Creative Writing
Quarter 3 – Module 7:
Fiction Techniques and Devices

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Grade & Section: ________________________
Name of School: ________________________
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What I Need to Know

Creative writing is used extensively in literature. It is used to capture in words ‘significant human experiences’ or describe in vivid details feelings, emotions, and memories that may be real or not. Literature comes in three genres: prose, poetry, and drama. For this particular module, the focus will be on fiction.

As the word implies, fiction refers to a body of literary work that focuses on events that are not real, and although these were created by the writer’s imagination, attention is given to make them relatable to readers.

This module is made for you to understand some techniques and devices used by creative writing in fiction and it provides you with a world view of subjects, topics, and content that adds to your knowledge.

In this module, you are expected to:
- Identify the various elements, techniques and literary device in various modes of fiction. HUMSS_CW/MPlg-i-11

What I Know

Directions: Choose the letter of the best answer and write these on a separate sheet of paper.

1. It is a plot technique where the story opens right in its climactic stage.
   a. in absentia res    c. in medias res
   b. in flagrante res  d. in tantum res

2. A plot technique that presents the series of events that happened prior.
   a. flashback         c. recollection
   b. flash forward      d. suspense

3. The type of irony that contrasts expectation versus reality.
   a. dramatic          c. thematic
   b. situational       d. verbal

4. Irony that pertains to the difference between what is said and what is meant.
   a. dramatic          c. thematic
   b. situational       d. verbal

5. The recurring presence of an object that has meaning in a story.
   a. allegory          c. motif
   b. created           d. universal
Fiction consists of works that are based on fabricated events and experiences, as opposed to the factual nature of nonfiction. It contains certain symbolic and thematic features known as “literary merits.” In other words, fiction narrates a story, which aims at commenting on something significant related to social, political, or human related issues.

Creative writing employs styles and features to make a story more vivid, and thus, create lasting mental impressions in the mind of readers and audiences alike. In the preceding module, we discussed the five of the elements of fiction, one of which is the plot.

In this module, we shall be focusing on some plot or fiction techniques and literary devices. These ingredients create works that are both entertaining and enlightening.

**What’s In**

Directions: Below is a digital illustration of a white dove with an olive branch on its beak. Study it and answer the succeeding questions on a separate sheet of paper.

1. A white dove with an olive branch on its beak is the universal symbol of?
   a. friendship         c. hope
   b. progress           d. love

2. In a story, symbols contribute or reinforce?
   a. facts              c. setting
   b. meaning            d. structure

3. The above symbol can be described as?
   a. created            c. factual
   b. dictated           d. universal

Source: vectorstock.com
What’s New

Directions: On a separate sheet of paper, copy the following and then place a check mark beside the statement that describes a universal symbolism.

___ 1. The crown or wreath of laurel as symbol of excellence.
___ 2. A spliced young coconut symbolizes loss of innocence.
___ 3. The torch as a symbol of knowledge or enlightenment.
___ 4. Gold as symbol of material greed, arrogance or caprice.
___ 5. Anything in the shape of a heart symbolizes love and affection.

What Is It

The preceding module discussed the plot. The following are some of the common techniques used by creative writers when structuring the plot of a work of fiction.

1. Deus ex machina. It is the sudden, unanticipated appearance of a character that solves the conflict in the story. A good example would be the Fairy Godmother in Cinderella.

2. In medias res. This plot technique involves opening the story right in the middle of a significant event, if not, the climax itself. This is immediately followed by a recounting of the events prior.

3. Flashback. Either a memory sequence where the main character or the narrator recalls past events that would lead into the present. Take for example the following excerpt from Amador T. Daguio’s Wedding Dance.

“Lumnay,” he said tenderly. “Lumnay, if I did this it is because of my need for a child. You know that life is not worth living without a child. The men have mocked me behind my back. You know that.”

“I know it,” he said. “I will pray that Kabunyan will bless you and Madulimay.”

She bit her lips now, then shook her head wildly, and sobbed.

She thought of the seven harvests that had passed, the high hopes they had in the beginning of their new life, the day he took her away from her parents across the roaring river, on the other side of the mountain, the trip up the trail which they had to climb, the steep canyon which they had to cross. The waters boiled in her mind in forms of white and
jade and roaring silver; the waters tolled and growled, resounded in
thunderous echoes through the walls of the stiff cliffs; they were far
away now from somewhere on the tops of the other ranges, and they
had looked carefully at the buttresses of rocks they had to step on---a
slip would have meant death.

They both drank of the water then rested on the other bank before they
made the final climb to the other side of the mountain.

She looked at his face with the fire playing upon his features---hard and
strong, and kind. He had a sense of lightness in his way of saying things
which often made her and the village people laugh. How proud she had been
of his humor. The muscles where taut and firm, bronze and compact in their
hold upon his skull—how frank his bright eyes were. She looked at his body
the carved out of the mountains five fields for her; his wide and supple torso
heaved as if a slab of shining lumber were heaving; his arms and legs flowed
down in fluent muscles—he was strong and for that she had lost him.

She flung herself upon his knees and clung to them. “Awiyao, Awiyao, my
husband,” she cried. “I did everything to have a child,” she said passionately
in a hoarse whisper. “Look at me,” she cried. “Look at my body. Then it was
full of promise. It could dance; it could work fast in the fields; it could climb
the mountains fast. Even now it is firm, full. But, Awiyao, I am useless. I
must die.”

“It will not be right to die,” he said, gathering her in his arms. Her whole
warm naked breast quivered against his own; she clung now to his neck, and
her hand lay upon his right shoulder; her hair flowed down in cascades of
gleaming darkness.

“I don’t care about the fields,” she said. “I don't care about the house. I don't
care for anything but you. I'll have no other man.”

“Then you'll always be fruitless.”

“I’ll go back to my father, I’ll die.”

“Then you hate me,” he said. “If you die it means you hate me. You do not
want me to have a child. You do not want my name to live on in our tribe.”

She was silent.

4. **Foreshadowing.** Details in the story that would give a hint about what
is about to happen in the story or to a particular character, and these
are only realized by the reader or audience through the narration.

5. **Suspense Thriller.** The use of a series of actions, movements,
decisions and events to create a sense of dread or fear for a character
or a set of characters in the reader or audience.
Creative writing also extends in the use of literary devices to make a work of fiction more vivid for the reader, and also to invite critical reading and/or analysis of meaning.

1. **Irony.** Irony is a literary device that emphasizes contrast. There are three types of irony. (1) **Verbal irony** refers to the contrast between what is said by a character and what is actually meant. (2) **Situational irony** pertains to the contrast of what actually happens and what was expected to happen. (3) **Dramatic irony** is said to have been perfected by Greek tragedians in their masterpieces. Here, the readers are consciously aware about the consequences of a series of actions, however, the main characters are oblivious to these.

2. **Symbols.** Symbols are items or objects used by writers to represent an idea, usually abstract values (such as in an allegory) or concepts that characters in the story exhibit through their thoughts and deeds. A **universal symbol** means that across cultures and languages, its meaning remains the same, like how the white dove with an olive branch on its beak represents “hope” or “peace.” Meanwhile, **created symbols** are those that are unique to a literary work. An object or symbol repeatedly featured in a story is called a **motif** similar to how a recurring idea is called a **theme**.

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**What’s More**

**Activity 1: SYMBOLISM TABLE**

Directions: Read the following excerpt from *Wedding Dance* by Amador T. Daguio. Identify objects/items that you think symbolize an idea/concept and fill out the table that follows. Use a separate sheet of paper for your answers.

Could she not, alone among all women, dance like a bird tripping for grains on the ground, beautifully timed to the beat of the gangsas? Did not the men praise her supple body, and the women envy the way she stretched her hands like the wings of the mountain eagle now and then as she danced? How long ago did she dance at her own wedding? Tonight, all the women who counted, who once danced in her honor, were dancing now in honor of another whose only claim was that perhaps she could give her husband a child.

“It is not right. It is not right!” she cried. “How does she know? How can anybody know? It is not right,” she said.

Suddenly she found courage. She would go to the dance. She would go to the chief of the village, to the elders, to tell them it was not right. Awiyao was hers; nobody could take him away from her. Let her be the first woman to complain, to denounce the unwritten rule that a man may take another woman. She would tell Awiyao to come back to her. He surely would relent. Was not their love as strong as the river?
She made for the other side of the village where the dancing was. There was a flaming glow over the whole place; a great bonfire was burning. The gangsas clamored more loudly now, and it seemed they were calling to her. She was near at last. She could see the dancers clearly now. The man leaped lightly with their gangsas as they circled the dancing women decked in feast garments and beads, tripping on the ground like graceful birds, following their men. Her heart warmed to the flaming call of the dance; strange heat in her blood welled up, and she started to run. But the gleaming brightness of the bonfire commanded her to stop. Did anybody see her approach?

She stopped. What if somebody had seen her coming? The flames of the bonfire leaped in countless sparks which spread and rose like yellow points and died out in the night. The blaze reached out to her like a spreading radiance. She did not have the courage to break into the wedding feast.

Lumnay walked away from the dancing ground, away from the village. She thought of the new clearing of beans which Awiyao and she had started to make only four moons before. She followed the trail above the village.

When she came to the mountain stream, she crossed it carefully. Nobody held her hand, and the stream water was very cold. The trail went up again, and she was in the moonlight shadows among the trees and shrubs. Slowly she climbed the mountain.

When Lumnay reached the clearing, she could see from where she stood the blazing bonfire at the edge of the village, where the wedding was. She could hear the far-off clamor of the gongs, still rich in their sonorousness, echoing from mountain to mountain. The sound did not mock her; they seemed to call far to her, to speak to her in the language of unspeaking love. She felt the pull of their gratitude for her sacrifice. Her heartbeat began to sound to her like many gangsas.

Lumnay thought of Awiyao as the Awiyao she had known long ago— a strong, muscular boy carrying his heavy loads of fuel logs down the mountains to his home. She had met him one day as she was on her way to fill her clay jars with water. He had stopped at the spring to drink and rest; and she had made him drink the cool mountain water from her coconut shell. After that it did not take him long to decide to throw his spear on the stairs of her father's house in token on his desire to marry her.

The mountain clearing was cold in the freezing moonlight. The wind began to stir the leaves of the bean plants. Lumnay looked for a big rock on which to sit down. The bean plants now surrounded her, and she was lost among them.

A few more weeks, a few more months, a few more harvests---what did it matter? She would be holding the bean flowers, soft in the texture, silken almost, but moist where the dew got into them, silver to look at, silver on the light blue, blooming whiteness, when the morning comes. The stretching of the bean pods full length from the hearts of the wilting petals would go on.

Lumnay’s fingers moved a long, long time among the growing bean pods.
Activity 2: EXCERPT ANALYSIS

Directions: Read the following excerpt from *Kesa and Morito* by Ryunosuke Akutagawa. Identify plot technique used. Use a separate sheet of paper for your answers.

That was when my plan took shape. At that moment, I determined that I should die in his place. Briefly, my decision brought calm, but when I looked at Morito and again saw my ugliness reflected in his eyes, my resignation vanished. Once again, I remembered that eclipse of the moon, seen as a child in the arms of my nurse. All the dark thoughts flooded back. Then I knew that it was not out of Love of my husband that I had decided to sacrifice my life for him; it was only because I had found a convenient way to atone for the sin of adultery. I lacked the courage to take my own life, but wanted to appear to the outside world as a little better than I was.

Yes, I had caught sight of my hidden motive. At the same time, I realized that another still baser motive lurked behind it. Under the pretext of dying for my husband, was I not seeking to revenge myself on Morito for his hatred and contempt, for his having used my body as an instrument to satisfy his lust? Looking into his face that awful night, I understood myself for the first time, and my heart froze within me. Now I know for certain that I am not dying for my husband. I am dying for myself! I am dying to obtain revenge on Morito for having wounded my heart and sullied my body. Not only have I no purpose in living on; I lack even a worthy purpose for which to end my life.

Yes, purposeless my death will be, but is not now even a purposeless death eminently to be desired. Forcing a smile, I agreed to help him murder my husband. Morito is an astute man and from my tone he must have sensed what I would do should he dare to break his word. But no, he will keep his word: vey soon he will be here… Was that the wind blowing against my shutters? … When I realize that after tonight my torturing thoughts will no longer pursue me, I am quite overcome with relief. Tomorrow's sun will throw its chilly rays on my lifeless body. My husband when he sees me - But no, I must not think of my husband! He loves me, but I lack the strength to return his love. I am a woman who can love but one man, and that man is coming here to kill me tonight. I have been dragged into darkness by my sinister lover. Now even the weak flicker of this little lamp seems to me like a dazzling flame…

Kesa blows out the lamp. Presently there is the faint sound in the darkness of a shutter being opened. The pale moonlight streams into the room.
Directions: Read the texts and fill the gaps. Choose the answer from the words inside the box. Use a separate piece of paper.

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<th>motif</th>
<th>deus ex machina</th>
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<td>fear</td>
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_______ is the sudden, unanticipated appearance of a character that solves the conflict in the story. _______ involves opening the story right in the middle of a significant event, if not, the climax itself. This is immediately followed by a _______ or a recounting of the events prior. _______ gives a hint about what is about to happen in the story or to a particular character. Suspense/thriller uses a series of actions, movements, decisions and events to create a sense of dread or _______.

_______ refers to the contrast between what is said by a character and what is actually meant. _______ pertains to the contrast of what actually happens and what was expected to happen. In symbolism, _______ has the same meaning across cultures and languages, while a _______ is unique to a literary work. An object or symbol repeatedly featured in a story is called a _______.

8
Directions: Imagine yourself being a professional creative writer. You are tasked to compose a short story about life in the Philippines, and you decide to include an object/item that you think best represents being a Filipino, and you wish to emphasize this through making it a motif in your work. What would this object be? Describe its meaning as a created symbol. Use a separate piece of paper.
Assessment

Directions: Read the questions and write the letter of the best answer on a separate sheet of paper.

1. It involves the sudden appearance or arrival of a character that solves the conflict.
   a. deus ex machina
   b. deus ex mundi
   c. in medias res
   d. in flagrante res

2. In the narration of events, in medias res is followed by?
   a. flashback
   b. flash forward
   c. rising action
   d. falling action

3. A plot technique whose aim is to strike fear or dread in the mind of the reader.
   a. deus ex machina
   b. flash forward
   c. flashback
   d. suspense/thriller

4. This type of irony pertains to a contrast between what is said and what is meant.
   a. dramatic irony
   b. situational irony
   c. thematic irony
   d. verbal irony

5. When a character is being sarcastic, which type of irony is at play?
   a. dramatic irony
   b. situational irony
   c. thematic irony
   d. verbal irony

6. A special type of irony where the audience is made aware of the consequences of the actions and decisions of a character but such remains oblivious to everyone involved in the story.
   a. dramatic irony
   b. situational irony
   c. thematic irony
   d. verbal irony

7. Which of the statements describe the use of symbolism in fiction?
   a. Symbols provide an alternative narration to the story.
   b. Symbols determine the time and place of the events.
   c. Symbols create the necessary conflict for character development.
   d. Symbols contribute to the reinforcement of the story’s theme or message.

8. The significance of a motif in a work of fiction is…
   a. announced by the author in the prologue.
   b. adapted by other authors of the same genre.
   c. decided by the characters in the story.
   d. determined by the reader through analysis.

9. A type of symbol whose meaning is the same across cultures and languages.
   a. created
   b. effected
   c. factual
   d. universal
10. The apple in Snow White is what type of symbol?
   a. created                 c. factual
   b. effected                d. universal

**Additional Activities**

**Flash fiction** is a genre of fiction, also called as a very short story, sudden fiction, short-short stories, microfiction, or microstories. Unlike regular short stories that are pages-long, flash fiction is usually limited by a word count, say 500 or 1000 words, however, regardless of its limited word count, the story must still be able to show the five parts of the plot.

Directions: Given the following prompt, create your own **flash fiction**. Use a separate sheet of paper.

Write a story that begins and ends with a bicycle.

________________________________________________________________________
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________________________________________________________________________
### What's More

1. a
2. a
3. d
4. d
5. d

### Activity 1 (Answers may vary but should include)

- mention of flame as symbol of courage or enlightenment
- sounds as the call of obedience to social norms/traditions
- bean pods to refer to life/fertility.

### What I Know

1. c
2. b
3. b
4. d
5. c

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**Assessment**

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