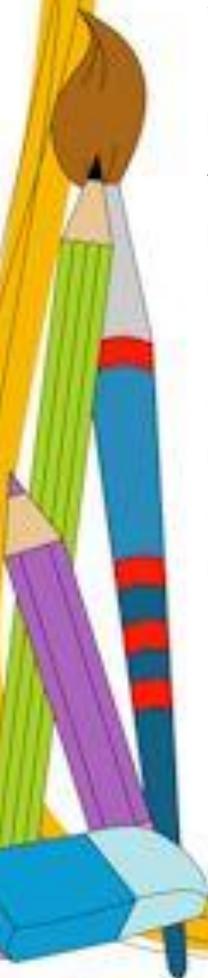
On one trip. Foolish, yes,  
but I was weepy all morning.  
Quiche. A blond boy swung me up  
in his arms and promised the earth.

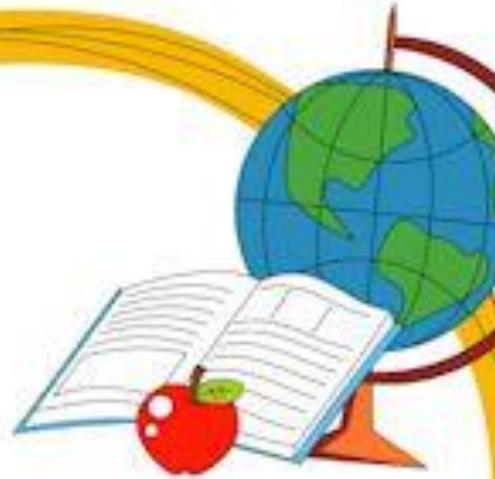
You see this came back to me  
as I stood on the scales.  
I wept. Shallots. In the window  
creamy ladies held a pose

which left me clogged and old.  
The waste. I forgotten my purse,  
fumbled; the shopgirl gaped at me  
compassionless. Claret. I blushed.

Cheese. Kleenex. It did happen.  
I lay in my slip on wet grass,  
laughing. Years. I had to rush out,  
blind in a hot flush and bumped

into an anxious, dowdy matron  
who touched the cold mirror  
and stared at me. Stared  
and said I'm sorry sorry sorry.





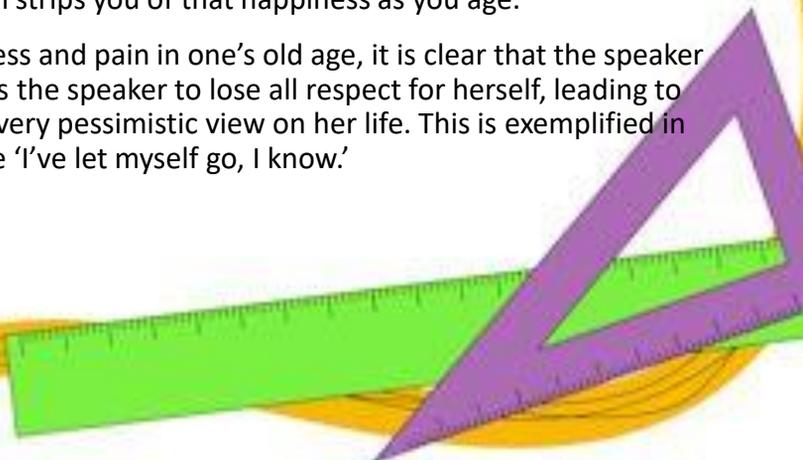
## Recognition

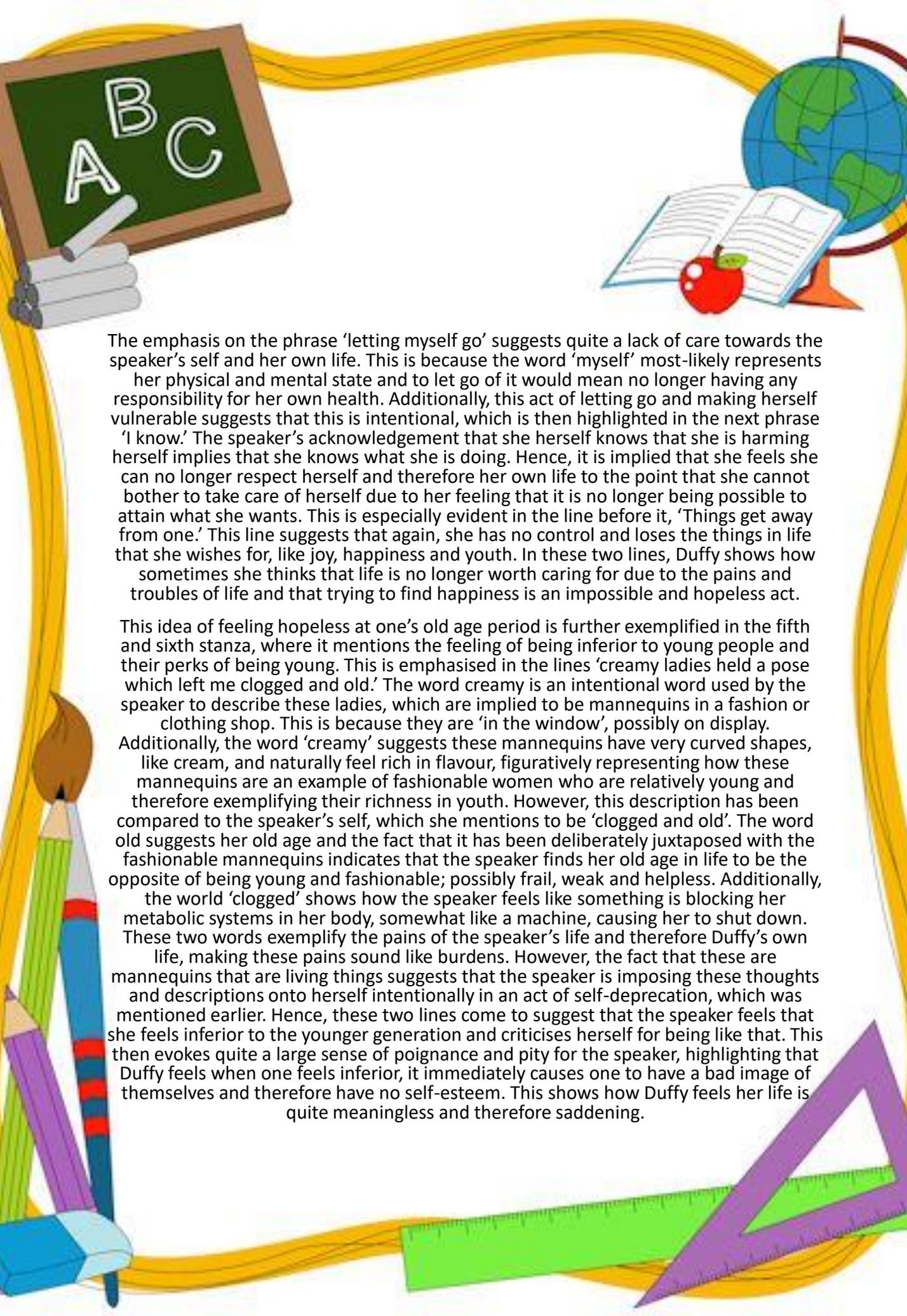
The intricacies of the world around us often lead us to many mistakes and regrets throughout our lives. Whether it is a simple slip-up or a divorce, it is quite clear that all these errors come to resurface in our thoughts whenever one feels miserable or depressed. However, simply acknowledging such things is quite an unhealthy way to deal with them, as it does not do anything to solve the problem, which then only leads us to feel lost in these troubles, which is exactly what the speaker feels in life in general.

Through this recognition of the speaker's pains in the poem "Recognition", Carol Ann Duffy portrays a very pessimistic and hopeless view on life due to everlasting life pains that make us long for the past and youth. This essay aims to delve into how she does so and explain the figurative language she uses to express this idea of why her life is so hopeless and even meaningless.

Firstly, the speaker often mentions her ageing process as a dreadful and deteriorating process that she thinks makes her weaker and more pathetic, indicating a sense of hopelessness towards this maturation. This is highlighted in the line 'I strain to remember a time'. The word choice of the word 'strain' gives a vivid illustration of the speaker's difficulty as she ages. It is mentioned here that the speaker is trying to reminisce about some sort of memory. However, to strain to do something means that it requires great amounts of effort and willpower to do so, and to remember something with difficulty would imply that she is forgetful and therefore old. Additionally, the fact that she is straining to do so, which implies she is attempting to reminisce these memories, shows the reader that she is trying to remember but is hindered by her age limitations. This then suggests that even trying to remember is a futile attempt and therefore hopeless, a fragile moment in the speaker's life. Additionally, the phrase 'when my body felt lighter' that comes after that line further implies her old age limitations. Her body feeling 'lighter' suggests that she now experiences a heavy burden than is symbolised by this emphasis on weight, exemplified to be much much lighter when she is younger. Hence, the speaker uses this word to acknowledge herself growing weaker, suggesting that the speaker finds life to be especially painful and full of burdens as one becomes older. Through this, Duffy encapsulates the feeling of how the inevitable cycle of life changes oneself to become the slugs of society, therefore implying that her life is a ruthless process that first gives you the joy of youth but then strips you of that happiness as you age.

Due to these feelings of dreadfulness and pain in one's old age, it is clear that the speaker feels hopeless, which then causes the speaker to lose all respect for herself, leading to self-deprecation and therefore a very pessimistic view on her life. This is exemplified in the line 'I've let myself go, I know.'





The emphasis on the phrase 'letting myself go' suggests quite a lack of care towards the speaker's self and her own life. This is because the word 'myself' most-likely represents her physical and mental state and to let go of it would mean no longer having any responsibility for her own health. Additionally, this act of letting go and making herself vulnerable suggests that this is intentional, which is then highlighted in the next phrase 'I know.' The speaker's acknowledgement that she herself knows that she is harming herself implies that she knows what she is doing. Hence, it is implied that she feels she can no longer respect herself and therefore her own life to the point that she cannot bother to take care of herself due to her feeling that it is no longer being possible to attain what she wants. This is especially evident in the line before it, 'Things get away from one.' This line suggests that again, she has no control and loses the things in life that she wishes for, like joy, happiness and youth. In these two lines, Duffy shows how sometimes she thinks that life is no longer worth caring for due to the pains and troubles of life and that trying to find happiness is an impossible and hopeless act.

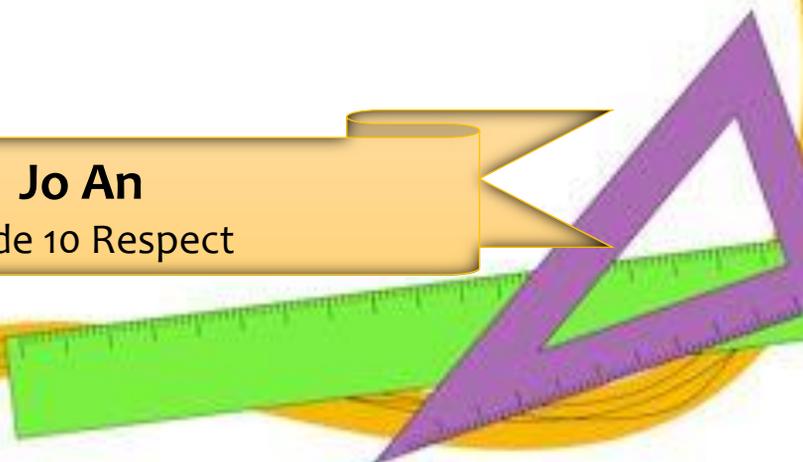
This idea of feeling hopeless at one's old age period is further exemplified in the fifth and sixth stanza, where it mentions the feeling of being inferior to young people and their perks of being young. This is emphasised in the lines 'creamy ladies held a pose which left me clogged and old.' The word creamy is an intentional word used by the speaker to describe these ladies, which are implied to be mannequins in a fashion or clothing shop. This is because they are 'in the window', possibly on display. Additionally, the word 'creamy' suggests these mannequins have very curved shapes, like cream, and naturally feel rich in flavour, figuratively representing how these mannequins are an example of fashionable women who are relatively young and therefore exemplifying their richness in youth. However, this description has been compared to the speaker's self, which she mentions to be 'clogged and old'. The word old suggests her old age and the fact that it has been deliberately juxtaposed with the fashionable mannequins indicates that the speaker finds her old age in life to be the opposite of being young and fashionable; possibly frail, weak and helpless. Additionally, the word 'clogged' shows how the speaker feels like something is blocking her metabolic systems in her body, somewhat like a machine, causing her to shut down. These two words exemplify the pains of the speaker's life and therefore Duffy's own life, making these pains sound like burdens. However, the fact that these are mannequins that are living things suggests that the speaker is imposing these thoughts and descriptions onto herself intentionally in an act of self-deprecation, which was mentioned earlier. Hence, these two lines come to suggest that the speaker feels that she feels inferior to the younger generation and criticises herself for being like that. This then evokes quite a large sense of poignance and pity for the speaker, highlighting that Duffy feels when one feels inferior, it immediately causes one to have a bad image of themselves and therefore have no self-esteem. This shows how Duffy feels her life is quite meaningless and therefore saddening.



By feeling that you have no control over what is going to happen and that it is hopeless, it is seen that one may feel like giving up on trying to please themselves, letting themselves be vulnerable to the pains of life and therefore feeling as if life in general is a large barrier that makes people miserable. This is especially evident in the message poem when one grows older. It literally means for them to grow weaker and older, making them less empowered in this world where being active and happy is a goal for everyone. The bleak tone that Duffy presents in this poem not only shows that life is a cruel cycle of events and is, therefore, a poignant process till death but also shows just how life makes us reflect on ourselves, making us feel even worse by making us compare ourselves to others and therefore leading to inevitable self-deprecation Hence, through this poem, Duffy distinctly exemplifies just how life turns out to be inevitably miserable for everyone, showing just how cruel life is.



**Jo An**  
Grade 10 Respect





## Marjane Strapi, *Persepolis*, page 37



### The Letter Page Analysis - *Persepolis*

By Andrea Makatita

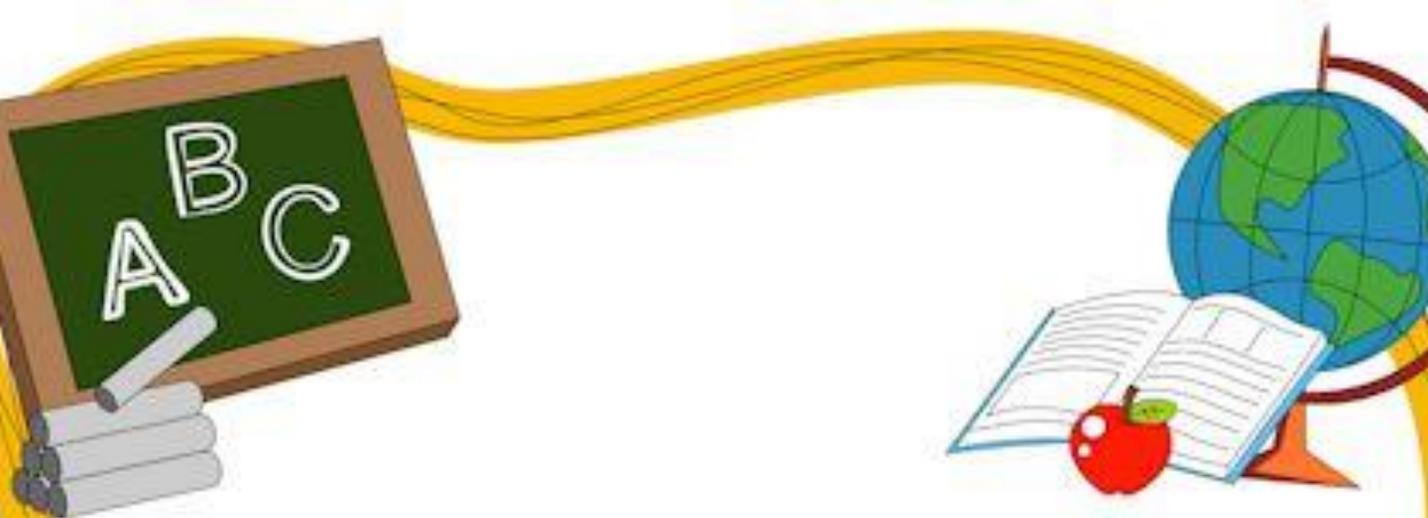
*Persepolis* is a graphic novel written by Marjane Satrapi in the early 2000s. Using various structural features and elements of graphic novels, she was able to create an artwork that captured the hearts of many with her creative discussions on issues of social class, religion and politics. In page 37 of the chapter titled “The Letter”, she uses a variety of techniques that make up a graphic novel to discuss the issue of social inequality and its effects on society. With this global issue, she aims to sympathize with individuals who still struggle from social inequality. She uses various techniques such as the camera angle, direct and indirect narration, iconically drawn characters and color to convey this global issue.

The utilization of different camera angles is quite evident in this section. We start with the first two panels that put its focus on Marji’s father and Hossein’s conversation, giving the readers a clear view of both Marji’s father’s worried expression and Hossein’s doubtful yet conscience-stricken expression.

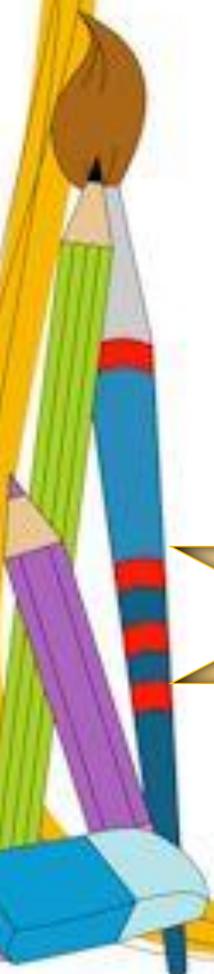


The next frame puts Marji at eye-level with the readers. Satrapi does this to put the readers' focus away from Marji's father, allowing us to sympathize with Marji as she is the only iconically-drawn character we see in the next few frames. The camera in the fourth frame, however, moves back to give us a bigger picture of the scene taking place. Figuratively, it could be Satrapi's way of telling the readers to look at the bigger picture of what Marji's father is trying to say. He leaves Marji with a quite depressing note by saying that "their love was impossible". Though we perceive Marji's agitated reaction, Satrapi invites the readers to take a step back and formulate their ideas as to why Hossein and Mehri's love may have been impossible. By looking at the "bigger picture", we can sympathize with both Marji and her father as we now get a clearer view of the perspective that each side is serving. The next few frames display a close-up of Marji and her actions; however, we now look at her with a new perspective. The readers can understand both perspectives that Marji and her father utilize when speaking of social inequality and how it may affect Mehri's ability to love another person of a different class. Satrapi encourages her readers to utilize both these perspectives as it complements each other. Marji serves a more "fantasy-based" view of issues of love and social classes, while her father analyzes the situation with a more realistic outlook.

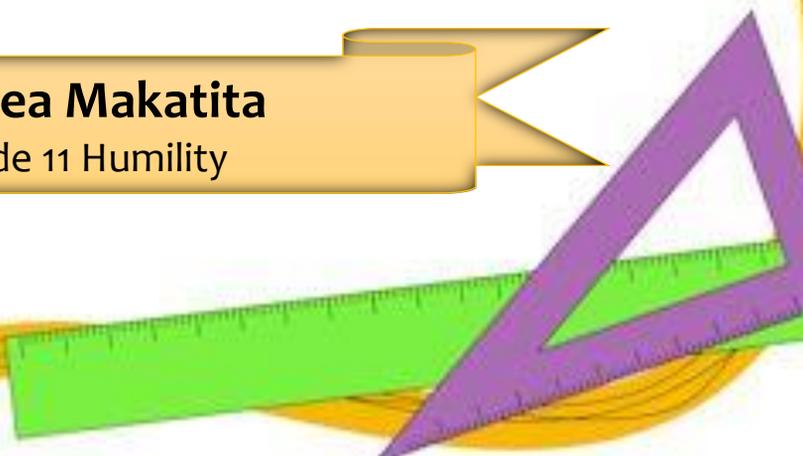
Satrapi uses her iconically drawn characters to, in a way, ridicule issues of social inequality and love. By drawing her characters iconically, she conveys her opinions that this issue brought by social inequality is very "child-like", as everyone deserves to be treated equally with love. She also utilizes the colour contrast of black and white, which emphasizes the two contrasting views of Marji and her father. Marji's father looks at problems of love according to issues of social inequality, making his view more realistic. Marji, like Satrapi, believes that this complication caused by social inequality is merely ridiculous as social inequality should not hinder a person from being with someone they love. The bland or "dramatic" colours of black and white also set the sad mood that Mehri is feeling. In the final panel, especially, Satrapi makes use of emanata to show the tears rapidly and continuously falling along Mehri's cheeks. Satrapi conveys a massive amount of emotion through Mehri's sad expression, the tears falling down her cheeks and the colour black and white to convey feelings of despair. Psychologically, people suffering from depression often use the colour grey to express their emotion. Thus, Satrapi uses these colours to emphasize Mehri's sadness, to the point where she could start feeling depressed.



A combination of direct and indirect narration is used to discuss issues of social inequality. Satrapi uses indirect narration to speak to her audience. In the last frame, especially, she tells the audience that differences in social classes should not matter by speaking of the way Marji comforts Mehri through her sadness. She tells us that there is no good in stereotyping others into various social groups. Using direct narration, Satrapi also aims to make the scenes laid in front of the readers come to life. She expresses both Marji and her father's concerns of love and social class through the dialogues in the graphic novel.



**Andrea Makatita**  
Grade 11 Humility





Shrinking Man Analysis Essay

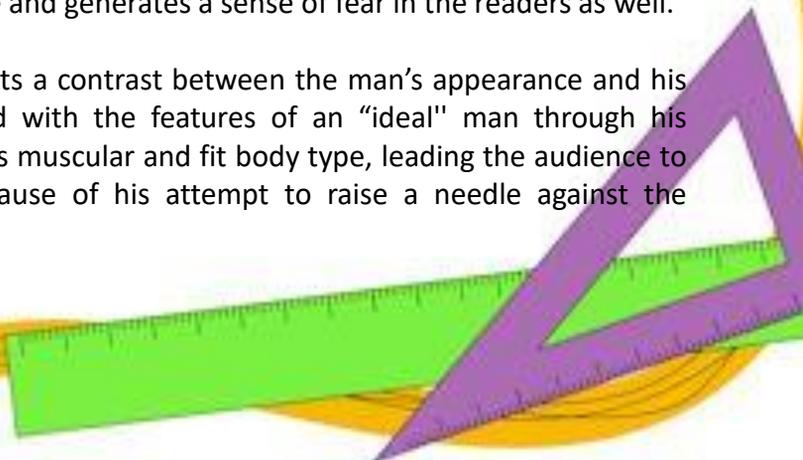
**By Rheanna Mahboobani**

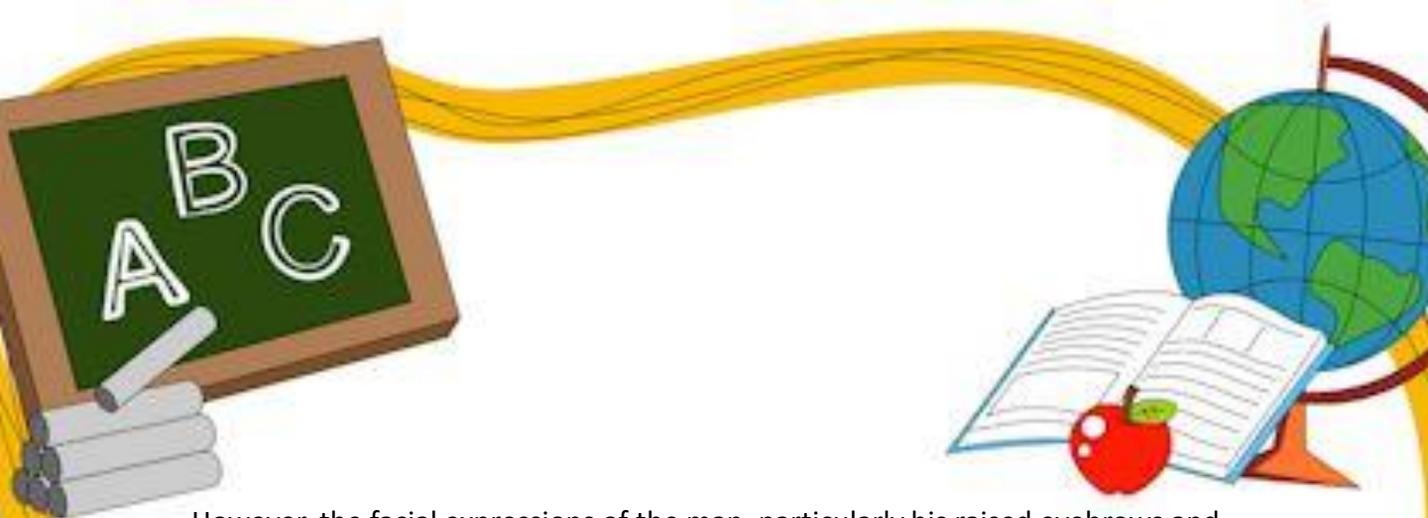
Text 5.3 portrays a movie poster of the “The Incredible Shrinking Man” movie which provides the readers with an insight into the context of the film and at the same time, interests and captures the reader’s imagination through the use of the illustrator’s artwork, symbolism and the use of text.

The illustrator expresses the cat and the man’s image in bright, exaggerated colours to signify their importance in the movie’s plot, leading the audience to assume that they are the movie’s two main characters. The use of the dramatic colour scheme also emphasises the movie’s fictional and non-realistic theme. Furthermore, the illustrator ensures that the artwork covers most of the poster’s space to capture the reader’s attention. In this artwork, the illustrator presents the cat’s image in a low-angled viewpoint, denoting its superiority compared to the man; frightening the readers and generating a feeling of fear and dread in them for the cat. To build to the depth of this concept, the cat is also depicted to be significantly more extensive compared to the tiny man, again expressing the cat’s power and dominance over the man and the man’s vulnerability compared to the cat. This allows the audience to realise the cat’s condescending nature; hence, allowing them to feel a sense of empathy towards the man.

In the artwork, the cat’s eyes are wide-open as well, conveying that it is interested in the man. Moreover, its eyes are tilted diagonally, expressing its anger and frustration towards the man, confirming its interest in attacking him. This allows the audience to feel intimidated by the cat and hopeless when it comes to the man’s chances of survival. Furthermore, the cat’s posture again emphasizes its confidence and dominance over the man with its sharp teeth and claws clearly exposed. This again evokes an intimidating atmosphere and generates a sense of fear in the readers as well.

The illustrator depicts a contrast between the man’s appearance and his personality. The man is portrayed with the features of an “ideal” man through his masculine features consisting of his muscular and fit body type, leading the audience to assume that he is confident because of his attempt to raise a needle against the enormous cat.

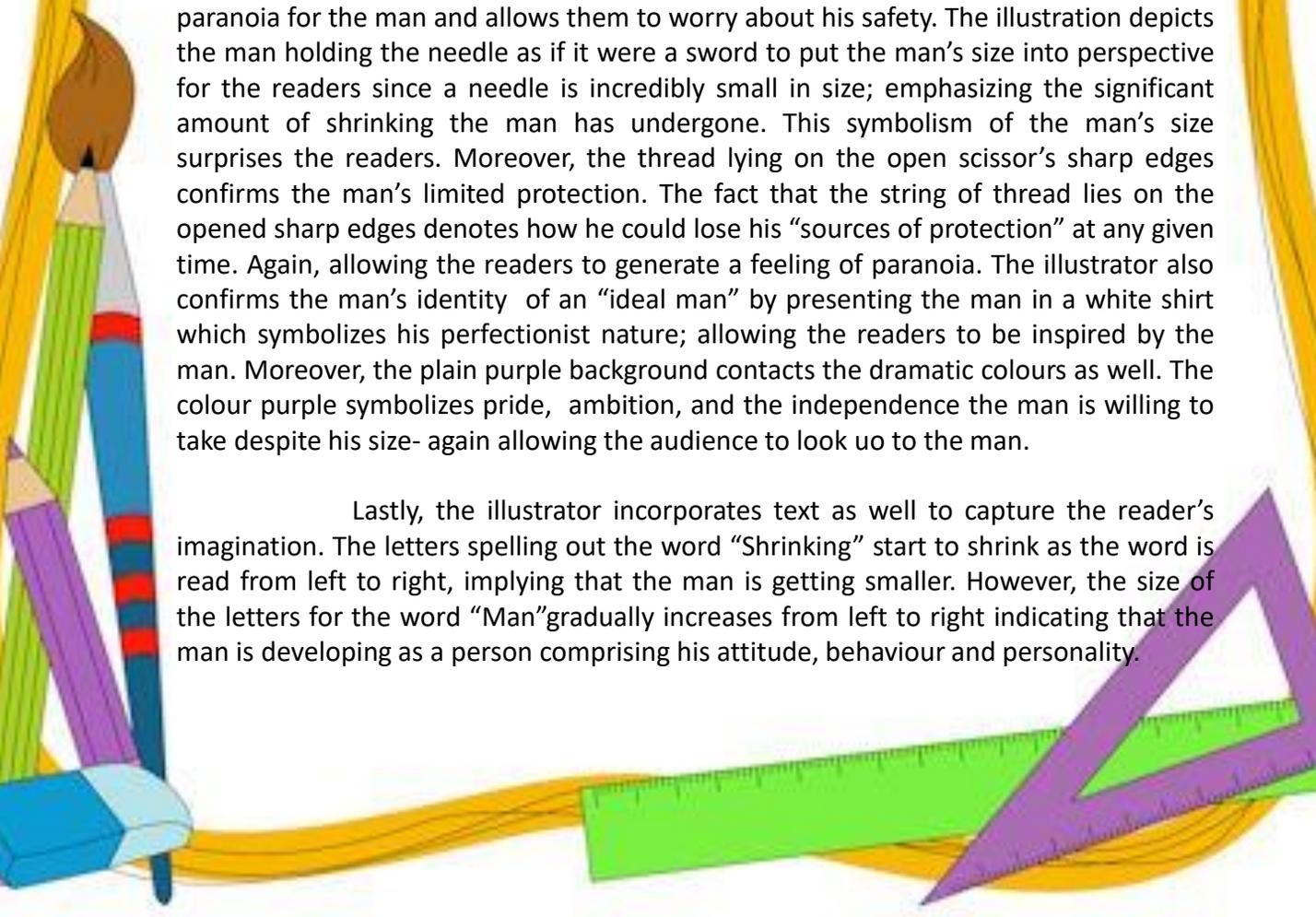




However, the facial expressions of the man, particularly his raised eyebrows and opened-mouth denotes his sense of shock and worry upon going against the enormous cat in his perspective. This allows the readers to understand that the man is ambitious for trying to fight a humongous creature in his viewpoint; however, denotes how the man doubts his abilities to protect himself because of his small size. This also leads the readers to evoke a sense of admiration and reverence for the man.

The illustrator also uses symbolism to provide the reader with a deeper understanding of the movie's context. The illustrator depicts the cat's eyes in a red colour to denote it's anger and frustration towards the man, confirming its monstrosity. This provides the reader with an uncomfortable feeling, building up a sense of anxiety in them. Moreover, the cat's sharp claws and teeth symbolizes it's rebellion, conveying its intentions to tear down the net trapping it. Furthermore, the thick roll of thread and the matches symbolize the man's finite source of protection since the roll of thread and the matches would eventually run out. This allows the reader to experience a feeling of paranoia for the man and allows them to worry about his safety. The illustration depicts the man holding the needle as if it were a sword to put the man's size into perspective for the readers since a needle is incredibly small in size; emphasizing the significant amount of shrinking the man has undergone. This symbolism of the man's size surprises the readers. Moreover, the thread lying on the open scissor's sharp edges confirms the man's limited protection. The fact that the string of thread lies on the opened sharp edges denotes how he could lose his "sources of protection" at any given time. Again, allowing the readers to generate a feeling of paranoia. The illustrator also confirms the man's identity of an "ideal man" by presenting the man in a white shirt which symbolizes his perfectionist nature; allowing the readers to be inspired by the man. Moreover, the plain purple background contacts the dramatic colours as well. The colour purple symbolizes pride, ambition, and the independence the man is willing to take despite his size- again allowing the audience to look up to the man.

Lastly, the illustrator incorporates text as well to capture the reader's imagination. The letters spelling out the word "Shrinking" start to shrink as the word is read from left to right, implying that the man is getting smaller. However, the size of the letters for the word "Man" gradually increases from left to right indicating that the man is developing as a person comprising his attitude, behaviour and personality.





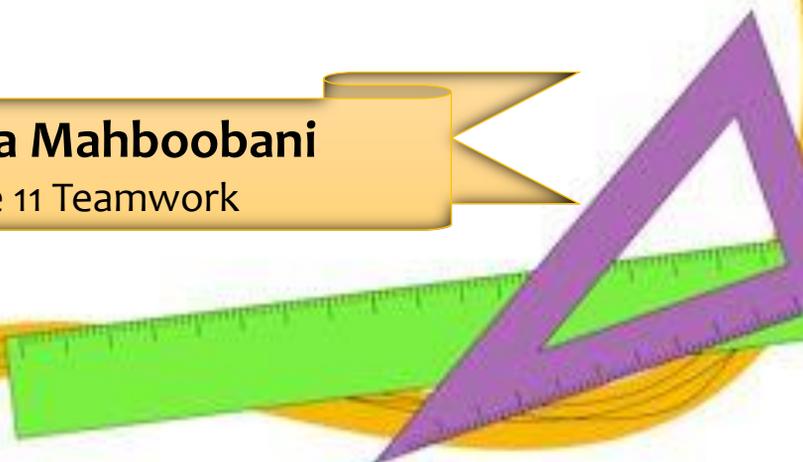
This provides the readers with a feeling of hope for the man's safety as well. Furthermore, the text is expressed in a light white colour, contrasting the dark purple background colour, Moreover, the text is deliberately huge to capture the audience's attention as well.

In conclusion, the illustrator depicts this movie poster of the "The Incredible Shrinking Man" movie to provide the readers with an insight into the context of the movie; hence, allowing the readers to feel paranoid, a sense of fear and worry, empathy and intimidation through the use of artwork, symbolism and text analysis.



**Rheanna Mahboobani**

Grade 11 Teamwork



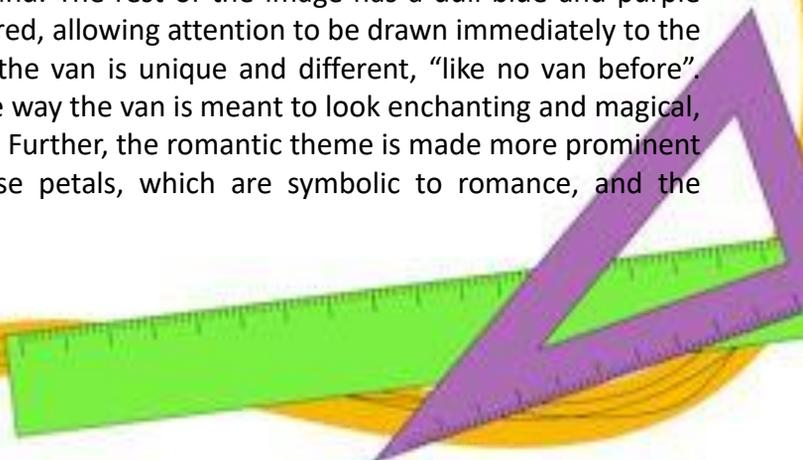


## Honda Odyssey Analysis

With the use of a spectrum of linguistic features, anchoring of images, and a clear sense and achievement of purpose, the text is successful in persuading the audience into buying the van.

The text uses a wide variety of linguistic elements to advertise this car and persuade the audience to buy the Honda Odyssey. The first example is the use of juxtaposing words in the same sentence; “war” and “cool”. The van’s ability to “warm up” the seats and the addition of a “cool box” imply the great range of features the van has to offer. The use of diction, as seen in the word “enchanting” establishes a romantic and magical atmosphere and implies class. The theme of class is further addressed when the author is careful to mention the fact that seats are “leather,” therefore solidifying the exclusiveness of the van, since leather is more expensive than fabric. In addition, the magical atmosphere gives the audience an idea of uniqueness. This is further amplified in the last line of the paragraph in the bottom left corner. The repetition of the word “before” and the use of the phrase “never be the same” emphasizes the point that this van is different from the rest, and as previously mentioned in the text, “special”. Moreover, the diction “tantalizingly efficient” highlights the specialty of the van’s “28 hwy mpg V-6” engine, making it more attractive to the audience. The phrase is also used to allow those who do not know much about automobiles to know that this engine is still separate from the rest. The personification of the phrase “the van beckons” and the use of the pronoun “you” creates a strong audience involvement. The effect urges the audience to visualize the car better, which is especially useful because it allows focus on the features the author wants the audience to remember, which increases persuasiveness.

The image anchors the linguistic elements because it embodies the uniqueness previously mentioned. The moonlight shining directly on the van allows for contrast from the duller background. The rest of the image has a dull blue and purple hue, but the van is a bright, shiny red, allowing attention to be drawn immediately to the van. This supports the idea that the van is unique and different, “like no van before”. This idea is also emphasized in the way the van is meant to look enchanting and magical, with the use of sparkles around it. Further, the romantic theme is made more prominent with the use of candles and rose petals, which are symbolic to romance, and the involvement of a couple.





The rose petals falling from inside the car, forming a path refers to the van “beckon[ing]” the couple and the audience. This aspect strengthens the personification of the van, therefore relating it to the linguistic elements.

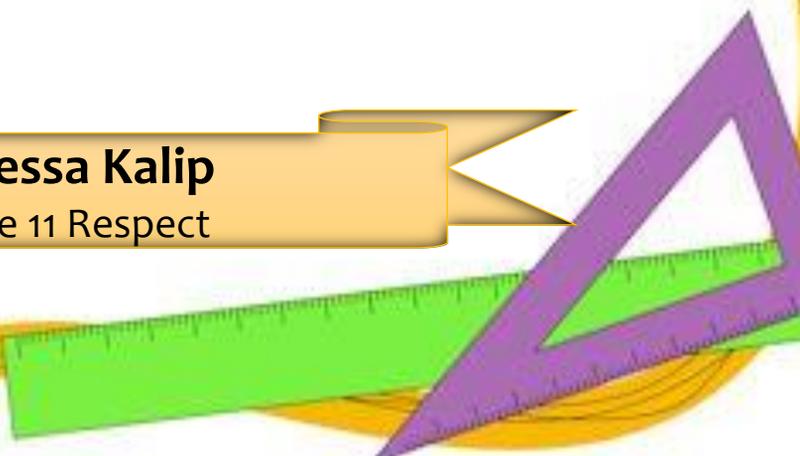
The text is effective in achieving its purpose, because not only since that it can relate to people who do and do not know much about automobiles, but also because it is able to make the van memorable. The van is innovative, as it is different from others, and this point is made very clear in the way it will make the customer’s experience to “never be the same”. Also, it addressed a more specific audience, which are couples, and the author ensures to make the text as relatable as possible by including the theme of romance. By making the text relatable, the audience will be more persuaded to buy the van because it makes them feel as if the van is made especially for them. This persuasiveness is also relevant in the way the van is personified, as it implies the author’s confidence in the amazing features of the van.

In conclusion, the text is highly effective in maintaining the audience’s interest in the van’s attractiveness and in persuading the audience that this van is a great deal.



**Vanessa Kalip**

Grade 11 Respect





**Paper 1 Political Speeches**  
**Text 2: A Day That Will Live in Infamy, by Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 1941**

In this speech Franklin D. Roosevelt addressed the attacks by Japanese forces to directly congress and broadcasted to the American people. His surface level intent was to call upon congress to declare war on Japan, but the main underlying motif was to rally the American people to support a war with Japan. He appeals to the audience of the American people through their sense of reason as well as emotion. His usage of diction, repetition and narrative in an assertive tone to resonate with the audience's sense of reason and evoke an emotional response.

The diction used throughout the speech is extremely emotive. He uses the word infamy to describe the date which solicits ideas of condemnation and dishonor when alluding to the surprise attacks by Japanese forces. He emphasizes the ill will behind the attacks with words such as "treachery" and "deceive" which continue to push the idea of immoral behavior by the Japanese. These words tie into betrayal of American trust that was placed into the Japanese. The audience themselves, being American, are placed in the position of the victim of deception eliciting the appropriate emotional responses of shock that lead to disgust and anger. These emotions are then aimed at a potential war effort by Roosevelt when he states at the end "we will not only defend ourselves to the uttermost, but will make it very certain that this form of treachery shall never again endanger us". The tone towards the end is of vengeful confidence and he calls upon the American people to trust in him and the Army to seek out their revenge. The diction also plays into the audience's reason through words such as "obvious" "deliberately" and "fact" to emphasize that there is no room for question that this attack was malicious in nature. This is also supported by the facts given of communication between the governments before the attack and how it was purposefully misleading. The audience is presented with various facts to solidify their disgust towards Japan as the intent to deceive is made clear.

A powerful use of repetition in Roosevelt's speech is the repetition of the words "Japanese forces attacked". While all the locations of the attacks could be condensed into one sentence, by splitting them up in this way Roosevelt focuses on the main message of the Japanese being the aggressors.



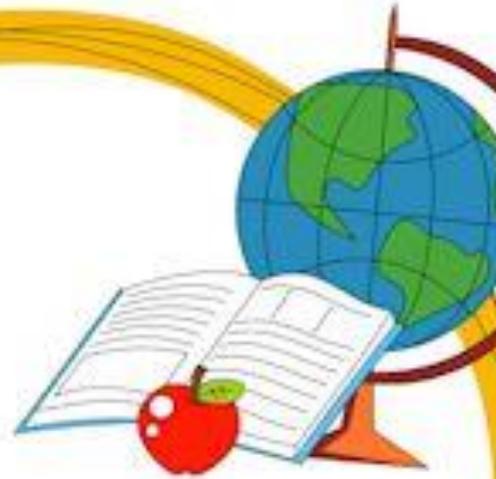
This further appeals to the emotions of the audience as the idea of being attacked is hammered into the message evoking the defensive emotions of fear and anger. Additionally, the parallelism of yesterday, last night to this morning gives the message a sequential tone as if to say finally the Japanese had attacked America. This adds to the appeal to reason as it presents the attack as part of a sequential pattern.

There is an underlying narrative that Roosevelt explicitly depicts of a shameful surprise attack on American soil. The use of diction supports this as the previously mentioned words of betrayal of American trust ties into this idea. The statement “ contained no threat or hint of war or of armed attack” explicitly goes to state that this attack was not only deadly but dishonourable in the build-up to the attack. Roosevelt plays to the idea that the American people were led to believe that Japan wished for peaceful negotiations and then attacked in treasonous fashion. This narrative serves to portray the actions of the Japanese as not only that of aggression but also a shameful conduct in the way they had done their attack. The audience associates the Japanese as not only people who have attacked them but have done so in a contemptible fashion.

Finally, the tone of Roosevelt utilizes throughout the speech is emotive yet confident. He presents his resolute resolve to get justice for the attacks in a manner that asserts the beliefs of the American people. He says “I believe that I interpret the will of the Congress and of the people” this confidence is what the emotions of the audience rally behind. Through this Roosevelt directs the emotions of the audience to the war effort with conviction.

In this speech, Roosevelt as the President of the United States calls upon the American people to take their anger and place trust in him to seek retribution for not only the harm the Japanese have caused but also the disgraceful manner in which they have conducted themselves. He uses emotive language and repetition to evoke strong emotions of shock and anger to direct towards his war effort. He does this while presenting a narrative of betrayal of American trust and presents the various facts to support it. This is all done in an assertive tone as a confident avenger for the American people.

**Bryan Hang**  
Grade 12 Teamwork



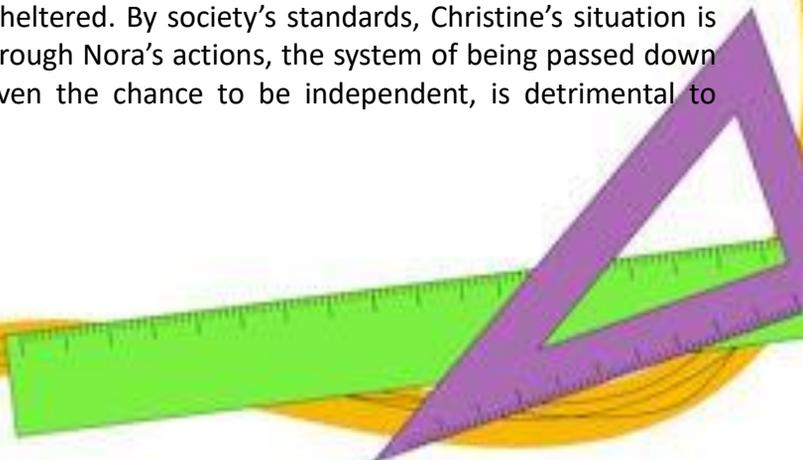
**To what extent is Ibsen's representation of Nora and Christine in *A Doll's House* a social commentary?**

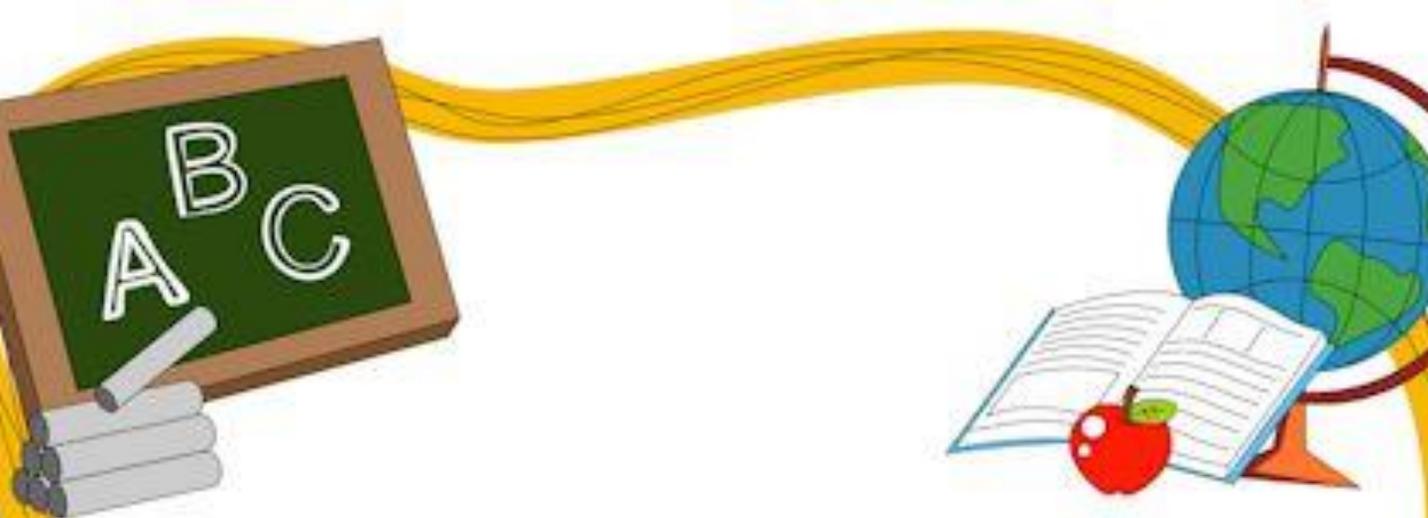
### **A Doll's House Essay**

Hendrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House* is arguably one of the most influential plays of its time. Recognized as the father of realism, Ibsen addressed many social issues that were considered taboo in late Victorian society. By exploring the theme of gender roles through the lens of Nora and Christine, the line of inquiry, to what extent is Ibsen's representation of Nora and Christine in a Doll's House a social commentary, is evaluated in this essay. Ibsen uses foils, dialogue and references clothing to critique the constraints of Victorian society and introduce solutions.

Christine's weathered and mature approach to life is a foil to Nora's childish nature. Initially, Nora is portrayed as the epitome of a proper Victorian woman of a relatively high class, married to a man with a steady job. Stereotypical of Victorian women, she is ignorant of societal issues (Appell, 2018). This is further established through her interaction with Krogstad. Ibsen goes to great lengths to highlight that very ignorance, spending four pages on the conversation where Krogstad explains the nature of borrowing to Nora and threatens to blackmail her. Nora admits she did not take into account she was committing fraud because "she did not trouble herself about [Krogstad]," (Ibsen, 1992, p. 23) underlining Nora's simplistic outlook on life, to live only for her husband. Through Nora's uninformed outlook, Ibsen highlights that in order to satisfy the conventions of society, privileged women were deprived of the opportunity to gain knowledge outside the home. Legal law was considered a man's world and as a result, high class women were dependent on male figures.

Contrastingly, Christine is very much in control of her life and her situation. Christine "learnt to act prudently. Life, and hard, bitter necessity taught [her] that" (Ibsen, 1992, p. 52). "Prudently" (Ibsen, 1992, p. 52) suggests Christine is not as naive as Nora because she has not had the benefit of being sheltered. By society's standards, Christine's situation is pitiful. However, as Ibsen shows through Nora's actions, the system of being passed down from father to husband, never given the chance to be independent, is detrimental to women.

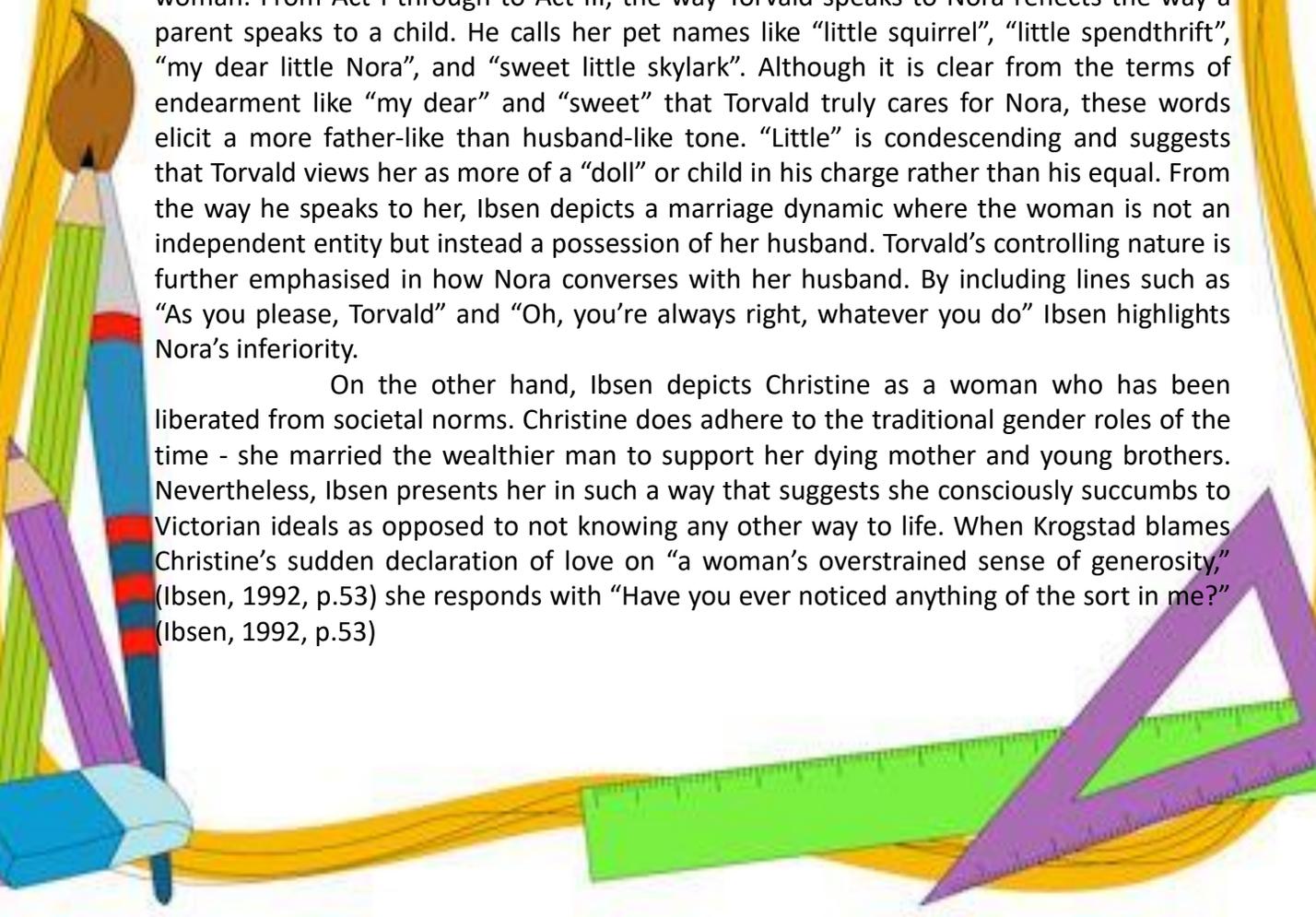


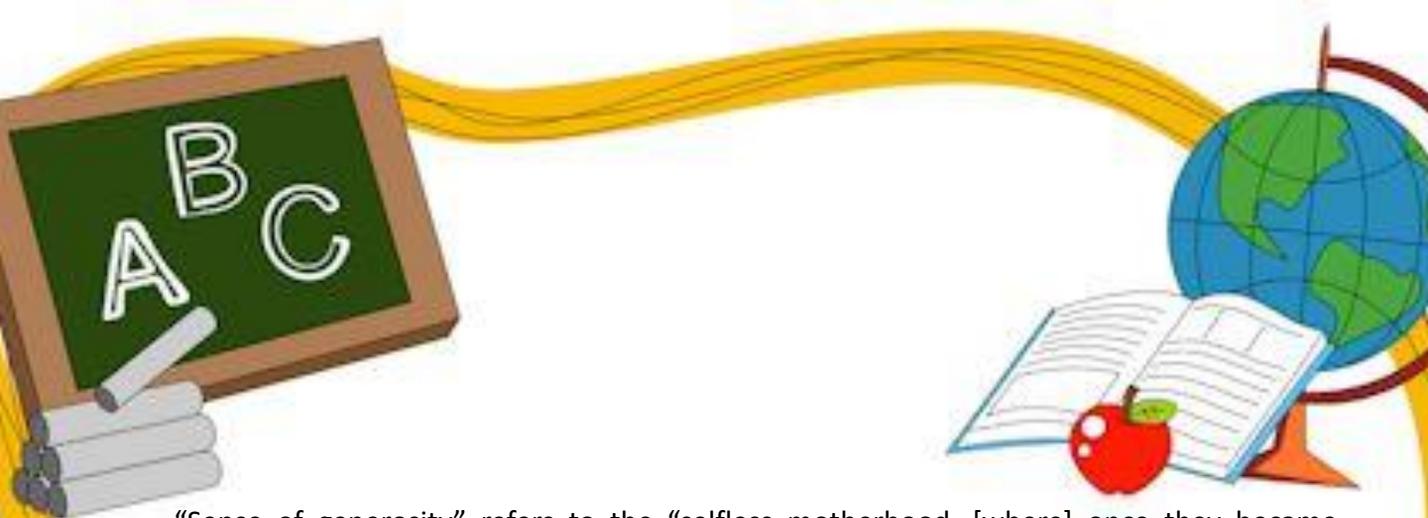


Christine was thrown into a “hard and bitter” (Ibsen, 1992, p. 52) situation where she needed to support her dying mother and two younger brothers and she actively made the decision to marry the wealthier man. Christine is able to make informed decisions that end up benefiting her, whereas Nora finds herself in a legal situation that she does not even understand the full extent of. By explicitly identifying how Christine is able to think and decide for herself, Ibsen reinforces Nora’s helplessness. In doing so, Ibsen highlights the limiting nature on women of Victorian ideals and presents the avoidable damaging effects on a woman’s livelihood. To further strengthen this argument, Ibsen substantiates his realistic characters with dialogue.

Ibsen is known for writing real and human characters. His incorporation of effective dialogue adds texture to both Nora’s and Christine’s personalities. The audience is able to think with, feel for, and act with them. Dialogue in *A Doll’s House* serves to frame the distinction between a privileged, yet confined, woman and a poor, but liberated, woman. From Act I through to Act III, the way Torvald speaks to Nora reflects the way a parent speaks to a child. He calls her pet names like “little squirrel”, “little spendthrift”, “my dear little Nora”, and “sweet little skylark”. Although it is clear from the terms of endearment like “my dear” and “sweet” that Torvald truly cares for Nora, these words elicit a more father-like than husband-like tone. “Little” is condescending and suggests that Torvald views her as more of a “doll” or child in his charge rather than his equal. From the way he speaks to her, Ibsen depicts a marriage dynamic where the woman is not an independent entity but instead a possession of her husband. Torvald’s controlling nature is further emphasised in how Nora converses with her husband. By including lines such as “As you please, Torvald” and “Oh, you’re always right, whatever you do” Ibsen highlights Nora’s inferiority.

On the other hand, Ibsen depicts Christine as a woman who has been liberated from societal norms. Christine does adhere to the traditional gender roles of the time - she married the wealthier man to support her dying mother and young brothers. Nevertheless, Ibsen presents her in such a way that suggests she consciously succumbs to Victorian ideals as opposed to not knowing any other way to life. When Krogstad blames Christine’s sudden declaration of love on “a woman’s overstrained sense of generosity,” (Ibsen, 1992, p.53) she responds with “Have you ever noticed anything of the sort in me?” (Ibsen, 1992, p.53)

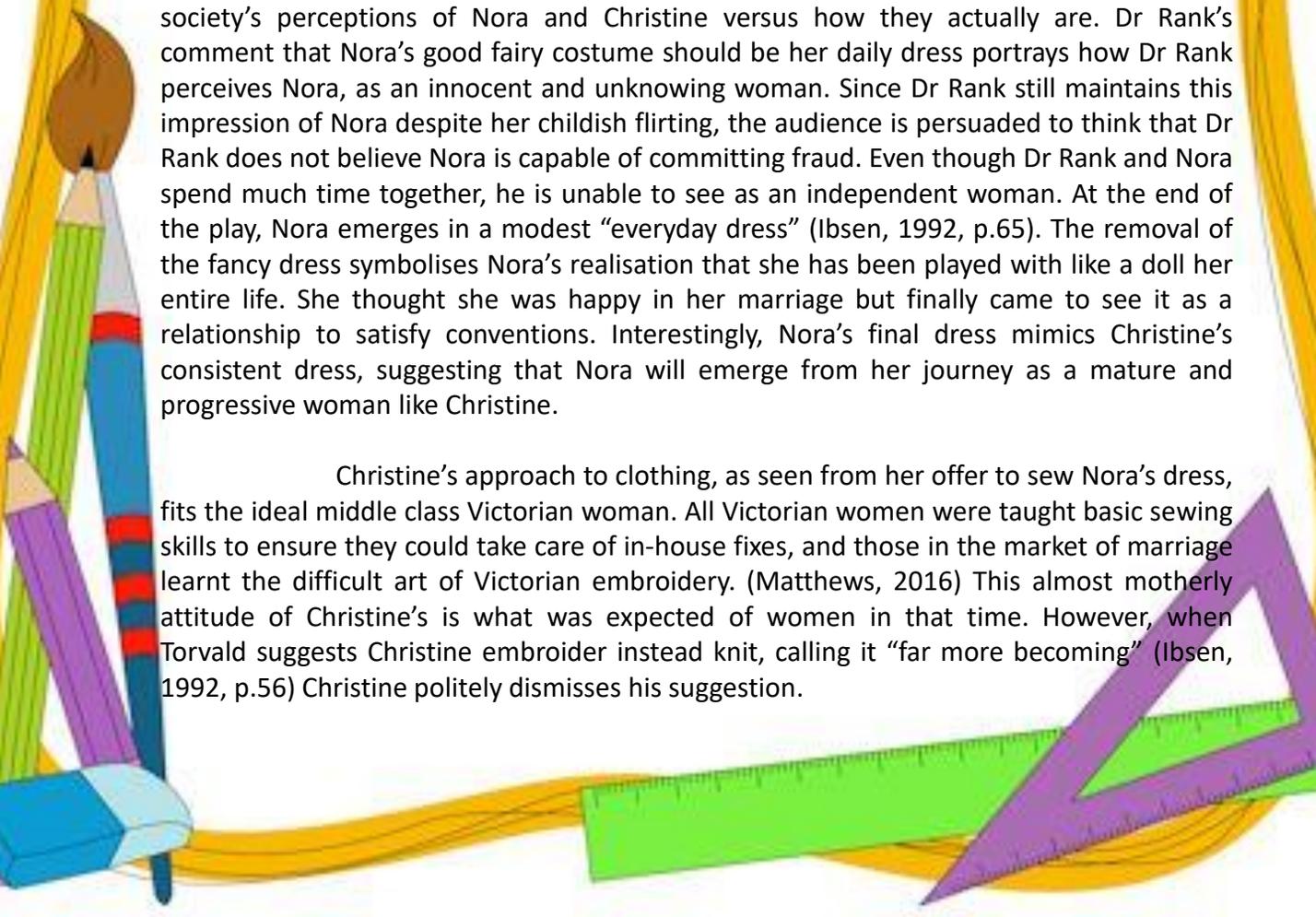




“Sense of generosity” refers to the “selfless motherhood...[where] once they became mothers, [they] were expected to forget about their own needs as humans.” (Ghosh, 2016) Ibsen’s use of “overstrained” implies that this “sense of generosity” (Ibsen, 1992, p.53) expected of women was over the top and excessive. Christine’s challenging nature, illustrated from her rhetorical question, shows her unorthodox and progressive perspective and by extension, Ibsen’s perspective on a woman’s role in society. Christine admits that “[She] want[s] to be a mother to someone, and [his] children need a mother.” (Ibsen, 1992, p.53) Christine acknowledges that she has a choice between living by herself and being a mother and wife, and chooses to become that mother and a wife. Ibsen conveys a radical yet ideal environment where women are given the chance to make decisions. By contrasting typical Victorian marriage dynamics and real love and care through dialogue, Ibsen critiques the patriarchal society in which he lived and demonstrates a sliver of what he hoped for.

In addition to dialogue, the references to clothing assist to contrast society’s perceptions of Nora and Christine versus how they actually are. Dr Rank’s comment that Nora’s good fairy costume should be her daily dress portrays how Dr Rank perceives Nora, as an innocent and unknowing woman. Since Dr Rank still maintains this impression of Nora despite her childish flirting, the audience is persuaded to think that Dr Rank does not believe Nora is capable of committing fraud. Even though Dr Rank and Nora spend much time together, he is unable to see as an independent woman. At the end of the play, Nora emerges in a modest “everyday dress” (Ibsen, 1992, p.65). The removal of the fancy dress symbolises Nora’s realisation that she has been played with like a doll her entire life. She thought she was happy in her marriage but finally came to see it as a relationship to satisfy conventions. Interestingly, Nora’s final dress mimics Christine’s consistent dress, suggesting that Nora will emerge from her journey as a mature and progressive woman like Christine.

Christine’s approach to clothing, as seen from her offer to sew Nora’s dress, fits the ideal middle class Victorian woman. All Victorian women were taught basic sewing skills to ensure they could take care of in-house fixes, and those in the market of marriage learnt the difficult art of Victorian embroidery. (Matthews, 2016) This almost motherly attitude of Christine’s is what was expected of women in that time. However, when Torvald suggests Christine embroider instead knit, calling it “far more becoming” (Ibsen, 1992, p.56) Christine politely dismisses his suggestion.





This reinforces the impression the audience has of Christine - a woman who does not care for societal expectations. Her attitude reveals that she is not looking to find a husband who cared whether she knitted or embroidered, or generally whether or not she conformed to the Victorian ideal of how a woman should behave. Through explicit costume changes and references to clothing and its constituents, Ibsen demonstrates Nora's character development from being doll-like to wanting to think for herself, and expresses the possibility of happiness without being in line with society's demands through Nora's attitude, as symbolised by her clothing.

To Ibsen, his endorsement of women was simply a testament to the force of logic and not a cry of feminism. He unabashedly presents Nora and Torvald's marriage for what it is, a sham, and does not shy from revealing Torvald's authoritarian and selfish nature. His depictions of Christine as a woman who is acutely aware of her position in society and her actions from the beginning, and of Nora as a woman who eventually finds her footing in a society where women are expected to conform to society's conventions, illustrate what Ibsen's ideal society is. Ibsen demonstrates that it is possible to be happy without having to agree and abide by the rules of society. *A Doll's House* may not call for a unanimous opinion, but that was not Ibsen's goal. Ibsen's realism calls for a reasonable and consistent conclusion all while critiquing aspects of society that he disagrees with, which has been presented effectively through foils, dialogue, and his reference to clothing.

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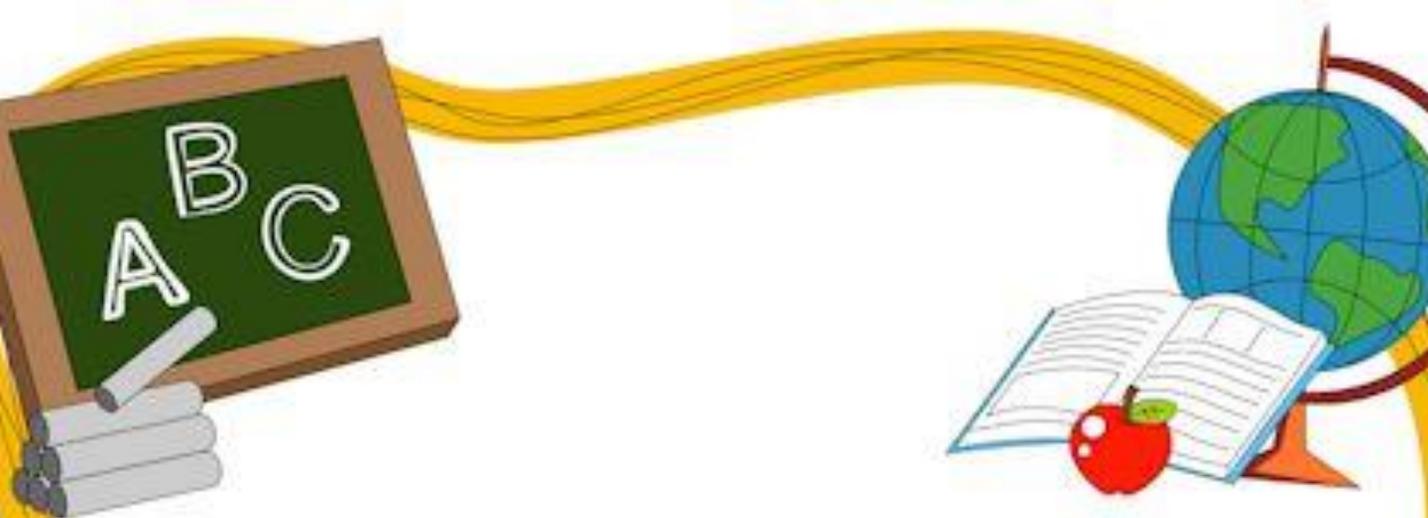
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**Katiana Kamdini**

Grade 12 Humility

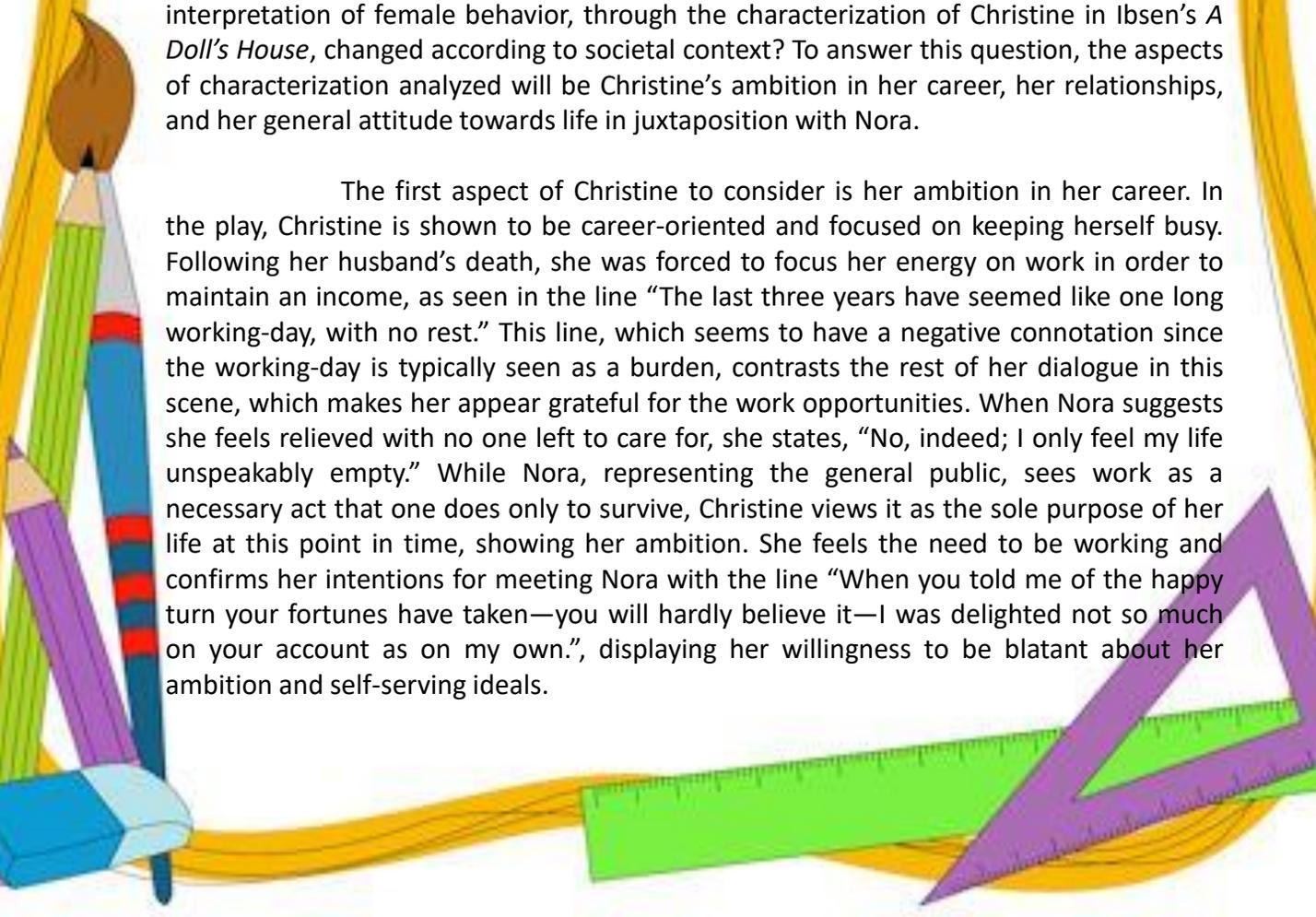


**Line of Inquiry:** To what extent has the interpretation of female behavior, through the characterization of Christine in Ibsen’s *A Doll’s House*, changed according to societal context?

## **A Doll’s House Essay**

When The World Economic Forum (WEF) released its annual Global Gender Gap Report at the end of 2019, Norway was named the world’s second most gender-equal country (World Economic Forum, 2019). Often, when *A Doll’s House* is discussed in the current cultural context, it is hailed as a feminist masterpiece. Nonetheless, at the time of its premiere, Norwegian audiences may have had a different response. In 1879, Norway was experiencing its second wave of feminism, and literature would have played a predominant role. In *A Doll’s House*, the character most often discussed in the context of feminism is Nora. However, in this essay, Christine will be assessed and analyzed to answer the line of inquiry: to what extent has the interpretation of female behavior, through the characterization of Christine in Ibsen’s *A Doll’s House*, changed according to societal context? To answer this question, the aspects of characterization analyzed will be Christine’s ambition in her career, her relationships, and her general attitude towards life in juxtaposition with Nora.

The first aspect of Christine to consider is her ambition in her career. In the play, Christine is shown to be career-oriented and focused on keeping herself busy. Following her husband’s death, she was forced to focus her energy on work in order to maintain an income, as seen in the line “The last three years have seemed like one long working-day, with no rest.” This line, which seems to have a negative connotation since the working-day is typically seen as a burden, contrasts the rest of her dialogue in this scene, which makes her appear grateful for the work opportunities. When Nora suggests she feels relieved with no one left to care for, she states, “No, indeed; I only feel my life unspeakably empty.” While Nora, representing the general public, sees work as a necessary act that one does only to survive, Christine views it as the sole purpose of her life at this point in time, showing her ambition. She feels the need to be working and confirms her intentions for meeting Nora with the line “When you told me of the happy turn your fortunes have taken—you will hardly believe it—I was delighted not so much on your account as on my own.”, displaying her willingness to be blatant about her ambition and self-serving ideals.





During the time of its premiere, this may have been seen favourably by the Norwegian public, particularly the women, given they were experiencing their second wave of feminism. “[Between 1880 and 1900] A few women were accepted to the University. Women wrote books and participated in the public debate. And they organised themselves in unions and associations.” (Bergstrøm, 2013) On the other hand, audiences may have shunned Christine for being so open about her immediate entrance into society after losing her husband, given women were expected at the time to go into a mourning period of roughly two and a half years, where they would not work the way Christine immediately did. This would have been viewed by Victorian audiences as improper or distasteful. However, while the general public may have had mixed reactions to this presentation of an ambitious modern woman, feminists in the audience certainly would have interpreted her as a role model to an extent. In terms of present Norway, ambitious women are encouraged, especially given the country’s efforts at gender affirmative action in favor of women in the workforce. This shows how over time and societal progression in terms of female gender roles, her behaviour would have grown to be seen as more acceptable.

Another important aspect of Christine’s behavior is how she acts around her romantic attachments and her intentions for relationships with other people. Christine is viewed mostly as a rather independent character, but displays moments where she shows her true intentions. In her relationship with her previous husband, it is shown to be mostly utilitarian; she states that her husband has left her “Not even any sorrow or grief to live upon.” (page 8) suggesting that she felt no deep connection to her husband, so much so that she need not mourn him, tying to her immediate entrance into the workforce. These are both displays of Christine using her romantic relationships for non-romantic reasons; it shows how Christine was aware that her marriage was not meant to be more than a financial proposition. The audience is further shown her perspective towards romantic relationships and marriage when she reunites with Krogstad. The audience is given a description of their previous encounter, and how she had chosen another man “only for the sake of money!”. Her lack of denial towards this statement, but instead willingness to support her decision shows that she has an objective understanding of how relationships can be beneficial in ways outside romance.

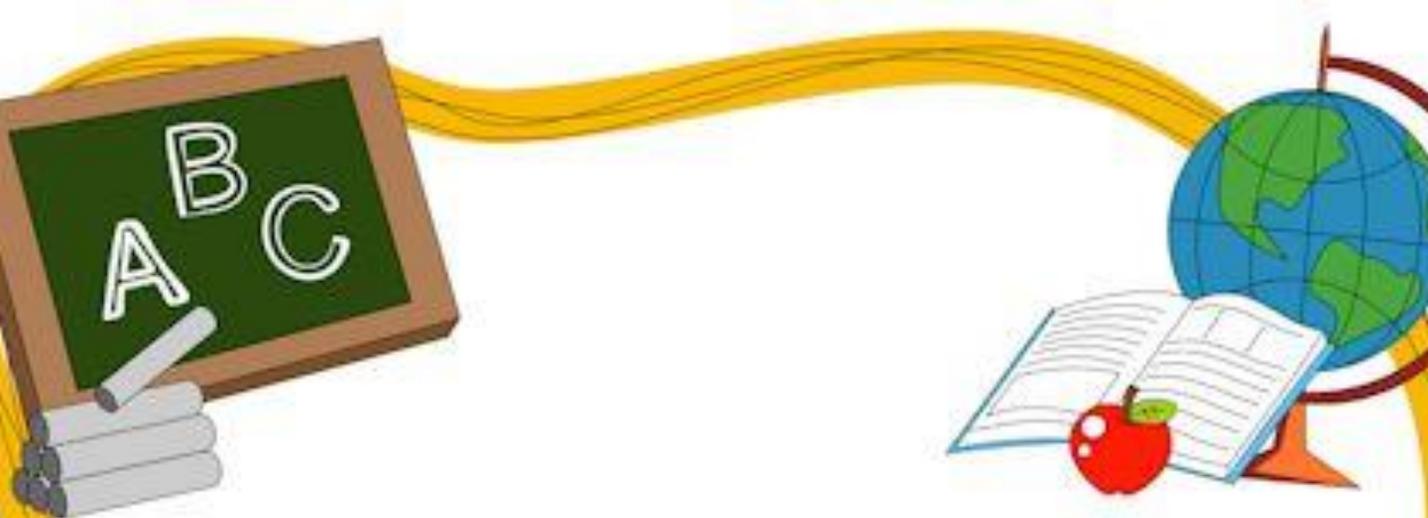


Her reliance on feelings of duty and obligation to explain her actions shows that to her, these trump any emotional attachment. In fact, as she reunites with Krogstad a predominant reason is not that she has feelings for him, but that she feels he can give her the opportunity to have people to care for. He has the ability to curb her loneliness and feeling of futility, and she is open about this in phrases such as “I want to be a mother to someone, and your children need a mother. We two need each other.” She wishes to not only have work but also to have a domestic role, showing the two sides of her ambition in relationships. However, it also further solidifies her ambition as an outlet of feelings of duty, as she feels the need to care for Krogstad’s girls.

According to Victorian ideals, of which the majority of Europe adhered to at the time, it was not uncommon for a woman to marry purely out of financial need rather than affection, which would have led her actions to be viewed as reasonable by the audience. In contrast, in modern society, there is a stigma towards being open about marrying for wealth, and marrying for love has become much more common. This is one scenario in which audiences may have approved of Christine’s actions less as time passed.

Alongside her ambition and attitude towards relationships, her general approach and attitude is also a significant aspect of her characterization. Christine is portrayed in the play as a woman with behavior that rather fits societal norms. As seen in the first time she meets Nora in the play, she speaks only one line at a time abruptly, such as “Yes, it is I” and “I arrived by steamer this morning. She speaks only when she needs to and does not exaggerate her message, suggesting that she fits the stereotype of a reserved woman. Her lack of outspokenness however is paired with a maturity that has come with age and experience. She is also repeatedly shown to be an honest woman that pushes Nora to tell the truth about her loan, even going so far as to conspire against Nora when Krogstad sends a letter exposing her, seen in the line “This unhappy secret must be disclosed; they must have a complete understanding between them, which is impossible with all this concealment and falsehood going on.” Her integrity is seen in how she views the secret as “unhappy”, and believes no relationship can be truly happy when there are lies present.

This behavior would have been what was deemed acceptable by Norwegian society at the time of the play’s debut, since Norwegian women were considered strong bearers of traditions. The tradition at the time would have been to uphold Victorian values, and this meant the prioritization of duty, seriousness, modesty and proper behavior. Coming from a financially modest background, Christine would’ve needed to maintain these values in order to be viewed as a proper woman.



This is in contrast to Nora's behavior as a much more outspoken character, who despite being of a higher status in society, maintains less of the proper behavior that is expected of a woman. Using Christine as Nora's character foil and the juxtaposition between them would've further emphasized the audience's preference towards Christine's behavior as it would have been much more acceptable. This makes Christine a complex character, because while she presents herself as an acceptable woman of the time, she chooses practices that would have been regarded as improper.

In conclusion, as a woman in 19th century Norway, Christine in many ways adheres to the standards that are presented by society in the sense that she fits the role of a domesticated woman. However, she also is abnormal in some ways and much more prone to being blunt about her intentions rather than hiding behind pretense. As a feminist figure for modern society, she may even be more of a feminist than the play's hero Nora, given she actively searches for opportunities and is blatant about her ambition. This is a quality that would have been shunned previously but now, would be viewed as admirable.

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Grade 12 Teamwork

