Module: CW Level: 3rd Year Teachers: Dr. GHODBANE

Types of Essays (Revision)

What is an expository essay?

It …

1. …Gives facts.
2. …Explains.
3. …Gives steps in a process.
4. …Presents ideas in logical order or correct sequence.

What are the key words that show it is an expository prompt?

1. Most people enjoy some type of music. Think about your favorite type of music and explain why you like that particular type of music.
2. Sometimes even the best drivers can get lost at times. Explain how you would direct a lost man to get back to the interstate highway from your neighborhood.

You will find these words in the prompt "**explain or tell how**".

What is a descriptive essay?

1. Sensory images are used to describe what the writer sees, hears, smells, touches, and tastes.
2. It paints a clear description of people, places, objects, or events.

What are the key words that show it is a descriptive prompt?

1. Describe your bedroom. Imagine telling someone who has never visited you.
2. There are many tourist spots to visit in Birmingham.
3. Describe your favorite place to take visitors.
4. You may want to tell what you will see, hear, smell and how you feel when you are there.

You must *describe* OR tell what a person can *SEE*, *HEAR*, *SMELL*, *TASTE*, OR *FEEL*

What is a persuasive essay?

1. You are asked to prove something.
2. Give reasons why.
3. Present arguments against your reasons. Show them to be false.
4. Take a stand
5. Ask or call for an action.

What are the key words that show it's a persuasive prompt?

1. Persuade a close friend to donate blood as part of a blood drive that your school is sponsoring for the Red Cross.

2. Some of your kid brother's friends have taken up smoking and want him to start too. Write a convincing letter to your kid brother to not take up this habit.

3. Write a letter to the editor of the newspaper telling why citizens in Birmingham should support a tax increase benefiting the local public schools.

4. You will notice the words *persuade*, *convince* OR *tell why* someone *should* do something.

What is a narrative?

A narrative…

1. Tells a story.
2. Has chronological order and sequence of events.
3. Has action.
4. Has conflicts or problems.
5. Has dialogue.
6. Has characters.
7. Has a definite beginning, middle and end.

What are the key words that show that these are narrative prompts?

1. You and your friend find a big box that is labeled "Do Not Open." Your friend wants to open the box. Write a story about what happens next.
2. Tell about a time when you made a serious mistake.
3. Two little girls found a wallet on the sidewalk. Tell what happened next.

Note the words: write a story or tell about a time, or tell what happened next.

Types of Writing

Introduction

Good and correct writing is important. The ability to write clear and accurate text is the most useful skill that you will learn at university. Whatever subject you specialize in, and whatever career you choose after you graduate, a command of language is a valuable asset. When employers offer a job to graduate they are *always* looking for someone with good communication skills and an eye for detail. In almost any job, you will spend time working with a range of texts. You may produce written reports, letters or marketing copy. You may also give lectures or presentations. If you are aiming for a career in which you can use language stylishly, such as journalism or creative writing, or whatever the type of writing is; it is equally important that you know the rules of good plain English. At university, 'good writing' means being able to produce a clear, grammatical, logical argument to answer a question in an exercise, an essay or an exam. Academic writing should be clear, clean and correct. It should display your knowledge and express your ideas. Good writing is always aimed at a particular audience. Your audience is the teacher who will mark your work. (Hutchison, 2005)

Academic Writing

Academic writing can be defined as the 'structured form of language' written by scholars and intended for other scholars. It is presented objectively and conveys clear information addressed to a particular audience. English academic writing is said to be linear in the sense that it deals with one central point or theme with no possible digression. This is so because the English composition does not develop more than one idea per sentence. Moreover academic writing is achieved in Standard English and its objective is to inform not to entertain (Wikipedia, 2006).

The Department of translation in Hopkins University defines academic writing differently: "In academic writing, the author covers the selected topic from an authoritative point of view. The writing is "thesis-driven" meaning that the starting point is a particular perspective, idea or 'thesis' on the chosen topic, e.g. establishing, proving or disproving 'answers' to the 'research questions' posed for the topic. In contrast, simply describing a topic without the questions does NOT qualify as "academic writing."(2007)The rigorous style of academic writing appears in the strict rules which govern it. As an instance, this type of writing does not allow the use of the first person because the focus is supposed to be on the

topic not on the writer. Some culture-specific feature like slang and abbreviations are avoided. Conversely, the register must be clear, formal and unambiguous; and it is often recommended to use a relatively cautious language. For example, writers are advised to express themselves in the following way:

1. This article *appears* to show ...
2. The character *seems* to be indifferent...
3. He *apparently* disagrees with ...

It seems clear in the examples above that the writer does not express himself in a definite style. He avoids pontificating and does not give the impression to aggress the reader through strong and exclusive terms. It is usually agreed that academic writing is more complex than current spoken language. It has longer words, it is lexically more dense and it has a more varied vocabulary. It uses more noun-based phrases than verb-based phrases. Written texts are shorter and the language has more grammatical complexity, including more subordinate clauses and more passives. Beside its formality, academic writing is objective and explicit. In other words, it is rarely personal and it takes care of the relationship between the different parts of the text. This is the writer's responsibility, not the reader's one. Finally, this type of writing requires from its author to make decisions about his stance on the subject he develops. Wikipedia defines it as: "Academic writing is usually serious, intended for a critical and informed audience, based on closely- investigated knowledge, and posits ideas or arguments. It usually circulates within the academic world ('the academy'), but the academic writer may also find an audience outside via journalism, speeches, pamphlets, etc." (2006).

Cognitive Writing

Cognitive research has highlighted our understanding of the stages within the writing process. It has also identified some of difficulties one may meet when involved in the act of writing. It shows how good writers produce successful pieces of writing because they make use of multiple revisions, while poor writers fail because their first draft is the last. The difference between the two processes is fundamentally is important as it is reported in literature because it raised on the secret
 of being a good writer. It has also contributed in defining the kinds of instructions we should provide our students with in order to make them write correctly.

Several cognitive models have been proposed to explain the complexity of the writing process. The most famous ones are Flower & Hymes , 1981; Breiter & Scardamalia, 1987; and Kellogg , 1996. The concepts proposed show some differences in the use of the terminology, but the consensus is that writing is a cognitively complex and interactive process

made up of multiple stages. They all agree that external and internal factors may influence the process of writing and disturb the writers and the quality of the final product. Flower and Hayes (1981) see the writing process as an interaction of three sub processes: planning, drafting and revising.

Planning. It is the stage where ideas are generated and organized. It is a systematic process of developing ideas and giving them shape. As the First stage in the writing process, planning is a series of strategies designed to find and formulate information in writing. At this stage, one needs to consider all the ideas she or he gets.

Transcribing. It is a procedure for **executing** a preliminary sketch. As the second stage in the writing process, drafting consists in sustaining the piece of writing. It permits to organize the information into meaningful clusters, and discover the link that connects those clusters.

Revising. It is a procedure for improving a work in progress. The third and final stage in the writing process is a series of strategies designed to re-examine and re-evaluate the choices that have created a piece of writing. It follows the preliminary draft and helps minimize the number of mistakes and discrepancies.

Flower and Hayes (1981) specify that the three sub-processes overlap and are repeated all along the writing process.

The second cognitive model, proposed in 1987 by Bereiter and Scardamalia, sees the writing process as a content-problem space and as a rhetorical-problem space. In the content-problem space, the writer solves the problem of generating ideas. Then, these ideas become another problem as they need to be modified till they meet rhetorical expectations. This takes place in the rhetorical-problem. The modified ideas may again introduce a new set of problems to the content-problem space, so that they may be modified again in light of other constraints.

Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) argued that: "this interaction between the problem spaces takes up a considerable amount of cognitive capacity. Furthermore, the ability to address both content-related and rhetorical problems is what separates proficient writers from poor writers." (p. 243).

In 1996, Kellogg defined the writing process in terms of an interaction of three processing Systems. "Each processing system is made up of two sub- systems: there is **formulation**, which is made up of planning and translating**. Execution,** which is made up of programming and execution. And **monitoring**, which consists of reading and editing"(p.182).

Unlike Flower and Hayes (1981), Kellogg (1996) provides detailed information about what goes on in each system and how the systems interact with each other. In this model, ideas and language are already determined at the formulation stage. Then, the ideas and language become the input to the execution system where the writer decides how to execute them. "Once they are executed, the monitoring system looks for a discrepancy and a solution in conjunction with the formulation system. The formulation system starts again for new ideas or language to resolve the discrepancy detected in the previous system". Kellogg (1996) emphasizes that such interaction between these systems is "fundamental to the proposed model." (p. 189)

Types of Writing (cont...)

Science/Technical Writing

Science writing is mainly concerned with writing about science for the general public. Teaching this type of writing implies teaching strategies of finding research subjects, publishing, and analyzing audiences. Students should learn about how to conduct a research project, to present an article and to analyze an audience. They are taught strategies by means of which they simplify the scientific subject using human interest, background information and proper terminology so that they can motivate the readers in reading their paper.

The need of science writing is growing rapidly as technology becomes more complex. Pure and complex scientific information is currently and daily translated to laymen and to non-scientifically minded people. As Blum and Knudson (1997) note in A Field Guide for Science Writers "science writing has become a profession. More and more academic programs are preparing students for work as science writers" (p. 36).

The aim of science writing is to present information about science or technology for a general audience, such as readers of a newspaper or a weekly magazine, or for a more limited audience. Science writing differs from scientific writing in that science writing addresses a broader, general audience; scientific writing addresses other scientists. Science writers tend to focus on recent developments, using simple vocabulary, interviews with experts as well as print sources for information. Quotations from current experts are essential, especially local and well-known experts when the article is intended for a local publication. Opposing views or interpretations are presented to suggest that the writer has tried to be objective.

Science writers read scientific journals to discover information that might be of interest to general audiences. Often, they digest that information, add to it information from other sources and "translate" the information to their more general audience.

So science writing differs from related types of writing, as it concentrates on presenting information about science to the general public in, for example, articles for newspapers, magazines, etc. It involves professional documents such as proposals and instructions and technological applications of principles of science, such as computer documentation.

Technical writing includes in-house documents for use in the writer's company or agency, such as standards and procedures, and external documents such as computer documentation or proposals. Business writing, of which technical writing is a subset, presents a broader range of information related to the functioning of a company or government agency.

Science writing and technical writing (and most non-academic writing) share characteristics, and teachers should help students see the similarities. Samson (2004) advises: "In both types of writing, the writer has to:

1. Interest the readers in the discussion, as they do not have to read the article (or book) and will do so only if they want to.

2. Incorporate the most recent information and expert opinions, and focus on how the information in the article contributes to what is already known about the subject.

3. Present the material at an appropriate level for the audience.

Technical writing students need practice writing for a general audience. However, they often learn to write for expert readers (professors) and get too little practice writing for general audiences. As technical writers, most will usually write for a restricted audience. Doing science writing can help them learn how to present information to general readers, who usually know less than they do about what they are writing about. Science writing students often need help with four main aspects of science writing: research, organization, audience analysis, and writing strategies."(p. 14)

In order for students to identify topics of interest to the public, analyze writers' approaches to those subjects and audiences and develop their knowledge of particular fields, students should read widely in newspapers and magazines. They should be encouraged to ask what they might try to accomplish in an article on a subject. They should be aware of whether they want to announce a recent development, provide information, entertain readers, convince readers of a position on an issue, advertise a product, or accomplish a combination of these or other aims.

Science writers need to have the latest, reliable, interesting and significant information from reading and from experts. Most students need to be taught how to plan and conduct and collect information from interviews, and such interviewing strategy should be built into a science writing course, to give the students experience working with subject-matter experts. Samson (2004} identifies some of the benefits scientific writing students get from regular and broad reading of articles. "They can:

1. Learn about recent developments and new interpretations of scientific information.

2. Identify subjects that editors think their readers will be interested in, and identify developing areas of interest that may hold opportunities for future articles.

3. Identify subject-matter experts.
4. Analyze approaches writers have used to interest readers and present information.
5. Get ideas for illustrations for articles.
6. Identify print/electronic sources of information." (p. 25)

Technical writing is synonymous with effective written communication. Its purpose is to convey a particular piece of technical information to a particular audience. Science writing is essentially writing explanations of scientific subjects. In its simplest definition, science writing is the process of transforming and translating technical ideas into written output that a target audience will understand. A technical or science writer is, therefore, responsible for translating something difficult into something readable and accessible to a large audience.

Cooperative Writing

Although many people in their personal lives write on their own, whether at home or at work, in language classes, teachers and students should take advantage of the presence of others to make writing a cooperative activity, with great benefit to all those involved.

It is generally agreed that cooperative learning is a teaching methodology that offers "principles and techniques for helping students work together more effectively" (Jacob, Power & Loh, 2002, p. 205). This means that cooperative learning is more than assembling students; instead, it has principles and techniques. Balloche (1998, p. 49) explains that the heart of the cooperative learning is the "positive interdependence; i.e. when the group members swim together what helps one member helps them all, and anything that hurts one group member hurts them all." Johnson and Johnson (1999) introduced the notion of individual accountability which puts pressure on the group members to learn and to help others learn. The difficulty of the cooperative writing is that it cannot be successful until students are in tune with each other. They need to negotiate what will be emphasized, how to organize the paper, how to argue or refute, etc.

Cooperative writing works well with both process and genre-based approaches. In the first case, reviewing and evaluation are greatly enhanced by having more than one person working on it, and the generation of ideas is frequently livelier with two or more people involved than it is when writers work on their own. In genre-based writing, two students analyze genre-specific texts better than one would do, and often create genre-specific texts more successfully. Writing in groups, whether as part of a long process or as part of a short game like communicative activity, can be greatly motivating for students.

Nowadays, cooperative writing is taking a considerable proportion of research. In a true collaborative work, each member should contribute actively to the project; he is given an equal ability to add, edit and remove text. The purpose is that each change should motivate others to participate. It is often argued that this collaborative writing does not work efficiently if the goal of the project is absent or vague. Furthermore, if disagreements arise between members of the group, the discussion will be more interesting and the end result will be better. Successful collaboration occurs when each participant is able to make a unique contribution toward achieving a common vision or goal statement. Supporting this common goal are objectives that have been generated by each of the participants. "It is important for each participant to "feel" as though he or she has a significant contribution to make to the achievement of goals. It is also important that each participant be held accountable for contributing to the writing project." (Brown, 1994, p. 110)

Creative Writing

The term 'creative' suggests imaginative tasks such as writing poetry, stories and plays. Such activities have a number of features to recommend them and the chief result is always a kind of achievement. Creative writing is somewhat related to some pride one feels when he ends his product. This is significantly more marked for creative writing than for other standard written products.

Creative writing is 'a journey of self-discovery and self-discovery promotes effective learning' (Gaffield-Vile 1998, p. 31). Quite frequently students show capacity to produce a greater variety of correct and appropriate language than they usually show when writing for routine assignments. While students are writing a simple poem about someone they care about; or while they try to construct a narrative or tell a story of their childhood, they are investigating in their own experience. This provides motivation to find the right words to such express experience.

In order to enhance the necessary pride that may feed the final product, students need to be given appropriate audience. Apart from us as teachers, the whole class can play this role. Any student will do his outmost when he knows that his paper will be read by his classmates, and why not, by all Department students.

There is always a danger that students may find writing imaginatively difficult. Having nothing to say, they may find creative writing as a painful and de-motivating experience, associated in their mind with a sense of frustration and failure. A lot will depend on how we encourage them. It is also important not to expect students to produce long

compositions from the very beginning. They would better learn how to build up creative writing bit by bit starting with simple structures like phrases and short sentences, then moving to longer passages. (Beetlestone, 1998, p.109)

According to Wikipedia Encyclopaedia (2007), "creative writing can technically be considered any writing of original composition... Creative writing is a more contemporary and process-oriented name for what has been traditionally called literature, including the variety of its genres." Creative writing is different from academic writing in that it does not obey strict rules; instead, it is believed to focus on students' self-expression.

It has gained prominence at all educational levels, and it is usually taught in workshops rather than in seminars. Teaching creative writing is a difficult/task because it deals with a combination of cognitive skills (thinking) and affective traits (feeling). Harlen (1992) explains creativity in practice as "a response involving feeling and thinking, creative attitudes combined with cognitive skills. Creative attitudes, or affective traits, will encourage the learner to be curious, take risks, use complex ideas and exercise the imagination. Cognitive skills will allow him to generate process and play with ideas." (p. 37).

Conclusion

In short, EFL students should master all language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The latter needs another mastery of other sub-skills and components which are: punctuation, capitalization, spelling, penmanship, structure, etc. Also, students must be ready to write all types of writing either fiction or nonfiction. The former can be represented as creative writing based on imagination. Whereas the latter can take many forms such as academic writing, which is based on real facts. Hence, the coming sections will be devoted to explain these two types in detail: creative writing and academic writing.

Creative Writing: An Overview

Introduction

Throughout this lecture basic notions related to creative writing (CW) will be explored and highlighted, in order to facilitate the task of understanding and teaching CW. Then, it is necessary to define the concept of CW by showing the relatedness between the two words: 'creative' and 'writing'. A clear understanding of CW depends on the clarification of its key words such as creative (thinking, writing and criticism), critical thinking; its principles, techniques, and ideas. Then, it will be easy to differentiate between CW and other types of writing. In addition, beginner writers face a great deal in getting started; hence, questions like: "from where do I get started?", "where do I get ideas?") come to their minds which need clear answers.

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Creative Fiction vs. Creative Non-Fiction

The main different classifications of creative writing are fiction or nonfiction. This is based on whether a text discusses the world of the imagination (fiction) or the real world (nonfiction). Hence, "Fiction" refers to literature which is created imaginatively. Among the earliest definitions for fiction, the Oxford English dictionary lists "that which is fashioned or framed; a device, a fabric." It is derived from the Latin, which means to fashion or to form. In other words, fiction is the dream of the writer made visible on the page. It may be the writer's lived experience or it may be entirely imagined". Mysteries, science fiction, romance, fantasy, are all fiction genres. Whereas, "nonfiction" refers to literature based on fact. It is the broadest category of literature. Creative non-fiction should: (1) include accurate and well-researched information, (2) hold the interest of the reader, and (3) potentially blur the realms of fact and fiction in a pleasing, literary style (while remaining grounded in fact). Creative non-fiction can be as experimental as fiction; it just needs to be based on reality.

Creative Writing Ideas

As it is defined by (Carter, 2010, p.12), an idea could take many forms, shapes, and sizes as follows:

An idea is like a lump of clay. It can be molded into many shapes. But some clays make good coffee cups, other clays make good floor tiles. Your idea, say, could be about someone starting at a new school. That idea could be turned into a funny rhyming poem or a comic strip, a school drama story, or a more serious free verse poem or monologue. You have to work out what that idea wants to be. It is as simple- and as difficult-as that.

The majority of beginner students in creative writing module have had a difficulty to find out an idea which should be new, unique, and original; thus, this question comes to their

minds "where do I get ideas from? In this respect, creating and discovering ideas is an arduous one to discuss with any certainty. All the questions surrounding the notion of "ideas" were clearly answered by the following experts (as cited in Carter, 2010, pp. 10–11).

For Terry Deary

> Ideas come to you out of the blue, and that [i]s why it [i]s sometimes hard to talk about the writing process. Inspiration is not definable. You can't bottle it, and if you could you would be a millionaire. Yes, there are moments of inspiration, where suddenly you think, that's what I've been looking for. It's very exciting!

Also, Jacqueline Wilson added that no clear and convincing answer in the following statement:

> All writers get asked where we get our ideas from. No writer can ever come up with a reasonable, convincing answer. You just don't know – an idea bobs into your head, just like that.

However, John Foster pinpointed three ways of getting them:

> Where do I get my ideas from? My answer is that you get your ideas in three ways: from your own experiences, from your observations and from your imagination. But once you get an idea – what are you going to do with it, and what happens if you are not writing anything at that time?

What is important is that the quality of this idea and is it sufficient to get only one idea as expressed by Ian Beck:

> An idea never arrives perfectly formed. It has to be built upon. It will arrive as a nudge saying, 'You think about that'. And your instinct just tells you that this idea is worth thinking about. Sometimes one idea needs another to connect up with.

This is supported by Russell Hoban:

> Things circulate in my skull waiting for other things to hook up with them.

Celia Rees confirmed that one idea is not sufficient in the following:

> Often I will get an idea, but it won't be complete. I may have a story or a plot, but it will need more. Then I have to wait until there is something else to add to it to make it whole.

Ramet (2007, pp.3–9) suggested the following ways to get an idea. When deciding to write, the next step is finding to write about by one of the following ways:

1. watching the world go by;
2. keeping an eye on the media;
3. writing aurally and visually;

4. drawing on your own experiences;

5. looking back into your past; and

6. read, read, read.

She provided us with the following checklist:

1. Do you read extensively?

2. Have you set aside a time to write each day?

3. Do you keep a notebook of ideas?

4. Do you have a good dictionary, thesaurus and access to reference material?

5. Have you considered how the use of computers impacts on your own writing ambitions?

6. Are you writing about what you know? (p.11)

In the same line of thoughts, Carter (2010) claimed that ideas are somewhere around us; we just try to discover them: "where do you get your ideas from?' It is what everyone asks of an author. Yet it is an impossible question to respond to with any certainty, except perhaps with the answer anywhere and "everywhere"(p.1).

Creative Thinking and Critical Thinking

Creative and critical thinking skills are considered essential for students (Crane, 1983, p.2). She went on to express the importance of both of these skills: "When reasoning fails, Imagination saves you! When Intuition fails, reason saves you!"(p. 7). Scriven (1979) states: "Critical skills go hand in hand with creative ones" (p. 37). Only by understanding if there is a relationship between these two essential constructs will teachers be able to enhance the capacity of the students to utilize both creative and critical thinking. It is essential to first define each of these concepts to determine if they are correlated. Hence, creative thinking is divergent; it tries to create something new. It is carried on by violating accepted principles. Critical thinking is convergent; it seeks to assess worth or validity in something that exists. It is carried on by applying accepted principles. Although creative and critical thinking may very well be different sides of the same coin they are not identical. (Beyer, 1989, p.35)

Creative Writing Principles

Creative writing should respect some principles which differ from one writer to another, such as (Goodwin, 2007; Martin, 2011; Vonnegut, 2014). Here are some of them that will help beginner students to write creatively and critically:

According to Goodwin (2007), these five principles will be sufficient to write creatively, among them:

1. creative writers should **develop a routine** and find specific place and time for daily writing,

2. each creative writer has to **praise him/herself** and verify the progress by keeping a note of what he/she created every month,

3. Also, **stimulation** is another principle that enables creative writers (students) to continually write new, inventive, rewarding words, they need, to stimulate their senses and imagination,

4. after that, the students need to **get support**, say, teachers, or by looking for local groups in their area, or join an online creative community.

5. students have to **vary their writings**, and do not always write in the same kind of format (genre/literary text). Hence, their writing will improve even more if they try a number of different genres and techniques.

Similarly, Martin (2011) emphasized the practice of both reading and writing, where all ideas must be natural, concise, clear, and original. So, here are a few ways creative writers can improve their writing style and add color to their work. He explained each key word mentioned above as follows:

1. **reading** can help improve your writing style immensely. There is nothing wrong with being influenced by a certain author's writing technique, in fact, you can even take a certain style a few steps further,

2. without constant **writing practice** you can't expect you creative writing skills to improve. Write constantly, even if you think your work is awful. It is not necessary to stick to one genre, even; experiment and innovate. There is a great possibility you'll latch on to your individual style soon enough,

3. use the language and words that come **naturally** to you. Opening a thesaurus and taking our difficult words will not make your writing better; in fact, it makes it pedantic and pretentious,

4. by **being concise and clear**, he means that nobody knows what you want to say better than you do, and most of the time simple, clear sentences make more of an impact than heavy long winded phraseology, and

5. try to **craft original new sentences**. Steer clear from done-to-death wordings and metaphors. You can create interest in your writing by being spunky, creative, and bold in your word choice.

After analyzing the results of four studies, Oberholzer (2014) extracted five principles that will form a primary component of the pedagogical foundation of the envisaged creative writing program. They are listed as follows:

1. writing freedom;
2. creative writing separation;
3. creative writing as an intrinsic practice;
4. student conceptions should form the core of all course design; and
5. the basis of a lifelong writing practice. (pp. 270–271)

Other principles are suggested by Vonnegut (2014) that will highlight this key word in creative writing. These principles are summarized as follows:

1. use the time of a total stranger in such a way that you will not feel the time was wasted,
2. give the reader at least one character he or she can root for,
3. every character should want something; even if it is only a glass of water,
4. every sentence must do one of two things (reveal character or advance the action),
5. start as close to the end as possible,
6. be a sadist. No matter sweet and innocent your leading characters, make awful things happen to them in order that the reader may see what they are made of,
7. write to please just one person. If you open a window and make love to the world, so to speak, your story will get pneumonia, and
8. give your readers as much information as possible as soon as possible. To heck with suspense. Readers should have such complete understanding of what is going on, where and why, that they could finish the story themselves, should cockroaches eat the last few pages.

In sum, creative writing principles can be summarized in the following points:

1. expert writers must first become expert readers. The students in creative writing classes must become aware of the basic techniques of literary expression, including narrative strategies, genres, and aesthetics;
2. creative writers must become more self-aware, craft conscious, and self-critical. The students must learn to revise. As important as learning how to write is the ability to evaluate and rewrite;
3. the students must recognize that creative writing is never simply descriptive or imaginative; and
4. creative writing also involves ideas, themes, questions, and arguments.

Creative Writing Techniques

Knowing some writing styles and techniques will help the students as writers develop and grow. It is easy to come up with creative writing ideas, but to make them polished; they need practice and knowledge. Below is a summary of the different techniques:

1. creating a ***strong plot*** for the story is important, in which it is easy could have engaging characters, a great scene, but if the plot is weak, the reader will not stay interested; in this sense "Plot. (which Aristotle termed the mythos) in a dramatic or narrative work is constituted by its events and actions, as these are rendered and ordered toward achieving particular artistic and emotional effects" (Abrams, 1999, p.225).

2. when writing a short story or a novel, a ***point of view*** is important in establishing who is telling the story in that Abrams (2009) stated: [point of view] signifies the way a story gets told—the mode (or modes) established by an author by means of which the reader is presented with the characters, dialogue, actions, setting, and events which constitute the narrative in a work of fiction. The question of point of view has always been a practical concern of the novelist, and there have been scattered observations on the matter in critical writings since the emergence of the modern novel in the eighteenth century. (p.231)

3. when writing a short story or a novel, a great technique is ***description***. Describing where the characters are, what the weather is like, etc. It helps the writer to provide a mood and visualization for the reader. But coming up with the words is sometimes hard to do;

4. sometimes when writing, there is a need to provide a background for the reader. ***Flashback*s** are a great way to go back in time and establish a past;

5. it is important to master communication among the characters in the story or the novel, "a ***dialogue*** is important in building suspense, conveying the story, and of course setting the mood. "Dialogue brings characters to life in novels, autobiography, biography and narrative non-fiction" (Hamand, 2009, p. 71) . It is a technique that is easy to learn and will help making the creative work more professional. Furthermore, other functions are mentioned by Ramet (2007) "[dialogue] delineates character, moves the story forward, creates conflict, tension and suspense, explains what happened in the past,conveys emotion, [and] conveys the thoughts of the characters" (p. 85).

6. building a mood, and engaging the reader's mind through ***foreshadowing***. It is a technique where writers provide some clues or hints about characters or events that help the reader predict what might happen later on;

7. ***writing prompts*** are sentences or paragraphs that provide inspiration to write;they can be activities or ideas;

8. a lot of students have difficulty with the beginning. A great way to get the creative juices flowing is by using ***story starters***; and

9. ***using real life experiences*** is a great technique because it helps in making the story; or the novel becomes more realistic. It is an important step in engaging the reader.

How to Get Started in Creative Writing?

To start and finish a piece of creative writing are the crucial stages in the creative writing process. Hence, a good starting point for writing any form or genre of fiction is to consider the writer's own life and experiences. A method that many teachers and workshop leaders use is to encourage the students and classes to tell each other stories from their own lives, perhaps significant experiences; events which are meaningful to them, or simply some amusing anecdotes. These oral stories can be shared with a partner or in small groups. Another way of doing this is for classes to record their stories, to transcribe them later and then rework the material into a piece of prose. Hence, the following are some of the useful starting points that will help beginner students in the writing classes:

1. making time to write;

2. giving yourself permission to write;

3. locking the door;

4. making time; and

5. building confidence. (Ramet, 2007, pp.1–3)

Creative Writing Fiction
Novel (Theory)

Novel Meaning and Function

A novel is a long narrative work of fiction with some realism. It is often in prose form and is published as a single book. The word 'novel' has been derived from the Italian word 'novella' which means "new". Similar to a short story, a novel has some features like a representation of characters, dialogues, setting, plot, climax, conflict, and resolution. However, it does not require all the elements to be a good novel.

From the dictionary point of views, " [it is] now applied to a wide variety of writings whose only common attribute is that they are extended pieces of prose fiction…a novel will be between 60-70, 000 words and, say, 200,000" (Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms, 1998, p. 560). Also "The English name for the form, on the other hand, is derived from the Italian novella (literally, "a little new thing"), which was a short tale in prose." (Abrams,1999, p. 190). According to (Klarer, 2004) « [The novel]. . . [e]merged in Spain during the seventeenth century and in England during the eighteenth century. . ." (p. 10)

A novel presents a whole picture as compared to a short story which displays only one aspect of life, or one side of the story. It also shows a vast panorama to its readers to see the story through an age in which it is presented such as The Tale of Two Cities has been written during the times when France and England were going through a lot of changes. Similarly, a novel also presents a conflict and its resolution. For every writer, a novel is a strong tool to present the philosophical, historical, social, cultural and moral perspectives.

Novella

Comparing to the novel in terms of the number of words, pages, and characteristics "novellas run from about fifteen thousand words to about eighty thousand words " (Steele, 2003, p. 4). Morley (2007) added "… novella is a short novel, commonly fifty to a hundred pages long…this allows greater character and theme development than a short story. . . It offers the concentration of a short story and the wider compass of the novel's form" (p. 159).

Types of Novels

Novels come in all styles imaginable, with every author bringing their own unique voice to the table. There are a handful of major subgenres that tend to make up a large share of the market, although there are many other genres (and mash-ups of genres) out there. Here are the major types of novels that students might need to know about such as mysteries, thrillers,

suspense, detective, science fiction, romantic, historical, realist or even postmodern.

Mystery Novels

Mystery novels revolve around a crime that must be solved, often a murder but not always. The traditional format will have a detective—either professional or amateur—as the protagonist, surrounded by a group of characters who help solve the crime or are suspects. Over the course of the story, the detective will sift through clues, including false leads and red herrings, to solve the case. Some of the best-known novels of all time fall into the mystery genre, including the Nancy Drew and Hardy Boys series, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes novels, and Agatha Christie's novels. Christie's And Then There Were None is the world's best-selling mystery novel.

Science Fiction and Fantasy

One of the more popular genres of novels is science fiction and fantasy, which both deal with speculative world building. The lines between the two are often blurred, but in general, science fiction tends to imagine a world that's different because of technology, while fantasy imagines a world with magic. Early science fiction included the works of Jules Verne and continued on through George Orwell's seminal classics such as 1984; contemporary science fiction is a highly popular genre. Some of the best-known novels in Western literature are fantasy novels, including the Lord of the Rings series, The Chronicles of Narnia, and Harry Potter; they owe their debt to European epic literature.

Horror/Thriller Novels

Thriller novels are occasionally combined with other genres, most often with mystery or science fiction. The defining characteristic is that these novels are often designed to induce a sense of fear, suspense, or psychological horror in the reader. Early versions of this genre included The Count of Monte Cristo (a revenge thriller) and Heart of Darkness (a psychological/horror thriller). More contemporary examples might be the novels of Stephen King.

Romance

Romance novels of the present day have some things in common with "romances" of the past: the idea of romantic love as an end goal, the occasional scandal, intense emotions at the center of it all. Today's romances, however, are more specifically focused on telling a story of a romantic and/or sexual love between characters. They often follow highly specific structures and are all but required to have an optimistic or "happy" resolution. Romance is currently the most popular novel genre in the United States.

Historical Fiction

Just like its name suggests, historical fiction is simply a fictional story that takes place at some real, past time in human history. Some instances of historical fiction involve fictional (or semi-fictional) stories about actual historical figures, while others insert wholly original characters into real-life events. Iconic works of historical fiction include Ivanhoe, A Tale of Two Cities, Gone with the Wind, and The Hunchback of Notre Dame.

Realist Fiction

Realist fiction is, quite simply, fiction that eschews heightened genre or style to attempt to tell a story that "could" take place in the world as we know it. The focus is on representing things truthfully, without romanticization or artistic flourishes. Some of the best-known realist authors include Mark Twain, John Steinbeck, Honoré de Balzac, Anton Chekov, and George Eliot.

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Examples of Novels from Literature

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Example 1

Animal Farm by George Orwell

Animal Farm by George Orwell was written in 1945 and published in England. It allegorizes the story of the Communist Revolution in Russia through the characters of pigs and satirizes its degradation into the same totalitarian regime. The story revolves around animals where pigs are the cleverer than others. They bring a revolution, expelling their old master, Mr. Jones. However, after a couple of years, the pig leaders Snowball and Napoleon develop friction. Snowball flees to save his life, and the situation turns a full circle where Napoleon and his cohorts again take a dictatorial turn to run the administration of the farm through propaganda and other strategies. This is a short form of a novel with animals as its characters.

Example 2

The Old Man and the Sea by Ernest Hemingway

The Old Man and the Sea is a tour de force of Hemingway, which won Noble Prize for Literature for him. A model of the realistic novel, the Old Man and the Sea presents the story of an old man who is too fragile to fish alone in the Gulf Stream near the Cuban capital of Havana. However, he hooks a truly huge marlin, which tests his mettle for almost three days. Although he kills the marlin by the end, he loses it to sharks. His extreme fight and endurance win him accolades from the readers.

Example 3

Great Expectations by Charles Dickens

This is one of the best comings of the age novels, which takes the reader on a journey to see the life of a poor young boy, Pip. In the novel, Pip's transformation from a poor orphan into a gentleman living in London goes through various challenges. His mistakes teach him valuable lessons as he realizes what his benefactors and Joe did for him. Parallelly, he falls in love with prideful Estelle and does his best to win her affection. By the end of the novel, Estelle is a widow and humbled, and Pip asks her to marry him, which she accepts. Without a doubt, "The Great Expectations" is one of the best English novels which tells the main characters personal growth and development.

Example 4

Frankenstein by Mary Shelley

Although written in the 19th century, Frankenstein by Mary Shelley is one of the best science fictions. The story of a young scientist, Victor Frankenstein obsessed with the idea of creating life. He creates 'the Creature' and is repulsed by his own experiment. The Creature brings havoc in Victor Frankenstein's life after he fails to give him a partner. Both Victor and the creature meet with a tragic end. The story teaches a lesson that we must never intervene with nature.

Example 5

Tess of the d'Urbervilles by Thomas Hardy

Tess of the d'Urbervilles by Thomas Hardy is one of the best novels of the last century, which explores the role of fate and chance in an individual's life. Tess belongs to a poor family, but her father discovers that their family, perhaps descendants of the D'Urbervilles, a noble family, after meeting Parson Tringham. Taking pride in his ancient lineage, he spends whatever they have and forces his young daughter to work on a farm where she is raped. Later, another young man, Angel Clare, marries her, but after this disclosure, he leaves her. By the end of the novel, Angel returns and accepts her, but Tess is hanged for murdering her former rapist, Alec.

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Novel Structure

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A novel can be structured in a myriad of ways. Most commonly, novels will be structured chronologically, with story segments divided into chapters. However, this is not the only structural option for authors.

Dividing Up the Story

Chapters tend to revolve around some small portion of the novel that is unified by a character, theme, or piece of plot. In larger novels, chapters may be grouped together into even larger sections, perhaps grouped by time period or an overarching portion of the story. The division into smaller "chunks" of story is one of the defining elements of a novel; a story that is short enough to not need such divisions is likely not lengthy enough to qualify as a full-lengthy novel.

Timelines and Points of View

Authors may choose to structure novels in a variety of different ways. Instead of telling a story chronologically, for instance, the story may toggle between different time periods in order to maintain suspense or make a thematic point. Novels may also switch between the perspectives of multiple characters, rather than focusing on a single character as the sole protagonist. A novel may be told in the first person (narrated by a character) or in the third person (narrated by an outside "voice" with varying degrees of knowledge).

Three-Act Structure

Regardless of the time frame, a novel's plot will often follow what is known as the three-act structure. The opening chapters will be concerned with acquainting readers with the main cast of characters and the world of the story, before a specific incident, typically referred to as the "inciting incident," shakes up the status quo and launches the "real" story. From that point, the story (now in "Act 2") will enter a series of complications as the protagonist pursues some goal, encountering obstacles and smaller goals along the way. At the midpoint of the story, there will often be some major shift that raises the stakes, all leading up to the emotional and narrative climax towards the end of the novel. "Act 3" concerns itself with this finale and the fallout.

Elements of a Novel

Character

Character is one of the important elements of fiction. Characters are elements which can be found in a novel. Plot and character are inseparable, because plot is not simply a series of event happens that come out of character to delineate character. In other word, when we want to know „what happened to him or her" and „how did it work out for them", so we should find out the action of the character in a sequence of events. Analyzing a character is more difficult than analyzing plot, because character is more complex, variable, and ambiguous.

Character is any person, identify, or entity whose existence originates from a fictional work or performance. Such existence is presumed by those participating in the performance as audience, readers, or otherwise. In addition to people, characters can be aliens, gods, artificial intelligence or, occasionally, inanimate objects.

According to Edgar (1987) a character maybe defined as a verbal representation of a human being. Through action, speech, description, and commentary, the authors portray characters that are worth caring about, rooting for, and even love, although there are also characters you may laugh at, dislike, or even hate.

According to Steven Croft (2002, p.113) characters are the central feature in any play or novel. Here are some ways to get a picture of the character:

1. What the characters look like (physical appearance, clothing, etc.)
2. What characters say and how it is said.
3. What the characters thinks (often we learn about this from a character's soliloquy).
4. How character acts–watch out for reaction to different situations.
5. How character's words match their actual deeds or their underlying motives.
6. What other character changes as the play goes on.

In their book "literature: an Introduction to Reading and Writing", Robert and Jacob (1987) describe that in analyzing a literary character, the writer begins to determine the character's outstanding traits. A trait is a quality of mind or habitual mode behavior, such as never repaying borrowed money, avoiding eye contact, or always thinking oneself the center of attention.

Sometimes, of course the traits we encounter are minor and therefore negligible. But often a trait maybe a person's primary characteristics (not only in fiction but also in life). Thus, characters may be ambitious, lazy, serene or anxious, aggressive or fearful, thoughtful or inconsiderate, open or secretive, confident or self-doubting, kind, cruel, quite or noisy, visionary or practical, careful or careless, impartial or biased, straightforward or underhanded, "winner or loser," and soon.

Koesmobroto (988, p.67) distinguished two types of character, main or major character and minor character. Major character is the most important character in the story. Basically, a story is about this character, but he cannot stand on his own; he needs other characters to make the story more convincing and lifelike. Minor characters are of less importance than those of the main. The main character in fiction or in a play is called protagonist. In traditional fiction the protagonist is also the hero or heroine, an admirable character that

embodies widely accepted strength and virtues, who is morally good. The antagonist is unsavory enough the world villain or villainess is used. It has often been assumed that characters in a literary work can be judged from four levels of characterization. These four levels are helpful for us to see the very basic description of characters. The four levels of characterization are:

1. **Physical:** physical level supplies such basic facts, as sex, age, and size. It is the simplest level of characterization because it reveals external traits only.

2. **Social:** social level of characterization includes economic status, profession, religion, family, and social relationship all those factors which place a character in his environment.

3. **Psychological:** this level reveals habitual responses, attitudes, desires, motivation, likes, and dislikes – the inner workings of the mind, both emotional and intellectual which leads to action. Since feeling, thought, behavior, define a character more fully than physical and social traits and since a literary work usually arises from desires in conflict, the psychological level is the most essential parts of characterized.

4. **Moral:** moral decisions more clearly differentiate characters than any other level of characterization. The choices made by a character when he is faced with a moral crisis show whether he is selfish, a hypocrite, or he is the one who always acts according to his belief. A moral decision usually causes a character to examine his own motives and values, and in the process his true nature is revealed both to himself and to the readers.

Forster (1990, pp.73-80) distinguish two kinds of characters. Those are:

1. **Flat.** A flat character is constructed round a single idea or quality; he is unchanging, static; at the end of the novel he is essentially what he has been throughout. His every response is predictable; the readers can anticipate exactly how the character will react.

2. **Round.** Quite the opposite is a character portrayed in the round. He is profoundly altered by his experiences. His responses take us by surprise. He doesn't embody a single idea or quality, but is much more complex. A round character is a major character in a work of fiction that encounters conflict and is changed by it. Round characters tend to be more fully developed and described than flat, or static, characters. If you think of the characters you most love in fiction, they probably seem as real to you as people you know in real life. This is a good sign that they are round characters. A writer employs a number of tools or elements to develop

a character, making him or her round, including description and dialogue.

More specifically, the changes that we are referring to as being "undergone" here are not changes in circumstances, but changes in some sense *within* the character in question –changes in insight or understanding (*of* circumstances, for instance), or changes in commitment, in values. The change (or lack of change) at stake in this distinction is a change "in" the character (nature) of the character (fictional figure).

Plot

Plot is one of the elements of fiction and organized the sequence of events and actions that make up the story. A novelist uses plot to arrange the sequence of events. In most stories, these events arise out of conflict experienced by the main character. The conflict may come from something external, like a dragon or an overbearing mother, or it may stem from an internal issue, such as jealousy, loss of identity, or overconfidence. As the character makes choices and tries to resolve the problem, the story's action is shaped and plot is generated. In some stories, the author structures the entire plot chronologically, with the first event followed by the second, third, and so on, like beads on a string. However, many other stories are told with flashback techniques in which plot events from earlier times interrupt the story"s "current" events. According to Foster: 18

"A plot is a narrative of events the emphasis falling on causality. The king died and the queen died of grief is not plot, the time sequence is preserved, but the sense of causality overshadows it" (Foster, 1980, p.87).

Plot must be effective and it includes a sequence of incidents that bear a significant causal relationship to each other. Causality is an important feature of realistic fictional plot because something happens because of a result something else. In other words, it's what mostly happened in the story or novel or what the story's general theme is based on, such as the mood, characters, setting, and conflicts occurring in a story. An intricate, complicated plot is known as an imbroglio, but even the simplest statements of plot can have multiple inferences, such as with songs the ballad tradition.

Talking about plot means we talk about the actions or events that are usually resolved at the end of a story. The fictional plot maybe a struggle between opposing forces, love and many others and it is usually resolved by the end if the story.

There are five essential parts of plot:

a) Exposition - The beginning of the story where the characters and the setting is revealed. The exposition is the introduction to the characters and setting of the story. The exposition hooks the reader, providing enough interest and information to the intended audience to encourage the reader to continue reading.

b) Rising Action - This is where the events in the story become complicated and the conflict in the story is revealed (events between the introduction and climax). The rising action introduces the conflict or problem in the story. This part of the plot tells us what it is that the main character or protagonist is facing. During the rising action, the main character struggles with this conflict or problem. The conflict may be:

1. Character vs. character: the problem the protagonist faces is one involving another character.
2. Character vs. society: the protagonist faces a problem involving something in the society in which they live (example: racism).
3. Character vs. self: the character has some internal struggle inside themselves.
4. Character vs. nature: the protagonist struggles with some natural force (tornado, harsh climate, etc.).

c) Climax -the climax is the highest point of the story where the conflict or problem changes or is resolved. Something happens in the climax to create a turning point for the characters in the story.

d) Falling action - The falling action is the series of events which take place after the climax; it is where the protagonist must react to the changes that occur during the climax of the story. The events and complications begin to resolve them. The reader knows what has happened next and if the conflict was resolved or not (events between climax and denouement).

e) Denouement -This is the final outcome or untangling of events in the story. The part of a story or drama which occurs after the climax and which establishes a new norm, a new state of affairs-the way things are going to be from then on. The author often ties up the loose ends of the story to have the plot reach a conclusion.

In a novel or a story, the events maybe rise and fall repeatedly and actually a plot develops a series of complications or intensification of the conflict that leads to a moment of great tension. Sometimes the author will use some techniques in writing the plot to make the story more interesting or to add a twist or turn. Foreshadowing is where the author may hint at what might happen in the future. ***Flashback*** is where the author might tell us something

that has happened in the past to help explain the present. **Irony** is when the author has something happen in the story that is the opposite of what the reader expects.

In general, plot can be divided into two types, they are closed and open. This division is based on the way how an author presents the resolution of his story, they are:

a. **Closed plot:** in this type of the plot the end of the story is clear because the author presents a definite resolution of conflict. Most narrative works use closed plot, because the end of the story is clear, readers do not have to think a lot about it.

b. **Open plot:** this type of plot has little or no resolution at all. The author, however, creates some clues in the story that will lead his readers to conclude the resolution of the story.

Setting

As it is defined by (Abraham, 1969) "The of a narrative or dramatic work is the general locate, historical time, and a social circumstances in which its action occurs, the setting of an episode or scen within a work is the particular physical location in which it takes place" (p.75). The setting is not only shows the place or time of the sequence of events, but it also expresses the character in a story. For example: the setting describes in a house, and then the house will express the character of the owner. In this case, we can see from the interior of the house, if the owner is a rich man then his house is big and filled in the expansive things. According to Rene Wellek and Warren through their book *Theory of Literature* describe that,

"Setting is environment and environment especially domestic interior, maybe viewed as metonymic, or metaphoric, expression of character" (1977, p.221). Setting is the natural, manufactured, political, and temporary environment, including everything that characters know and own. Like all human beings, fictional characters do not exist in isolation. Just they become human by interacting with other characters, they gain identity because of their cultural and political allegiances, their possessions, their jobs and their location where they live and move and have their being.

Stories must, therefore, necessarily include description of places, objects, and backgrounds. So, setting includes the time, location, and everything in which a story takes place, and initiates the main backdrop and mood for a story. Setting has been referred to as story world or milieu to include a context (especially society) beyond the immediate surroundings of the story. Elements of setting may include culture, historical period, geography, and hour. Along with plot, character, theme, and style, setting is considered one of the fundamental components of fiction. A setting is the time, place and social environment a story takes place. Writers describe the world they know. Sights, sounds, colors, and textures

are all vividly painted in words as an artist paints images on canvas. The writer imagines a story to be happening in a place that is rooted in his or her mind. The location of a story's actions, along with the time in which it occurs, is the setting. Setting is created by language. How many or how few details we learn is up to the author. Many authors leave a lot of these details up to the reader's imagination.

Setting is a key role in plot, as in man vs. nature or man vs. society stories. In some stories the setting becomes a character itself. In such roles, setting may be considered a plot device or literary device. The term "setting" is often used to refer to the social milieu, in which the events of a novel occur. Characters may either helped or hurt by their surroundings, and they may fight about possession and goals. Further, as characters speak with each other, they reveal the degree to which they share the custom and ideas of their times.

Nature and the outdoors. The natural world is an obvious location of many narratives and plays. It is therefore important to note natural surroundings (hills, valleys, mountains, meadows, fields, trees, lakes, streams), living creatures (birds, dogs, horses, snakes), and also conditions in which things happen (sunlight, darkness, calm, wind, rain, snow, storm, heat, cold) –any or all of which may influence character and action.

Objects of human manufacture and construction. To reveal or highlight qualities of character, and also to make fiction life, authors include detail about buildings and objects of human manufacture and construction. Houses, both interiors, are common, as are possessions such as walking sticks, fences, park benches, toys, automobiles, hair ribbon, necklace, and so on.

Cultural conditions and assumption. Just as physical setting influence characters, so do cultural conditions and assumptions, such as characters live, the primitive beliefs, human sacrifice, modern scientific beliefs, and so on.

Benefits of Using Novels   to Teach Creative Writing

The use of a novel is a beneficial technique for mastering not only linguistic system, but also life in relation to the target language. In a novel, the characters reflect what people really perform in daily lives. Novels not only portray, but also enlighten human lives. Using a novel in a foreign language class offers the following educational benefit.

1. develops the advanced level readers' knowledge about different cultures and different groups of people,
2. increases the students' motivation to read owing to being an authentic material,
3. offers real life / real life like settings,
4. gives the students the opportunity to make use of their creativity,

5. improves critical thinking skills,
6. paves the way for teaching the target language culture, and
7. enables the students to go beyond what is written and dive into what is meant. (Hişmanoğlu, 2005, p.63).

Helton, Asamani, and Thomas (1998, pp.1–5) expanded the list of the benefits by focusing on imagination,emotions of the characters, the mastery of the skills (oral or written) that will enable them to acquire information, process this knowledge, identify problems, formulate alternatives, and arrive at meaningful, thoughtful, effective decisions and solutions. Also the focus encompasses the holistic learning and critical thinking via activities beginning with basic comprehension and writing, to present a unique way of teaching reading by getting the students involved and excited about the reading process.

When selecting a novel to be used in the foreign language class, the language teacher should pay attention to whether the novel has an intriguing story that will be of interest to the entire class. Themes and settings captivating their imagination and exploring the human condition should be included in the nature of the selected novels. A novel should have a powerful, fast-paced plot and interesting, well delineated, memorable characters. The content of the novel should be suitable for the students' cognitive and emotional levels. Specific themes and concepts being developed in class should also be incorporated within the novel. (Hişmanoğlu, 2005, p.64)

When assessing comprehension, teachers may employ novel tests requiring the students to develop the sub-skills of written language like spelling, handwriting, grammar, and punctuation. Essay type tests written by teachers help the students to gradually improve their skills in writing and organizing material into paragraphs with acceptable sentence structure. The tests are made up of not only fact-based questions serving as a basis of evaluating comprehension, but also open-ended questions developing critical thinking abilities.

The open-ended questions enable the students to predict outcomes, make comparisons and contrasts, and draw conclusions. Class discussions of each novel event should comprise the main idea and supporting details, including who, what, when, where, and how. Details of various social issues such as sexual harassment and abortion, which are often an integral part of the plot, can provoke interesting debate. Discussions can also facilitate vocabulary development (Helton, Asamani, &Thomas 1998, pp.1–5).

In sum, the use of novels is a very beneficial technique in today's foreign language classes. If selected carefully, using a novel makes the students' reading lesson motivating, interesting and entertaining. Though many students find reading a novel written in a target language difficult, boring, demotivating, a novel is a very effective way of building vocabulary and developing reading comprehension skills. It is through reading that the

students broaden their horizons, become familiar with other cultures, and hence develop their intercultural communicative competence, learning how to view the world from different perspectives. The result will be the possession of critical thinking and writing (Hişmanoğlu, 2005, p.64).

Short Story (Theory and Practice)

Introduction

For many writers the short story is the perfect medium. While writing a novel can be a hard task, just about anybody can craft and most importantly finish a short story? That does not mean that short stories are easy to write, or that they aren't as artistic and valuable as novels. With practice, patience, and a mind of imagination, you could be the next best-selling author. All of us love reading for pleasure or entertainment specially short stories, and when we talk about a wonderful meaningful objective short story. Thus, we need first to know at least the definition, history, features, and elements of a good short story, in order to be a good writer.

Definition of a Short Story

Many researchers such as (Poe, 1984*; Abrams, 1999; Cuddon, 1999;* Browns, 1997) have defined the short story as a fictional work, usually written in narrative prose. It is emerged and traced from earlier oral storytelling traditions in the 17th century; it becomes a popular form of literature in the present time. A short story has almost all the same characteristics and the elements of the novel, but in a different and limited way to bring their good effect.   A short story concentrates on a few numbers of characters, creating a single effect or mood. It is less complex than the novel. Usually a short story focuses on one incident; has a single plot, a single setting; and covers a short span of time. Short stories have no fixed length. The order of exposition, conflict, intensifying action, crisis, climax, resolution, etc. may change from writer to writer. In modern times such order may or may not be followed by the writers. The form of the short story can be used by each writer in a different and innovative way.

According to Holman (1980): "A short story is a relatively brief fictional narrative in prose. It may range in length from the short-short story of 500 words up to the 'long-short story' of 12,000 to 15,000 words" (p. 417). Also, it is defined by Mikics (2007) as "a fictional form used early in European literature, and flourishing in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries" (pp.276–277). Furthermore, Steele (2003) gave some characteristics of short stories claiming " . . . short fiction is an exacting form. . . Short stories must be kept on a strict diet. Every word counts. The best short stories employ a precision and economy reminiscent of poetry" (p.4). In support of this idea, Morley (2007) added "the short story is a place of order, resonance and closure. Language, imagery and form are super-concentrated" (p.157).

Why Use Short Stories with the Language Learners?

The notion that the main objective of EFL teaching is to help students to communicate fluently in the target language because most teachers still believe that an EFL class should focus on mastering linguistic elements only. However, recent trend in EFL teaching indicates the necessity of integrating literature because it is rich potential to provide an authentic model of language use. Among literary genres, short stories seem to be the most suitable choice for this due to its potential to help students enhance the four skills—listening, speaking, reading and writing—more effectively because of the motivational benefit embedded in the stories.

Why Short Stories?

Despite its benefits for students, some objections are always raised against the use of literature in schools and universities due to overcrowded classes, overloaded syllabus and limited time—some problems commonly met in elementary to high public schools in almost all developing countries. First, the deviated and figurative language of poetry necessitates very long time to grasp. Second, the length of novel will make it difficult for such classes to finish. Finally, drama can be used in classes, but it will be difficult to act out a play in crowded classes within limited course hours. Considering these objections, it is obvious that among literary forms, short-story seems to be the most suitable one to use in schools and universities. Since it is **short** and aims at giving **a 'single effect'**, there is usually **one plot**, a **few characters**; there is **no detailed description** of setting. So, it is easy for the students to follow the story line of the work.

This reason, that short stories are the most suitable literary genre to use in English teaching due to its shortness, is supported by Collie and Slater (1991) when they list four advantages of using short stories for language teachers. First, short stories are practical as their **length is long enough to cover entirely in one or two class sessions**. Second, short stories are **not complicated** for students to work with on their own. Third, short stories have a **variety of choice for different interests and tastes.** Finally, short stories can be **used with all levels** (beginner to advance), **all ages** (young learners to adults) and **all classes**. In brief, it helps us to improve our level of three of the most important aspects of the English language: reading, learn new words and how to express in a proper manner.

Distinctive Features of a Short Story

1. They are **short** and can usually be read at a **single sitting**. This means that writers have to curtail description and ensure that the action moves swiftly. Unnecessary words are simply omitted. **(1.000 – 20.000 words) of length**; the 'regular' short story, usually found in periodicals or anthology collections. They tend to have

single focus: Writers of all full length novels can allow characters to develop and change as time passes. They develop a complex plot and include some interesting sub plots and pay attention to background details. Characters; settings; themes; atmosphere all of these can be developed in a novel. However, with a short story the focus is usually on only one of these aspects.

2. Characters **are few** in number: Characters have to be introduced sparingly into short stories because each new character, usually requires background information and at least a brief explanation of his or her presence. No unnecessary character can be introduced in the short story.

3. There is often a **surprise ending**: Short stories frequently have an **unexpected** twist at the end, but plausible endings.

4. They usually end at or soon after the climax: While a novel may reach its climax and then take a chapter or two to tie up all the loose ends, the short story will often leave much the reader's imagination.

5. It depicts a decisive moment of life and it has a simple plot.

6. It provides a unified impression of tone and effect.

Why Using Short Stories in Teaching Creative Writing?

Short fiction is a supreme resource for observing not only language but life itself. In short fiction, characters act out all the real and symbolic acts people carry out in daily lives, and do so in a variety of registers and tones. The world of short fiction both mirrors and illuminates human lives. (Sage, 1987, p.43) The inclusion of short fiction in the teaching of creative writing, especially to EFL students, offers the following educational benefits (Arıoğul, 2001, pp.11-18):

1. makes the students' reading task easier due to being **simple and short** when compared with the other literary genres,

2. enlarges the advanced level readers' worldviews about different cultures and different groups of people,

3. provides more creative, encrypt, challenging texts that require personal exploration supported with prior knowledge for advanced level readers,

4. motivates learners to read due to being an **authentic material**,

5. offers a world of wonders and a world of mystery,

6. gives students the chance to use their **creativity**,

7. promotes **critical thinking skills**,

8. facilitates teaching a foreign culture (i.e. serves as a valuable instrument in attaining cultural knowledge of the selected community,

9. makes students feel themselves comfortable and free,

10. helps students coming from various backgrounds communicate with each other because of its **universal language**,

11. helps students to go beyond the surface meaning and **dive** into underlying meanings,

12. acts as a perfect vehicle to help students understand the positions of themselves as well as the others by transferring these gained knowledge to their own world.

In brief, the use of a short story seems to be a very helpful technique in today's EFL classes. As it is **short**, it makes the students' reading task and the teacher's coverage easier. An important feature of short fiction is its being **universal.** To put it differently, students all over the world have experienced stories and can relate to them. Moreover, short fiction, like all other types of literature, makes contribution to the development of cognitive analytical abilities by bringing the whole self to bear on a compressed account of a situation in a single place and moment. (Sage, 1987, p. 43)

Basic Elements of the Short Story

As any other literature sorts; the short story has a basic elements to control and arrange the form and the logic art in the short story.

Character and Characterization.

The character is the name of a literary genre; it is a short, and usually witty, sketch in prose of a distinctive type of person. Characters are the persons represented in a dramatic or narrative work, who are interpreted by the reader as being endowed with particular moral, intellectual, and emotional qualities by inferences from what the persons say and their distinctive ways of saying it—the dialogue and from what they do—the action. The grounds in the character's temperament, desires, and moral nature of their speech and actions are called their motivation (Abrams, 1999, pp.32–33).

As cited in (Abrams, 1999, p.33), Forster distinguished between two types of characters ; A *flat character* (also called a type, or "two-dimensional") is built around "a single idea or quality" and is presented without much individualizing detail, and therefore can be fairly adequately described in a single phrase or sentence. A *round character* is complex in temperament and motivation and is represented with subtle particularity; such a character,

therefore is as difficult to describe with any adequacy as a person in real life, and like real persons, is capable of surprising us.

Every short story requires the central character who is motivated to take action, or react to an outside force, in order to achieve some purpose. Many short stories also include one or more secondary characters who are part of the story, but not central to it. The writer can create several types of characters, primary or secondary, flat or round, static or dynamic, even an antihero.

What is characterization? It refers to the methods that the writer puts to use, in order to develop the main character and supporting characters within a story. In short fiction, the writer can employ two methods: Direct characterization or indirect characterization.

Direct Characterization. The writer tells the reader about the character's personality using the narrator of the story, another character, or the main character revealing aspects about himself/herself.

Indirect Characterization. The writer reveals to the reader what the character's personality through the thoughts, feeling, and actions of the character. The writer can do this in several ways:

1. Describing the appearance of the character.
2. Describing the character's actions/reactions/behavior.
3. Revealing what the character is thinking, such as stream of consciousness or interior monologue.
4. Using dialogue.
5. Describing the reactions of other characters.

Theme

The theme of a short story is simply its meaning. It is the main idea explored in the story by the writer. It answers the question: *What did you learn about the human condition or human nature? How Can You Identify the Theme of a Short Story?* Sometimes a writer crafts a story with a central idea, in which the theme is easy to identify and understand—such as love, hatred, death.

Setting

The setting means time and place that form the background for the story.

1. Place: Geographical location. Where is the action of the story taking place?
2. Time: When is the story taking place? (historical period, time of day, year, etc)
3. Weather Conditions: Is it rainy, sunny, stormy, etc?

4. Social Conditions: What is the daily life of the characters like? Does the story contain local color (writing that focuses on the speech, dress, mannerisms, customs, etc. of a particular place)?

5. Mood or Atmosphere: What feeling is created at the beginning of the story? Is it bright and cheerful or dark and frightening?

Plot

The plot is how the author arranges events to develop his basic idea; The structure of a short story plot follows a pattern with a beginning, middle, and end. Each of the three parts of the story fulfills a distinct purpose.

1. **Beginning**. Here the author hooks the reader by introducing the main characters and their goals, the setting, and the main conflict. The mood and tone are set at the beginning, and should be consistent throughout the story. The first sentence must be interesting.

2. **Middle.** This is the arc of the story, where it is essential to stay on the story track. Here a series of events or complications occur, leading to an increase in the tension. This is also where the characters change and grow as they deal with the conflicts they face.

3. **End.** Is the point after which nothing else of significance happens in the story. Here the main conflict is resolved, and the loose ends are tied up. Tension falls quickly, and a good ending leaves the readers.

Types of Ending

Happy. Here the main character wins etc, and everything works out.

Sad. Where the main character loses, etc., and things have not worked out (e.g. King of the Castle)

Bittersweet. Where some things work out, but others do not (e.g. The Match).

Ironic. Where things work out in the way that characters had planned to avoid (e.g. Animal Farm)

Twist in the Tale. An unexpected or surprise ending (e.g. many Roald Dahl short stories).

Cliffhanger. Where the reader is left to supply the ending (e.g. The Italian Job).

Multiple. Where the writer supplies various endings and the reader has to choose (e.g. Freaky Friday; French Lieutenant's Woman).

Sequel ending. Where all is not resolved (e.g. the baddie gets away) and room is left for a follow-up.

Your choice of Ending has to take into account **both** the expectations set up in the beginning and the way in which you have built the story up in the Middle.

Structure

You have a choice of how you put your story together

1. In **a linear** fashion - where the story is told from beginning to end.
2. In a **retrospective** fashion - (e.g. flashback) where you start the story at or near the end, return to the beginning and then work towards the end.
3. In a **fragmented** fashion – where the bits of the story are told, but not necessarily in the order that they occur.

Dialogue

'Dialogue' is another word for talk or speech in fiction, and without it, stories would be very dull. Dialogue is vital in fiction and it serves as one of the major ways that a writer has to bring stories to life. Dialogue has many roles to play within stories, including:

1. to shape and form characters;
2. to give the reader an insight into what the characters think and feel;
3. to provide first-hand experience of how the characters behave;
4. to allow the characters to express themselves;
5. to develop the plot and to allow the story to progress; and
6. to allow conflict to occur between characters.

For many people, dialogue is one of the easiest things to write. However, it is important to make sure that a story is not overtaken by dialogue, and that every line of dialogue serves a purpose. In fiction is a verbal exchange (conversation, discussion) between two or more characters. If there is only one character, who is talking to himself in his mind, it is known as interior monologue. Dialogue helps us to know the type of character (Carter, 2010, p.93).

Style

Style differs from one writer to another. In fiction, style is the codified gestures, in which the author tells the story. It is the way of painting writing; it is the writer touch in his writing. According to (Crimmon, 1980, p. 194), **"**Style is a writer's particular approach to arranging words and sentences that reflects both an author's taste and purpose. Style is usually measured by the degree of formality in an author's use of sentences, diction and tone".

Conclusion

Finally, after tackling what the short story is exactly; why we use it with language learners; what are the basic elements and characteristics of a short story. Besides, the sample of short story with its critic. Expecting, we paved the way for the learner to take the first step and raise the pen to write with leisure, relief and relaxation a short story. Hoping that this will help the students to be creative in writing short stories. Furthermore, to write a short story is not that complex task, once the student understands the different features and elements of a short story, s/he can dare writing a good short story and why not being a famous writer then