

Group Members: _____

Section: _____

Date: _____

Score: _____

Directions: Read the literary text below then analyze it by answering the questions that follow. **(55 points)**

Author: *Estrella D. Alfon (July 18, 1917 – December 28, 1983) was a well-known prolific Filipina author who wrote in English. Because of continued poor health, she could manage only an A. A. degree from the University of the Philippines. She then became a member of the U. P. writers club and was given the privileged post of National Fellowship in Fiction at the U. P. Creative Writing Center. She died at the age of 66.*

Magnificent

There was nothing to fear, for the man was always so gentle, so kind. At night when the little girl and her brother were bathed in the light of the big shaded bulb that hung over the big study table in the downstairs hall, the man would knock gently on the door, and come in. He would stand for a while just beyond the pool of light, his feet in the circle of illumination, the rest of him in shadow. The little girl and her brother would look up at him where they sat at the big table, their eyes bright in the bright light, and watch him come fully into the light, but his voice soft, his manner slow. He would smell very faintly of sweat and pomade, but the children didn't mind although they did notice, for they waited for him every evening as they sat at their lessons like this. He'd throw his visored cap on the table, and it would fall down with a soft plop, then he'd nod his head to say one was right, or shake it to say one was wrong.

It was not always that he came. They could remember perhaps two weeks when he remarked to their mother that he had never seen two children looking so smart. The praise had made their mother look over them as they stood around listening to the goings-on at the meeting of the neighborhood association, of which their mother was president. Two children, one a girl of seven, and a boy of eight. They were both very tall for their age, and their legs were the long gangly legs of fine spirited colts. Their mother saw them with eyes that held pride, and then to partly gloss over the maternal gloating she exhibited, she said to the man, in answer to his praise, but their homework. They're so lazy with them. And the man said, I have nothing to do in the evenings, let me help them. Mother nodded her head and said, if you want to bother yourself. And the thing rested there, and the man came in the evenings therefore, and he helped solve fractions for the boy, and write correct phrases in language for the little girl.

In those days, the rage was for pencils. School children always have rages going at one time or another. Sometimes for paper butterflies that are held on sticks, and whirl in the wind. The Japanese bazaars promoted a rage for those. Sometimes it is for little lead toys found in the folded waffles that Japanese confection-makers had such light hands with. At this particular time, it was for pencils. Pencils big but light in circumference not smaller than a man's thumb. They were unwieldy in a child's hands, but in all schools then, where Japanese bazaars clustered there were all colors of these pencils selling for very low, but unattainable to a child budgeted at a baon of a centavo a day. They were all of five centavos each, and one pencil was not at all what one had ambitions for. In rages, one kept a collection. Four or five pencils, of different colors, to tie with strings near the eraser end, to dangle from one's book-basket, to arouse the envy of the other children who probably possessed less.

Add to the man's gentleness and his kindness in knowing a child's desires, his promise that he would give each of them not one pencil but two. And for the little girl who he said was very bright and deserved more, he would get the biggest pencil he could find.

One evening he did bring them. The evenings of waiting had made them look forward to this final giving, and when they got the pencils they whooped with joy. The little boy had two pencils, one green, one blue. And the little girl had three pencils, two of the same circumference as the little boy's but colored red and yellow. And the third pencil, a jumbo size pencil really, was white, and had been sharpened, and the little girl jumped up and down, and shouted with glee. Until their mother called from down the stairs. What are you shouting about? And

they told her, shouting gladly, Vicente, for that was his name. Vicente had brought the pencils he had promised them.

Thank him, their mother called. The little boy smiled and said, Thank you. And the little girl smiled, and said, Thank you, too. But the man said, are you not going to kiss me for those pencils? They both came forward, the little girl and the little boy, and they both made to kiss him but Vicente slapped the boy smartly on his lean hips, and said, Boys do not kiss boys. And the little boy laughed and scampered away, and then ran back and kissed him anyway.

The little girl went up to the man shyly, put her arms about his neck as he crouched to receive her embrace, and kissed him on the cheeks.

The man's arms tightened suddenly about the little girl until the little girl squirmed out of his arms, and laughed a little breathlessly, disturbed but innocent, looking at the man with a smiling little question of puzzlement.

The next evening, he came around again. All through that day, they had been very proud in school showing off their brand new pencils. All the little girls and boys had been envying them. And their mother had finally to tell them to stop talking about the pencils, pencils, for now that they had, the boy two, and the girl three, they were asking their mother to buy more, so they could each have five, and three at least in the jumbo size that the little girl's third pencil was. Their mother said, Oh stop it, what will you do with so many pencils, you can only write with one at a time.

And the little girl muttered under her breath, I'll ask Vicente for some more.

Their mother replied, He's only a bus conductor, don't ask him for too many things. It's a pity. And this observation their mother said to their father, who was eating his evening meal between paragraphs of the book on masonry rites that he was reading. It is a pity, said their mother, People like those, they make friends with people like us, and they feel it is nice to give us gifts, or the children toys and things. You'd think they wouldn't be able to afford it.

The father grunted, and said, the man probably needed a new job, and was softening his way through to him by going at the children like that. And the mother said, No, I don't think so, he's a rather queer young man, I think he doesn't have many friends, but I have watched him with the children, and he seems to dote on them.

The father grunted again, and did not pay any further attention.

Vicente was earlier than usual that evening. The children immediately put their lessons down, telling him of the envy of their schoolmates, and would he buy them more please?

Vicente said to the little boy, Go and ask if you can let me have a glass of water. And the little boy ran away to comply, saying behind him, but buy us some more pencils, huh, buy us more pencils, and then went up to stairs to their mother.

Vicente held the little girl by the arm, and said gently, Of course I will buy you more pencils, as many as you want. And the little girl giggled and said, Oh, then I will tell my friends, and they will envy me, for they don't have as many or as pretty.

Vicente took the girl up lightly in his arms, holding her under the armpits, and held her to sit down on his lap and he said, still gently, what are your lessons for tomorrow? And the little girl turned to the paper on the table where she had been writing with the jumbo pencil, and she told him that that was her lesson but it was easy.

Then go ahead and write, and I will watch you.

Don't hold me on your lap, said the little girl, I am very heavy, you will get very tired.

The man shook his head, and said nothing, but held her on his lap just the same.

The little girl kept squirming, for somehow she felt uncomfortable to be held thus, her mother and father always treated her like a big girl, she was always told never to act like a baby. She looked around at Vicente, interrupting her careful writing to twist around.

His face was all in sweat, and his eyes looked very strange, and he indicated to her that she must turn around, attend to the homework she was writing.

But the little girl felt very queer, she didn't know why, all of a sudden she was immensely frightened, and she jumped up away from Vicente's lap.

She stood looking at him, feeling that queer frightened feeling, not knowing what to do. By and by, in a very short while her mother came down the stairs, holding in her hand a glass of sarsaparilla, Vicente.

But Vicente had jumped up too soon as the little girl had jumped from his lap. He snatched at the papers that lay on the table and held them to his stomach, turning away from the mother's coming.

The mother looked at him, stopped in her tracks, and advanced into the light. She had been in the shadow. Her voice had been like a bell of safety to the little girl. But now she advanced into glare of the light that held like a tableau the figures of Vicente holding the little girl's papers to him, and the little girl looking up at him frightened, in her eyes dark pools of wonder and fear and question.

The little girl looked at her mother, and saw the beloved face transfigured by some sort of glow. The mother kept coming into the light, and when Vicente made as if to move away into the shadow, she said, very low, but very heavily, do not move.

She put the glass of soft drink down on the table, where in the light one could watch the little bubbles go up and down in the dark liquid. The mother said to the boy, Oscar, finish your lessons. And turning to the little girl, she said, Come here. The little girl went to her, and the mother knelt down, for she was a tall woman and she said, Turn around. Obediently the little girl turned around, and her mother passed her hands over the little girl's back.

Go upstairs, she said.

The mother's voice was of such a heavy quality and of such awful timbre that the girl could only nod her head, and without looking at Vicente again, she raced up the stairs. The mother went to the cowering man, and marched him with a glance out of the circle of light that held the little boy. Once in the shadow, she extended her hand, and without any opposition took away the papers that Vicente was holding to himself. She stood there saying nothing as the man fumbled with his hands and with his fingers, and she waited until he had finished. She was going to open her mouth but she glanced at the boy and closed it, and with a look and an inclination of the head, she bade Vicente go up the stairs.

The man said nothing, for she said nothing either. Up the stairs went the man, and the mother followed behind. When they had reached the upper landing, the woman called down to her son, Son, come up and go to your room.

The little boy did as he was told, asking no questions, for indeed he was feeling sleepy already.

As soon as the boy was gone, the mother turned on Vicente. There was a pause.

Finally, the woman raised her hand and slapped him full hard in the face. Her retreated down one tread of the stairs with the force of the blow, but the mother followed him. With her other hand she slapped him on the other side of the face again. And so down the stairs they went, the man backwards, his face continually open to the force of the woman's slapping. Alternately she lifted her right hand and made him retreat before her until they reached the bottom landing.

He made no resistance, offered no defense. Before the silence and the grimness of her attack he cowered, retreating, until out of his mouth issued something like a whimper.

The mother thus shut his mouth, and with those hard forceful slaps she escorted him right to the other door. As soon as the cool air of the free night touched him, he recovered enough to turn away and run, into the shadows that ate him up. The woman looked after him, and closed the door. She turned off the blazing light over the study table, and went slowly up the stairs and out into the dark night.

When her mother reached her, the woman, held her hand out to the child. Always also, with the terrible indelibility that one associated with terror, the girl was to remember the touch of that hand on her shoulder, heavy, kneading at her flesh, the woman herself stricken almost dumb, but her eyes eloquent with that angered

fire. She knelt, she felt the little girl's dress and took it off with haste that was almost frantic, tearing at the buttons and imparting a terror to the little girl that almost made her sob. Hush, the mother said. Take a bath quickly.

Her mother presided over the bath the little girl took, scrubbed her, and soaped her, and then wiped her gently all over and changed her into new clothes that smelt of the clean fresh smell of clothes that had hung in the light of the sun. The clothes that she had taken off the little girl, she bundled into a tight wrenched bunch, which she threw into the kitchen range.

Take also the pencils, said the mother to the watching newly bathed, newly changed child. Take them and throw them into the fire. But when the girl turned to comply, the mother said, No, tomorrow will do. And taking the little girl by the hand, she led her to her little girl's bed, made her lie down and tucked the covers gently about her as the girl dropped off into quick slumber.

Give/answer what is asked in each item below. Write your answers on a separate sheet of paper.

Part 1: (3 items x 5 points)

1. What is the genre of the text?
2. What important standards of literature are considered in analyzing the literature?
When do you need to draw considerations of the standards of literature? When is not?
3. Knowing these literary standards, values, and genres, how are they helpful in analyzing the text?

Part 2: (40 points)

1. Who are the characters in the story? **(5 points)**
2. When/where is the setting of the story? **(5 points)**
3. What happened in the story? Plot it. **(25 points)**

Criteria	Description	Points
Plot	Correctly identified the plot: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, denouement <i>(5 points each part of the plot)</i>	5
Total		5

4. What literary devices are present in the selection? **(5 points)**

Criteria	Description	Points
Literary Devices	Correctly extracted and identified the literary devices/techniques.	5
Total		5