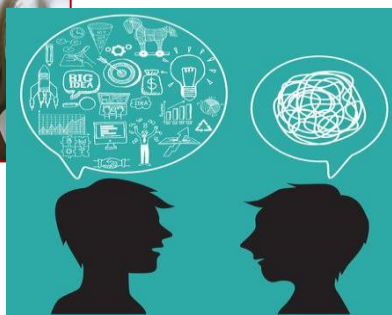
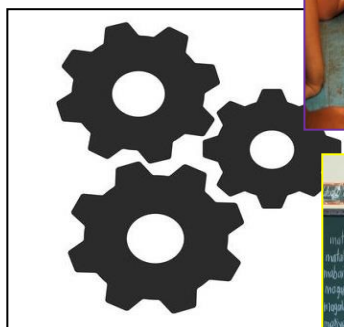


21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World



21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World
Quarter 1 – Module 7: Inferring Literary Meaning from Literal Language based on Usage
First Edition, 2020

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21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World

Quarter 1

Self-Learning Module 7

Inferring Literary Meaning from Literal Language based on Usage

Introductory Message

For the Facilitator:

Welcome to the (21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World)
Self-Learning Module on (Inferring Literary Meaning from Literal Language based
on Usage!)

This Self-Learning Module was collaboratively designed, developed and reviewed by educators from the Schools Division Office of Pasig City headed by its Officer-in-Charge Schools Division Superintendent, Ma. Evalou Concepcion A. Agustin, in partnership with the City Government of Pasig through its mayor, Honorable Victor Ma. Regis N. Sotto. The writers utilized the standards set by the K to 12 Curriculum using the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELC) in developing this instructional resource.

This learning material hopes to engage the learners in guided and independent learning activities at their own pace and time. Further, this also aims to help learners acquire the needed 21st century skills especially the 5 Cs, namely: Communication, Collaboration, Creativity, Critical Thinking, and Character while taking into consideration their needs and circumstances.

In addition to the material in the main text, you will also see this box in the body of the module:



Notes to the Teacher

This contains helpful tips or strategies that will help you in guiding the learners.

As a facilitator you are expected to orient the learners on how to use this module. You also need to keep track of the learners' progress while allowing them to manage their own learning. Moreover, you are expected to encourage and assist the learners as they do the tasks included in the module.

For the Learner:

Welcome to the (21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World) Self-Learning Module on (Inferring Literary Meaning from Literal Language based on Usage!)

This module was designed to provide you with fun and meaningful opportunities for guided and independent learning at your own pace and time. You will be enabled to process the contents of the learning material while being an active learner.

This module has the following parts and corresponding icons:



Expectations – This points to the set of knowledge and skills that you will learn after completing the module.



Pretest - This measures your prior knowledge about the lesson at hand.



Recap - This part of the module provides a review of concepts and skills that you already know about a previous lesson.



Lesson - This section discusses the topic in the module.



Activities - This is a set of activities that you need to perform.



Wrap-Up - This section summarizes the concepts and application of the lesson.



Valuing - This part integrates a desirable moral value in the lesson.



Posttest - This measures how much you have learned from the entire module.



EXPECTATIONS

This is your self-instructional learner module in 21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World Grade 11. All the activities provided in this lesson will help you learn and understand: **Inferring Literary Meaning from Literal Language based on Usage**.

Specifically, you will learn the following:

1. Differentiate literal from literary meaning;
2. Infer literary meaning from literal language through extracting dramatic situations and allegories.
3. Value Filipino resilience.



PRETEST

Identify the term being defined by each item. Use the choices from the word bank then write it on the blanks.

Dramatic Situations	Literal Meaning	Literary Meaning
Allegory	Figurative Language	

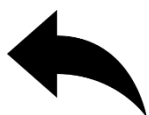
_____ 1. This is the combination of setting, characters and action in the poem which is supposed to engage readers.

_____ 2. It is one of the considerations in inferring the literary meaning of words/groups of words

_____ 3. This is the symbolic representations of the truths or generalization about human existence

_____ 4. This refers to taking the meaning of the individual words

_____ 5. This refers to understanding the meaning of words in relation to the entire text



RECAP

Previously, we have known the similarities and differences of the various 21st Century Literary Genres which are: *poetry, hyperpoetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, drama, flash fiction, blogs and textula*. Unfortunately, knowing their similarities and differences does not equate to literary comprehension and appreciation



LESSON

For today, we shall start comprehending with the goal of appreciating these literary texts through our lesson which is Inferring Literary Meaning from Literal Language based on Usage.

What do you think is the difference between literal and literary meaning?

How could we infer literary meaning from literal language?

To answer the first question, literal means exactly as it says while literary is taken in relation to the literature or the literary text. In short, we have to take the context of the statement or the literary text. That's why, we often refer to google, dictionary and thesaurus or none at all in getting the literal meaning of words or groups of words while we have to consider idioms, figures of speech and literary devices in inferring literary meaning of texts.

So if we hear the expression, "It's raining cats and dogs!" either we interpret it as literal or literary.

Let us further remind ourselves of this concept through this exercise. Decide whether the following underlined terms should be understood as literal or literary. Clue: only one phrase is to be taken literally!

1. Those birds in a cage seem to be fed well. They grow too fast.
2. We are birds in a cage. We cannot say anything against the government.
3. The class president's words are as sharp as knives. Someone from the class was completely insulted.
4. Poverty is a disease – it often leads to a weak body unless you have a strong mind.

Let's begin! Let us compare these first two items as they have similar underlined terms.

1. Those birds in a cage seem to be fed well. They grow too fast.
2. We are birds in a cage. We cannot say anything against the government.

The underlined term is *birds in a cage*. The first statement used the birds in a cage literally as we refer to these birds as pets inside a cage whose owners feed them well as supported by the next statement: *they grow too fast*. This leaves the use of the literary meaning of the same term to the second statement. Let us use the second part of the statement as hint in finding the literary meaning which is *we cannot say anything against the government*. In this statement, the pronoun we is directly compared to birds in a cage since they cannot say anything against the government. This is an example of metaphor! In this statement, people are compared to birds in a cage which means they have no freedom because of the government.

Since we have the first statement with the use of literal term and meaning, and the second item as the literary version of the same term, the following underlined terms shall be taken with literary meaning in accordance to our previously mentioned clue.

3. The class president's words are as sharp as knives. Someone from the class was completely insulted.

The underlined phrase is *as sharp as knives* which is compared to the class president's words. This phrase is a bit easy since we have the use of the words *as* which makes it an example of simile. Now the challenge is to identify its literary meaning which could be better explained with the aid of the proceeding statement, *someone from the class was completely insulted*. So when we say someone from the class was insulted from words uttered, do you think the class president stated something nice or pleasing to hear? Of course, it would surely be the opposite! Thus, this statement says that the class president has uttered offensive words which insulted someone from the class.

4. Poverty is a disease. It often leads to a weak body unless you have a strong mind.

The underlined phrase here is *poverty is a disease*. In this statement, another direct comparison is involved between poverty and disease which is already evident in our second item. This means we have used the same figurative language which is metaphor. What aspect of disease then could be linked to poverty? This question could then be answered by the second half of this item. Poverty could be linked to a disease in such a way that it often *leads to a weak body unless you have a strong mind*. In this sense, poverty would often make a big impact to the body or physical things and one way to defend yourself from being completely eaten by it is to have a positive mindset.

If you have answered all the items correctly, then you are good to go! And to remind you of our topic which is inferring literary meaning from literal language, we'll be paying less attention to literal meaning and consider the context of the literary text instead. But this time, we'll be extracting allegory and dramatic situations in inferring a text's literary meaning.

Allegory is the symbolic representation of the truths or generalization about human existence while **dramatic situation** is the combination of setting, characters and action in the poem which is supposed to engage readers. Linking this two, characters and events represent particular qualities or ideas that relate to morals, religion, politics, etc. For example, we have the dramatic situation of the race between the hare and the tortoise to present an allegory of winning despite opponents' obvious edge but through perseverance and truthfulness.

Let's have a practice by reading a poem titled "Third World Geography" by Cirilo F. Bautista. He was awarded as National Artist for Literature in 2014. Let us infer the text's literary meaning from literal language based on the use of dramatic situations and allegory.

THIRD WORLD GEOGRAPHY

by Cirilo Bautista

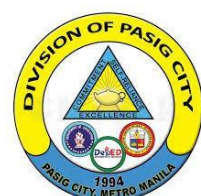
1. *A country without miracles*
2. *sits heavy on the map,*
3. *thinking of banana trees rotting*
4. *in the sunlight.*
5. *The man who watches over it*
6. *has commandeered all hopes,*
7. *placed them in a sack,*
8. *and tied its loose end.*
9. *He goes around carrying it*
10. *on his back.*
11. *When asked what is inside,*
12. *he says, "Just a handful of feathers,*
13. *just a handful of feathers."*
14. *That's how light the burden*
15. *of government is in peace time—*
16. *any tyrant can turn it into a metaphor.*
17. *You kneel on the parched earth*
18. *and pray for rice. Only the wind*
19. *hears your useless words.*
20. *The country without miracles*
21. *tries to get up from the page,*
22. *but the bold ink and sharp colors*
23. *hold it down.*

Let us start extracting dramatic situations. Again, in extracting this, we need to consider characters, action and setting. Visual illustrations could really aid us in better understanding this.

Let us begin with the setting. Which of the words in the first line gives us a hint on the text's setting? We have the word country. This country was further personified by the proceeding lines sits heavy on the map thinking of banana trees rotting on the sunlight. So in this illustration, we see an exhausted man leaning on a rotting banana tree.



Next, how many characters do you think are involved in this text? We have literally two! We have this man as stated in line 5 and another character represented by the pronoun you in line 17.



Next, let us try to describe these characters through the actions and things associated to them, again aided by illustrations. We have this man on the right carrying a sack of feathers, and this man on the left praying for rice.



What particular but literal details were taken to come up with these illustrations? We have the sack labelled with hope, yet containing feathers carried by this man as taken from these corresponding lines:

The man has commandeered all hopes, place them in a sack and tied loose its end. When asked what is inside, he says, “just a handful of feathers, just a handful of feathers.”

Moreover, we have this callout with rice as prayed by a man in kneeling position as taken from these lines:

You kneel on parched earth and pray for rice. Only the wind hears your words.

To sum, we can actually extract three dramatic situations taken literally from the lines of the text: a man thinking of banana trees rotting in the sunlight, another man carrying a sack of feathers and another man praying for rice.

Taking these dramatic situations based on the literal language found in the text, what allegory then is presented? This literary text would present as an allegorical scenario of **oppression** involving an oppressor and those oppressed, because of the opposing message conveyed by this proud man carrying this sack labelled hope and these two men of exhausted face and helpless face.

Now let us start inferring the literary meaning of these lines with identifying words / groups of words suggesting oppression. These are: *without miracles, sits heavy, trees rotting, parched earth, pray for rice* and the worst part, *only the wind hears your useless words*. All these word groups suggest hopelessness, helplessness and deprivation. We'll be discussing the details of oppression present in these lines after answering the next question.

Now the next question is who are the oppressed ones? Let us use the same verses and identify two word groups suggesting the identity of the oppressed. These words may clearly be associated to any country or group of people in particular. We cannot use underlined phrases conveying oppression since most countries have experienced, if not experiencing oppression at the moment. If you have thought of banana trees and rice, then you are right!

Extracting these two products, what country then is involved in the literary text? Let us choose from three Asian countries very much related to them.

- Is it India because of their traditional rice dish serving method called banana leaf rice?
- Is it the Philippines because rice is the staple food of Filipinos and the Philippines is one of the top five exporters of bananas in the world?
- Is it Thailand because of their sweet sticky rice with banana filling as an authentic recipe?

If you have chosen the Philippines, congratulations you know your country very well!

Since we know already the identity of the oppressed, it would be easier for us to cite types of oppressions suggested by the text. We have five faces of oppression according to Iris Young: Violence, Powerlessness, Exploitation, Marginalization and Cultural Imperialism. Let us examine each group of words.

- *without miracles* and *sits heavy* could suggest both powerlessness and marginalization since the people are deprived of what should be given to them as citizens and countrymen and are seen as the society's little ones.
- *Banana trees rotting* could suggest both powerlessness and exploitation since they are not given enough compensation despite the fact that the Philippines is one of the top exporters of this product.
- How about *parched earth* and *pray for rice* could be the combination of violence, powerlessness and exploitation for the same reasons cited earlier.
- Lastly, *only the wind hears your useless words* is a sign of marginalization as the oppressor tends to neglect these people and treat them as useless part of the society despite endless calls for help.

Now let us proceed to describing the oppressor. What particular words / groups of words could help us in this part? These are the following! Lines 6 to 8, 9 to 10 and 11 to 13.

But the real challenge is should we take them in a literal way or should it be the literary way? If you wish to take the literal way, just look at the illustration on previous pages. But if you wish to further enrich your skills and you still have our previous slides in your mind, let us begin!

- *has commandeered all hopes, placed them in a sack and tied its loose end.*



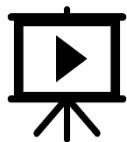
-For oppressors, this is synonymous with extracting all hope from the people, ordering them around and imprisoning them in your command and rules.

- *he goes around carrying it on his back.*

-In connection with imprisoning the people, depriving them of all hope possible, the oppressor seems to be proud of his cruel acts, even asking for attention and recognition.

- *when asked what is inside, he says, “just a handful of feathers, just a handful of feathers.”*

-This verse group should anger you as it suggests the oppressors’ contentment over neglecting the people’s sufferings and belittling the little chances the people have. This is also supported by the last verse group, *“that’s how light the burden of the government is in peace time – any tyrant can turn it into a metaphor.”*



ACTIVITIES

Activity 1

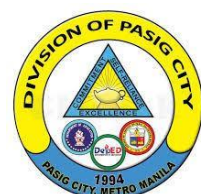
Refer to this excerpt from Third World Geography in answering the items below. State your answers in complete sentence.

*The country without miracles
tries to get up from the page,
but the bold ink and sharp colors
hold it down.*

1. What literal meaning is present in the excerpt?

2. What another allegory could then be attributed to *bold ink and sharp colors* in relation to the excerpt? Explain your answer.

3. Resilience is one of the values Filipinos are known for. How could we embody resilience despite oppression?



Activity 2

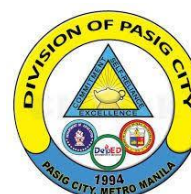
Illustrate an editorial cartoon for the excerpt mentioned above with the theme, FILIPINO RESILIENCE. Be sure to include object from the excerpt mentioned above. Your work shall be graded as follows:

- Concept - 10 points
 - ✓ 10 points if the concept was presented well;
 - ✓ 8 points if few important objects are missing;
 - ✓ 5 points if important objects are missing making the concept vague.
 - Creativity / Authenticity - 5 points
 - ✓ 5 points if guidelines in the creation of editorial cartoon is followed thus achieving both creativity and neatness;
 - ✓ 3 points if some guidelines such as use of minimal colors are not achieved thus losing authenticity.
- **Total** - **15 points**



WRAP-UP

To sum, this entire literary text would give us a disturbing allegorical scenario of oppression – with explicit details of the oppressor and those of the oppressed through dramatic situations. Describe then an oppressor using an allegory and the oppressed using dramatic situations.





VALUING

Filipinos are known to have encountered many trials either man-made or natural calamities – but are still able to stand up with pride anew after these calamities. Filipino resilience is one value to embrace and be proud of.



POSTTEST

Encircle the letter of your answer to the following questions.

1. Which of the following statements uses the phrase *red flag* in a literal way?
 - A. I hate to see a red flag in this room.
 - B. My boss' raised eyebrows caused a red flag.
 - C. He raised his red flag after being teased for quite some time.
2. Which of the following instances could call for the idiom *break a leg*?
 - A. eating out with friends
 - B. taking a college entrance exam
 - C. going to the salon for a makeover

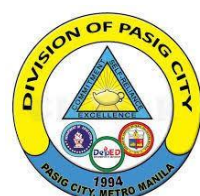
3. What literal meaning could be inferred from this poem?

Your absence has gone through me

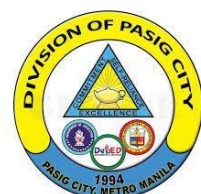
Like thread through a needle.

Everything I do is stitched with its color.

- A. a man pierced with needle
 - B. a man with colorful threads around him crying for help
 - C. a sad man doing a simple chore but with colorful threads surrounding him
4. What literary meaning then could be inferred from the poem?
 - A. an allegory of an attempt to move on after a significant other's loss
 - B. an allegory of an attempt to forget a significant other's loss despite being reminded of it in every move
 - C. an allegory of an unexpectedly great impact of someone's loss to the extent of seeing him in everything you do



5. Which of the following could best explain the dramatic situation used to present the allegory presented by the poem?
- A. the use of colorful threads stitched to a man and his work
 - B. the use of simile to compare somebody's absence to that of a thread through a needle
 - C. a man with a needle pierced to his heart from whose colorful threads attach him to his usual work





KEY TO CORRECTION

Posttest	Activity	Pretest
1. A 2. B 3. C 4. C 5. C	1. The Philippine map trying to stand up but with a personified pen dragging it down. 2. This could be self- serving history written on books trying to coat the weeping Filipinos behind colorful smiles. 3. The answer varies as long as resilience examples are stated.	1. Dramatic Situations 2. Figurative Language 3. Allegory 4. Literal Meaning 5. Literary Meaning

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