**21st Century Literature**

Government Property

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**Senior High School**

**from the Philippines and the World**

**Quarter 1 – Week 7**

Name of Learner: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Grade Level: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Section: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**LEARNING ACTIVITY SHEET**

**Elements of a Short Story**

1. **MOST ESSENTIAL LEARNING COMPETENCY WITH CODE**

Do a self- and/or peer assessment of the creative adaptation of a literary text based on rationalized criteria.

Code: **EN12Lit-Ie-31.3**

**Specific Objective:**

After going through the series of activities, you are expected to:

1. analyze a short story by identifying its basic elements,
2. demonstrate understanding of a short story, and
3. perform a self or peer-assessment in evaluating one’s work.
4. **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

A short story has six basic elements that you as a reader should look for when analyzing one. Every story begins with a seed of an idea. Hence, the author should think of these basic elements when writing a story. Although not all stories put equal importance on every aspect, each of these elements must be expected in the story. At the end of this lesson, you are expected to do a self- and/or peer assessment of the creative adaptation of a literary text based on rationalized criteria.

1. **GENERAL DIRECTIONS**

To achieve the objectives of this module, do the following:

1. Take your time reading the lessons carefully.
2. Follow the directions and/or instructions in the activities and exercises diligently.
3. Answer all the given tests and exercises.
4. **LEARNING ACTIVITIES**
5. **EXPLORE**.

**Activity 1:** Read the short story entitled “Sinigang” by Marie Aubrey J. Villaceran, a professor at the Department of English and Comparative Literature in the University of the Philippines, Diliman. In the story, Liza narrates how she deals with the issue of her father, having an affair with another woman, and how it emotionally separates her from him. Read and learn more about the story and find out how the basic elements are used.

**SINIGANG**

Marie Aubrey J. Villaceran

“So, what happened?”

She had finally decided to ask the question. I had been wondering how long my Tita Loleng could contain her curiosity.

I continued to pick out tomatoes for the Sinigang we were to have for dinner. I wasn’t usually the one who assisted my aunt with the cooking. She preferred my younger sister, Meg, for I knew far less in this area—not having the aptitude, or the interest, I guess—for remembering recipes. That didn’t matter today, though. This time, Tita Loleng wanted more than just an extra pair of hands in the kitchen.

“Nothing much,” I answered offhandedly. “We did what people usually do during funerals.” I reminded myself to tread carefully with her. Though I did not really feel like talking, I could not tell her off for she took offense rather easily.

I put the tomatoes in the small palanggana, careful not to bruise their delicate skin, and carried them to the sink.

“Did you meet…her?” Tita Loleng asked.

There came to me a memory of sitting in one of the smaller narra sofas in the living room in Bulacan. I faced a smooth white coffin whose corners bore gold-plated figures of cherubs framed by elaborate swirls resembling thick, curling vines. Two golden candelabras, each supporting three rows of high-wattage electric candles, flanked the coffin and seared the white kalachuchi in the funeral wreaths, causing the flowers to release more of their heady scent before they wilted prematurely. Through an open doorway, I could see into the next room where a few unfamiliar faces held murmured conversations above their coffee cups.

“Are you Liza?” A woman beside me suddenly asked.

I was surprised, for I had not heard anyone approaching. Most of the mourners preferred to stay out on the veranda for fear that the heat from the lights might also cause them to wither.

I looked up slowly: long, slim feet with mauve-painted toenails that peeked through the opening of a pair of scruffy-looking slippers; smooth legs unmarred by swollen veins or scars—so unlike the spider-veined legs of my mom—encased in a black, pencil-cut skirt; a white blouse with its sleeves too long for the wearer, causing the extra fabric to bunch around the cuffs; a slim neck whose skin sagged just a little bit; and a pale face that seemed like it had not experienced sleep in days. The woman looked to me like she was in her forties—the same age as my mother.

“Yes,” I had answered that woman—the same answer I now gave to Tita Loleng.

I gently spilled out all the tomatoes into the sink and turned on the tap. The water, like agua bendita, cleansed each tomato of the grime from its origins.

“What did she tell you?” Tita Loleng asked.

“Nothing much. She told me who she was.”

“What did she look like?”

“She’s pretty, I guess.”

She was. She looked like she had Indian blood with her sharp nose and deep-set eyes thickly bordered by long lashes. Just like Mom, she still maintained a slim figure though she already had children. The woman, upon seeing my curious stare, had explained, “I am Sylvia.”

All my muscles tensed upon hearing her name. It took all my self-control to outwardly remain calm and simply raise an eyebrow.

My reaction caused a range of emotion to cross the woman’s face before it finally crumbled and gave way to tears. Suddenly, she grabbed my hand from where it had been resting on the arm of the sofa. Her own hands were damp and sticky with sweat. She knelt in front of me—a sinner confessing before a priest so he could wash away the dirt from her past.

But I was not a priest. I looked down at her and my face remained impassive.

When her weeping had subsided, she raised her head and looked at me.

“Everyone makes mistakes, Liza.” Her eyes begged for understanding.

It was a line straight out of a Filipino soap opera. I had a feeling that the whole situation was a scene from a very bad melodrama I was watching.

I looked around to see if anyone had witnessed the spectacle unfolding in this living room, but it was as if an invisible director had banned all but the actors from the set. Except for us, not a soul could be seen.

I wanted Sylvia to free my hand so I nodded and pretended to understand. Apparently convinced, she let go and, to my shock, suddenly hugged me tight. My nose wrinkled as the pungent mix of heavy perfume and sweat assailed me. I wanted to scream at her to let go but I did not move away.

“Hmm, I think they’re washed enough na.” Tita Loleng said.

Turning off the tap, I placed the tomatoes inside the basin once more. Then, as an afterthought, I told my Tita, “I don’t think she is as pretty as Mom, though.”

Tita Loleng nodded understandingly. She gestured for me to place the basin on the table where she already had the knives and chopping board ready.

“Where was your Dad when she was talking to you?”

“Oh, he was sleeping in one of the bedrooms. Mom did not want to wake him up because they told her he had not slept for two nights straight.”

Tita Loleng snorted. “Haay, your mother talaga,” she said, shaking her head.

I had to smile at that before continuing. “When he saw me, Sylvia had already been called away to entertain some of the visitors.”

“Was he surprised to see you?” Tita knew that I had not wanted to go to the funeral. Actually, she was one of the few people who respected, and understood, my decision.

“No.” I sliced each of the tomatoes in quarters. The blade of the knife clacked fiercely against the hard wood of the chopping board. “He requested Mom to make me go there.” We both knew that I could never have refused my mother once she insisted that I attend. I had even gone out and gotten drunk with some friends the night before we were to leave just so I could have an excuse not to go, but my mom was inflexible. She had ordered my two sisters to wake me up.

Tita Loleng gave me a sympathetic look. “No choice then, huh?” She was forever baffled at the way my mother could be such a martyr when it came to my father and such a tyrant to her children.

Clack! Clack! The knife hacked violently against the board.

“Nope.”

When my Dad had come out of the room, I remembered sensing it immediately—the same way an animal instinctively perceives when it is in danger. I had been looking at the face of my dead half-brother, searching for any resemblance between us. Chemotherapy had sunk his cheeks and had made his hair fall out, but even in this condition, I could see how handsome he must have been before his treatment. His framed photograph atop the glass covering of the coffin confirmed this. Lem took after my father so much that Dad could never even hope to deny that he was his son. I, on the other hand, had taken after my mother.

I knew my father was staring at me but I refused look at him. He approached and stood next to me. I remained silent.

“I am glad you came,” he said.

I gave him a non-committal nod, not even glancing his way.Tita Loleng interrupted my thoughts with another one of her questions.

“Did you cry?”

I shook my head vehemently as I answered, “No.”

I took the sliced tomatoes, surprised to find not even a splinter of wood with them, as well as the onions Tita Loleng had chopped and put them in a pot.

“What next?” I asked her.

“The salt.” Then she went and added a heaping tablespoonful of salt to the pot.

“Is that all?”

“Uh-huh. Your Mom and I prefer it a bit saltier, but your Dad likes it this way.” Then she gestured towards the pot, closing and opening her fist like a baby flexing its fingers.

I started crushing the onions, tomatoes, and salt together with my hand.

“He was an acolyte in church,” my father had said then, finally splintering the silence I had adamantly maintained. “Father Mario said that we shouldn’t feel sad because Lem is assured of going to a better place because he was such a good child.” Good, I thought, unlike me whom he always called “Sinverguenza”, the shameless daughter.

I finally turned to him. There was only one question I needed to ask. “Why?”

He met my gaze. I waited but he would not—could not— answer me. He looked away.

My mask of indifference slipped. It felt like a giant hand was rubbing salt into me, squeezing and mashing, unsatisfied until all of me had been crushed.

“Stop it na, Liza!” Tita Loleng exclaimed. “Anymore of that mashing and you will be putting bits of your own flesh and bone in there,” my aunt warned. She went to the refrigerator and took out plastic bags containing vegetables. She placed them in the sink. “All of these will be needed for the sinigang,” she said. “Prepare them while you’re softening the meat.” Then she took off her apron, “You go and finish off here. I will just go to my room and stretch my back out a bit.” With a tender pat on my head, she walked out of the kitchen.

I breathed a sigh of relief. The questions had stopped, for now.

I poured the hugas bigas into the mass of crushed onions and tomatoes and added the chunks of beef into the concoction before covering the pot and placing it on the stove. I turned on the flame. The sinigang needed to simmer for close to an hour to tenderize the meat.

In the meantime, I started preparing all the other ingredients that will be added to the pot later on. Taking all the plastic bags, I unloaded their contents into the sink then washed and drained each vegetable thoroughly before putting them beside my chopping board.

I reached for the bunch of kangkong and began breaking off choice sections to be included in the stew. When I was a child, before Tita Loleng had chosen to stay with us, my mom used to do the cooking and she would have Meg and I sit beside her while she readied the meals. I remembered that whenever it came to any dish involving kangkong, I would always insist on preparing it because I loved the crisp popping sound the vegetable made whenever I broke off a stem. It was on one such occasion, I was in second year high school by then but still insistent on kangkong preparation, when Mom had divulged the truth about the boy who kept calling Dad on the phone everyday at home. Meg had also been there, breaking off string beans into two-inch sections. Neither of us had reacted much then, but between us, I knew I was more affected by what Mom had said because right until then, I had always been Daddy’s girl.

When the kangkong was done, I threw away the tough, unwanted parts and reached for the labanos. I used a peeler to strip away the skin—revealing the white, slightly grainy flesh—and then sliced each root diagonally. Next came the sigarilyas, and finally, the string beans.

Once, I asked Tita Loleng how she knew what type of vegetable to put into sinigang and she said, “Well, one never really knows which will taste good until one has tried it. I mean, some people cook sinigang with guavas, some with kamias. It is a dish whose recipe would depend mostly on the taste of those who will do the eating.”

I got a fork and went to the stove where the meat was simmering. I prodded the chunks to test whether they were tender enough—and they were. After pouring in some more of the rice washing, I cleared the table and waited for the stew to boil.

A few minutes later, the sound of rapidly popping bubbles declared that it was now time to add the powdered tamarind mix. I poured in the whole packet and stirred. Then I took the vegetables and added them, a fistful at a time, to the pot. As I did so, I remembered the flower petals each of my two sisters and I had thrown, fistful by fistful, into the freshly dug grave as

Lem’s casket was being lowered into it.

My dad was crying beside me and I recalled thinking, would he be the same if I was the one who had died? I glanced up at him and was surprised to find that he was looking at me. His hand, heavy with sadness, fell on my shoulder.

“I’m sorry,” he had told me.

I let the stew boil for a few more minutes before turning off the fire.

The sinigang would be served later during dinner. I pictured myself seated in my usual place beside my father who is at the head of the table. He would tell Mom about his day and then he would ask each of us about our own. I would answer, not in the animated way I would have done when I was still young and his pet, but politely and without any rancor.

Then, he would compliment me on the way I had cooked his favorite dish and I would give him a smile that would never quite show, not even in my eyes.

**DIRECTIONS**: **Study the following questions carefully and write your answers on a separate sheet of paper.**

1. Where did the story happen?

2. Who were the characters in the story?

3. What do you think led to the emotional separation of Liza from her father?

4. What was the most interesting part of the story?

5. What was the story about?

6. Who narrated the story?

1. **LEARN**

***BASIC ELEMENTS OF A SHORT STORY***

1. **Character**– A character in a short story is a person, in some stories an animal, who takes part in the action of the story or other literary work. The way an author develops the character in a story is very important in making the story appeal to the readers. It is said that the heart of the story are the characters. The two most important characters in a short story are the protagonist and the antagonist.
2. The **protagonist** is considered as the main character or most important of all the characters. It is the character who learns something or undergoes some changes throughout the course of the story. Some stories depict the protagonist as the hero of the story, while in other stories the protagonist is not considered a hero as he has done nothing heroic. In any case, the story always revolves around the protagonist.
3. The **antagonist** is the character that challenges the main character. It has no concern for the well-being of the main character. The antagonist may be a person, the nature, the society, or any intangible matter that contends with or creates a problem for the protagonist.
4. **Setting**– The place (locale) and time (period )when the story happens is called the setting. The setting may be based on real place and real time or it may also be based on the author’s imagination. When analyzing the setting of the story, consider where the action is taking place. Most authors use descriptive words to describe the landscape, scenery, buildings, season, or weather to provide a strong sense of setting which will help the reader visualize the story and connect to the story’s plot.
5. **Plot**– A plot is the actual story. It is what the story is all about. It is also the series of events and characters’ actions that lead to the highest point of interest in a short story. The following are the different parts of a story’s structure:
6. ***Exposition*** –This is the beginning of the story. This is where the author introduces the characters, identifies where the story is happening, and establishes the main conflict.
7. ***Rising Action***–This event occurs as you begin to move throughout the story. This is where conflicts start to build.
8. ***Climax***– It is the most exciting part of a short story. This is the part in the story when important decisions are made or important things are discovered.
9. ***Falling Action***– This point occurs after the climax as the problems in the story start to work themselves out. The excitement becomes less and less as the conflict is resolved.
10. ***Resolution***– This is the solution to the problem in a story. The solution may not be what you hoped for but as long as it fits the story in tone and theme, the conflict has been resolved.
11. **Conflict**– Every story needs to have a problem and this problem is called conflict. The main character, also called the protagonist, needs to have someone or something to challenge him. Without conflict, the story will not go anywhere and will not be very interesting to the readers. The main character may be faced with one of the four different types of conflict.

These four types of conflict are:

* man versus man;
* man versus nature;
* man versus himself; and
* man versus society.

1. **Theme**- This is the central idea in a short story and a general truth. This is considered as the author’s message to the readers.
2. **Point of View** – This is the way the story is told or narrated. It is also known as the vantage point that a writer uses to narrate the story. The following are the types of point of view in a short story:
3. **First Person** – the narrator participates in and tells the story using the pronoun ‘I’.
4. **Limited Third Person** – the narrator is not in the story and narrates using the pronouns ‘she’ or ‘he’. Also, the narrator is unable to see into the minds of the characters.
5. **Omniscient Third Person** – the narrator is not in the story and tells the story using the pronouns ‘she’ or ‘he’. In this point of view, the narrator can tell the thoughts of the characters as he can see into their minds.
6. **ENGAGE**

**Activity 2:** Identify the six (6) elements from the short story Sinigang.

1. Setting : \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. Characters : \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3. Plot : \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

4. Conflict : \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

5. Theme : \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

6. Point of View : \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Activity 3:** In this activity, you have to identify the plot structure of the story “Sinigang”. Write **A** for exposition; **B** for rising action; **C** for climax; **D** for falling action; and **E** for resolution. Write your answers on a separate sheet of paper.

1. “Did you meet…her?” Tita Loleng asked.
2. The woman looked to me like she was in her forties—the same age as my mother.
3. The woman, upon seeing my curious stare, had explained, “I am Sylvia.”
4. I finally turned to him. There was only one question I needed to ask. “Why?”
5. I wanted to scream at her to let go but I did not move away.
6. All my muscles tensed upon hearing her name. It took all my self-control to outwardly remain calm and simply raise an eyebrow.
7. When my Dad had come out of the room, I remembered sensing it immediately—the same way an animal instinctively perceives when it is in danger.
8. When her weeping had subsided, she raised her head and looked at me. “Everyone makes mistakes, Liza.” Her eyes begged for understanding.
9. I continued to pick out tomatoes for the sinigang we were to have for dinner. I wasn’t usually the one who assisted my aunt with the cooking.
10. “I’m sorry,” he had told me.
11. **APPLY**

**Activity 4: Read and understand each item carefully. Choose and write the letter of the best answer on a separate sheet of paper.**

1. Who is the writer of the short story “Sinigang”?

A. Marie Aubrey Villaceran B. NVM Gonzales

C. Edith L. Tiempo D. Manuel E. Arguilla

1. Where is the setting of the story?

A. farm B. house

C. cemetery D. garden

1. Who is the main character in the story?

A. Sylvia B. Liza

C. Lem D. Tita Loleng

1. What point of view was used by the author in telling the story?

A. Third Person B. Omniscient Third Person

C. First Person D. Limited Third Person

1. Whose favorite dish is the “Sinigang”?

A. Liza B. Tita Loleng

C. Liza’s mother D. Liza’s father

1. What type of conflict was shown in the story?

A. man versus man B. man versus nature

C. man versus himself D. man versus society

1. What element refers to the events in the story?

A. Setting B. Theme

C. Plot D. Conflict

1. What is known as the essence of fiction?

A. Setting B. Theme

C. Conflict D. Climax

1. What do you call the series of events when things begin to happen in the story?

A. Rising Action B. Theme

C. Exposition D. Climax

1. What element is presented at the final part of the story?

A. Resolution B. Theme

C. Exposition D. Climax

1. What element is considered the high point in the story?

A. Setting B. Theme

C. Exposition D. Climax

1. What element creates the tone and presents the characters and other important facts to introduce the story?

A. Setting B. Theme

C. Exposition D. Climax

1. What element includes the locale and period in a story?

A. Setting B. Theme

C. Exposition D. Climax

1. Based on the text, what does the word “Sinverguenza” mean?

A. a person who is shameless

B. a person who is sinful

C. a person who is calm

D. a person who is reckless

1. What type of character contends with the main character?

A. opposition B. protagonist

C. antagonist D. instigator

1. **REFERENCES**

Tañag D., Darvin K.A., Judit C.J. (2020). *21st Century Literature from*

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1. **ANSWERS KEY**

**Activity 1**

There is no specific answer to this activity. Answers may vary from student to student.

**Activity 2**

There is no specific answer to this activity. Answers may vary from student to student.

**Activity 3**

1. **A**
2. **A**
3. **B**
4. **C**
5. **C**
6. **D**
7. **C**
8. **B**
9. **A**
10. **E**

**Activity 4**

1. **A**
2. **B**
3. **B**
4. **C**
5. **D**
6. **A**
7. **C**
8. **C**
9. **A**
10. **A**
11. **D**
12. **C**
13. **A**
14. **A**
15. **C**

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