

**LITERATURE CIRCLE: A STRATEGY IN IMPROVING  
CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS**

A Thesis  
Presented to the Faculty  
of the Graduate School of  
University of Cebu  
Cebu City

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Science in Teaching  
major in English Language and Literature

by

**MARY NERISSA T. CASTRO**

October 2019

## APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis entitled **LITERATURE CIRCLE: A STRATEGY IN IMPROVING CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS** prepared and submitted by **MARY NERISSA T. CASTRO** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of **Master of Science in Teaching major in English Language and Literature** has been examined and recommended for acceptance and approval for Oral Examination.

### THESIS COMMITTEE

**ULYSSES B. APARECE, Ph.D.**  
Adviser

**MARCIAL T. CHIU, M.A.**  
Member

**NILDA L. ARCIPE, M.A.**  
Member

**YOLANDA C. SAYSON, Ed.D.**  
Chairman

### PANEL OF EXAMINERS

Approved by the Committee on Oral Examination with a grade of **PASSED**.

**ULYSSES B. APARECE, Ph.D.**  
Adviser

**MARCIAL T. CHIU, M.A.**  
Member

**NILDA L. ARCIPE, M.A.**  
Member

**YOLANDA C. SAYSON, Ed.D.**  
Chairman

Accepted and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Teaching major in English Language and Literature.

Comprehensive Exam : **PASSED**  
Date of Oral Examination : **October 8, 2019**

**YOLANDA C. SAYSON, Ed.D.**  
Dean

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This research has become the turning point of the researcher to pursue professional development. Hence, the researcher would like to acknowledge the following for making this academic endeavor a meaningful one:

**Dr. Ulysses B. Aparece**, the researcher's adviser, for sharing his invaluable feedback and for showing his utmost concern and support;

**Dr. Yolanda C. Sayson**, Graduate School Dean and chair of the committee, for her expertise in the writing of this thesis;

**Professor Marcial T. Chiu and Professor Nilda L. Arcipe**, members of the committee, for their insightful suggestions;

**Ms. Sheilla Marie Falar**, statistician, for the statistical analysis;

**Ms. Maleen Grafilo-Ordiz**, for her profound understanding and undeniable support;

**The students of University of Cebu-Banilad Campus**, for their enthusiastic participation and cooperation in this study;

**The researcher's family**, for their infinite love, unfailing support, and continuous encouragement; and

**Above all, to Almighty God**, for his divine guidance and bountiful blessings.

**MARY NERISSA T. CASTRO**

**ABSTRACT**

<b>Title</b>	:	<b>LITERATURE CICLE: A STRATEGY IN IMPROVING CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS</b>
<b>Researcher</b>	:	<b>Mary Nerissa T. Castro</b>
<b>Degree</b>	:	<b>Master of Science in Teaching major in English Language and Literature</b>
<b>School</b>	:	<b>University of Cebu</b>
<b>Adviser</b>	:	<b>Dr. Ulysses B. Aparece</b>
<b>Date Completed</b>	:	<b>October 2019</b>

Reading is the prime foundation of one's academic and social status. However, this vital skill is what most students lack attention and interest. As a result, it deteriorates their critical thinking skills. To address the problem, Harvey Daniel introduced his literature circle strategy. It showcases different features that likely aid student's struggles in the aspect of reading. This study, therefore, aims to determine the effectiveness of the literature circle strategy in improving critical thinking skills in reading among students at the University of Cebu-Banilad Campus.

The study utilized a quasi-experimental method where the 48 ABM Grade 12 research subjects of the study were divided into two groups, namely: control and experimental. Strategies employed in these groups were different. The traditional method was practiced in the control group, while the literature circle strategy was implemented in the experimental group. For data gathering, a researcher-made test about the short story "Dead Stars" by Paz Marquez Benitez was used as the main instrument. Another short story entitled "The Small Key" by Paz Latorena was used as a springboard in the implementation of strategies for both groups. Statistical treatments used for data analysis were simple percent, t-test for Correlational Samples, and t-test for Two Independent Samples.

Findings revealed that in measuring subjects' critical thinking skills in reading, there is a significant difference between the posttest performances of the groups. The research subjects under experimental group performed higher than the control group. The study concludes that literature circle strategy is effective in enhancing student's critical thinking skills in reading.

**Keywords:** literature circle, improving critical thinking skills, quasi-experimental method, University of Cebu-Banilad

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Title Page	i
Approval Sheet	ii
Acknowledgment	iii
Abstract	iv
Table of Contents	v
List of Tables	viii
List of Figures	ix
<b>Chapter</b>	
<b>1 THE PROBLEM AND ITS SCOPE</b>	1
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	1
Rationale of the study	1
Theoretical Background	2
<b>THE PROBLEM</b>	14
Objectives of the Study	14
Statement of Null Hypotheses	15
Significance of the Study	15
<b>RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</b>	18
Research Design	18
Research Environment	19
Research Subjects	20
Research Instruments	22

	Research Procedures	24
	Gathering of Data	24
	Treatment of Data	26
	<b>DEFINITION OF TERMS</b>	28
<b>2</b>	<b>PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA</b>	30
	Pretest Performances of the Control and Experimental Groups	30
	Posttest Performances of the Control and Experimental Groups	31
	Difference Between the Pretest Performances of the Control and Experimental Groups	33
	Difference Between the Pretest and Posttest Performances of the Control and Experimental Groups	35
	Difference Between the Posttest Performances of the Control and Experimental Groups	37
<b>3</b>	<b>SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	39
	Summary	39
	Findings	41
	Conclusion	42
	Recommendations	42
	Proposed Action Plan	43

<b>REFERENCES</b>		50
<b>APPENDICES</b>		
Appendix A	Transmittal Letter	54
Appendix B-1	Research Instruments	55
Appendix B-2	Dead Stars	60
Appendix B-3	The Small Key	73
Appendix C	Location Map	77
Appendix D	Reliability Test Result	78
Appendix E	Intervention Guide Questions	80
Appendix F-1	Pretest Performances of the Control and Experimental Groups	83
Appendix F-2	Posttest Performances of the Control and Experimental Groups	84
Appendix G-1	Documentations Prior to the Conduct of the Study	85
Appendix G-2	Documentations during the Conduct of the Study	86
Appendix H	Documentations of Pretest and Posttest Results	90
<b>CURRICULUM VITAE</b>		96

**LIST OF TABLES**

<b>Table</b>		<b>Page</b>
1	Pairing of the Research Subjects	21
2	Pretest Performances of the Control and Experimental Groups	30
3	Posttest Performances of the Control and Experimental Groups	32
4	Difference Between the Pretest Performances of the Control and Experimental Groups	34
5	Difference Between the Pretest and Posttest Performances of the Control and Experimental Groups	35
6	Difference Between the Posttest Performances of the Control and Experimental Groups	37
7	Literature Circle: A Workshop for Critical Reading Matrix	46
8	Cronbach Alpha Reliability Test Result	78
9	Data Gathered during Pretest Performances of the Control and Experimental Groups	83
10	Data Gathered during the Posttest Performances of the Control and Experimental Groups	84

**LIST OF FIGURES**

<b>Figure</b>		<b>Page</b>
1	Research Flow	18

# CHAPTER 1

## THE PROBLEM AND ITS SCOPE

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Rationale**

Literature serves as a channel for cultural and life appreciation. It can also access and reflect on various cultural backgrounds and norms of which students make connections of their thoughts and feelings as they read. Teaching literature can be laborious if students are not motivated to read. Reading can expand vocabulary range, develop critical thinking skills, and cultivate one's understanding of other cultures.

Reading, however, has been a long-term struggle of teachers as they deal with students who lack skills, literacy, motivation, and independence to read. This declining interest is evident in the study conducted by Social Weather Stations in May 2012. It revealed that the overall number of Filipino adult readers fell to 88% from 92% in 2007 and 94% in 2003. The results also noted that there was an abatement in readership in four types of reading materials, namely: books, magazines, comics, and newspapers (Roque, 2016).

The English instructors at the University of Cebu- Banilad have been using the usual approach in teaching literature. For instance, they give reading assignments with hope and assumptions that students will complete the reading task. The method does not seem to fit the holistic development of the

child and does not offer an opportunity for developing critical thinking skills. Thus, a literature circle strategy which encourages students to read independently is introduced. It is done through a small group discussion where students gather to enhance literacy by discussing a piece of literature in depth.

The researcher, who is a teacher by profession, has been teaching literature throughout her teaching career. It has been observed that students are struggling to derive in-depth analysis and interpretation of any given texts. Therefore, the researcher would explore the effectiveness of literature circles, as means to improve students' critical thinking skills in reading.

### **Theoretical Background**

This study is anchored in Lev Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development, Johnson and Johnson's Cooperative Learning and Deci and Ryan's Self-determination Theory.

Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) by Lev Vygotsky asserts that learning should match the child's level of development. Hence, to better comprehend the relationship between the two, it is necessary to distinguish the actual and potential levels of a child. The actual level refers to those achievements that a child can perform or demonstrate independently, whereas potential levels relate to tasks a child is capable with an adult's succor and collaboration with peers (McLeod, 2018). The assistance that a child needs in

a potential level is best played and explained in the concept of more knowledgeable other.

Vygotsky regarded that learning and development are best understood when the focus is on the examination of the process of how one learns when engaged in shared tasks rather than the measurement on what the learner can accomplish independently. Development in this concept occurs when a child learns general concepts and principles that can apply to new tasks and problems (Lantolf, 2000). Productive interactions and aligning instructions toward the ZPD allow learners to develop skills and strategies that will eventually apply in their situations. It guides the learner with instructions on how to perform the task and organize the newly gained knowledge in their existing mental schemas of which he/she will later use in further complicated and advance performance independently.

According to Johnson and Johnson (2005), cooperative learning is when students work together in small groups to accomplish a shared set of learning goals which aid in maximizing their own and each other's learning. For the lesson to be interdependent, five primary elements must be examined and carefully structured namely: positive interdependence, promotive interaction, individual accountability, social skills, and group processing (Johnson, Johnson & Holubec, 2013).

Within cooperative activities, there is a positive interdependence among students' goal attainments if each member in the group has also reached the learning goal. The idea accounts that what helps one member helps all group members and what hurts one group member hurts all (Johnson & Johnson, 2008).

Promotive interaction, on the other hand, is achieved if each member shares mutual understanding, either academically or personal. The support and assistance that each member has, bring openness and active interaction among individuals within the group (Johnson, Johnson & Holubec, 2013).

The success rate of this method, however, does not only rely on the same goal that each member is eyeing but also need an individual's participation and meaningful demonstration on each other's knowledge and skills. Contributing a fair share of the work toward the group's goal and providing each other with feedback or any sort of assistance simulate members to feel individually accountable with their fellow group members (McCafferty, Jacobs & Iddings, 2006).

The groups formed, according to Ashman and Gillies (2003), worked on a variety of activities which continuously build effective communication as each member freely communicate their ideas or concerns on achieving their goals through group processing. As students do this, specific episodes of

caring, sharing, taking turns, trust-building, and other social skills were frequently observed among members as they surfaced towards interactions which deepen their interpersonal sensitivity and understanding (McConnell, 2014).

With cooperative learning, students can have opportunities to assess, evaluate, and acknowledge each other's understanding, which motivates them to learn. The more skills engaged when students interact, the higher their achievements will be (Johnson & Johnson, 2008). Hence, it is the interaction that drives students to acquire learning.

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) involves intrinsic motivation which was developed by Ryan and Deci (2000). This represents a broader framework for the study of human motivation, personality, and functioning. Intrinsic motivation refers to one's inner pleasure, which often leads to high levels of engagement and performance (Seifert & Sutton, 2012). According to Legault (2017), the theory proposes three basic psychological human needs for facilitating optimal functioning, constructive social growth, and personal well-being: autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

In SDT theory, the basic human needs are linked to one's motivation and are necessary conditions for the maintenance of intrinsic motivation (Niemi & Ryan, 2009). The need for autonomy refers to the experience of

behavior as reflectively self-endorsed. Students become autonomous when devotion and energy towards their studies are self-inflicted. Hence, acknowledgment of perceptions and opportunities for self-direction were found to heighten intrinsic motivation because they allow people a more prominent feeling of autonomy. Studies have further shown that autonomy-supportive teachers (in contrast to controlling) reported to increase student's curiosity, excitement for a challenge, and self-esteem (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

On the other hand, the need to feel efficacious or skilled in one's pursuit of goals is pinned to competence. According to Deci and Ryan (2004), when students feel competent, they feel to meet the challenges and are in pursuit of more trials. It allows them to build mastery and to unravel new things. Self-determined students are more likely motivated to achieve; hence, providing appropriate tools and feedback when students perform well promote success and their feeling of efficacy. Accordingly, feedback serves as basis for the learners to monitor their learning by providing relevant information on how to master the tasks at hand. Moreover, introducing learning activities that are optimally challenging allow and expand students' academic capabilities (Niemiec & Ryan, 2009).

Lastly, SDT also flourished a sense of security and relatedness. It is very essential for students to feel a sense of belonging and connectedness with

others (Deci & Ryan, 2004). In the classroom, relatedness is deeply associated when a student feels that the people around genuinely like, respect, and value him or her. Students who report such relatedness are more likely to exhibit excitement and integrated regulation for the difficult tasks involved in learning, whereas those who feel disconnected or rejected are more likely to move away (Mata et al., 2009).

Grounded by these different theories and their highly remarkable principles, Harvey Daniels (as cited in Stabile, 2009) proposed a new strategy, the so-called literature circle. It is a small peer-led discussion where students gather to discuss a piece of literature in-depth and to guide each other throughout the text. This peer-led discussion, according to Sandmann and Gruhler (2007), ignites questions driven from the text in which students critically express and value each other's perspectives to those questions, thus, creating a literate and interpretive community. It is also a great source of motivation, for it encourages thoughtful discussions and engagement of readers to love reading. It gives students opportunities to enhance their critical thinking skills and reflectivity as they read, discuss, and respond to a text (Ericson, 2001). In circles, according to Daniels (2002), participants have their roles (connector, questioner, illustrator, word wizard, etc.) rotating in every session and come to the group with notes needed to perform the job (as

cited in Straits & Nicholas, 2006). However, Peterson and Belizaire (2006) discussed that students do not need to rely on role sheets to help guide their discussions, for they often got too focused on completing the sheets and spent less time on broadening and putting thought to their group discussions.

As described by Moses (2009) and Noe (2013), this strategy is flexible and applicable in many types of learners, ages, and classrooms. The implementation of it is different in every classroom, for it is not a specific program and has no fixed recipe. It is ‘teacher by design’ that will provide students with modeling and structure. Hence, educators adapted and redefined this strategy in different ways (Noe, 2013). The following are some of the fundamental features of literature circles:

**Students Choose Their Reading Material.** Letting students pick their own choice of book is equally developing their sense of independence towards reading. Good teaching is when teachers intuitively provide students with choices in reading and discussing books. Hence, for reading to become a lifelong habit and deeply owned skill, it has to be voluntary, anchored in feelings of pleasure.

**Groups Meet on a Regular, Predictable Schedule.** Literature circle is not introduced as a one-time-only strategy in the classroom setting. It needs proper internalization of procedures, norms, and independency letting

teachers and students to have this strategy in a regular schedule and not in an occasional treat. They also have to acknowledge that this is a long-term classroom investment. The meeting schedules of students are highly vital and encouraged. Each session needs a great amount of time to open up a natural conversation among members paving a way of having in-depth understanding and discussions of the book.

Students' Domination in Topic Discussion. In literature circles, students develop their ownership towards reading through selecting issues for discussion and sharing their views among fellow readers. They are in charge of their thinking and discussion helping them to become literary individuals and intellectually independent.

Written Notes to Guide both Reading and Discussions. Students, in circles, write their own thoughts and responses to the text and often used these as their starting point for conversation and sharing. After students have finished their circle, they write their own thoughts about the discussion. They reflect on tasks they did and determine what to improve and to strengthen. This allows students to be aware and to have full control of their own leaning like a mature adult reader. They also have reading logs to keep on track with where their group is in the reading material and so as to not let other members read ahead.

Teachers as Facilitator. The teachers' work in literature circles is complex and essential. Aside from small briefing of introducing the strategy, most roles played are supportive, organizational and managerial. A teacher can also play a key role such as fellow reader where she joins a certain group and shares his/her honest ideas about the book (Daniels, 2002).

Literature Circle is an excellent practice for analytical skills, which helps learners become critical thinkers. As they immerse themselves in the process, they scrutinized the text, look for connections to the real world, make cultural assumptions towards the characters and to the author, situate themselves of why characters behave as they do, and evaluate interpretations in a context-based manner (Brown, 2009). The notion is further supported by Yang (2002), describing the strategy that can enhance one's self-evaluative stance, personal responses, and judgments from the readers. It heartens readers to draw logical inferences or conclusions from the text read, linking to their personal experience. Henceforth, the literature circle strategy does not only ignite students' interest in reading but also sharpens their critical thinking skills.

Critical thinking, according to Paul and Elder (2019), is a self-directed, self-monitored, and self-corrective thinking. It involves a series of complex self-thought processes to solve problems effectively and requires standards of

excellence (Fisher, 2011). A critical thinker suspends judgment, exclude jumping to conclusions, avoid impulsive thinking, and does not settle for a superficial level of interpretation (McPeck, 2016). With all the mentioned features, students need to apply critical thinking towards reading. Through this, readers do not recognize not only what a text says, but also how the text is portrayed. To read critically, one must analyze, interpret, and find evidence on the read text (Kurland, 2000).

In light of these, different studies across the globe investigated the effectiveness of literature circle strategy in cultivating critical thinking skills and were put under meticulous observations. Most of it stresses the positive effect of literature circles both in qualitative and quantitative research.

Irawati (2016) conducted quasi-experimental method to see the effect of literature circle in improving reading comprehension of students. The results showed that literature circle has positive effect on students' literal and inferential reading comprehension covering identifying directly stated main ideas, finding explicit information, determining subject matter, and drawing inferences.

Brown (2009) also revealed that the literature circle strategy helped in developing students' critical thinking abilities. The study focused on the usage of various works of literature showcasing global issues context. The strategy

itself has aid English as a Foreign Language (EFL) readers in becoming more mature and critical thinkers as they unravel the context of each assigned text by evaluating various characters' behavior. They based not solely within the context of the story but also in the context of the current real-world situations.

A similar study conducted by Liao (2009) also shows the effectiveness of the literature circle in enhancing English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Taiwanese students' critical thinking skills as the study gives ample opportunities for students to practice and answer higher-order thinking questions. The efficient learning tool for critical thinking, the regular and prolonged practice of connecting reading with reflection, has created a supportive and collaborative atmosphere.

Karatay (2017) conducted another study that was carried out as action research to utilize the literature circle strategy in improving students' text analyzation skills- in finding the topic, main idea, and keywords using expository texts. Based on the results utilizing pretest and posttest exams, the literature circle is operative in developing students' abilities to find the theme, main idea, and keywords in a text. The students also pointed out that the implementation of this strategy increased their self-confidence, cooperative learning, critical thinking, reading objectively without bias, and independent reading skills.

In connection with the incentive that students have shown towards reading, a study conducted by Whittingham (2014) showed the effectiveness of literature circle strategy in motivating students to complete more assigned reading material using non-fiction texts. Due to the open-ended questions provided in the survey, results showed that the literature circle gave them the purpose of reading a text and guided them on which parts of the text they need to focus further.

Stabile (2009) specifically focused on struggling readers to assess how the literature circle strategy can help them to become more engaged and reflective. The findings of the study noted that the literature circle strategy is useful for struggling readers. The following conclusions were established: through literature circles, students have ownership on their reading; literature circles provide students with a small intimate setting; and lastly, the strategy aids students to have in-depth knowledge of the text read for they were using notes throughout the process.

The theories and works of literature presented have provided insights and distinct features of the literature circle strategy. It discusses how the strategy aids students' reading literacy as they share their knowledge, perceptions, and reflections, towards their group. Hence, this research on literature circle would be a great strategy in improving critical thinking skills.

## **THE PROBLEM**

### **Statement of the Problem**

This study aimed to determine the effectiveness of literature circle strategy in improving critical thinking skills among Grade 12-ABM students in University of Cebu- Banilad Campus, S.Y. 2019-2020. The findings served as the basis of a proposed action plan.

Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the pretest performances of the control and experimental groups?
2. What are the posttest performances of the control and experimental groups?
3. Is there a significant difference between the pretest performances of the control and experimental groups?
4. Is there a significant difference between the pretest and posttest performances of the control and experimental groups?
5. Is there a significant difference between the posttest performances of the control and experimental groups?
6. Based on the findings, what action plan can be proposed?

## **Statement of Null Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant difference between the pretest performances of the control and experimental groups.

Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant difference between the pretest and posttest performances of the control and experimental groups.

Ho<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant difference between the posttest performances of the control and experimental groups.

## **Significance of the Study**

The outcome of the study will be favorable to the following individuals:

**Students.** Students' engagement towards reading is an integral step to a lifelong learning process. Hence, their inner drive to read after the implementation and exposure of the literature circle strategy would help them realize how essential and fun reading is. Also, through collaborative work, the students are actively into the process of their learning as they become critical thinkers in the in-depth analysis of the concept of the text.

**Teachers.** The findings of the study will give teachers another perspective on how to teach literature effectively in the classroom. It will help them address students' lack of incentive to read and to have them exercise higher-order thinking skills as a way of understanding the text. It also paved

the way to maximize students' engagement toward learning literature as they act as a facilitator within the process.

**School Administrators.** It will encourage the school administrators to include the strategy in teaching literature. The proposed action plan will serve as a basis for in-service pieces of training for teachers handling literature. It further designs and develops some plans using the introduced strategy. The administration will also come to realize that the problem issued is evident and must be given the utmost care.

**Department of Education (DepEd).** The study will give enlightenment to the Department of Education in giving importance and attention to this upsetting situation of most students who lack interest and critical analysis in reading. The strategy this study proposes gives a new glimpse to the teachers on how to effectively teach literature outside the traditional context. Hence, aiding the field of education to increase critical reading skills and engagement of students resulting in higher performance and achievements.

**The Researcher.** The results will give the researcher who is a teacher by profession, an idea on how to teach literature effectively for students to feel stimulated at the same time to gain a deeper understanding of what they have read.

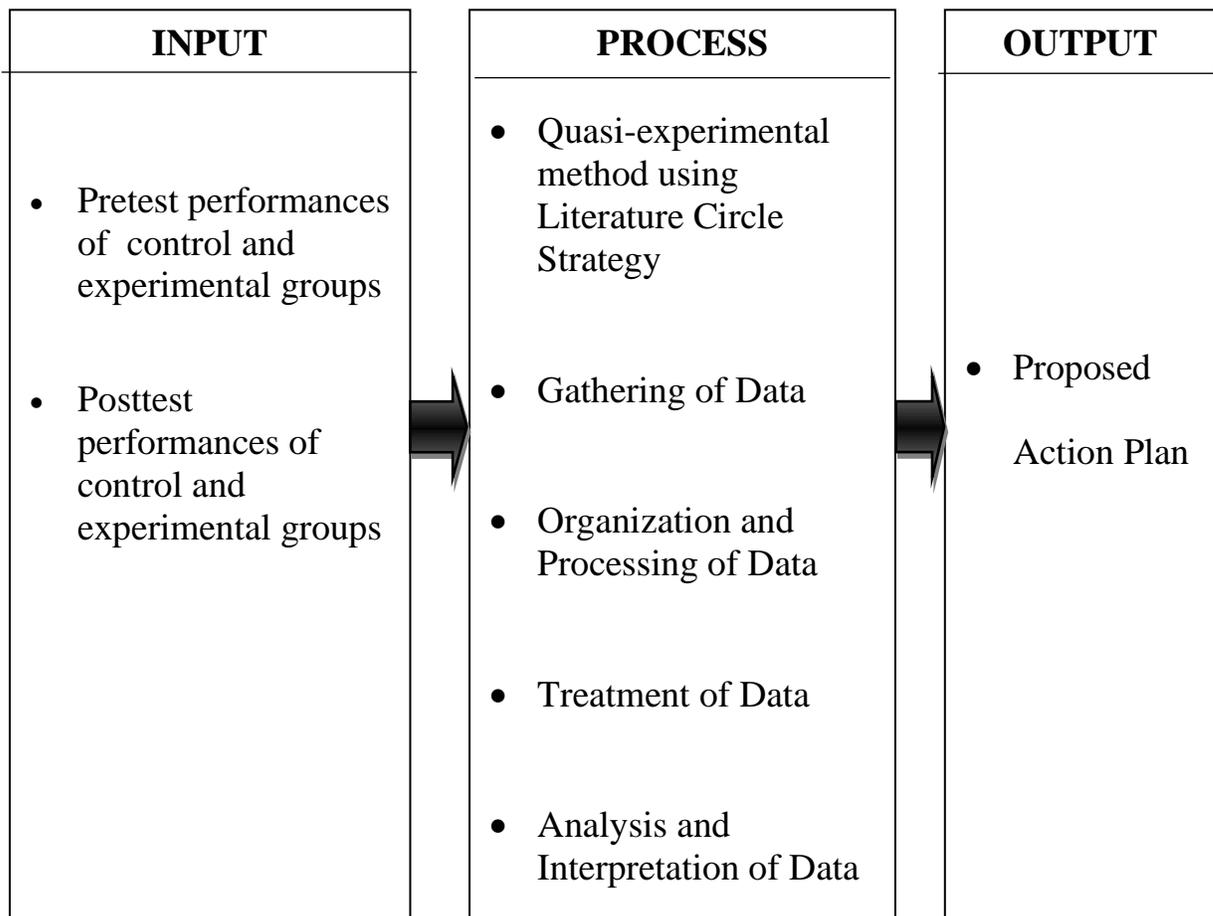
**Future Researchers.** The study can serve as reference material and related inquiry for future researchers who may take their case related to this study. It can also serve as the leading source for them to come up with a new research problem or as a replicated research problem with different variables, settings, instruments, procedures, and respondents.

# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

## Research Design

The study utilized the quasi-experimental method using Literature Circle Strategy in improving critical thinking skills of Grade 12-ABM students of the University of Cebu- Banilad Campus-Senior High School Department.

Figure 1 shows the flow of this study.



**Figure 1**  
**Research Flow**

## **Research Environment**

The study was conducted at the University of Cebu- Banilad Campus, Senior High School Department, located at Governor Cuenco Avenue, Banilad, Cebu City 6000 (see Appendix C for the location map). University of Cebu (UC) is an educational institution in Cebu City offering primary, secondary, tertiary education and post-graduate degrees. It offers affordable and quality education responsive to global demands. The university as well is one of the prominent educational institutions in the Philippines.

It extended its educational influence adapting the K-12 curriculum under the Senior High School Department in 2016. It offers three different tracks, namely Academic, Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL), and Arts and Design. The first two tracks were further subdivided into strands. Under the Academic track are General Academic Strand (GAS), Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMMS), Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), and Accountancy, Business and Management (ABM). On the other hand, TVL offers Home Economics (HE) and Information and Communications Technology (ICT). Currently, the UC- Senior High School Department has approximately 3,600 senior high students and 65 faculty members. The accessibility of the setting served as the basis of why it was the chosen research environment.

## **Research Subjects**

The subjects of this study were Grade 12 students consisting of 48 students taking up Accountancy, Business and Management (ABM) under the Academic track of University of Cebu-Banilad- SHS Department. The students were currently enrolled in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Literature from the Philippines and the World (English 4) as part of their curriculum in their first semester. These 48 subjects belong to one class. They were then divided into two groups, namely the control group and the experimental group. The grouping was based on their age, gender, and their final grade in English 2 subject last school year.

Table 1 shows how the subjects were paired and grouped in the study.

**Table 1**  
**Pairing of the Research Subjects**

Control Group				Experimental Group			
Subjects	Age	Gender	Grade	Subjects	Age	Gender	Grade
A	17	F	97	AA	18	F	96
B	17	M	94	BB	17	F	94
C	17	F	94	CC	17	F	94
D	18	F	94	DD	17	F	94
E	17	F	93	EE	17	F	94
F	17	F	93	FF	17	F	93
G	17	F	92	GG	17	F	92
H	18	F	92	HH	17	F	92
I	18	F	91	II	17	F	91
J	17	F	91	JJ	17	F	91
K	17	F	91	KK	18	F	91
L	18	F	91	LL	17	F	91
M	17	M	90	MM	17	M	90
N	17	F	90	NN	17	F	90
O	18	F	90	OO	18	F	90
P	20	F	90	PP	17	M	90
Q	17	M	90	QQ	18	F	90
R	18	F	89	RR	17	F	89
S	16	F	89	SS	17	F	89
T	17	F	89	TT	18	F	89
U	16	M	88	UU	18	F	89
V	18	F	87	VV	18	M	88
W	17	F	87	WW	17	F	87
X	18	F	86	XX	17	M	84
<b>Total/ Ave.</b>	<b>417/ 17.38</b>	<b>M= 4 F= 20</b>	<b>2178/ 90.75</b>		<b>415/ 17.29</b>	<b>M= 4 F= 20</b>	<b>2178/ 90.75</b>
<b>SD</b>			<b>2.59</b>				<b>2.64</b>

Table 1 shows how the research subjects were paired in the study. They were grouped according to their age, gender, and final grade in English 2 subject. It is further shown in the table that the majority of the subjects were females in both control and experimental groups. Most of the research

subjects as well had similar age range from 16-18, and their final grades in English 2 have accumulated the same average result.

### **Research Instruments**

A researcher-made test about the short story “Dead Stars” by Paz Marquez Benitez was used as the main instrument of this study (see Appendix B-1 for the research instrument). It served as the pretest and posttest exam of both control and experimental groups. The selection of the literary text was based on the curriculum guide in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Literature from the Philippines and the World (English 4) showcasing renowned canonical Filipino works. The underlying moral lesson of the story and the comparative plot to the recent Filipino situation somehow serve as an eye-opener for students to do some reflections on making decisions and implications of emotions. Moreover, the text itself is quite complicated. Hence, profound analysis and a closer reading of the material are highly needed.

The structure of the test was selected-response assessment specifically multiple choice. It comprised 20 questions that would assess subjects’ knowledge and reasoning. Each item of the test was structured prudently to highly engage critical analysis. The qualitative interpretation of the subjects’ critical thinking level and its corresponding scores were based on the following scoring range:

<b>Score Ranges</b>	<b>Categories</b>
20-16	Very Good
15-11	Good
10-6	Fair
5-0	Poor

Pilot testing is of paramount importance to ensure and increase the practicality, validity, and reliability of the main instrument. Accordingly, the researcher-made test was pretested to 48 students from the same strand of the target sample of the study. The pilot testing of the study aided the researcher to verify students' difficulties and lacks in dealing with the items which ensure more completeness and clarity of the instrument. The statistical tool used to find out the reliability of the test was Cronbach's Alpha (see Appendix D for the reliability test result).

Another short story entitled "The Small Key" by Paz Latorena was used in both control and experimental groups. It was done to assess the effectivity of each strategy used. The selection of the short story was based on the curriculum guide of the English 4 subject-21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World, showcasing different renowned Filipino authors.

## **Research Procedures**

**Gathering of Data.** To conduct the study, the researcher obtained authorization from the principal of the University of Cebu-Banilad Campus-Senior High School Department (see Appendix A for the transmittal letter). The researcher personally conducted the study, for she handles English 4, and the research subjects were under her supervision.

In the first meeting, prior to the actual gathering of data, the researcher gave a brief background of the notable authors in the Philippine contexts and their respective works. The elements of a short story as well were discussed to understand how these significantly contribute toward profound analysis and understanding of any texts read. Before the period ends, the researcher divided the class into control and experimental groups based on their age, gender, and final grade in the English 2 subject. The subjects were also asked to read the short story, “Dead Stars” as their assignment.

In the second meeting, the researcher administered a pretest for both control and experimental groups to determine the subjects’ initial level of critical thinking skills. During the pretest, subjects read the short story “Dead Stars” by Paz Marquez Benitez (see Appendix B-2 for the copy of the story) for about 30 minutes. After this, the copies were taken from them, and another 30 minutes allotment for answering the researcher-made test (see Appendix

B-1 for the research instrument). The pretests of the two groups were gathered by the researcher and were evaluated by an eligible statistician.

Soon after the pretest, the control and experimental groups were taught using different strategies. The conveyance of these strategies was done alternately in separate meetings since the research subjects of the study belong to one class. Also, during the implementation of strategy in a specific group, research subjects from the other group were asked to be in the library or spare classrooms and were tasked to do activities regarding the short story “The Small Key” (see Appendix B-3 for the copy of the short story).

In the third meeting, the control group used the conventional approach to teaching literature using the springboard “The Small Key” by Paz Latorena (see Appendix B-3 for the copy of the short story). The researcher explained some thematic, stylistic features of the text and literary content. The students tried to interpret the literary, social, political, and historical context of the text. Lectures, reading of notes, and explanations were utilized in the discussion.

In the fourth to fifth meetings, the experimental group used the literature circle strategy utilizing the same short story “The Small Key” (see Appendix B-3 for the copy of the short story). During this session, the researcher introduced the idea of the literature circle and the procedures in implementing this strategy. Then, the research subjects were grouped into

five, consisting of 4-5 members. Guide questions were handed in during the implementation process based on their focus and task to profoundly discuss the text: Group 1: Characters, Group 2: Setting, Group 3: Plot, Group 4: Symbols, and Group 5: Theme. The group was given the freedom to choose their desired topic for an in-depth discussion of the story. While the students were sharing, the researcher roamed around to monitor the discussions. Throughout the procedure, the main features/procedures of the literature circle introduced by Daniels (2002) and Moses (2009), were strictly followed such as students choose their topic for the material, groups met on a regular and predictable schedule on students' domination in the topic discussion, and notes to guide students' deliberations, and the teacher acted as a facilitator.

After all the procedures, posttest was administered to both groups. The researcher-made test (see Appendix B-1 for the research instrument) that was utilized in the pretest was given once more. The posttest scores of both groups were gathered and evaluated by the same statistician. This is to know to what extent the students have progressed.

### **Treatment of Data**

The data gathered were subjected to statistical treatment to facilitate the interpretation of the results.

**Simple Percent** was used to categorize the level of proficiency of the

participants in their pretest and posttest performances both for the control and experimental groups;

The **t-test for Correlational Samples** was used to determine the significant difference between the pretest and posttest performances of the control and experimental groups; and

The **t-test for Two Independent Samples** was used to determine the significant difference between the posttest performances of the control and experimental groups.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

To obtain a clearer understanding of the contents of this study, the following terms were operationally defined.

**Control Group.** This refers to the research subjects who do not receive any treatment in the study. This group received the traditional approach in teaching literature.

**Effectiveness of Literature Circle Strategy in Improving Critical Thinking skills.** This refers to the improvement of students' critical thinking skills in reading using the literature circle strategy, a small, peer-led discussion group where students gather together to discuss a piece of literature in depth and to guide each other throughout the text.

**Experimental Group.** This refers to the subject of the study who received the treatment or intervention. They were exposed to using literature circle strategy in having an in-depth analysis of the text.

**Posttest Performances.** These are the scores obtained by both groups after teaching literature the conventional way in the control group and the usage of literature circle strategy in the experimental group. It is the main specification if progress is apparent, and if the strategy introduced is operational or not.

**Pretest Performances.** These are the scores obtained by the students

belonging from both control and experimental groups as they answered the research-made test about Dead Stars by Paz Marquez Benitez.

**Proposed Action Plan.** This refers to the advancement of lesson plans and motivation workshops for interested teachers who want to enhance their students' critical thinking skills in reading. The workshop focused on the effective use of the Literature Circle Strategy in the classroom setting.

## CHAPTER 2 PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This chapter presents and proves the proposition of the data gathered by the researcher on the effectiveness of the literature circle strategy in enhancing critical thinking skills among ABM students of the University of Cebu-Banilad Campus- SHS Department. The sources of data were scores garnered by the research subjects in the researcher-made test showcasing “Dead Stars” by Paz Marquez Benitez. The results were presented in tabular form with corresponding analysis and interpretation.

### **Pretest Performances of the Control and Experimental Groups**

The results of pretest performances of the control and experimental groups were shown in Table 2 to compare subjects’ performances before the implementation of strategies used in each group when teaching literature.

**Table 2**  
**Pretest Performances of the Control and Experimental Groups**

Pretest		Control Group		Experimental Group	
<i>Categories</i>	<i>Score Ranges</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
Very Good	20-16	2	8.33	1	4.17
Good	15-11	11	45.83	11	45.83
Fair	10-6	11	45.83	11	45.83
Poor	5-0	0	0.00	1	4.17
<b>Total:</b>		24	100.00	24	100.00

As shown in Table 2, when comparing and contrasting the pretest performances of both control and experimental groups, the following were observed: the same number of subjects (11) were under *fair* and *good* categories and the corresponding percentages/frequencies between *poor* and *very good* were quite similar and failed to show major difference of results.

The similarity of results drawn from the table contributed an additional indicator that the two groups were valid samples and were both struggling in their performance. This also brought enlightenment and realization that the research subjects lack the skills, critical analysis, motivation, and independence to read. Hence, it further acknowledges the essentiality of implementing the literature circle as an intervention to boost their performance. This strategy gives them opportunities to enhance their critical thinking skills and reflectivity as they read, discuss, and respond to a text (Ericson, 2001).

### **Posttest Performances of the Control and Experimental Groups**

Table 3 shows the posttest performances of the control and experimental groups to compare research subjects' performances after traditional approach was implemented in the control group while experimental was treated with literature circle strategy.

**Table 3**  
**Posttest Performances of the Control and Experimental Groups**

Pretest		Control Group		Experimental Group	
<i>Categories</i>	<i>Score Ranges</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
Very Good	20-16	0	0.00	5	20.83
Good	15-11	17	70.83	19	79.17
Fair	10-6	7	29.17	0	0.00
Poor	5-0	0	0.00	0	0.00
<b>Total:</b>		24	100.00	24	100.00

As shown in Table 3, both groups improved in their posttest performances. Most of the subjects in the control group, which garnered 70.83% in *good* category, made a slight increase in its performance insignificantly. However, being compared to the experimental group makes a major comparison. Five (5) or 20.83% of the subjects under the experimental group achieved *very good* category while the rest of the subjects which garnered 79.17% were under *good* category. It justifies that most of the subjects' scores under this group have increased significantly.

The results also highlight that there were subjects from the control group who still belong to *fair* category while the experimental group progresses only from *good* and *very good* categories.

The utmost improvement of the results among subjects under the experimental group, as shown in table 3, positively implies the effectiveness of the literature circle strategy in improving critical thinking skills. The cooperative notion the strategy implicates is best backboned by Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development theory. It can be drawn from the result that the potential level of less competent subjects was developed because of social interaction from peers and adult's succor (McLeod, 2018).

Because the strategy is a peer-led discussion, it ignited subjects' interest to come up with questions driven from the text and critically expressed and valued each other's perspectives to these questions (Stabile, 2009). This also gave the subjects an inner drive to do things on their own and encourage thoughtful discussions (Ericson, 2001). Based on this concept, subjects were intrinsically motivated, which explains why they acquired higher levels of engagement and performance, and this idea is fully supported by Deci and Ryan's Self-determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

### **Difference Between the Pretest Performances of the Control and Experimental Groups**

Table 4 presents the results of the test of significance of the differences between the pretest performances of the control and experimental groups. This is to measure if the strategy implemented in a certain group made a great impact in increasing students' critical thinking skills in reading.

**Table 4**  
**Difference Between the Pretest Performances of the Control and Experimental Groups**

Variables		Mean	Computed t-value	df	p-value	Decision on Ho	Interpretation
Pretest	Control	10.79	0.15	46	0.8814	Ho accepted	No Significant Difference
	Experimental	10.67					

As reflected in Table 4, a t-test was used to find if there is a significant difference between the means of two groups. The computed t-value of both groups is 0.15, with a corresponding p-value of 0.8814. The p-value is greater than 0.05 level of significance, hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. It implies that there is no significant difference between the pretest performances of the control and experimental groups.

The research subjects of both groups yield similar results or mean scores and similar performances from the given pretest. This further validates that the subjects were equally divided according to their age, gender, and final grade in English 2. Both subjects, as well, driven from the result, do have a similar intellectual capacity or critical thinking skill to analyze and understand the given story of “Dead Stars.”

**Difference Between the Pretest and Posttest Performances of the Control**

## and Experimental Groups

Table 5 presents the results of the test of significance of the differences between the pretest and posttest performances of the control and experimental groups.

**Table 5**  
**Difference Between the Pretest and Posttest Performances of the Control and Experimental Groups**

Variables		Mean	Computed t-value	df	p-value	Decision on Ho	Interpretation
Control	Pretest	10.79	-1.19	46	0.2402	Ho accepted	No Significant Difference
	Posttest	11.79					
Experimental	Pretest	10.67	-4.79	46	<0.0001	Reject Ho	Significantly Different
	Posttest	13.96					

The results tabulated in Table 5 showed that the overall performances of the control group during the pretest and posttest yield no significant difference. The research subjects' scores or critical thinking skills in reading have not improved that much even after the traditional approach in teaching literature has been implemented during the research process. Based on the data gathered, the lecture-based approach utilized in control group has

increased its performance but still doesn't yield great impact in enhancing subjects' critical thinking skills in reading. Hence, there is no significant difference in their performance between pretest and posttest.

On the other hand, the results garnered by subjects under experimental group posted a significant difference between their pretest and posttest performances. This implies that the scores obtained in the experimental group showed a significant increase after the literature circle strategy in improving critical thinking skills has been implemented. With this notion, the strategy used in the experimental group helped in boosting subjects' performance as well as critical thinking skills in reading. This also showcased the effectiveness of the literature circle strategy compared to the traditional approach.

The results further conform to the idea of Brown (2009) who asserted that the literature circle is an excellent practice for analytical skills which helps learners become critical thinkers. When subjects immerse themselves in the process, they scrutinize the text, look for connections to the real world, make cultural assumptions towards the characters and to the author, situate themselves of why characters behave as they do and evaluate interpretations in a context-based manner.

### **Difference Between the Posttest Performances of the Control and Experimental Groups**

Table 6 shows the results of the test of significance of the differences between the posttest performances of the control and experimental groups.

**Table 6**  
**Difference Between the Posttest Performances of the Control and Experimental Groups**

Variables		Mean	Computed t-value	df	p-value	Decision on Ho	Interpretation
Posttest	Control	11.79	-3.07	46	0.0036	Reject Ho	Significantly Different
	Experimental	13.96					

The results yielded in Table 6 were gathered after different approaches in teaching literature to enhance critical thinking skills were implemented in control and experimental groups. The traditional approach and literature circle strategy were utilized respectively.

As seen in table 6, the computed t-value of both groups is -3.07 with a corresponding p-value of 0.0036. The p-value is lesser than 0.05 level of significance, hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. This asserts that the performances between control and experimental groups displayed significant differences. Additionally, based on the mean, the experimental group which utilizes literature circle strategy obtained higher result than the control group.

The findings further imply that the literature circle used in the experimental group is better and more effective than the traditional. The cooperative learning strategy offers of which students work together in small groups, to accomplish a shared set of learning goals aided in maximizing their own and each other's learning (Johnson & Johnson, 2005). On how the strategy works are greatly structured and based on cooperative learning theory of Johnson and Johnson (2008). Its success was greatly explained and hereby executed which explains that to have a high success rate, groups must consist of a heterogeneous set of skills and knowledge. Centered on the results tabulated in Table 6 and based on this notion, it was evident that the more skills engaged when students interact with each other, the higher their achievements will be.

### **CHAPTER 3**

#### **SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND**

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter covers the summary, findings, conclusions, and recommendations on the use of Literature Circle Strategy in improving critical thinking skills among students at the University of Cebu- Banilad Campus.

### **Summary**

This study aimed to determine the effectiveness of literature circle strategy in improving critical thinking skills among Grade 12-ABM students in University of Cebu- Banilad Campus, S.Y. 2019-2020. The findings served as the basis of a proposed action plan.

Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the pretest performances of the control and experimental groups?
2. What are the posttest performances of the control and experimental groups?
3. Is there a significant difference between the pretest performances of the control and experimental groups?
4. Is there a significant difference between the pretest and posttest performances of the control and experimental groups?
5. Is there a significant difference between the posttest performances of the control and experimental groups?

6. Based on the findings, what action plan can be proposed?

This study utilized the quasi-experimental method to measure the effectiveness of literature circle strategy in enhancing students' critical thinking skills in reading. The research subjects were 48 Grade 12- ABM students of University of Cebu Banilad Campus, SHS Department. They belong to one class and were divided into two groups namely, control and experimental. The grouping was based on their age, gender and their final grade in English 2 subject. The main instrument used by the researcher was the short story "Dead Stars" by Paz Marquez Benitez. The selection of the literary text was based on the curriculum guide in 21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World (English 4) showcasing renowned canonical Filipino works. Another short story entitled "The Small Key" by Paz Latorena was used as a springboard for both groups to objectively measure the effectiveness of the strategies used in each group. During the data gathering, the teaching procedure done in the control group was performed by means of traditional method while the other group utilized literature circle strategy to enhance subjects' critical thinking skills in reading. The data were then meticulously computed to come up with unbiased and reliable results.

## **Findings**

Based on the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of data, the following findings were revealed:

1. The pretest performances of the control and experimental groups revealed that same number and most of the subjects of subjects in both groups fell under *fair* and *good* categories.

2. The posttest performances of the control group revealed that most of the subjects were in *good* category while the performances under experimental achieved *very good* and mostly in *good* categories.

3. There is no significant difference between the pretest performances of the control and experimental groups.

4. There is no significant difference in the pretest and posttest performances of the control group while the experimental group showed significant difference between pretest and posttest performances.

5. There is a significant difference between the posttest performances of the control and experimental groups.

## **Conclusion**

Literature circle effectively develops critical reading skills of students. Events, characters, experiences and other feelings of what students read in the text are shared as resources for independent learning.

### **Recommendations**

In light of the findings of the study, the following recommendations are given:

1. Possible topics for future researches:

1.1. selection of non-fiction texts using literature circle in enhancing critical thinking skills,

1.2. literature circle strategy in enriching one's vocabulary, and

1.3. utilizing the literature circle strategy to enhance intrinsic motivation to read among college students.

2. Adoption of the proposed action plan.

# **Literature Circle: A Workshop for Critical Reading**

---

## **A Proposal Output for Using Literature Circle Strategy in the Classroom**

---

**Prepared by:**

**Mary Nerissa T. Castro**

**October 2019**

## **Literature Circle: A Workshop for Critical Reading**

**Target Participants:** SHS Faculty Teachers

**Length of Workshop:** 3 days

### **Rationale**

Reading is an essential and vital foundation for all students' learning across not only to their academic lives but also to their social lives. However, it has been a long-time struggle for teachers to address the dilemma of students' no interest in books at the same time their lack of skills to comprehend literature and informational texts critically. Hence, teachers must find means or strategies that would give them a positive outcome.

The common phenomena situated above are the very reason this Literature Circle: A Workshop for Critical Reading is meticulously plotted. This workshop is a great help for teachers to know what literature circle strategy is and know the fundamental steps in implementing it in a classroom setting. This is a proposal output provided for the teachers at the University of Cebu-Banilad Campus, SHS Department to open their outlook in adapting new strategies in teaching literature, and not just stick to a traditional approach. The effectivity of the literature circle deeply lies on how well teachers know, introduce, and implement the strategy to his students.

This output is designed for teachers to ignite students' inner desire to

read literature and to develop their critical thinking skills when reading. With this output, teachers will also be given ideas on how to utilize the strategy effectively to elicit higher performance from the students.

### **General Objective**

This critical reading workshop will be utilizing literature circle as a strategy used by teachers in teaching literature for students to have in-depth and valuable experience.

### **Specific Objectives**

At the end of the session, the teachers can:

- a. define and explain the nature of literature circle;
- b. describe the significance of utilizing literature circle in critical reading enhancement;
- c. perform varied activities needed for a successful implementation; and
- d. apply literature circle as a strategy used for authentic literature learning.

### **Activities Indented for Critical Reading Workshop**

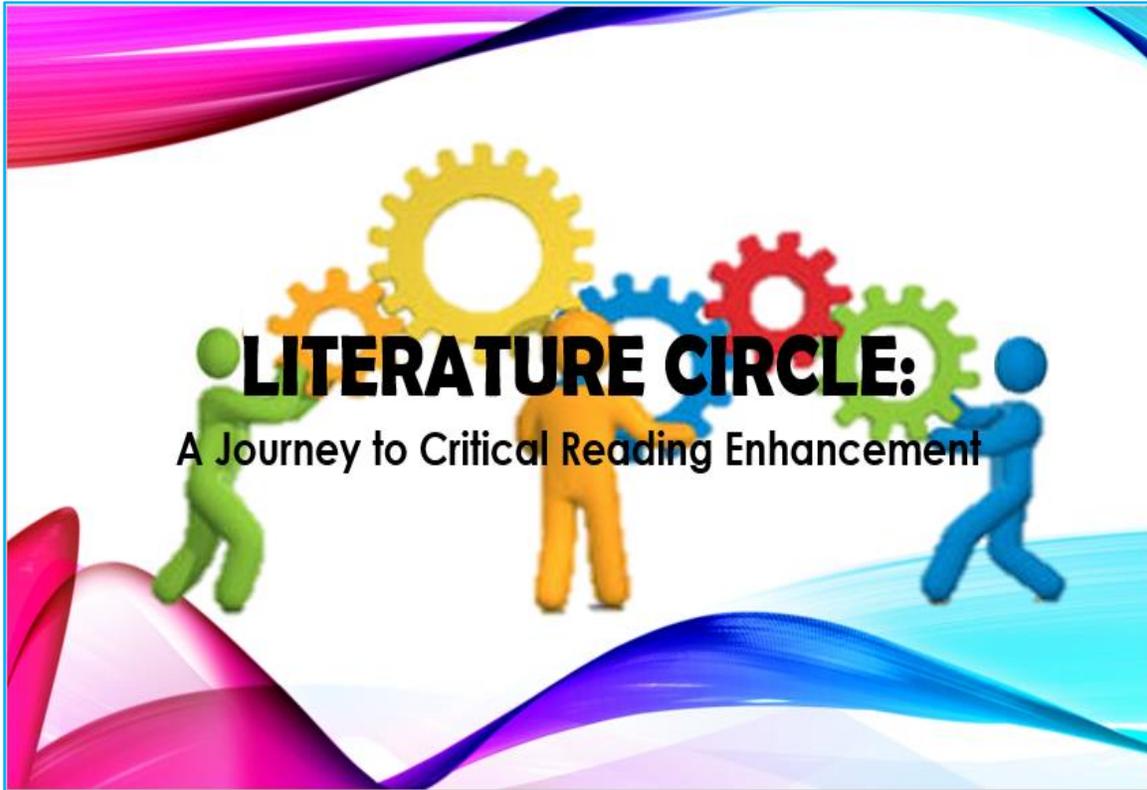
1. group sharing
2. demonstration
3. mini-activities
4. reflection activities

**Table 7**  
**Literature Circle: A Workshop for Critical Reading Matrix**

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Strategies/Activities</b>	<b>Target Audience</b>	<b>Materials and Equipment</b>	<b>Expected Outputs</b>
To provide teachers with background of what literature circle is and how it is implemented	<b>Day 1: Morning Session</b>					
	7:30-8:30	Registration and Opening of the Program				
	8:30-12:00	Literature Circle: A Journey to Critical Reading Enhancement	Lecture/ Group Discussion	SHS Teachers	PowerPoint Presentation/ Laptop/ LCD Projector/ Hard Copy	struggles teacher faced in injecting reading to the class/ insights about the strategy
to provide teachers an application to the steps on how literature circle is effectively implemented in the classroom setting	<b>Day 1: Afternoon Session</b>					
	1:00-4:00	Literature Circle: Teacher's Information	Integration/demonstration of the procedures in Literature Circle	SHS Teachers	Video Presentation of how to implement Literature Circle in a classroom setting ( <a href="https://youtu.be/yVK9ZV-AinA">https://youtu.be/yVK9ZV-AinA</a> )	application/demonstration of strategy through a role play

Objectives	Time Frame	Topics	Strategies/Activities	Target Audience	Materials and Equipment	Expected Outputs
to perform activities needed in the implementation of literature circle for authentic learning	<b>Day 2: Morning Session</b>					
	8:00-1:00	Literature Circle: The Simulation Process	simulation of the process in implementing literature circle	SHS Teachers	Copy of the short story "The Summer Solstice" by Nick Joaquin/ role sheets/ bond paper/pen	activity sheets driven from the activity
to describe the significance of utilizing literature circle in critical reading enhancement	<b>Day 2: Afternoon Session</b>					
	2:00-3:30		reflections/ questions in regard to strategy	SHS Teachers	reflection sheets	reflections/insights
apply literature circle as a strategy in teaching literature	<b>Day 3: Morning/ Afternoon Session</b>					
	8:00-4:00	The Making: Literature Circle	Group Discussion/lesson plan outline injecting literature circle	SHS Teachers	bond papers/ pen/PowerPoint Presentation/ Laptop/ LCD Projector	lesson plan outline per group
Presentation of outlines/additional tips on how literature circle can be used not just in the field of literature						
to provide teachers with other set of techniques/activities which can be injected with literature circle						

## Sample Slides of the Critical Reading Workshop



## LITERATURE CIRCLE

- a strategy that aims to engage students in critical thinking and reflection as they read, discuss and respond to a text
- one of the tools that teachers may use to improve reading comprehension and encourage students to take responsibility for their reading and thinking about text
- its purpose is to make learning visible and audible, comprehend texts through the use of appropriate strategies, build collaboration, confidence and independence amongst students

## FEATURES

### Literature Circles are...

- Student-centered
- Structured for student's independence and responsibility
- Guided primarily by student insights and questions
- Intended for advancement of critical reading skills

### Literature Circles are not...

- Teacher and text centered
- Unstructured, uncontrolled "talk time" without accountability
- Guided primarily by teacher or curriculum
- Intended solely for context reading

## SAMPLE VIDEO



## REFERENCES

### Books

- Ashman, A. & Gillies, R. (Eds.). (2003). *Cooperative learning: The social and intellectual outcomes of learning in groups*. New York: Routledge.
- Deci, E. L. & Ryan, R. M. (Eds.). (2004). *Handbook of self-determination research*. University Rochester Press.
- Ericson, B. O. (2001). *Teaching Reading in High School English Classes*. National Council of Teachers of English, Urbana, IL.
- Johnson, D. W., Johnson, R. & Holubec, E. (2013). *Cooperation in the classroom* (9th ed.). Edina, MN: Interaction Book Company.
- McConnell, D. (2014). *Implementing computing supported cooperative learning*. New York: Routledge.
- McPeck, J. E. (2016). *Critical thinking and education*. New York: Routledge.
- Seifert, K. & Sutton, R. (2012). *Educational psychology*. New York: Basic Books.

### Periodicals/Journals

- Brown, H. (2009). Literature circles for critical thinking in global issues classes. *The Language Teacher*, 33(10), 16-17.
- Johnson, D. W. & Johnson, R. T. (2005). New developments in social interdependence theory. *Genetic, Social, and General Psychology Monographs*, 131(4), 285-358.
- Johnson, R. T. & Johnson, D. W. (2008). Active learning: Cooperation in the classroom. *The Annual Report of Educational Psychology in Japan*, 47, 29-30.
- Irawati, D. (2016). Effectiveness of literature circles on students' reading comprehension. *IJOLTL: Indonesian Journal of Language Teaching and Linguistics*, 1(3), 179-192.

- Karatay, H. (2017). The Effect of literature circles on text analysis and reading desire. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 6(5), 65-75.
- Legault, L. (2017). Self-determination theory. *Encyclopedia of Personality and Individual Differences*, 21(2), 1-9.
- Liao, M. H. (2009). Cultivating critical thinking through literature circles in EFL context. *Spectrum: Ncue Studies in Language, Literature, Translation*, (5), 89-115.
- Mata, J., Silva, M. N., Vieira, P. N., Carraça, E. V., Andrade, A. M., Coutinho, S. R. & Teixeira, P. J. (2009). Motivational “spill-over” during weight control: Increased self-determination and exercise intrinsic motivation predict eating self-regulation. *Health Psychology*, 28(6), 709.
- Niemiec, C. P. & Ryan, R. M. (2009). Autonomy, competence, and relatedness in the classroom: Applying self-determination theory to educational practice. *Theory and Research in Education*, 7(2), 133-144.
- Peterson, S. & Belizaire, M. (2006). Another look at roles in literature circles. *Middle School Journal*, 37(4), 37-43.
- Ryan, R. M. & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 68.
- Sandmann, A. & Gruhler, D. (2007). Reading is thinking. *International Journal of Learning*, 13(10), 105-113.
- Straits, W. & Nicholas, S. (2006). Literature circles for science. *Science and Children*, 44(3), 52-55.
- Whittingham, J. (2014). Reading motivation: A study of literature circle. *Academic Exchange Quarterly*, 18(2), 1-5.
- Yang, A. (2002). Science fiction in the EFL class. *Language Culture and Curriculum*, 15(1), 50-60.

## **Unpublished Material**

Stabile, C. (2009). *Are literature circles an effective reading strategy for struggling readers*. Ohio University, Athens, OH. Unpublished master's thesis.

## **Internet Sources**

Daniels, H. (2002). *Literature circles: Voice and choice in book clubs and reading groups*. Stenhouse Publishers. Retrieved November 12, 2002 from <https://books.google.com.ph/books?id=hsIUp1-k5-8C&f=false>.

Fisher, A. (2011). *Critical thinking: An introduction*. Cambridge University Press. Retrieved September 22, 2011 from <https://books.google.com.ph/books?id=wMhBQ0WdjF4C>.

Lantolf, J. P. (Ed.). (2000). *Sociocultural theory and second language learning* (Vol. 78, No. 4). Oxford University Press. Retrieved March 16, 2000 from <https://books.google.com.ph/books?id=iwsewZKSMC>.

Kurland, D. (2000). *Critical reading and critical thinking*. Retrieved June 11, 2000 from [https://www.cgc.edu/Academics/LearningCenter/Writing/Documents/Specific%20Genres/Critical%20Thinking%20\(3%20pg\).pdf](https://www.cgc.edu/Academics/LearningCenter/Writing/Documents/Specific%20Genres/Critical%20Thinking%20(3%20pg).pdf).

McCafferty, S. G., Jacobs, G. M. & Iddings, A. C. (Eds.). (2006). *Cooperative learning and second language teaching*. Cambridge University Press. Retrieved August 14, 2006 from [https://books.google.com.ph/books?id=\\_QVte8KUNzwC](https://books.google.com.ph/books?id=_QVte8KUNzwC).

McLeod, S. (2018). *Lev Vygotsky. Simply psychology*. Retrieved August 5, 2018 from <https://www.simplypsychology.org/Vygotsky.html>.

Moses, A. (2009). *How to create a classroom literature circle*. Retrieved November 23, 2009 from <https://www.edutopia.org/literature-circles-classroom-book-discussion-how-to>.

Noe, K. S. (2013). *Literature circle center*. Retrieved April 27, 2013 from <https://www.litcircles.org/index.html>.

Paul, R. & Elder, L. (2019). *The miniature guide to critical thinking concepts & tools*. Rowman & Littlefield. Retrieved June 1, 2019 from <https://books.google.com.ph/books?id=-DSbDwAAQBAJ>.

Roque, A. P. (2016). Pressing on. *PressReader*, p. 10. Retrieved June 22, 2016 from <https://www.pressreader.com/philippines/business-world>.

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A TRANSMITTAL LETTER

July 11, 2019

**MALEEN GRAFILO-ORDIZ**  
Principal, Senior High School Department  
University of Cebu- Banilad Campus  
Banilad, Cebu City

Dear Ms. Grafilo-Ordiz:

Good day!

I am writing to inform your good office that I am currently in the process of completing my requirements for the course Master of Science in Teaching major in English Language and Literature. I would like to seek aid from your department's assistance with respect to the success of my study- **Literature Circle: A Strategy in Improving Critical Thinking Skills**. In line with my professional growth as an educator, I would like to request your approval of conducting this study in your respective institution. The target research subjects of this study will be Grade 12-ABM students. This aims to help teachers in enhancing students' critical thinking abilities as well as their engagement and independence to read. The undersigned request the approval of your good office to conduct the data gathering.

Rest assured that all the information gathered will be handled with utmost confidentiality. Hoping for your positive response on this matter.

Thank you very much.

Respectfully yours,

**MARY NERISSA T. CASTRO**  
Researcher

Noted by:

Approved by:

**ULYSSES B. APARECE**  
Research Adviser

**MALEEN GRAFILO-ORDIZ**  
Principal, SHS Department

## APPENDIX B-1 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

- I. MULTIPLE CHOICE.** Encircle the letter of your choice.
1. A complex judgment between two women confronts Alfredo. Yet, he ended with someone whom his family betrothed him to. What aspect/s could account behind this conflict?
    - a. It leaves his love untroubled in the first place, no matter how tempting the situation is.
    - b. He realized that the love toward Julia is more genuine and is far distinct than what he felt to Esperanza.
    - c. The society has contributed most of the factor and what people might say matters him most.
    - d. He falls drastically in love with the other woman. He did not let society dehumanized him and be the master of his fate.
  
  2. Esperanza's character, compared to any, modern woman has a different approach in confronting the issue.
    - a. Esperanza is banking on the fact that Alfredo is already committed to her and could not possibly leave her for another woman.
    - b. She has heard lots of rumors and awaits for an opportunity to make use of these for Alfredo's undoing.
    - c. She is scheming something in secrecy and plans not to confront Alfredo with the issue.
    - d. Esperanza believes that Alfredo will eventually lose his interest in the other woman.
  
  3. In the arms of Julia, Alfredo is seemingly out of his character, from a relaxed and calm demeanor to a man bursting with energy and vitality. What could be the reason behind this abrupt change of behavior?
    - a. Dull moments and lack of excitement have enveloped the relationship between Esperanza and Alfredo, provoking the latter to experience something new.
    - b. When Alfredo is with Julia, he feels freedom away from the prying eyes of society.
    - c. Julia's character, compared to Esperanza, is more comfortable to be with, and he feels freedom.
    - d. Alfredo's inner desire of being vigorous and passionate, which are Julia's characters, has ignited him to go against what is right.
  
  4. It is an unhappy marriage, yet Alfredo is still far from the reach of Esperanza. Why is Alfredo still longing for Julia after many years have passed?

- a. Alfredo still cares about what Julia feels after the painful parting, the night Julia found out he was engaged.
  - b. He pins to the illusion of the past, which haunts him thinking of what could happen if they have rekindled the love they once had.
  - c. Julia had made the right decision for Alfredo, and this was not heartily accepted.
  - d. Alfredo would feel real happiness if Julia turned out to be his wife.
5. Esperanza believes in the 'regenerative virtue of institution, in their power to regulate feeling as well as to conduct.' Based on this notion, do you think Esperanza doesn't love Alfredo?
- a. Yes, for she was not prone to indulge in unprovoked jealousies.
  - b. Yes, it's safe to say so, for she is in a relationship for moral obligation and social expectations.
  - c. No, for despite the situation, she never went out of her way to find another man.
  - d. No, it's safe to say so, for she never mistrusted Alfredo's feelings.
6. The story depicts a love triangle. Aside from choosing between two women, what could be the most underlying dilemma of Alfredo?
- a. The choice between what he feels he should do and what he wants to do.
  - b. He is preoccupied imagining life with Julia Salas if they ended together.
  - c. He is much concerned with the whereabouts of Julia Salas.
  - d. All of the above.
7. When Alfredo went to Julia's hometown, fate destined them to meet and had a small talk. Amid their conversation, Alfredo felt that something was missing. What could it be?
- a. The appearance of Julia Salas that he once fascinated.
  - b. The feeling he has pinned on to Julia for a long time.
  - c. The vitality she once felt to Julia every time they meet.
  - d. The emotionless and undisturbed disposition they have felt.
8. Alfredo is aware of the causes of his change and the consequences he might be facing if he continues to deviate from the norms of society. According to him, what is the very reason why would men like him mismanaged their lives.
- a. To try something new ignites their curiosity.
  - b. Temptations are lurking around the corner
  - c. Satisfying greed and desire for craving an immediate excitement pushed them to do thigs.
  - d. Temptations are lurking around the corner
  - e. The wild dreams and chances they always want to meet and satisfy.

9. Do the characters in the story portray a significant difference to the attributes people have today?
  - a. Yes, change is now happening, and all people disregard the views of society.
  - b. Yes, irrational emotions conflicting with the right decisions drive most of the people nowadays.
  - c. No, the norms displayed in society initiate the decisions.
  - d. No, all people still believe in infidelity and have high regard for marriage.
  
10. The author sets the story in Don Julian's and Judge Del Valle's house. What does it try to imply?
  - a. The society is patriarchal, and it foreshadows the social make-up.
  - b. Don Julian and Judge Del Valle are prominent and influential people in town.
  - c. It signifies Alfredo's wealth and influence in society.
  - d. Don Julian and Judge Del Valle dominated the forms and morals of society.
  
11. The social set-up of the story affects the decisions the characters have made. Describe the society the characters are in.
  - a. People live up to the expectations of society.
  - b. Society highly viewed courtship, marriage, and fidelity.
  - c. It requires people to make sacrifices of themselves to conform to the norms and culture of the society.
  - d. All of the above.
  
12. The love of Alfredo for Julia is like a dead star. What does this mean?
  - a. The love ignited between Alfredo and Julia is forbidden.
  - b. Alfredo's love for Julia is eternal, and fate cannot change it.
  - c. It refers to an illusion of transient love out from curiosity of what could have been if it happened.
  - d. Alfredo's love is just one-sided and is fantasized by him alone.
  
13. Why is Alfredo, one of the main characters of the story, made a lawyer by profession?
  - a. Lawyers make a good profit.
  - b. Alfredo, through his profession, has influenced society.
  - c. The profession paved the way for Alfredo for Esperanza to trust him.
  - d. Lawyers are known to be wise and objective in making decisions and so as Alfredo.
  
14. What situation do characters portray a man vs. society type of conflict?
  - a. When Esperanza believes in the 'regenerative virtue of institution, in their power to regulate feeling as well as conduct.'

- b. It refers to people's sentiments when a long engagement will break on the eve of the wedding.
- c. Both a and b are correct answers.
- d. Alfredo was torn between doing what is right and what is in his heart.

15. What event displays man vs. man conflict?

- a. Alfredo was torn between doing what is right and what is in his heart.
- b. When Esperanza believes in the 'regenerative virtue of institution, in their power to regulate feeling as well as conduct.'
- c. It refers to people's sentiments when a long engagement will break on the eve of the wedding.
- d. Both a and b are correct answers.

16. How did the story start?

- a. He had gone neighboring with Don Julian to Judge Del Valle's house and met Julia Salas. Coming to the judge's house became often and realized he was in love with Julia in spite of his engagement with Esperanza.
- b. Alfredo and Esperanza got married. After eight years, he was searching for a lady named Brigida Samuy-a lady important for his defense in the court-in Sta. Cruz, Julia's hometown.
- c. At Don Julian's house, Carmen was asking Don Julian about Alfredo and Esperanza. Alfredo reminisced how he met Julia Salas.
- d. After the procession for The Lady of Sorrows, Alfredo caught up with Julia and congratulated him for the wedding. It traps Alfredo in a complicated situation and decision.

17. What is the rising action of the story?

- a. Alfredo and Esperanza got married. After eight years, he was searching for a lady named Brigida Samuy-a lady important for his defense in the court-in Sta. Cruz, Julia's hometown.
- b. After the procession for The Lady of Sorrows, Alfredo caught up with Julia and congratulated him for the wedding. It traps Alfredo in a complicated situation and decision.
- c. At Don Julian's house, Carmen was asking Don Julian about Alfredo and Esperanza. Alfredo reminisced how he met Julia Salas.
- d. He had gone neighboring with Don Julian to Judge Del Valle's house and met Julia Salas. Coming to the judge's house became often and realized he was in love with Julia in spite of his engagement with Esperanza.

18. What could be the climax of the story?

- a. He had gone neighboring with Don Julian to Judge Del Valle's house and met Julia Salas. Coming to the judge's house became often and realized he was in

love with Julia in spite of his engagement with Esperanza.

- b. Alfredo and Esperanza got married. After eight years, he was searching for a lady named Brigida Samuy-a lady important for his defense in the court-in Sta. Cruz, Julia's hometown.
- c. After the procession for The Lady of Sorrows, Alfredo caught up with Julia and congratulated him for the wedding. It traps Alfredo in a complicated situation and decision.
- d. Julia didn't want Alfredo not to honor his understanding with Esperanza. She said goodbye and went home to Esperanza. There, she has said the last word.

19. What theme does the story try to convey to the readers?

- a. It is never good to have a dalliance with another woman.
- b. One must be deliberate in deciding.
- c. People are blind in seeking the hedonistic pursuit of things that they once romanticized.
- d. Always pursue and do what you desire.

20. Why is the story, Dead Stars, still relevant today?

- a. The story has been the favorite topic for discussion in literature subjects.
- b. The story depicts the innate nature of humans.
- c. The characters' features and responses to the society are reflected.
- d. The societal set-up of the story reflects what we have today.

## APPENDIX B-2

### Dead Stars

*By: Paz Marquez Benitez*

THROUGH the open window the air-steeped outdoors passed into his room, quietly enveloping him, stealing into his very thought. Esperanza, Julia, the sorry mess he had made of life, the years to come even now beginning to weigh down, to crush--they lost concreteness, diffused into formless melancholy. The tranquil murmur of conversation issued from the brick-tiled azotea where Don Julian and Carmen were busy puttering away among the rose pots.

"Papa, and when will the 'long table' be set?"

"I don't know yet. Alfredo is not very specific, but I understand Esperanza wants it to be next month."

Carmen sighed impatiently. "Why is he not a bit more decided, I wonder. He is over thirty, is he not? And still a bachelor! Esperanza must be tired waiting."

"She does not seem to be in much of a hurry either," Don Julian nasally commented, while his rose scissors busily snipped away.

"How can a woman be in a hurry when the man does not hurry her?" Carmen returned, pinching off a worm with a careful, somewhat absent air. "Papa, do you remember how much in love he was?"

"In love? With whom?"

"With Esperanza, of course. He has not had another love affair that I know of," she said with good-natured contempt. "What I mean is that at the beginning he was enthusiastic--flowers, serenades, notes, and things like that--"

Alfredo remembered that period with a wonder not unmixed with shame. That was less than four years ago. He could not understand those months of a great hunger that was not of the body nor yet of the mind, a craving that had seized on him one quiet night when the moon was abroad and under the dappled shadow of the trees in the plaza, man wooed maid. Was he being cheated by life? Love--he seemed to have missed it. Or was the love that others told about a mere fabrication of perfervid imagination, an exaggeration of the commonplace, a glorification of insipid monotonies such as made up his love life? Was love a combination of circumstances, or sheer native capacity of soul? In those days love was, for him, still the eternal puzzle; for love, as he knew it, was a stranger to love as he divined it might be.

Sitting quietly in his room now, he could almost revive the restlessness of those days, the feeling of tumultuous haste, such as he knew so well in his boyhood when something beautiful was going on somewhere and he was trying to get there in time to see. "Hurry, hurry, or you will miss it," someone had seemed to urge in his ears. So he had avidly seized on the shadow of Love and deluded himself for a long while in the way of humanity from

time immemorial. In the meantime, he became very much engaged to Esperanza. Why would men so mismanage their lives? Greed, he thought, was what ruined so many. Greed--the desire to crowd into a moment all the enjoyment it will hold, to squeeze from the hour all the emotion it will yield.

Men commit themselves when but half-meaning to do so, sacrificing possible future fullness of ecstasy to the craving for immediate excitement. Greed--mortgaging the future--forcing the hand of Time, or of Fate

"What do you think happened?" asked Carmen, pursuing her thought.

"I supposed long-engaged people are like that; warm now, cool tomorrow. I think they are oftener cool than warm. The very fact that an engagement has been allowed to prolong itself argues a certain placidity of temperament--or of affection--on the part of either, or both." Don Julian loved to philosophize. He was talking now with an evident relish in words, his resonant, very nasal voice toned down to monologue pitch. "That phase you were speaking of is natural enough for a beginning. Besides, that, as I see it, was Alfredo's last race with escaping youth--"

Carmen laughed aloud at the thought of her brother's perfect physical repose--almost indolence--disturbed in the role suggested by her father's figurative language.

"A last spurt of hot blood," finished the old man.

Few certainly would credit Alfredo Salazar with hot blood. Even his friends had amusedly diagnosed his blood as cool and thin, citing incontrovertible

evidence. Tall and slender, he moved with an indolent ease that verged on grace. Under straight recalcitrant hair, a thin face with a satisfying breadth of forehead, slow, dreamer's eyes, and astonishing freshness of lips-- indeed Alfredo Salazar's appearance betokened little of exuberant masculinity; rather a poet with wayward humor, a fastidious artist with keen, clear brain.

He rose and quietly went out of the house. He lingered a moment on the stone steps; then went down the path shaded by immature acacias, through the little tarred gate which he left swinging back and forth, now opening, now closing, on the gravel road bordered along the farther side by madre cacao hedge in tardy lavender bloom.

The gravel road narrowed as it slanted up to the house on the hill, whose wide, open porches he could glimpse through the heat-shrivelled tamarinds in the Martinez yard.

Six weeks ago that house meant nothing to him save that it was the Martinez house, rented and occupied by Judge del Valle and his family. Six weeks ago Julia Salas meant nothing to him; he did not even know her name; but now--

One evening he had gone "neighboring" with Don Julian; a rare enough occurrence, since he made it a point to avoid all appearance of currying favor with the Judge. This particular evening however, he had allowed himself to be persuaded. "A little mental relaxation now and then is beneficial," the old man had said. "Besides, a judge's good will, you know;" the rest of the thought--"is worth a rising young lawyer's trouble"-- Don Julian conveyed through a shrug

and a smile that derided his own worldly wisdom.

A young woman had met them at the door. It was evident from the excitement of the Judge's children that she was a recent and very welcome arrival. In the characteristic Filipino way formal introductions had been omitted--the judge limiting himself to a casual "Ah, ya se conocen?"--with the consequence that Alfredo called her Miss del Valle throughout the evening.

He was puzzled that she should smile with evident delight every time he addressed her thus. Later Don Julian informed him that she was not the Judge's sister, as he had supposed, but his sister-in-law, and that her name was Julia Salas. A very dignified rather austere name, he thought. Still, the young lady should have corrected him. As it was, he was greatly embarrassed, and felt that he should explain.

To his apology, she replied, "That is nothing, Each time I was about to correct you, but I remembered a similar experience I had once before."

"Oh," he drawled out, vastly relieved. "A man named Manalang--I kept calling him Manalo. After the tenth time or so, the young man rose from his seat and said suddenly, 'Pardon me, but my name is Manalang, Manalang.' You know, I never forgave him!"

He laughed with her.

"The best thing to do under the circumstances, I have found out," she pursued, "is to pretend not to hear, and to let the other person find out his mistake without help."

"As you did this time. Still, you looked amused every time I--"

"I was thinking of Mr. Manalang."

Don Julian and his uncommunicative friend, the Judge, were absorbed in a game of chess. The young man had tired of playing appreciative spectator and desultory conversationalist, so he and Julia Salas had gone off to chat in the vine-covered porch. The lone piano in the neighborhood alternately tinkled and banged away as the player's moods altered. He listened, and wondered irrelevantly if Miss Salas could sing; she had such a charming speaking voice.

He was mildly surprised to note from her appearance that she was unmistakably a sister of the Judge's wife, although Doña Adela was of a different type altogether. She was small and plump, with wide brown eyes, clearly defined eyebrows, and delicately modeled hips--a pretty woman with the complexion of a baby and the expression of a likable cow. Julia was taller, not so obviously pretty. She had the same eyebrows and lips, but she was much darker, of a smooth rich brown with underlying tones of crimson which heightened the impression she gave of abounding vitality.

On Sunday mornings after mass, father and son would go crunching up the gravel road to the house on the hill. The Judge's wife invariably offered them beer, which Don Julian enjoyed and Alfredo did not. After a half hour or so, the chessboard would be brought out; then Alfredo and Julia Salas would go out to the porch to chat. She sat in the low hammock and he in a rocking chair and the hours--warm, quiet March hours--sped by. He enjoyed talking with her and it was evident that

she liked his company; yet what feeling there was between them was so undisturbed that it seemed a matter of course. Only when Esperanza chanced to ask him indirectly about those visits did some uneasiness creep into his thoughts of the girl next door.

Esperanza had wanted to know if he went straight home after mass. Alfredo suddenly realized that for several Sundays now he had not waited for Esperanza to come out of the church as he had been wont to do. He had been eager to go "neighboring."

He answered that he went home to work. And, because he was not habitually untruthful, added, "Sometimes I go with Papa to Judge del Valle's."

She dropped the topic. Esperanza was not prone to indulge in unprovoked jealousies. She was a believer in the regenerative virtue of institutions, in their power to regulate feeling as well as conduct. If a man were married, why, of course, he loved his wife; if he were engaged, he could not possibly love another woman.

That half-lie told him what he had not admitted openly to himself, that he was giving Julia Salas something which he was not free to give. He realized that; yet something that would not be denied beckoned imperiously, and he followed on.

It was so easy to forget up there, away from the prying eyes of the world, so easy and so poignantly sweet. The beloved woman, he standing close to her, the shadows around, enfolding.  
"Up here I find--something--"

He and Julia Salas stood looking out into the she quiet night. Sensing unwanted intensity, laughed, woman-like, asking, "Amusement?"

"No; youth--its spirit--"

"Are you so old?"

"And heart's desire."

Was he becoming a poet, or is there a poet lurking in the heart of every man?

"Down there," he had continued, his voice somewhat indistinct, "the road is too broad, too trodden by feet, too barren of mystery."

"Down there" beyond the ancient tamarinds lay the road, upturned to the stars. In the darkness the fireflies glimmered, while an errant breeze strayed in from somewhere, bringing elusive, faraway sounds as of voices in a dream.

"Mystery--" she answered lightly, "that is so brief--"

"Not in some," quickly. "Not in you."

"You have known me a few weeks; so the mystery."

"I could study you all my life and still not find it."

"So long?"

"I should like to."

Those six weeks were now so swift--seeming in the memory, yet had they been so deep in the living, so charged with compelling power and sweetness.

Because neither the past nor the future had relevance or meaning, he lived only the present, day by day, lived it intensely, with such a willful shutting out of fact as astounded him in his calmer moments.

Just before Holy Week, Don Julian invited the judge and his family to spend Sunday afternoon at Tanda where he had a coconut plantation and a house on the beach. Carmen also came with her four energetic children. She and Doña Adela spent most of the time indoors directing the preparation of the merienda and discussing the likeable absurdities of their husbands-- how Carmen's Vicente was so absorbed in his farms that he would not even take time off to accompany her on this visit to her father; how Doña Adela's Dionisio was the most absentminded of men, sometimes going out without his collar, or with unmatched socks.

After the merienda, Don Julian sauntered off with the judge to show him what a thriving young coconut looked like-- "plenty of leaves, close set, rich green"-- while the children, convoyed by Julia Salas, found unending entertainment in the rippling sand left by the ebbing tide. They were far down, walking at the edge of the water, indistinctly outlined against the gray of the out-curving beach.

Alfredo left his perch on the bamboo ladder of the house and followed. Here were her footsteps, narrow, arched. He laughed at himself for his black canvas footwear which he removed forthwith and tossed high up on dry sand.

When he came up, she flushed, then smiled with frank pleasure.

"I hope you are enjoying this," he said

with a questioning inflection.

"Very much. It looks like home to me, except that we do not have such a lovely beach."

There was a breeze from the water. It blew the hair away from her forehead, and whipped the tucked-up skirt around her straight, slender figure. In the picture was something of eager freedom as of wings poised in flight. The girl had grace, distinction. Her face was not notably pretty; yet she had a tantalizing charm, all the more compelling because it was an inner quality, an achievement of the spirit. The lure was there, of naturalness, of an alert vitality of mind and body, of a thoughtful, sunny temper, and of a piquant perverseness which is sauce to charm.

"The afternoon has seemed very short, hasn't it?" Then, "This, I think, is the last time--we can visit."

"The last? Why?"

"Oh, you will be too busy perhaps."

He noted an evasive quality in the answer.

"Do I seem especially industrious to you?"

"If you are, you never look it."

"Not perspiring or breathless, as a busy man ought to be."

"But--"

"Always unhurried, too unhurried, and calm." She smiled to herself.

"I wish that were true," he said after a meditative pause.

She waited.

"A man is happier if he is, as you say, calm and placid."

"Like a carabao in a mud pool," she retorted perversely

"Who? I?"

"Oh, no!"

"You said I am calm and placid."

"That is what I think."

"I used to think so too. Shows how little we know ourselves."

It was strange to him that he could be wooing thus:  
with tone and look and covert phrase.

"I should like to see your home town."

"There is nothing to see--little crooked streets, bunut roofs with ferns growing on them, and sometimes squashes."

That was the background. It made her seem less detached, less unrelated, yet withal more distant, as if that background claimed her and excluded him.

"Nothing? There is you."

"Oh, me? But I am here."

"I will not go, of course, until you are there."

"Will you come? You will find it dull. There isn't even one American there!"

"Well--Americans are rather essential to

my entertainment."

She laughed.

"We live on Calle Luz, a little street with trees."

"Could I find that?"

"If you don't ask for Miss del Valle," she smiled teasingly.

"I'll inquire about--"

"What?"

"The house of the prettiest girl in the town."

"There is where you will lose your way." Then she turned serious. "Now, that is not quite sincere."

"It is," he averred slowly, but emphatically.

"I thought you, at least, would not say such things."

"Pretty--pretty--a foolish word! But there is none other more handy I did not mean that quite--"

"Are you withdrawing the compliment?"

"Re-enforcing it, maybe. Something is pretty when it pleases the eye--it is more than that when--"

"If it saddens?" she interrupted hastily.

"Exactly."

"It must be ugly."

"Always?"

Toward the west, the sunlight lay on the

dimming waters in a broad, glinting streamer of crimsoned gold.

"No, of course you are right."

"Why did you say this is the last time?" he asked quietly as they turned back.

"I am going home."

The end of an impossible dream!

"When?" after a long silence.

"Tomorrow. I received a letter from Father and Mother yesterday. They want me to spend Holy Week at home."

She seemed to be waiting for him to speak. "That is why I said this is the last time."

"Can't I come to say good-bye?"

"Oh, you don't need to!"

"No, but I want to."

"There is no time."

The golden streamer was withdrawing, shortening, until it looked no more than a pool far away at the rim of the world. Stillness, a vibrant quiet that affects the senses as does solemn harmony; a peace that is not contentment but a cessation of tumult when all violence of feeling tones down to the wistful serenity of regret. She turned and looked into his face, in her dark eyes a ghost of sunset sadness.

"Home seems so far from here. This is almost like another life."

"I know. This is Elsewhere, and yet strange enough, I cannot get rid of the old things."

"Old things?"

"Oh, old things, mistakes, encumbrances, old baggage." He said it lightly, unwilling to mar the hour. He walked close, his hand sometimes touching hers for one whirling second.

Don Julian's nasal summons came to them on the wind.

Alfredo gripped the soft hand so near his own. At his touch, the girl turned her face away, but he heard her voice say very low, "Good-bye."

## II

ALFREDO Salazar turned to the right where, farther on, the road broadened and entered the heart of the town--heart of Chinese stores sheltered under low-hung roofs, of indolent drug stores and tailor shops, of dingy shoe-repairing establishments, and a cluttered goldsmith's cubbyhole where a consumptive bent over a magnifying lens; heart of old brick-roofed houses with quaint hand-and-ball knockers on the door; heart of grass-grown plaza reposeful with trees, of ancient church and convento, now circled by swallows gliding in flight as smooth and soft as the afternoon itself. Into the quickly deepening twilight, the voice of the biggest of the church bells kept ringing its insistent summons. Flocking came the devout with their long wax candles, young women in vivid apparel (for this was Holy Thursday and the Lord was still alive), older women in sober black skirts. Came too the young men in droves, elbowing each other under the talisay tree near the church door. The gaily decked rice-paper lanterns were again on display while from the windows of the older

houses hung colored glass globes, heirlooms from a day when grasspith wicks floating in coconut oil were the chief lighting device.

Soon a double row of lights emerged from the church and uncoiled down the length of the street like a huge jewelled band studded with glittering clusters where the saints' platforms were. Above the measured music rose the untutored voices of the choir, steeped in incense and the acrid fumes of burning wax.

The sight of Esperanza and her mother sedately pacing behind Our Lady of Sorrows suddenly destroyed the illusion of continuity and broke up those lines of light into component individuals. Esperanza stiffened self-consciously, tried to look unaware, and could not.

The line moved on.

Suddenly, Alfredo's slow blood began to beat violently, irregularly. A girl was coming down the line--a girl that was striking, and vividly alive, the woman that could cause violent commotion in his heart, yet had no place in the completed ordering of his life.

Her glance of abstracted devotion fell on him and came to a brief stop.

The line kept moving on, wending its circuitous route away from the church and then back again, where, according to the old proverb, all processions end.

At last Our Lady of Sorrows entered the church, and with her the priest and the choir, whose voices now echoed from the arched ceiling. The bells rang the close of the procession.

A round orange moon, "huge as a winnowing basket," rose lazily into a

clear sky, whitening the iron roofs and dimming the lanterns at the windows. Along the still densely shadowed streets the young women with their rear guard of males loitered and, maybe, took the longest way home.

Toward the end of the row of Chinese stores, he caught up with Julia Salas. The crowd had dispersed into the side streets, leaving Calle Real to those who lived farther out. It was past eight, and Esperanza would be expecting him in a little while: yet the thought did not hurry him as he said "Good evening" and fell into step with the girl.

"I had been thinking all this time that you had gone," he said in a voice that was both excited and troubled.

"No, my sister asked me to stay until they are ready to go."

"Oh, is the Judge going?"

"Yes."

The provincial docket had been cleared, and Judge del Valle had been assigned elsewhere. As lawyer-- and as lover-- Alfredo had found that out long before.

"Mr. Salazar," she broke into his silence, "I wish to congratulate you."

Her tone told him that she had learned, at last. That was inevitable.

"For what?"

"For your approaching wedding."

Some explanation was due her, surely. Yet what could he say that would not offend?

"I should have offered congratulations long before, but you know mere visitors are slow about getting the news," she continued.

He listened not so much to what she said as to the nuances in her voice. He heard nothing to enlighten him, except that she had reverted to the formal tones of early acquaintance. No revelation there; simply the old voice--cool, almost detached from personality, flexible and vibrant, suggesting potentialities of song.

"Are weddings interesting to you?" he finally brought out quietly

"When they are of friends, yes."

"Would you come if I asked you?"

"When is it going to be?"

"May," he replied briefly, after a long pause.

"May is the month of happiness they say," she said, with what seemed to him a shade of irony.

"They say," slowly, indifferently. "Would you come?"

"Why not?"

"No reason. I am just asking. Then you will?"

"If you will ask me," she said with disdain.

"Then I ask you."

"Then I will be there."

The gravel road lay before them; at the road's end the lighted windows of the house on the hill. There swept over the

spirit of Alfredo Salazar a longing so keen that it was pain, a wish that, that house were his, that all the bewilderments of the present were not, and that this woman by his side were his long wedded wife, returning with him to the peace of home.

"Julita," he said in his slow, thoughtful manner, "did you ever have to choose between something you wanted to do and something you had to do?"

"No!"

"I thought maybe you had had that experience; then you could understand a man who was in such a situation."

"You are fortunate," he pursued when she did not answer.

"Is--is this man sure of what he should do?"

"I don't know, Julita. Perhaps not. But there is a point where a thing escapes us and rushes downward of its own weight, dragging us along. Then it is foolish to ask whether one will or will not, because it no longer depends on him."

"But then why--why--" her muffled voice came. "Oh, what do I know? That is his problem after all."

"Doesn't it--interest you?"

"Why must it? I--I have to say good-bye, Mr. Salazar; we are at the house."

Without lifting her eyes she quickly turned and walked away.

Had the final word been said? He wondered. It had. Yet a feeble flutter of hope trembled in his mind though set against that hope were three years of

engagement, a very near wedding, perfect understanding between the parents, his own conscience, and Esperanza herself—Esperanza waiting, Esperanza no longer young, Esperanza the efficient, the literal-minded, the intensely acquisitive.

He looked attentively at her where she sat on the sofa, appraisingly, and with a kind of aversion which he tried to control. She was one of those fortunate women who have the gift of uniformly acceptable appearance. She never surprised one with unexpected homeliness nor with startling reserves of beauty. At home, in church, on the street, she was always herself, a woman past first bloom, light and clear of complexion, spare of arms and of breast, with a slight convexity to thin throat; a woman dressed with self-conscious care, even elegance; a woman distinctly not average.

She was pursuing an indignant relation about something or other, something about Calixta, their note-carrier, Alfredo perceived, so he merely half-listened, understanding imperfectly. At a pause he drawled out to fill in the gap: "Well, what of it?" The remark sounded ruder than he had intended.

"She is not married to him," Esperanza insisted in her thin, nervously pitched voice. "Besides, she should have thought of us. Nanay practically brought her up. We never thought she would turn out bad."

What had Calixta done? Homely, middle-aged Calixta?

"You are very positive about her badness," he commented dryly.

Esperanza was always positive.

"But do you approve?"

"Of what?"

"What she did."

"No," indifferently.

"Well?"

He was suddenly impelled by a desire to disturb the unvexed orthodoxy of her mind. "All I say is that it is not necessarily wicked."

"Why shouldn't it be? You talked like an-immoral man. I did not know that your ideas were like that."

"My ideas?" he retorted, goaded by a deep, accumulated exasperation. "The only test I wish to apply to conduct is the test of fairness. Am I injuring anybody? No? Then I am justified in my conscience. I am right. Living with a man to whom she is not married--is that it? It may be wrong, and again it may not."

"She has injured us. She was ungrateful." Her voice was tight with resentment.

"The trouble with you, Esperanza, is that you are--" he stopped, appalled by the passion in his voice.

"Why do you get angry? I do not understand you at all! I think I know why you have been indifferent to me lately. I am not blind, or deaf; I see and hear what perhaps some are trying to keep from me." The blood surged into his very eyes and his hearing sharpened to points of acute pain. What would she say next?

"Why don't you speak out frankly before it is too late? You need not think of me and of what people will say." Her voice trembled.

Alfredo was suffering as he could not remember ever having suffered before. What people will say--what will they not say? What don't they say when long engagements are broken almost on the eve of the wedding?

"Yes," he said hesitatingly, diffidently, as if merely thinking aloud, "one tries to be fair--according to his lights--but it is hard. One would like to be fair to one's self first. But that is too easy, one does not dare--"

"What do you mean?" she asked with repressed violence. "Whatever my shortcomings, and no doubt they are many in your eyes, I have never gone out of my way, of my place, to find a man."

Did she mean by this irrelevant remark that he it was who had sought her; or was that a covert attack on Julia Salas?

"Esperanza--" a desperate plea lay in his stumbling words. "If you--suppose I--" Yet how could a mere man word such a plea?

"If you mean you want to take back your word, if you are tired of--why don't you tell me you are tired of me?" she burst out in a storm of weeping that left him completely shamed and unnerved.

The last word had been said.

III

AS Alfredo Salazar leaned against the boat rail to watch the evening settling over the lake, he wondered if Esperanza would attribute any significance to this trip of his. He was supposed to be in Sta. Cruz whither the case of the People of the Philippine Islands vs. Belina et al had kept him, and there he would have been if Brigida Samuy had not been so important to the defense. He had to find that elusive old woman. That the search was leading him to that particular lake town which was Julia Salas' home should not disturb him unduly yet he was disturbed to a degree utterly out of proportion to the prosaicness of his errand. That inner tumult was no surprise to him; in the last eight years he had become used to such occasional storms. He had long realized that he could not forget Julia Salas. Still, he had tried to be content and not to remember too much. The climber of mountains who has known the back-break, the lonesomeness, and the chill, finds a certain restfulness in level paths made easy to his feet. He looks up sometimes from the valley where settles the dusk of evening, but he knows he must not heed the radiant beckoning. Maybe, in time, he would cease even to look up.

He was not unhappy in his marriage. He felt no rebellion: only the calm of capitulation to what he recognized as irresistible forces of circumstance and of character. His life had simply ordered itself; no more struggles, no more stirring up of emotions that got a man nowhere. From his capacity of complete detachment he derived a strange solace. The essential himself, the himself that had its being in the core of his thought, would, he reflected, always be free and alone. When claims encroached too insistently, as sometimes they did, he

retreated into the inner fastness, and from that vantage he saw things and people around him as remote and alien, as incidents that did not matter. At such times did Esperanza feel baffled and helpless; he was gentle, even tender, but immeasurably far away, beyond her reach.

Lights were springing into life on the shore. That was the town, a little up-tilted town nestling in the dark greenness of the groves. A snubcrested belfry stood beside the ancient church. On the outskirts the evening smudges glowed red through the sinuous mists of smoke that rose and lost themselves in the purple shadows of the hills. There was a young moon which grew slowly luminous as the coral tints in the sky yielded to the darker blues of evening.

The vessel approached the landing quietly, trailing a wake of long golden ripples on the dark water. Peculiar hill inflections came to his ears from the crowd assembled to meet the boat--slow, singing cadences, characteristic of the Laguna lake-shore speech. From where he stood he could not distinguish faces, so he had no way of knowing whether the presidente was there to meet him or not. Just then a voice shouted.

"Is the abogado there? Abogado!"

"What abogado?" someone irately asked. That must be the presidente, he thought, and went down to the landing.

It was a policeman, a tall pock-marked individual. The presidente had left with Brigida Samuy--Tandang "Binday"--that noon for Santa Cruz. Señor Salazar's second letter had arrived late, but the wife

had read it and said, "Go and meet the abogado and invite him to our house."

Alfredo Salazar courteously declined the invitation. He would sleep on board since the boat would leave at four the next morning anyway. So the presidente had received his first letter? Alfredo did not know because that official had not sent an answer. "Yes," the policeman replied, "but he could not write because we heard that Tandang Binday was in San Antonio so we went there to find her."

San Antonio was up in the hills! Good man, the presidente! He, Alfredo, must do something for him. It was not every day that one met with such willingness to help.

Eight o'clock, lugubriously tolled from the bell tower, found the boat settled into a somnolent quiet. A cot had been brought out and spread for him, but it was too bare to be inviting at that hour. It was too early to sleep: he would walk around the town. His heart beat faster as he picked his way to shore over the rafts made fast to sundry piles driven into the water.

How peaceful the town was! Here and there a little tienda was still open, its dim light issuing forlornly through the single window which served as counter. An occasional couple sauntered by, the women's chinelas making scraping sounds. From a distance came the shrill voices of children playing games on the street--tubigan perhaps, or "hawk-and-chicken." The thought of Julia Salas in that quiet place filled him with a pitying sadness.

How would life seem now if he had married Julia Salas? Had he meant anything to her? That unforgettable red-and-gold afternoon in early April haunted him with a sense of incompleteness as restless as other unlaidd ghosts. She had not married--why? Faithfulness, he reflected, was not a conscious effort at regretful memory. It was something unvolitional, maybe a recurrent awareness of irreplaceability. Irrelevant trifles--a cool wind on his forehead, far-away sounds as of voices in a dream--at times moved him to an oddly irresistible impulse to listen as to an insistent, unfinished prayer.

A few inquiries led him to a certain little tree-ceilinged street where the young moon wove indistinct filigrees of light and shadow. In the gardens the cotton tree threw its angular shadow athwart the low stone wall; and in the cool, stilly midnight the cock's first call rose in tall, soaring jets of sound. Calle Luz.

Somehow or other, he had known that he would find her house because she would surely be sitting at the window. Where else, before bedtime on a moonlit night? The house was low and the light in the sala behind her threw her head into unmistakable relief. He sensed rather than saw her start of vivid surprise.

"Good evening," he said, raising his hat.

"Good evening. Oh! Are you in town?"

"On some little business," he answered with a feeling of painful constraint.

"Won't you come up?"

He considered. His vague plans had not included this. But Julia Salas had left the window, calling to her mother as she did so. After a while, someone came

downstairs with a lighted candle to open the door. At last--he was shaking her hand.

She had not changed much--a little less slender, not so eagerly alive, yet something had gone. He missed it, sitting opposite her, looking thoughtfully into her fine dark eyes.

She asked him about the home town, about this and that, in a sober, somewhat meditative tone. He conversed with increasing ease, though with a growing wonder that he should be there at all. He could not take his eyes from her face. What had she lost? Or was the loss his? He felt an impersonal curiosity creeping into his gaze. The girl must have noticed, for her cheek darkened in a blush.

Gently--was it experimentally?--he pressed her hand at parting; but his own felt undisturbed and emotionless. Did she still care? The answer to the question hardly interested him.

The young moon had set, and from the uninviting cot he could see one half of a star-studded sky.

So that was all over.

Why had he obstinately clung to that dream?

So all these years--since when?--he had been seeing the light of dead stars, long extinguished, yet seemingly still in their appointed places in the heavens.

An immense sadness as of loss invaded his spirit, a vast homesickness for some immutable refuge of the heart far away where faded gardens bloom again, and where live on in unchanging freshness, the dear, dead loves of vanished youth.

## APPENDIX B-3

### The Small Key

By: Paz Latorena

It was very warm. The sun, up above a sky that was blue and tremendous and beckoning to birds ever on the wing, shone bright as if determined to scorch everything under heaven, even the low, square nipa house that stood in an unashamed relief against the gray-green haze of grass and leaves.

It was lonely dwelling located far from its neighbors, which were huddled close to one another as if for mutual comfort. It was flanked on both sides by tall, slender bamboo tree which rustled plaintively under a gentle wind.

On the porch a woman past her early twenties stood regarding the scene before her with eyes made incurious by its familiarity. All around her the land stretched endlessly, it seemed, and vanished into the distance. There were dark, newly plowed furrows where in due time timorous seedling would give rise to sturdy stalks and golden grain, to a rippling yellow sea in the wind and sun during harvest time. Promise of plenty and reward for hard toil! With a sigh of discontent, however, the woman turned and entered a small dining room where a man sat over a belated a midday meal.

Pedro Buhay, a prosperous farmer, looked up from his plate and smiled at his wife as she stood framed by the doorway, the sunlight glinting on her dark hair, which was drawn back, without relenting wave, from a rather prominent and austere brow.

“Where are the shirts I ironed yesterday?” she asked as she approached the table.

“In my trunk, I think,” he answered.

“Some of them need darning,” and observing the empty plate, she added, “do you want some more rice?”

“No,” hastily, “I am in a burry to get back. We must finish plowing the south field today because tomorrow is Sunday.”

Pedro pushed the chair back and stood up. Soledad began to pile the dirty dishes one on top of the other.

“Here is the key to my trunk.” From the pocket of his khaki coat he pulled a string of non descript red which held together a big shiny key and another small, rather rusty looking one.

With deliberate care he untied the knot and, detaching the big key, dropped the small one back into his pocket. She watched him fixedly as he did this. The smile left her face and a strange look came into her eyes as she took the big key from him without a word. Together they left the dining room.

Out of the porch he put an arm around her shoulders and peered into her shadowed face.

“You look pale and tired,” he remarked softly. “What have you been doing all morning?”

“Nothing,” she said listlessly. “But the heat gives me a headache.”

“Then lie down and try to sleep while I am gone.” For a moment they looked deep into each other’s eyes.

“It is really warm,” he continued. “I think I will take off my coat.”

He removed the garment absent mindedly and handed it to her. The stairs creaked under his weight as he went down.

“Choleng,” he turned his head as he opened the gate, “I shall pass by Tia Maria’s house and tell her to come. I may not return before dark.”

Soledad nodded. Her eyes followed her husband down the road, noting the fine set of his head and shoulders, the case of his stride. A strange ache rose in her throat.

She looked at the coat he had handed to her. It exuded a faint smell of his favorite cigars, one of which he invariably smoked, after the day’s work, on his way home from the fields. Mechanically, she began to fold the garment.

As she was doing so, a small object fell from the floor with a dull, metallic sound. Soledad stooped down to pick it up. It was the small key! She stared at it in her palm as if she had never seen it before. Her mouth was tightly drawn and for a while she looked almost old.

She passed into the small bedroom and tossed the coat carelessly on the back of a chair. She opened the window and the early afternoon sunshine flooded in. On

a mat spread on the bamboo floor were some newly washed garments.

She began to fold them one by one in feverish haste, as if seeking in the task of the moment in refuge from painful thoughts. But her eyes moved restlessly around the room until they rested almost furtively on a small trunk that was half concealed by a rolled mat in a dark corner. It was a small old trunk, without anything on the outside that might arouse one’s curiosity. But it held the things she had come to hate with unreasoning violence, the things that were causing her so much unnecessary anguish and pain and threatened to destroy all that was most beautiful between her and her husband!

Soledad came across a torn garment. She threaded a needle, but after a few uneven stitches she pricked her finger and a crimson drop stained the white garment. Then she saw she had been mending on the wrong side.

“What is the matter with me?” she asked herself aloud as she pulled the thread with nervous and impatient fingers.

What did it matter if her husband chose to keep the clothes of his first wife?

“She is dead anyhow. She is dead,” she repeated to herself over and over again.

The sound of her own voice calmed her. She tried to thread the needle once more. But she could not, not for the tears had come unbidden and completely blinded her.

“My God,” she cried with a sob, “make me forget Indo’s face as he put the small key back into his pocket.”

She brushed her tears with the sleeves of her camisa and abruptly stood up. The heat was stifling, and the silence in the house was beginning to be unendurable.

She looked out of the window. She wondered what was keeping Tia Maria. Perhaps Pedro had forgotten to pass by her house in his hurry. She could picture him out there in the south field gazing far and wide at the newly plowed land with no thought in his mind but of work, work. For to the people of the barrio whose patron saint, San Isidro Labrador, smiled on them with benign eyes from his crude altar in the little chapel up the hill, this season was a prolonged hour during which they were blind and dead to everything but the demands of the land.

During the next half hour Soledad wandered in and out of the rooms in effort to seek escape from her own thoughts and to fight down an overpowering impulse. If Tia Maria would only come and talk to her to divert her thoughts to other channels!

But the expression on her husband’s face as he put the small key back into his pocket kept torturing her like a nightmare, goading beyond endurance. Then, with all resistance to the impulse gone, she was kneeling before the small trunk. With the long drawn breath she inserted the small key. There was an unpleasant metallic sound, for the key had not been used for a long time and it was rusty.

That evening Pedro Buhay hurried home with the usual cigar dangling

from his mouth, pleased with himself and the tenants because the work in the south field had been finished. Tia Maria met him at the gate and told him that Soledad was in bed with a fever.

“I shall go to town and bring Doctor Santos,” he decided, his cool hand on his wife’s brow.

Soledad opened her eyes.

“Don’t, Indo,” she begged with a vague terror in her eyes which he took for anxiety for him because the town was pretty far and the road was dark and deserted by that hour of the night. “I shall be alright tomorrow.”

Pedro returned an hour later, very tired and very worried. The doctor was not at home but his wife had promised to give him Pedro’s message as soon as he came in.

Tia Maria decide to remain for the night. But it was Pedro who stayed up to watch the sick woman. He was puzzled and worried – more than he cared to admit it. It was true that Soledad did not look very well early that afternoon. Yet, he thought, the fever was rather sudden. He was afraid it might be a symptom of a serious illness.

Soledad was restless the whole night. She tossed from one side to another, but toward morning she fell into some sort of troubled sleep. Pedro then lay down to snatch a few winks.

He woke up to find the soft morning sunshine streaming through the half-open window. He got up without making any noise. His wife was still

asleep and now breathing evenly. A sudden rush of tenderness came over him at the sight of her – so slight, so frail.

Tia Maria was nowhere to be seen, but that did not bother him, for it was Sunday and the work in the south field was finished. However, he missed the pleasant aroma which came from the kitchen every time he had awakened early in the morning.

The kitchen was neat but cheerless, and an immediate search for wood brought no results. So shouldering an ax, Pedro descended the rickety stairs that led to the backyard.

The morning was clear and the breeze soft and cool. Pedro took in a deep breath of air. It was good – it smelt of trees, of the ricefields, of the land he loved.

He found a pile of logs under the young mango tree near the house and began to chop. He swung the ax with rapid clean sweeps, enjoying the feel of the smooth wooden handle in his palms.

As he stopped for a while to mop his brow, his eyes caught the remnants of a smudge that had been built in the backyard.

“Ah!” he muttered to himself. “She swept the yard yesterday after I left her. That, coupled with the heat, must have given her a headache and then the fever.”

The morning breeze stirred the ashes and a piece of white cloth fluttered into view.

Pedro dropped his ax. It was a half-burn panuelo. Somebody had been burning

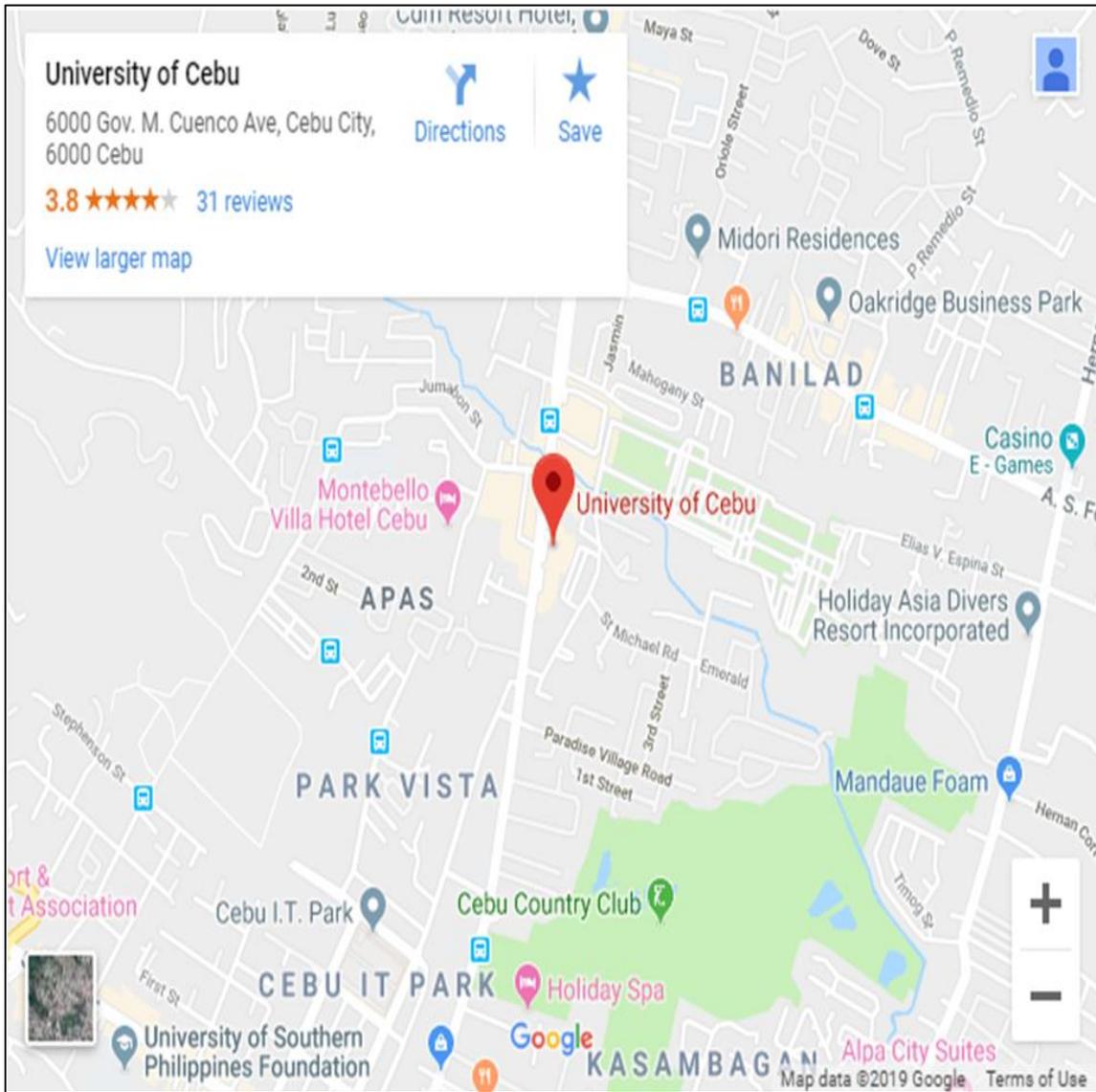
clothes. He examined the slightly ruined garment closely. A puzzled expression came into his eyes. First it was doubt groping for truth, then amazement, and finally agonized incredulity passed across his face. He almost ran back to the house. In three strides he was upstairs. He found his coat hanging from the back of a chair. Cautiously he entered the room. The heavy breathing of his wife told him that she was still asleep. As he stood by the small trunk, a vague distaste to open it assailed to him. Surely he must be mistaken. She could not have done it, she could not have been that... that foolish.

Resolutely he opened the trunk. It was empty.

It was nearly noon when the doctor arrived. He felt Soledad's pulse and asked question which she answered in monosyllables. Pedro stood by listening to the whole procedure with an inscrutable expression on his face. He had the same expression when the doctor told him that nothing was really wrong with his wife although she seemed to be worried about something. The physician merely prescribed a day of complete rest.

Pedro lingered on the porch after the doctor left. He was trying not to be angry with his wife. He hoped it would be just an interlude that could be recalled without bitterness. She would explain sooner or later, she would be repentant, perhaps she would even listen and eventually forgive her, for she was young and he loved her. But somehow he knew that this incident would always remain a shadow in their lives.

## APPENDIX C LOCATION MAP



University of Cebu- Banilad Campus

SHS Department

# APPENDIX D RELIABILITY TEST RESULT

## Table 8 Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test Result

		Items																				Total			
		I.1	I.2	I.3	I.4	I.5	I.6	I.7	I.8	I.9	I.10	I.11	I.12	I.13	I.14	I.15	I.16	I.17	I.18	I.19	I.20				
Persons	S.1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	8			
	S.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			
	S.3	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	12			
	S.4	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	13			
	S.5	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	6		Statistics for Persons	
	S.6	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4			
	S.7	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9			
	S.8	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	12	Mean persons	8.917	
	S.9	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	13			
	S.10	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	11			
	S.11	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	10	SD persons	3.672	
	S.12	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	4			
	S.13	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	9			
	S.14	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	12	Variance persons	13.482	
	S.15	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	12			
	S.16	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	9			
	S.17	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	17			
	S.18	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	9			
	S.19	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	8			
	S.20	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	12			
	S.21	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	4		
	S.22	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	13			
	S.23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3			
	S.24	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	10			
	S.25	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	12			
	S.26	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	6			
	S.27	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	5			
	S.28	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	12			
	S.29	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	10			
	S.30	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2			
	S.31	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	16			
	S.32	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	14			
	S.33	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	6			
	S.34	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	11			
	S.35	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	9			
	S.36	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	8			
	S.37	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	7			
	S.38	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	6			
	S.39	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	8			
	S.40	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	9			
	S.41	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	12			
	S.42	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	9			
	S.43	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	11			
	S.44	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	11			
	S.45	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	9			
	S.46	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	7			
	S.47	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	5			
	S.48	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3			
Item variances		0.14	0.24	0.25	0.23	0.17	0.26	0.25	0.24	0.25	0.24	0.25	0.16	0.24	0.24	0.23	0.25	0.24	0.25	0.20	0.17				

Sum of item variances = 4.492

Number of items = 20

<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	0.702
<b>SEM</b>	2.005
<b>SEM (Alternative formula)</b>	2.005
<b>SEM*</b>	2.119

**Legend:**

<b>Range</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
>0.9	Excellent
>0.8	Good
>0.7	Acceptable
>0.6	Questionable
>0.5	Poor
<0.5	Unacceptable

Table 8 shows the reliability test of the researcher-made test utilizing the Cronbach Alpha. The pilot test/dry run responses yield a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.702. It indicates that the reliability of the test is acceptable and researcher-made instrument has passed the test.

## **APPENDIX E**

### **INTERVENTION GUIDE QUESTIONS**

#### **Characters**

1. Describe each character.
2. What is the significance of the key for Pedro? For Soledad?
3. Why did Soledad think that the trunk of Pedro's dead wife is something that threatens her beautiful relationship with her husband?
4. Does Pedro love Soledad? If so, why does Pedro still keep the belongings of his dead wife?
5. Pedro somehow knew that this incident would always remain a shadow in their lives. Why does he think so?
6. Pedro's character seems silent after everything that had happened. What's the reason behind this?
7. Compare the love of Pedro between Soledad and his dead wife.
8. If you were Soledad, would you have done the same thing that she did? Explain your answer.

#### **Setting**

1. Describe the setting or the societal set up of the story?
2. Does the setting give hint of what could have happened along the story
3. Compare the setting then and now.
4. Do the characters in the story portray a significant difference to the attributes people have today? Why?

#### **Plot**

1. Introduce all the characters.
2. Narrate the events of the story

- a. Exposition
  - b. Rising action
  - c. Climax
  - d. Falling Action
  - e. Resolution/ Denouement
3. What's the conflict of the story?
  4. Give significant events that happened in the story.

### Symbols

1. What does the small key symbolize?
2. The following are specific points in the story. Please make an interpretation out of your answer.

Specific points in the narrative	Interpretation
“Sunday... quiet.. Peace... beauty everywhere. But a fierce gnawing fear in the heart of a woman and bitter smoldering resentment in a man's”	
A puzzled expression came into his eyes. First it was doubt groping for truth, then amazement, and finally agonized incredulity passed across his face.	
But somehow he knew that this incident would always remain a shadow in their lives.	
She would explain sooner or later, she would be repentant, perhaps she would even listen and eventually forgive her, for she was young and he loved her.	
...dropped the small one back into his pocket. She watched him fixedly as he did this. The smile left her face and a strange look came into her eyes as she took the big key from him without a word.	

3. Does age play a great role in how events turned out in the story? In what way?

## **Theme**

1. What values can we get from the story?
2. Can these values be seen today?
3. Describe the message the story tries to portray.
4. What is the impact of the story to the readers?

**APPENDIX F-1**  
**PRETEST PERFORMANCES OF THE CONTROL AND**  
**EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS**

**Table 9**  
**Data Gathered during Pretest Performances of the**  
**Control and Experimental Groups**

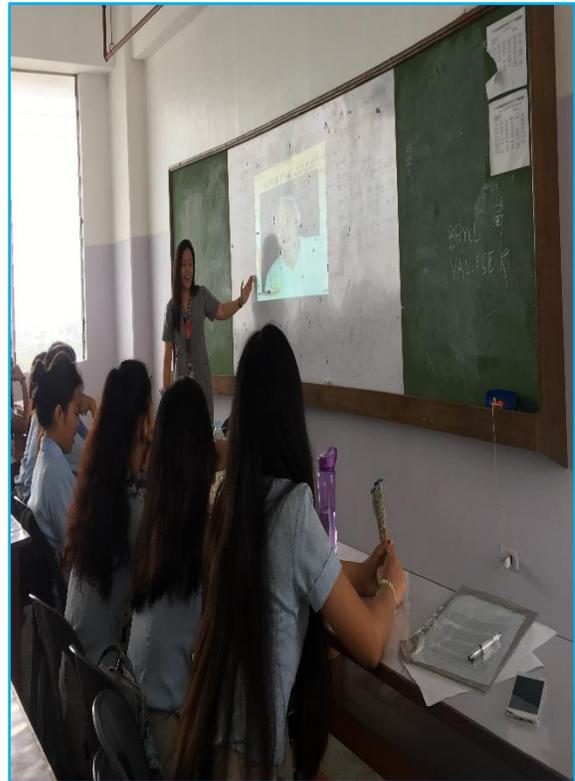
SUBJECTS (I)	CONTROL	SUBJECTS (II)	EXPERIMENTAL
A	16	AA	13
B	15	BB	11
C	8	CC	13
D	12	DD	11
E	13	EE	13
F	7	FF	13
G	16	GG	11
H	12	HH	12
I	9	II	10
J	11	JJ	16
K	14	KK	10
L	9	LL	7
M	10	MM	10
N	6	NN	13
O	13	OO	9
P	13	PP	8
Q	10	QQ	10
R	12	RR	14
S	9	SS	9
T	12	TT	10
U	12	UU	8
V	6	VV	12
W	7	WW	9
X	7	XX	4
<b>SUM</b>	<b>259</b>		<b>256</b>

**APPENDIX F-2**  
**POSTTEST PERFORMANCES OF THE CONTROL AND**  
**EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS**

**Table 10**  
**Data Gathered during Posttest Performances of the**  
**Control and Experimental Groups**

SUBJECTS (I)	CONTROL	SUBJECTS (II)	EXPERIMENTAL
A	15	AA	16
B	15	BB	15
C	11	CC	13
D	13	DD	11
E	11	EE	12
F	10	FF	16
G	13	GG	15
H	13	HH	14
I	13	II	17
J	14	JJ	19
K	14	KK	13
L	14	LL	16
M	13	MM	11
N	8	NN	15
O	14	OO	11
P	15	PP	15
Q	7	QQ	12
R	12	RR	13
S	15	SS	15
T	11	TT	15
U	6	UU	13
V	10	VV	12
W	7	WW	13
X	9	XX	13
<b>SUM</b>	<b>283</b>		<b>335</b>

**APPENDIX G-1**  
**DOCUMENTATIONS PRIOR TO THE CONDUCT OF THE STUDY**



## APPENDIX G-2 DOCUMENTATIONS DURING THE CONDUCT OF THE STUDY

### Research Subjects in their Pretest and Posttest



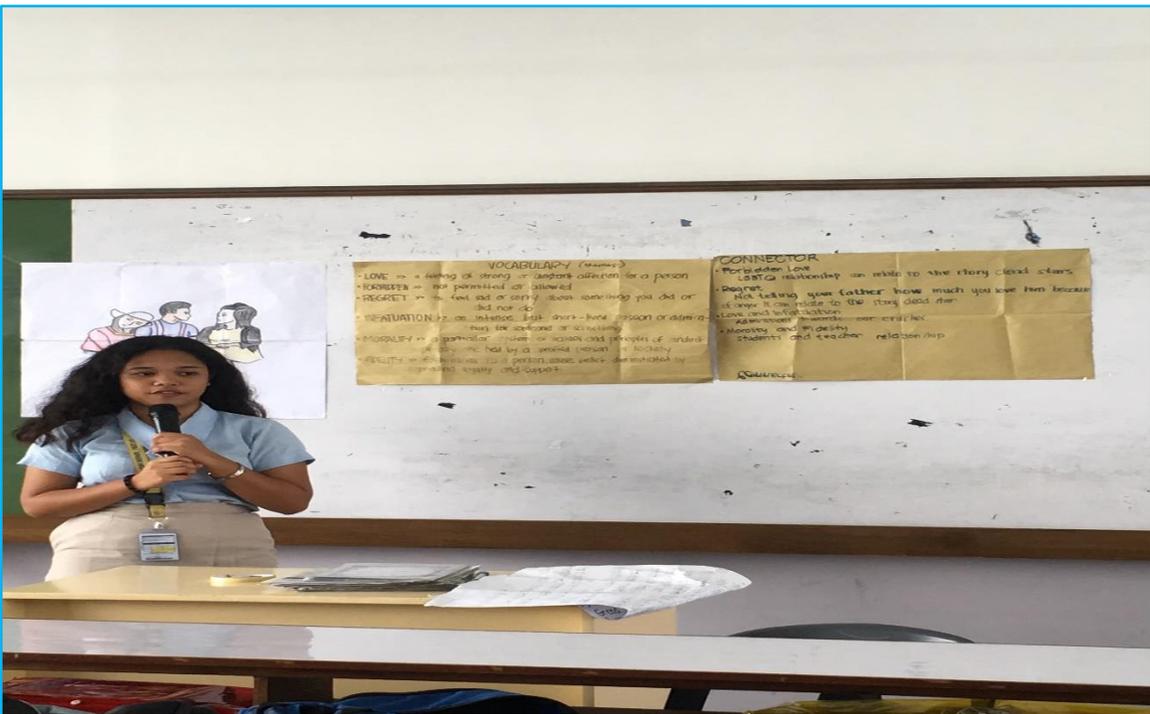
## The Control Group Utilizing Traditional Method



## The Experimental Group Utilizing Literature Circle Strategy

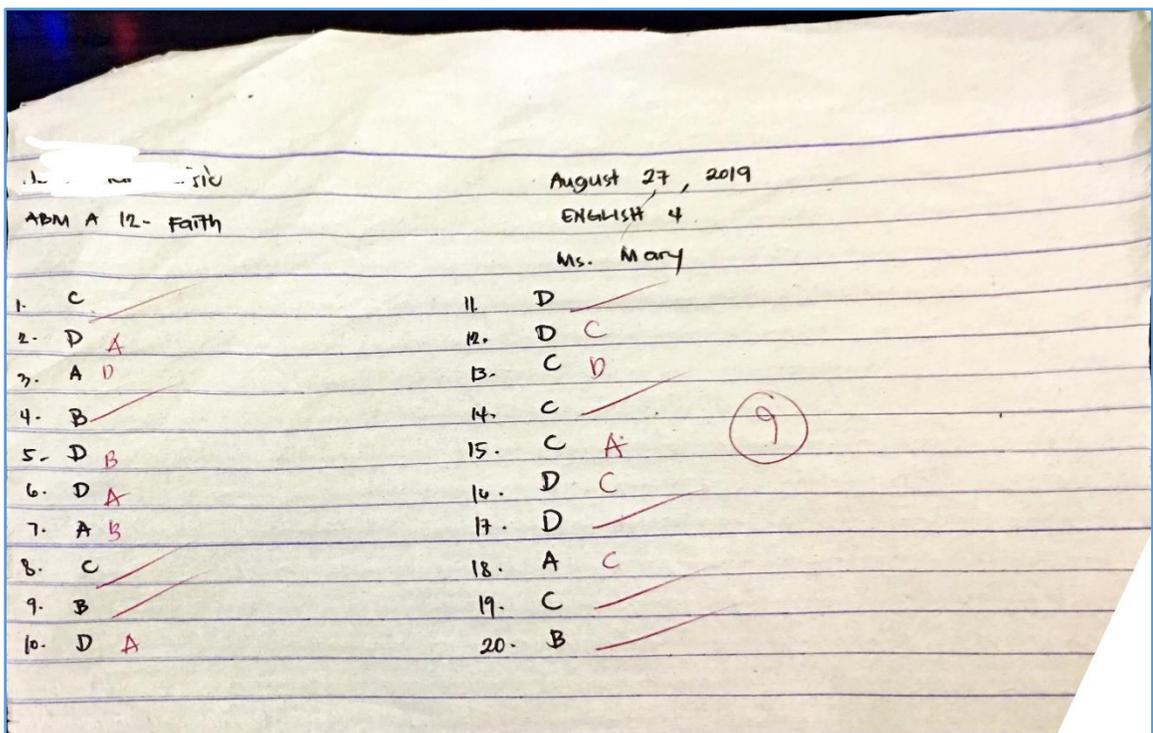
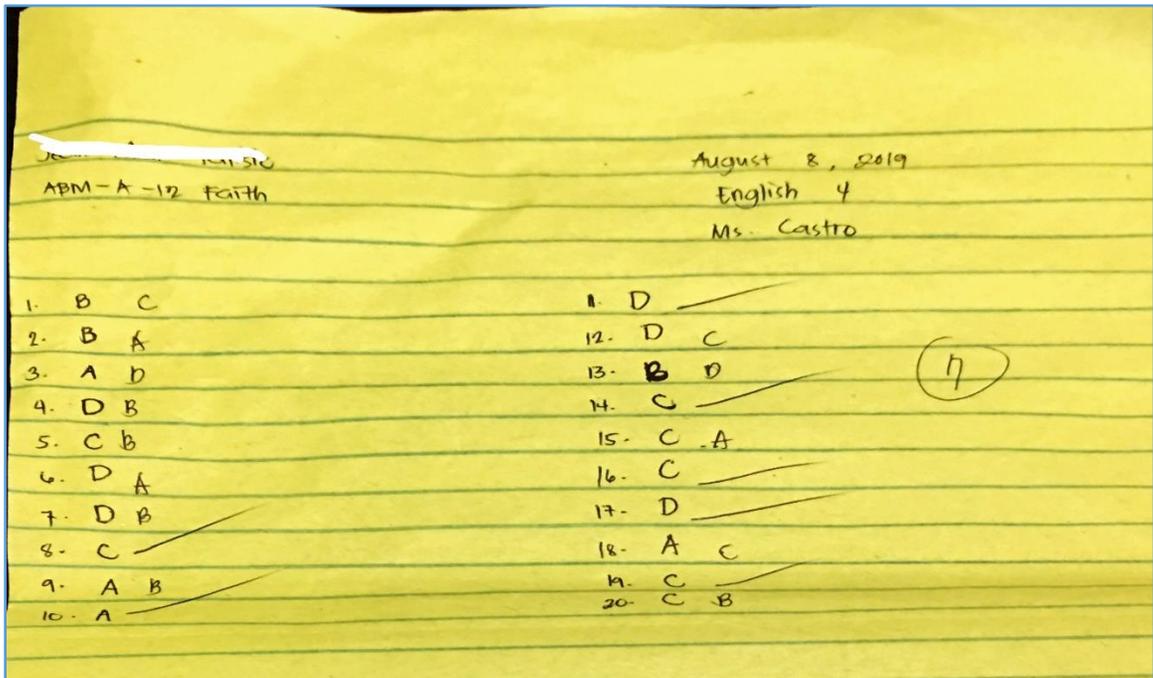


# Group Presentation of the Experimental Group after Utilizing the Literature Circle Strategy



# APPENDIX H DOCUMENTATIONS OF PRETEST AND POSTTEST RESULTS

## Sample Pretest and Posttest Results of the Control Group



08-19-19

Engl 4

Mc. Castro

Quiz  
APM A-12 Faith

1.) A. C

2.) A. /

3.) D. /

4.) B. /

5.) D. B

6.) A. /

7.) C. B

8.) C. /

9.) A. B

10.) A. /

11.) D. /

12.) C. /

13.) D. /

14.) C. /

15.) A. /

16.) C. /

17.) D. /

18.) B. X

19.) C. /

20.) B. /

15

08-27-19

Engl 4

Mc. Castro

Quiz  
APM A-12 Faith

1.) A.C

2.) A. /

3.) D. /

4.) B. /

5.) A.B

6.) A. /

7.) C.B

8.) C. /

9.) A.B

10.) A. /

11.) D. /

12.) C. /

13.) A.D

14.) C. /

15.) A. /

16.) C. /

17.) D. /

18.) C. /

19.) C. /

20.) B. /

15

B

oslovia  
ENGLISH 4  
MS Castro

~~\_\_\_\_\_~~  
ABMA 12 FAITH

1 D C  
 2 A  
 3 D  
 4 B  
 5 C B  
 6 D A  
 7 C B  
 8 A C  
 9 B  
 10 A  
 11 D  
 12 D C  
 13 D  
 14 C  
 15 A  
 16 C  
 17 D  
 18 C  
 19 C  
 20 D B

(7)

oslovia  
ENGLISH 4  
MR Macy

~~\_\_\_\_\_~~  
ABMA 12 FAITH

1 C  
 2 A  
 3 A D  
 4 B  
 5 B  
 6 A  
 7 C B  
 8 C  
 9 A B  
 10 A  
 11 D  
 12 C  
 13 D  
 14 C  
 15 A  
 16 C  
 17 D  
 18 C  
 19 A C  
 20 D B

(14)

## Sample Pretest and Posttest Results of the Experimental Group

8-08-19  
Eng 3  
Ms. Castro

Item	A	B	faith
1. b		c	
2. d		A	
3. C		D	
4. C		B	
5. b			
6. b		D	
7. a		B	
8. C			
9. a		B	
10. b		A	
11. a		D	
12. a		C	
13. C		D	
14. d		C	
15. d		A	
16. C			
17. b		D	
18. a		C	
19. a		C	
20. b			

4

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
Aug 27 2019  
Eng  
Ms. Castro

Item	A	B	faith
1. C			
2. a			
3. d			
4. b			
5. C B			
6. d. A			
7. C B			
8. C			
9. b			
10. a			
11. d			
12. b. C			
13. C. D			
14. C			
15. a			
16. C			
17. C. D			
18. a. C			
19. C. D			
20. b			

1/2

\_\_\_\_\_ (NDC)  
ABM A 1A - FAITH

AUGUST 8, 2019  
ENGLISH 4  
MS. CASTRO

1. C ✓	11. D ✓
2. A ✓	12. A C
3. B D	13. C D
4. A B	14. A C
5. D B	15. A ✓
6. D A	16. B C
7. C B	17. C D
8. C ✓	18. B C
9. A B	19. C ✓
10. A ✓	20. C B

(7)

\_\_\_\_\_ (NDC)  
ABM A 12 - FAITH

AUGUST 27, 2019  
ENGLISH 4  
MS. MARY

1. C ✓	11. D ✓
2. A ✓	12. A C ✓
3. D ✓	13. D ✓
4. B ✓	14. C ✓
5. B ✓	15. A ✓
6. A ✓	16. C ✓
7. C B	17. C D
8. C ✓	18. C ✓
9. A B	19. C ✓
10. A ✓	20. B ✓

(16)

English 2  
August 26, 2019  
English 2  
Mrs. Castro

English 2  
ABM 12A - Faith

1. A C  
2. C A  
3. D ✓  
4. B ✓  
5. C B  
6. D A  
7. C B  
8. C ✓  
9. D B  
10. A ✓  
11. D ✓  
12. C ✓  
13. D ✓  
14. D C  
15. A ✓  
16. B C  
17. C D  
18. B C  
19. B C  
20. B ✓

(9)

English 2  
August 27, 2019  
Eng. 4  
Mrs. Mary Castro

English 2  
ABM 12A - Faith

1. C ✓  
2. A ✓  
3. B D ✓  
4. B ✓  
5. C B ✓  
6. D A ✓  
7. D B ✓  
8. A C ✓  
9. B ✓  
10. A ✓  
11. D ✓  
12. C ✓  
13. D ✓  
14. C ✓  
15. A ✓  
16. C ✓  
17. D ✓  
18. C ✓  
19. C ✓  
20. B ✓

(15)