

**HOW WRITING SHORT STORIES BENEFIT  
MY CRITICAL THINKING: A REFLECTIVE STUDY**



**THESIS**

**Nada Shafa Amany  
170210401082**

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION PROGRAM  
LANGUAGE AND ARTS DEPARTMENT  
FACULTY OF EDUCATION  
UNIVERSITY OF JEMBER**

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**THESIS**

Composed to Fulfill One of the Requirements to Obtain S1 Degree at the English  
Language Education Study Program of the Language and Arts Education  
Department Faculty of the Teacher Training and Education  
Jember University

**By**

**Nada Shafa Amany**

**170210401082**

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAM  
LANGUAGE AND ARTS EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
THE FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION  
JEMBER UNIVERSITY**

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**STATEMENT OF THESIS AUTHENCITY**

I certify that this thesis is the authentic work of the author herself. All materials, secondary and primary sources have been fully acknowledged and referenced. I certify that this thesis is the result of work that has carried out since the official start date of the approved thesis title; this thesis has never been submitted previously.

I am aware of the potential consequence of any procedure and guideline, the cancellation of an academic award. I am responsible for the validity and correctness of the contents in accordance with a scientific attitude that must be upheld. Thus, I make this statement truthfully without any coercion and pressure from any party.

Jember, July 29<sup>th</sup> 2022

Nada Shafa Amany  
NIM. 170210401082

**DEDICATION**

This thesis is honorably dedicated to:

1. My beloved parents: Violetta Handayani Ade Putri and Lucki Rukminto. My dearest sister, Fara Khalisa Siti Harumi and my dearest grandmother Elly Rosiah. Thank you for always support me in any condition, your never ending pray, and suggestions.
2. All members of my family and friends that have supported me to finish my thesis.



**MOTTO**

“One must have chaos in oneself to give birth to a dancing star. “

(Friedrich Nietzsche)

“There is nothing more truly artistic than to love people.”

(Vincent Van Gogh)



**CONSULTANTS' APPROVAL**  
**HOW WRITING SHORT STORIES BENEFIT MY CRITICAL THINKING**  
**: A REFLECTIVE STUDY**

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Jember University

Name : Nada Shafa Amany  
Identification Number : NIM. 170210401082  
Place/Date of Birth : Jember, May 7<sup>th</sup>, 1998  
Program : English Education Study Program  
Department : Language and Arts Education  
Faculty : Teacher Training and Education

Approved

Consultant I

Consultant II



Siti Masrifatul Fitriyah, S.Pd,M.A, Ph.D.  
NIP. 19770322 200604 2 001



Mutiara Bilqis, S.Pd,M.Pd  
NIP. 198805252019032016

**EXAMINERS' APPROVAL**

This thesis entitled “**How Writing Short Stories Benefit My Critical Thinking: A Reflective Study**” is approved and accepted by the Examination Committees of the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Jember University.

Date :

Place : The Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Jember University.

**The Examiner Committees:**

The Chairperson,

The Secretary,



**Siti Masrifatul Fitriyah, S.Pd.,M.A., Ph.D**  
NIP. 19770322-200604 2 001



**Mutiara Bilqis, S.Pd,M.Pd**  
NIP. 198805252019032016

**The Members,**

Member 1,

Member 2,



**Prof. Dr. Budi Setyono, M.A.**  
NIP. 19630717 199002 1 001



**Drs. I Putu Sukmaantara, M.Ed.**  
NIP. 19640424 199002 1 003

Acknowledged by

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Jember University**

**Prof. Dr. Bambang Soepeno, M.Pd.**  
NIP. 196006121987021001

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I believe that this thesis might have some weaknesses. Therefore, any constructive criticism from those who really want to improve this thesis will be highly appreciated.

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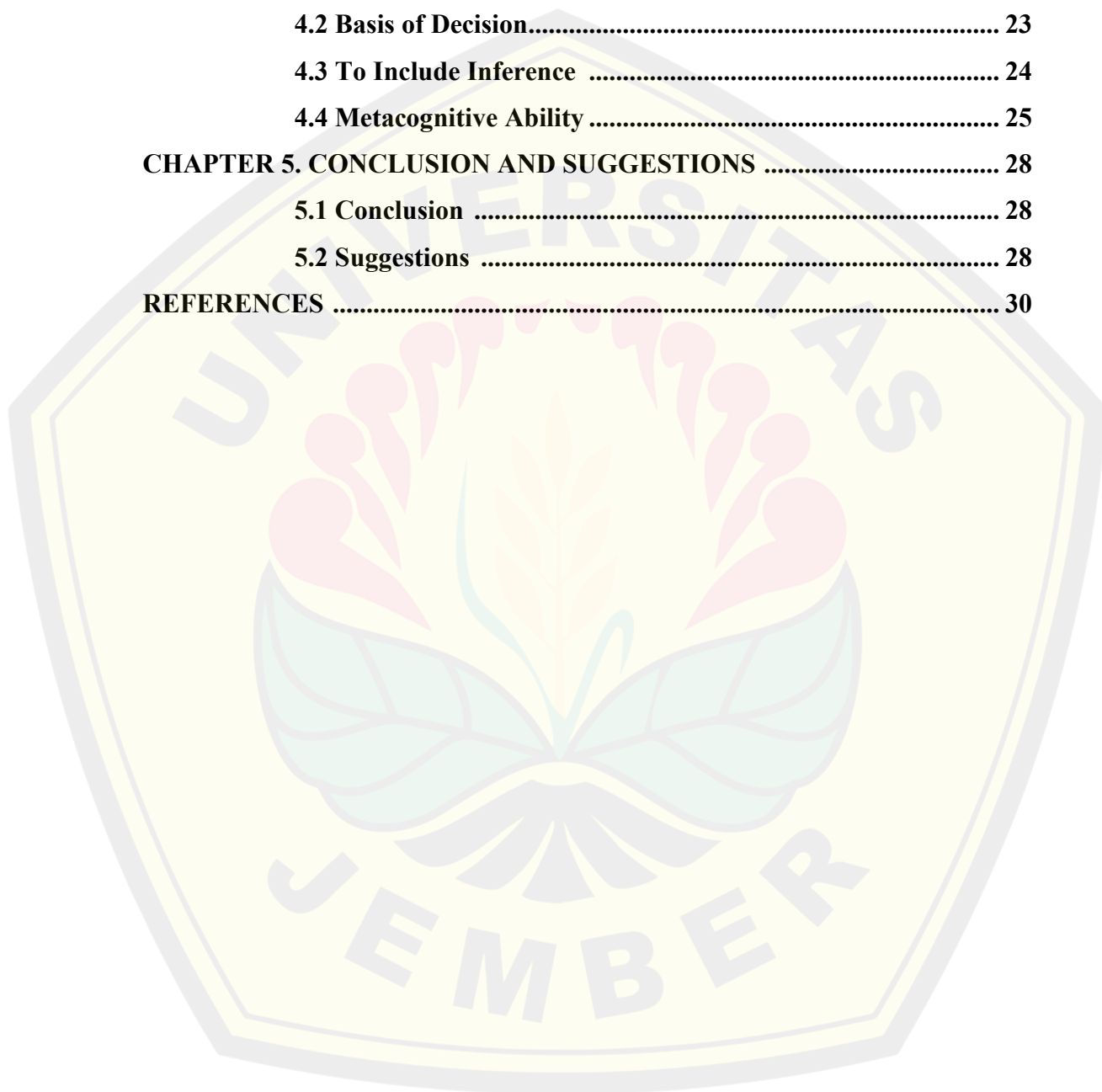
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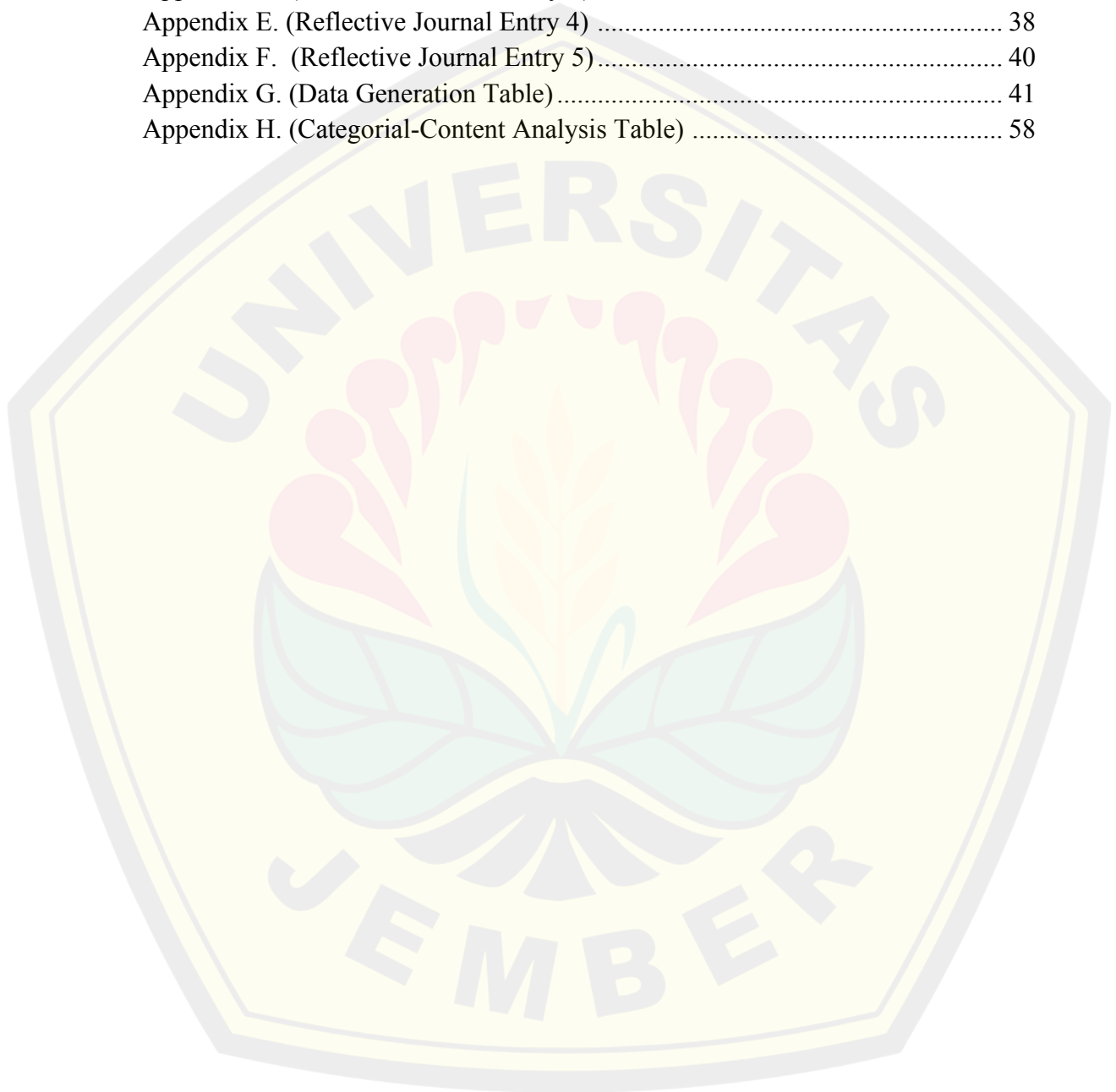
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## SUMMARY

**How Writing Short Stories Benefit My Critical Thinking: A Reflective Study;** Nada Shafa Amany, 170210401082; 2022; 29 Pages; English Language Education Study Program, Language and Arts Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Jember University.

Although universities and higher education had made critical thinking skills their ultimate goal to attire their students with, the ideal outcome still somehow feels quite unreachable. In a study that aimed to investigate the difference between the critical thinking of graduate and non-graduate students between 256 Scottish and Australian university students studying education, Pithers and Soden (1999) concluded that there is no significant difference between the two groups. This suggests that the universities included in the study failed to install critical thinking skills in their students. It is a primary goal and necessity to make sure that university students are driven by their critical thinking skills so that they could apply their knowledge with self-awareness and responsibility.

Educators from higher education are determined to equip the students of the 21st century with critical thinking skills in navigating the vastly changing world. As teachers and educators attempting different methods to include critical thinking skills into students' awareness, integrated subjects and methods were held in the classroom to engage them. Writing a short narrative emphasize the social aspects of creativity and writing. Through perspective shifts and metareflection, such an approach tries to improve students' ability to write to learn (Elbow 1973) and think critically. Writing short stories also offers a different kind of boost to students. It demands inspiration, originality, imagination, and personal preference as powerful tools to develop their minds as a writer. This research focuses on how my experiences in writing three short stories benefit my critical thinking skill as a university student and an EFL learner. Moreover, with the rise of narrative research and creative thinking in education, the prejudice against narrative inquiry and creative writing in academia must eventually be overcome. Due to the obvious gap in this study, more research on the relationship between creative writing and critical thinking is urgently required.

The data for this study were taken from a reflective journal. The researcher used categorical-content analysis to analyze the data. The entries of the reflective journal was about my experiences on writing three short stories entitles “Neverland 2.0”, “Tsumibito” and “Solar Plexus”. The codes for the analysis were predetermined from Ennis’s Disposition of Ideal Critical Thinker (1991) in which I have simplified before. As anticipated, the capacity for self-reflection and critical thought has been a part of my writing process. I learned how creating short stories aids my critical thinking through the reflections. High order thinking, the capacity for self-reflection, and metacognition ability are necessary for short story writing. Building a short story involves several different components, all of which clearly demonstrate the application of critical thinking skills. I must identify the topic, the theme, and the lesson I wish to convey before I can decide on the story's focal point. In developing the plot of the story, I must use my ability to filter and select elements that I want to use in my story. There is also a reasoning and analysis to be done considering the hypotheses that emerged during the writing process. And finally, I must use my self-reflecting ability as a writer to deeply comprehend my characters, to engage readers in the narrative, to perceive the story in different perspectives, and to be adaptable to changes.

There is no reason why writing needs to be one of the most dreadful subjects in learning English. Creative writing is a friendly approach to establishing better cognitive skills seamlessly through students’ likeness and diverse personalities. Short story writing is not difficult for students to do on their own; there are many options for varied interests and preferences, and it may be used with students of all ages, shifts, and English proficiency levels (Pardede, 2011). Analyzing a simple short tale from anyone can provide you a window into how they feel and how they think about certain issues. It is obvious that this study is bound to a certain context and that further research is required. My reflective study, however, sheds light on the potential of short story writing as a practical tool that contributes to critical thinking abilities. This study suggests that critical thinking skills are implemented in every component in the writing process of short stories. Additionally, incorporating story writing into a learning process will support the

use of literature as authentic language learning material. It is encouraged to conduct more study to show the advantages of short story writing on critical thinking skills.



## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an introduction to my research. There are four sections consisting of research background, question, objective, and contribution. Each provides information about my research concept.

### 1.1 Research Background

Although universities and higher education had made critical thinking skills their ultimate goal to attire their students with, the ideal outcome still somehow feels quite unreachable. In a study that aimed to investigate the difference between the critical thinking of graduate and non-graduate students between 256 Scottish and Australian university students studying education, Pithers and Soden (1999) concluded that there is no significant difference between the two groups. This suggests that the universities included in the study failed to install critical thinking skills in their students. It is a primary goal and necessity to make sure that university students are driven by their critical thinking skills so that they could apply their knowledge with self-awareness and responsibility. Educators from higher education are determined to equip the students of the 21st century with critical thinking skills in navigating the vastly changing world.

Dewey (1910) was one of the first philosophers to hypothesize about "reflective thinking" as a goal of education, even if he did not use the term "critical thinking." According to Dewey, critical thinking is a scientific attitude of mind with "reflective thoughts", "reflective thinking" or "thoughts" as the goals. This pristine concept of critical thinking is nowadays preserved and best defined by Ennis (1989) who described critical thinking as "Referring to reasonable and reflective thinking focused on deciding what to believe or do." Learning about thinking should be included as one of the main objectives in every learning process. Ennis and Dewey's "reflective thinking" ignited the modern concept of critical thinking in education.

In the age of limitless access to data, media, and knowledge, developing students' critical thinking skills in higher education is regarded as one of the most

significant issues in education today. Due to this issue, various methods were attempted to implement critical thinking for students. Critical writing, critical reading, critical listening, and discussions about critical thinking are being introduced and talked about in the classrooms. And yet, with plenty of learning methods and assessments to carry out critical thinking at the university level, my generation of sophisticated technology and social media is still inattentive and unprepared with our judgments based on our critical thoughts. The era of social media is the era of information overload and media abuse in which young people would grow apathetic trying to perceive reality and made-up stories. Filtering and being reflective is crucial to surviving this modern wave. While all of these new methods of learning are progressively empowered, the evidence presented in *Critical thinking in education: A review*, by Pithers & Soden (2000) suggests that not all students may be good at critical thinking; nor do some teachers appear to teach students 'good thinking' skills. It is deduced that teaching Critical Thinking for University students demands resourceful educators, diverse methods, a cooperative environment, and responsive pupils.

Based on my literature research, despite the ongoing effort on reinforcing critical thinking, scarcely enough sources were found regarding the contribution of implementing critical thinking through writing in EFL. More specifically, through creative writing. It is agreeable to say from a superficial observation that creative writing as a subject does not utilize its full potential at the university level of education. It is agreeable to say from a superficial observation that creative writing as a subject does not utilize at its full potential at the university level of education.

This might be due to the lingering prejudice surrounding creative works in the academic world. The bias of educators toward academic formal forms over creativity limits the accessibility of creative writing in the curriculum. Writing a persuasive essay is considered more important to the student's academic growth and future jobs than writing a short narrative, according to the evaluation (Maloney, 2019). The circulating argument is strongly debatable. Because high order thinking needs creativity and intellectual standard to simultaneously develop and critique



ideas, it is evident that critical thinking and creative thinking are intimately connected (Paul & Elder, 2008).

Creative writing has multiple deeper layers than what it appears. Writing short stories, in particular, constructs the imagination of the writer in writing narrative which nurtures one's critical thinking as Billig's statement (1996) cited in Edberg (2018) about how writing narratives benefits the thinking, "The narrative example opens up many roads to critical metareflection (reflecting about reflection). Narrative text type appears to play an important part in people's meaning-making. Narratives in general, not just novels, seem to have a core function for cognitive processes." (p.26). This research focuses on how writing creatively on regular basis benefits my critical thinking skill as a university student and an EFL learner. To get a better understanding from my first-hand experience regarding the link of creativity in writing a short story and the thinking process behind it and how doing it is beneficial for my critical thinking, is what I aim to inform from this research.

## **1.2 Research Question**

Based on the background above, I formulate a research question as follows: "How do my experiences of writing short stories benefit my critical thinking skill?"

## **1.3 Research Objective**

The objective of this study is to figure out how writing short stories benefits my critical thinking for the better.

## **1.4 Research Contributions**

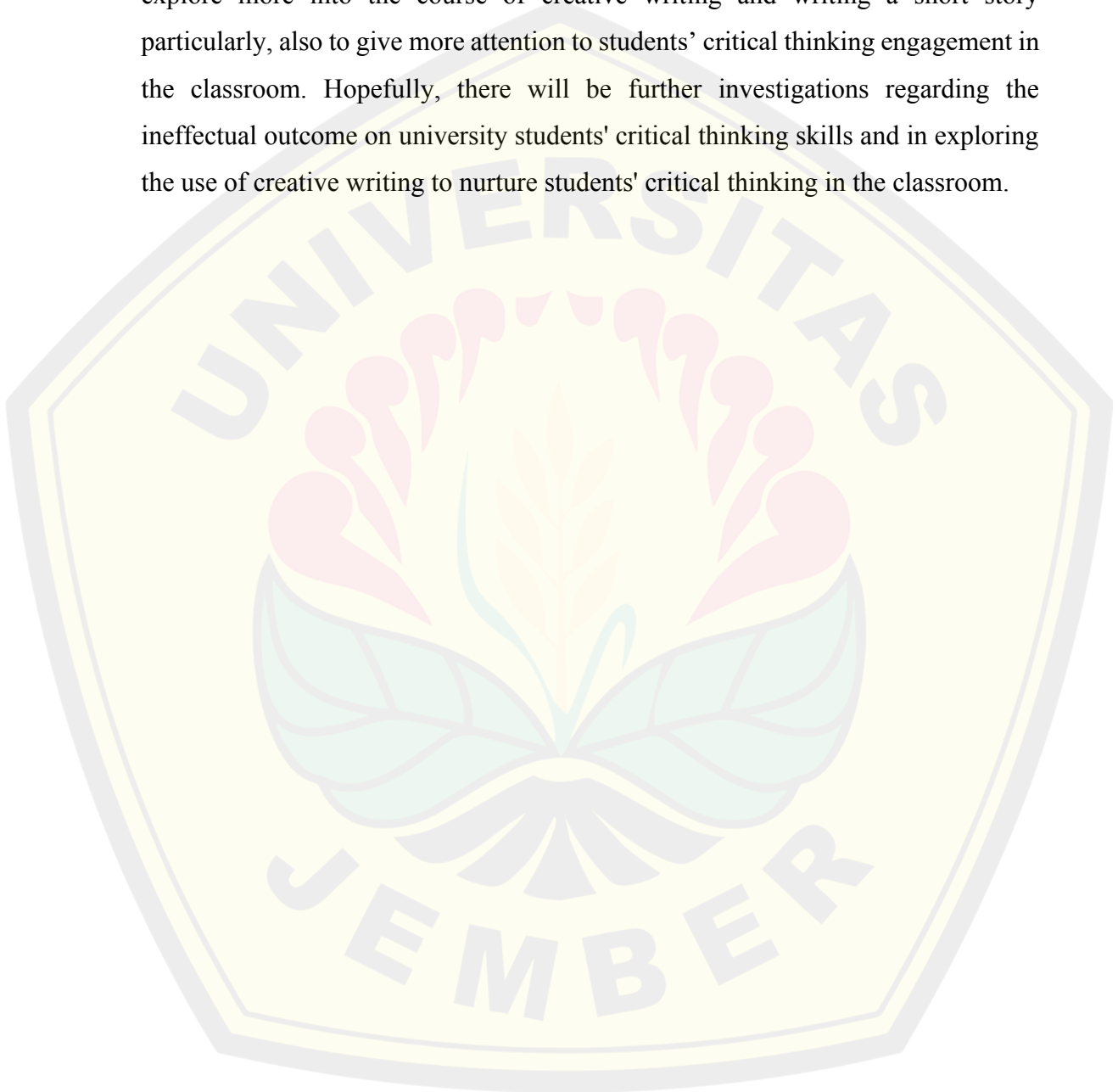
### **1.4.1 Practical Contribution**

The results of this study will provide information for future educators in university or higher education to utilize short story writing effectively to develop students' critical thinking. Furthermore, the result of this study will amplify creative writing as a subject taught in university. It will also introduce writing a short story as an activity that may benefit students' critical thinking. The teacher can also use

the results of this research to put perspective on how exploring one's creativity can enhance critical thinking.

#### **1.4.2 Empirical Contribution**

The result of this research is expected to encourage future researchers to explore more into the course of creative writing and writing a short story particularly, also to give more attention to students' critical thinking engagement in the classroom. Hopefully, there will be further investigations regarding the ineffectual outcome on university students' critical thinking skills and in exploring the use of creative writing to nurture students' critical thinking in the classroom.



## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents the results of my review of literature related to my topic and previous studies regarding this research.

#### 2.1 Critical Thinking

In this era, information and knowledge are vast and diverse. The world keeps changing every day and we need the skill to help us navigate the stream of media and information. Critical thinking helps us select, filter, and analyze occurrences that happened around us. It also helps us to be more open in perceiving something new. Critical Thinking sets a virtuous difference in our lives. It evolves our ability to perceive and calculate life events and the knowledge that we experience. Using critical thinking, we are able to see deeper meanings behind every discourse and event.

Throughout world history, critical thinking has been through a lot of changes depicted by humanity's greatest thinkers from when the concept first emerged in the seventh century. Philosophers and educators have restlessly and diligently tried to redefine and improve the concept of critical thinking countless times. One of the most known and breaking through theories of critical thinking was by Ennis (1996), as he revealed that critical thinking is reasonable and reflective thinking focused on deciding what to believe or do. I decided to follow through with Ennis' criteria for an ideal critical thinker given his view of reflectivity on critical thinking. My research on this is heavily influenced by Ennis (1989) and Nussbaum's (2001) theories that promote critical thinking as a tool to assess self-reflection and therefore able to gain more knowledge about a person's feelings, perspective, narrative and cognitive process.

In the Decision-Making Process of an ideal critical thinker, decisions on belief or action generally occur within the framework of a few concerns and should have some justification. This foundation can be an observation, a statement from a few sources, or certain preexisting prepositions that have been acknowledged. On this premise, interference in a decision is made. Inductive, deductive, and value

judgment interferers are the three categories of interferers (as a process, not a product). In making and assessing the decision, the interferer should utilize a set of critical thinking dispositions, be clear about what is going on, and be able to assume alternate points of view. (Ennis, 1991).

Below is the critical thinking disposition excerpted from Robert Ennis' Critical Thinking: A Streamlined Conception (1991).

Disposition of the ideal critical thinker:

1. To be clear about the intended meaning of what is said, written, or otherwise communicated
2. To determine and maintain focus on the conclusion or question
3. To take into account the total situation
4. To seek and offer reasons
5. To try to be well informed
6. To look for alternatives
7. To seek as much precision as the situation requires
8. To try to be reflectively aware of one's own basic beliefs
9. To be open-minded: consider seriously other points of view than one's own
10. To withhold judgment when the evidence and reasons are insufficient
11. To take a position (and change a position) when the evidence and reasons are sufficient to do so
12. To use one's critical thinking abilities

Abilities of the ideal critical thinker:

(The first five items involve *clarification*.)

1. To identify the focus: the issue, question, or conclusion
2. To analyze arguments
3. To ask and answer questions of clarification and/or challenge
4. To define terms, judge definitions, and deal with equivocation
5. To identify unstated assumptions

(The next two involve the *basis* for the decision.)

6. To judge the credibility of a source
7. To observe, and judge observation reports

(The next three involve *inference*.)

8. To deduce, and judge deductions
9. To induce, and judge inductions
  - a. To generalizations
  - b. To explanatory conclusions (including hypotheses)

10. To make and judge value judgments

(The next two are metacognitive abilities—involving *supposition* and *integration*.)

11. To consider and reason from premises, reasons, assumptions, positions, and other prepositions with which one disagrees or about which one is in doubt—without letting the disagreement or doubt interfere with one’s thinking (“suppositional thinking”)
12. To integrate the other abilities and dispositions in making and defending a decision  
(The next four are auxiliary critical thinking abilities—having them is not constitutive of being a critical thinker.)
13. To proceed in an orderly manner appropriate to the situation, for example,
  - a. To follow problem-solving steps
  - b. To monitor one’s own thinking
  - c. To employ a reasonable critical thinking checklist
14. To be sensitive to the feelings, level of knowledge, and degree of sophistication of others
15. To employ appropriate rhetorical strategies in discussion and presentation (orally and in writing)
16. To employ and react to “fallacy” labels in an appropriate manner  
(Ennis, 1991, p.8)

The preceding overview might be used as a checklist for a critical thinking curriculum, a set of specifications for a critical thinking exam, or a topic outline for a distinct critical thinking test or course with some rearranging. The dispositions are intended to assist students in making educational decisions (Ennis, 1991). In the academic world, reflective thinking reckons as a high-level application for students. Robert Ennis’ disposition is a proper analytical framework for my research. To be able to practice self-reflection, it requires practicing a certain mindset and awareness. Robert Ennis’ CT skill dispositions of an ideal critical thinker shall assist EFL teaching methodology for a self-reflecting tool in observing one’s self CT skill development and I am aiming to moving towards this direction.

## **2.2 Critical Thinking in University**

Higher education is the stage in a student's life where two important goals are expected to be achieved by the end of education. Students must be able to (i) acquire sufficient knowledge of the field or subject, and most importantly, (ii) think critically about the acquired knowledge and other problems or problems encountered in daily life. (Schafersman, 1991). The first goal is easily achieved at

most colleges, but the second is the college's Achilles' heel (Halpern, 2014; Bailin et al., 1999). Such city college or university has always been trying to equip their students with critical thinking skills. The mission is to fulfill the need of the modern era society for the people who can demonstrate high order thinking in making crucial decisions and solving problems.

At the university level, due to the sensitive nature of critical thinking, the skill is integrated inside the teaching and learning process with many different teaching styles, subjects, and methodologies. As the world continues to develop and progress, new curriculum and assessment are tested and improved for the students to spread critical thinking skills and awareness to the pupils. These skills are significant on a very basic level of language learning, in order to learn an entirely new language in the academic realm that is rapidly moving forward. Contrary to this academic goal, in research conducted by Pithers and Soden (1991, cited in Ozmen, 2008, p. 121) to investigate the difference between the critical thinking of graduate and non-graduate students, the research suggests that there is no significant difference between the two groups. This is why fostering students' critical thinking in universities is viewed as one of the most serious challenges of today's education in the age of easy access to information (Nejmaoui, 2018).

For the time being, the global world is continuously changing in many aspects of life. Technology and social media have been allowing the current of news, media, and information to flood our screens erratically, shifting every perspective and narration possible now and every hour. Critical thinking has become a crucial skill to possess a make sense of the knowledge obtained. Students from all over the world attend universities and colleges to acquire established education. University graduates are expected to face society as someone who has mastered their subject matter as well as a person who can filter facts and knowledge given on daily basis. Nevertheless, recent findings indicate that the university has not succeeded to integrate critical thinking skills within the teaching and learning process. In a recent study, there is very little evidence that students at universities acquire the skills of critical thinking in their learning and teaching activities (Tosuncuoglu, 2018), which affirms the emergency of critical thinking skill

awareness at the university level. Investigations continue to be carried out both from inside and outside the university to continue to achieve the ideal standard of a successful critical thinking implementation for students.

### **2.3 Creative Writing**

For an EFL student, writing in English can be a dreading challenge in mastering the English language. Students in university are demanded to produce essays and critical writing that would prove their proper knowledge possession. Essentially, a writing skill for an EFL learner is one form of discourse. Writing discourses can be described as “configurations of beliefs and practices about the teaching of writing” (Ivanič, 2004. p.220). Writing most of the time requires the highest high order thinking to be able to construct ideas into words and sentences. As creativity is associated with higher-order cognitive skills (Sotto, 1994), it is an important component of language learning, supporting the use of literature in writing instruction (Oster, 1989).

Creative writing is a branch of writing that indulges imagination and creativity to construct a simple short story, a novel or a poem. Creative writing is one of the courses available at the university along with other writing courses such as academic writing and essay writing. From time to time, writing a short story in a creative writing course is taught as an art/literacy subject rather than a linguistic or a critical subject. Incidentally, creative writing can be both an influential and effective English learning tool for its ability to prompt the students to adequately participate in the class activities, enjoyably use the language, and in the process, improve it (Alsyouf, 2019).

Elbow (1994) claims that learning to write is an unconscious process that occurs as a result of the act of writing. Writers may express themselves freely and fully on things that inspire them, such as personal experiences, using creative writing. That way, simultaneously, the capacity to think develops, not by explicit teaching about writing. In general, there are two components in creative writing: learning to write and reflecting on what you've learned. In the actual world, not all successful writers participate in the second part. We may

deduce from this that studying creative writing at the university level provides a far broader education than other sorts of writing courses. The limit of a creative writing course is the writer's imagination and creativity.

Regarding the relationship between writing and creativity, Tse and Shun (2000) pointed out that creativity is an important aspect of writing. They found that creativity was advocated as one of the six levels of language ability. In all the elements of foreign language education, writing and creativity seem to be inextricably linked. Writing is an expression of creativity by itself. It is also one of the most effective ways to foster student creativity. This concept has the potential to turn pupils' aversion to writing into enthusiasm. Creative writing allows pupils to express their ideas and originality while also honing their writing abilities. In order to teach writing, it is beneficial to encourage creativity and generate ideas (Lin, 1998). In this research, short story writing based on eliciting premises served the aim of using creative writing for benefitting my critical thinking.

#### **2.4 Short Stories in Creative Writing**

Among various genres of literature, stories are more captivating and accessible than others. Short stories are authentic materials of English literacy that students can easily find anywhere, for example in the newspaper, blogs, etc. For an EFL learner, a short story can transform into a secret passage to another person's life tale from a different part of the world. Everyone has his or her stories to tell. Stories hypnotize readers developing their curiosities about 'what happens next'. They are recognized and valued in their own sense. (Thapaliya, 2012)

Short stories are used in language classrooms to help students improve communicative skills (Adhikari, 2006). Stories contain lessons, messages, and perspectives. They evoke feelings, emotions, and empathy. They provide a framework for finding meaning in life and the world around us. And they can help shape inclusive, supportive, or exclusive and destructive beliefs and actions. Teaching short stories has four advantages in the ELT classroom (Pardede, 2011), it is practical as their length is ideally suitable to cover entirely in one or two class sessions it is not complicated for students to work with on their own it has a variety



of choices for different interests and tastes and it can be used with all levels of English proficiency, all ages, and shifts

Why writing a short story is recommended amongst other methods? Elbow (1981) was more concerned with the influence of the writing process than the final product in his book "Writing with Power." He called upon two skills that are so different that they usually conflict with each other in writing: creating and criticizing. Students are challenged to control their writing, emphasize conciseness, and sharpen their grammatical abilities when creating short stories. In all good essays, self-expression is also a key component (Ibnian, 2010). The text type of a short story opens up for the narrative imagination, and the writing process allows the writers to engage emotionally. Furthermore, most students are familiar with short story writing and appear to believe that producing such works is quite simple. (Edberg, 2018).

Educators need to consciously look back at the potentially positive role of the story as pedagogy. Short stories are designed to educate us on how to assess and evaluate the power of story in education in order to support academic endeavors (Glesne&Pugach, 2018). It is the freedom to create and use imagination in creative writing that I believe would be a strong quality to counter self-reflection in constructing a good narration.

### **2.5 Short Story for Critical Thinking**

As teachers and educators attempting different methods to include critical thinking skills into students' awareness, integrated subjects and methods were held in the classroom to engage them. Some of the well-known subjects for EFL learners are Critical Reading, Critical Writing, Discourse Analysis, etc. These subjects supposedly introduced critical thinking skills to the students and develop their CT skills in the assessment. If done correctly, the outcome of the integrated classroom will be fruitful. Nevertheless, the result throughout the years has not significantly improved (See Section. 2.2 Critical Thinking in University). The necessity of self-critical awareness (through shifting perspective) is emphasized in several critical thinking frameworks. Through what she refers to as the "narrative imagination",

Nussbaum (2001) demonstrates the purpose of critical thinking as a human capacity to empathize with other people and their living circumstances, through which we can “imagine what it is like to be in the shoes of another [...] Such perspectival thinking is fundamental to human emotional and moral life” (Nussbaum 2001, p. 146). According to Peter Elbow (1981), increasing creativity improves critical thinking and vice versa. "Creativity" vs. "criticality" should not be a topic of discussion. The mastery of one's creativity and critical thinking skills should not be subjugated to one another, but rather should work together to enhance both of the gears required for writing. Nussbaum, Elbow, and Ennis' theories sequentially complement each other in understanding the significance of a creative process alongside the practice of critical thinking. Robert Ennis' appended his theory that his definition of critical thinking is also covered with creative activities such as hypotheses, questions, alternatives, and plans for experiments. Those components of the creative process enhance my belief in Nussbaum's principle of narrative imagination in critical thinking and writing a short story is ideal to practice these principles.

Literary writings are not designed with the intention of being used for teaching. Instead, they deal with "issues that were important to the author at the time they wrote them (Maley, 1989). Because of that, literary texts contain an authentic value of human life. Since narrative text qualities are so common in English, understanding about them would improve critical and academic literacy. (Linel, 2011 cited in Edberg, 2018). As a result, the language is considerably richer and more varied than the language samples found in textbooks. Because it depicts real-life situations, writers and readers are frequently confronted with crises and dilemmas that demand real-world answers. A short narrative may be used to stimulate and sharpen the intellect until the journey reaches its conclusion. Writing a short narrative helps you to emphasize the social aspects of creativity and writing. Through perspective shifts and metareflection, such an approach tries to improve students' ability to write to learn (Elbow 1973) and think critically.

Writing a short story also offers a different kind of boost to students. It demands inspiration, originality, imagination, and personal preference as powerful

tools to develop their minds as a writer. When the writer becomes aware of internal processes and reactions and then manages to control them, she can use emotions as tools for analysis and critical thinking. If a system that allows for emotional engagement is to be used as a tool for critical thinking, it appears that it must also include methods to direct and structure the engagement (Edberg, 2018). Narrative ordinarily talks about imaginations or personal experiences which act as specific stimuli to develop and expand the writer's mind using self-critics, and creativity. As Elbow(1981) utilized the writing process to obtain new knowledge, this research is an attempt to follow his principle and utilize the process of writing a short story to obtain a new skill for my critical thinking.

## **2.6 Writing a Short Story**

Author W. Somerset Maugham once said: "There are three rules for writing a novel. Unfortunately, no one knows what they are." This wise comment applies equally to short stories. (Lucke, 1999, p. 12)

There are no certain rules or steps to apply in writing a short story. All writers have their own methods on how to write a good story. Though the way to cook a short story is varied in the literature world, there are crucial ingredients on what a good story should have. These are the important elements to be considered according to Lucke (1998).

### **a. Characters**

No matter how interesting the idea is, the story won't come alive unless the writer creates some imaginary individuals and present it to the readers. Characters shape the narrative by their motives, actions, and responses. Writers give their characters personalities by making them as solid, complex, and real as the readers and everyone else.

### **b. Conflicts**

The story's life force flows through conflicts. Conflict drives the story's events and brings up the problems that need to be solved. As conflict occurs, characters reveal themselves when they take action to deal with it, including their

motivations, shortcomings, and strengths. Writers need to explore how conflict propels the narrative and generates the tension that holds readers' attention until the very last word.

**c. Plot and structure**

Similar to the skeleton inside a person or the framing of a house, the plot and structure connect and give shape to the story. You can consider how you want to order and convey the events of the novel from beginning to middle to end if you have a clear understanding of your characters and the issue they are facing.

**d. Setting and atmosphere**

The setting of a story gives its characters and events context. It not only places them in time and space, but it also molds the individuals and affects what happens to them. It affects readers as well. Writers immerse readers in the narrative and increase their sense of engagement when the setting is evocative and the atmosphere supports the tone and mood of the story. A good writer will make the readers feel like they are actually in the story.

**e. Narrative voice**

The first four elements make up the who, why, what, when, and where of the story; they define what the story is about. The fifth element is the how, the "artful way" the story is told (Lucke, 1998).

**2.7 Previous Studies on The Use of Creative Writing for Critical Thinking**

Finding publications and journals on the use of creative writing for critical thinking has proven to be difficult; there is still a significant gap in the study between the two. Despite this fact, hereby are some past studies that came close over the years. The first one I found is, "Achieving Critical Thinking Skills Through Reading Short Stories" by Mohammad & Kamran (2012). The goal of this study was to develop critical thinking skills in TEFL students by giving them short stories to read. It was experimental research in which the pretest findings revealed that students in both the experimental and control groups achieved similarly on the pretest. Following the findings of the article, curriculum developers, material designers, and language teachers are strongly encouraged to use literature,

particularly short stories, and poetry, to help students develop critical thinking skills, even though the findings of this article are not conclusive and more research is needed in this area.

The second one was written by Corrine and Marleen (2018) entitled, "Story as Pedagogy: A Reflective Commentary." Through the use of a story, this commentary aims to promote reflection about learning and teaching. The writers demonstrate how they have employed narrative in their classrooms and what they believe the benefits are. They look at how they learned as youngsters through stories and why they grew to appreciate it as a method of seeing and thinking. They further discuss how storytelling has influenced their professional work before developing particular narrative tactics for educating undergraduate and graduate students. The paper finishes with recommendations for improving the integration of narrative practices into teaching and learning. Because they loved what happened in their classes when they used stories as a manner of managing pedagogy, they committed to their individual and collective commitments. First, using stories (whether published or created by students through interviews or writings) engaged students and formed ideas that would have been impossible to attain otherwise. Students were drawn to topics and viewpoints that would have been difficult or alienating if given in a different way. Then, through storytelling strategies, students developed empathy and compassion for individuals and communities in various life situations. Students developed personal connections with individuals, cultures, and circumstances that may not have previously piqued their attention. The researchers observed how students' comprehension of complexity within social phenomena grew as they sought to grasp various perspectives. Furthermore, narrative strategies generally fostered a feeling of connection in the classroom. These strategies supported the development of participant respect, partnerships, and even long-term friendships. Students learned to understand and value each other through sharing their own and others' stories. Finally, as instructors of qualitative inquiry, authors were particularly pleased to see students' interest and abilities as researchers and writers increase. Students frequently "discovered" their own voices and new passions while writing their own stories or utilizing innovative approaches to write

the stories of others. They end with a half-dozen suggestions for incorporating narrative practices into teaching and learning.

The third one is “The Place of Creative Writing in an EFL University Curriculum” by Iain (2019). This paper makes the point for creative writing to be taught alongside academic writing in any four-skills curriculum, for students of all ages and levels, with a focus on university students. The paper examines the various ways in which creative writing assists the L2 learner, utilizing data from ESL/ EFL situations as well as earlier research in the disciplines of writing and developmental psychology. He also stated that, although academic writing is just as important for developing language skills and progressing students toward error eradication and the desired level of fluency as creative writing, but excluding creative writing from a rounded four-skill curriculum handicaps teachers and students as they strive for improvement. “Perhaps the most underutilized ELT tool is creative writing. Prejudice against non-academic types of writing, the belief that play is inherently insignificant and has no place in an academic institution, and a misunderstanding of the required language skills are all frequently stated as reasons for choosing academic writing over creative writing. Students, on the other hand, typically experience a lack of capacity to appropriately and effectively convey their internal reality in the second language. Despite the fact that emotions, subjective experience, and even personal identity are critical to mastering the target language, these abilities are lacking from their written result. Many studies have been conducted, with convincing outcomes. The proof is there.” (p. 248).

With the rise of narrative research and creative thinking in education, the prejudice against narrative inquiry and creative writing in academia must eventually be overcome. Due to the obvious gap in this study, more research on the relationship between creative writing and critical thinking is urgently required. My research will hopefully contribute a little to the field.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methodology of the study as follows: research design, settings, research questions, data collection, observation, reflective journal, interview, and data analysis.

#### 3.1 Research Design

This study used narrative inquiry as the research design to understand my experience in writing short stories. Narrative Inquiry recently became more popular in recent narrative studies and gains interest due to its unique characteristic. Narrative inquiry is a research methodology that has its central concerning stories from narrators about their life experiences. Narrative inquiry is much more than the telling of the stories (Clandinin, et al., 2007, p.21), it is also about making meaning of life experiences in the process of telling the stories (Barkhuizen, 2022). Thus, Narrative Inquiry is both a perspective of the phenomenon of people's experiences and a methodology for narratively inquiring into experience, allowing for the close examination of individuals' experiences. Researchers examine the place, temporality, and sociality from within a methodological three-dimensional narrative inquiry space that enables inquiry into both researchers' and participants' storied life experiences (Caine & Clandinin, 2008). Each story shared and lived is positioned and understood within wider cultural, social, and institutional narratives inside this space. Narrative inquiry strives to comprehend and make meaning of experience in the ongoing lives of study participants across multiple disciplines and professional domains (Caine&Clandinin, 2008).

As Bruner (2002) expressed how telling stories is an astonishing thing, he further elaborated how the human species is the only species whose main purpose is to tell each other about the expected and the surprises that upset the expected through telling stories. Stories passed through generations and become archives that help humanity in solving problems and building community. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) developed a narrative interpretation of experience based on Dewey's two experience criteria. "People are individuals and need to be understood

as such, but they cannot be understood solely as individuals," they argued, drawing on Dewey's (1938) first criterion, interaction. "They are constantly in a social setting, always in a relationship" (p. 2). Experiences arise out of other experiences, and experiences lead to further experiences, drawing on Dewey's second criterion, continuity. Other people's experiences can be the kickstart of our own's experience and also what leads it further. Savin-Baden and Niekerk (2007) also advised researchers to be able to position themselves in the perspective so that stories can be analyzed effectively.

### **3.2 Research Participant**

I, myself, the author of this study was the participant of the study. I am an EFL learner and an undergraduate student of the English Department for English Teacher Training at the University of Jember, East Java, Indonesia. I have been writing short stories since 2010, when I was twelve years old, and I never stopped since then. Approximately, I have written over 30 short stories and poems in my life time. I am a passionate bookworm who both enjoys writing and reading as hobbies in my leisure time.

### **3.3 Data Collection Method**

This study gathered qualitative data from a reflective journal. In this case, reflective journaling entails summarizing a recent event and deconstructing key components (e.g., people, resources, activities) that influenced learning over time. Reflective journal, according to researchers, is an important tool for alerting and leading students toward better learning. Dewey (1933) was one of the first educators to write about reflection. He stated that reflective thinking is "the active, persistent, and careful consideration of a belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it ends". He also noted that reflection is the foundation of learning. The practice of reflection as a habit of reviewing and critiquing life events are in order to make sense of the experiences (Brookfield, 1993; Kerka, 2002) and search for meaning when integrating them into our lives.



Journal writing has been used with ESL students to develop writing English language fluency and voice (Holmes, 2004; Kerka, 2002). Moreover, it is suggested that in addition to the reflection embedded in the practice, reflective writing provides a measure of the writer's L2 ability (Hyland, 2007). Reflective journals' impact on students in higher education has been praised, studied (Korstange, 2016), and found to be beneficial. Cathro, O'Kane, & Gilbertson (2017) discovered that reflective journals improve the learning process by bridging the gap between what students are doing and what they should be doing. It also helps students become more mindful of their own skills (Boud, Keogh, & Walker, 1998). Furthermore, there is a need for future research in examining EFL learners' reflective journal writing in the content classroom (Goris, Denessen, & Verhoeven, 2017).

The focus here is to tell my experiences in writing three short stories entitled, “Neverland 2.0”, “Tsumibito” and “Solar Plexus” and how it benefits my critical thinking skill for the better. A reflective journal will be made and kept throughout the study to record my perceptions, thought, feeling, and action during writing my short story. I recorded my process of thoughts and experience in the journal and the entries of the journal will later be collected as the data of the research through narrative inquiry.

### **3.4 Instrument of the Study**

In collecting the data, a daily reflective journal was used as the instrument in this study. A reflective journal is used to observe emotions, enhance creativity, and develop metacognitive awareness. In writing my reflective journal, there are several things to be considered to make sure I can use this reflective journal to examine the progress of my critical thinking skills at the end of the study. The protocol in the process of each journal entry will be as followings:

1. Brainstorming ideas, and continue as the story proceeds
2. Reflect on my emotional and mental state or how I feel about my own ideas and progress during the day

3. Asking myself critical and profound questions regarding my cognitive process
4. Reflect upon my feelings, emotions, and the way I think as I conclude how perceive the story

### 3.5 Data Analysis Method

The data of my study was analyzed with narrative analysis identified as Categorical-Content Perspective analysis. Categorical-Content Perspective Analysis is processed by breaking the narrative materials of the life stories into relatively small units of content and submitting them to either descriptive or statistical statements (Lieblich, 1998). The stages done in my version of content analysis may be described as follows:

1. Simplifying Ennis's Disposition to generate categories and codes  
I comprehend Ennis's Disposition of Ideal Critical Thinker (1991) and simplified the elements into four major categories: to involve clarification, the basis of decision, to include references and metacognitive abilities. Each categories consists of one up to two codes in which I also merged from Ennis's Dispositions. The categories and the corresponding codes are listed below.
  1. To Involve Clarification
    - a) To identify the focus: the issue, question or conclusion
  2. The Basis of Decision
    - a) To try to be well-informed
    - b) To seek as much precision as the situation require
  3. To Include Inference
    - a) To reason and analyze hypotheses
  4. Metacognitive Ability
    - a) To be open-minded and look for alternatives from other point views

b) To be reflective on one's own thinking, feelings and value

2. Read freely, tagged and compiled phrases of my reflective journal

The objective is to read my reflective journal entries as freely as possible with the aim to tag and compile all relevant portions of my reflective journal that fit into my predetermined codes. In practice, it's a circular process of attentive reading and tagging.

3. Sorting the materials according to the category

At this step, distinctive phrases or utterances compiled from the data generation are designated to the four major categories. I verify the result to minimize any errors.

4. Drawing conclusion from the result

I examine my categories, the codes and the excerpts. I clarify each excerpt to make sure the phrases align with the categories and omit the excerpts that were considered unnecessary.

## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The data from my reflective journal was analyzed using the categorical-content analysis. The content analysis was conducted to analyze my critical thinking in the following way. I wrote my experiences in writing three short stories that I have written recently entitled “Neverland 2.0”, “Tsumibito” and “Solar Plexus”. I read them thoroughly to familiarize myself with the data. The initial codes and the category of my categorical-content perspective analysis are predetermined from Ennis’s Disposition of Ideal Critical Thinker (1991) that I simplified. After assembling the codes, I retraced for patterns in how I reflected on my experiences, feelings, and perspectives about my writing process.

#### 4.1 To Involve Clarification

One of the most integral components before writing a short story is to determine the main idea of the story. The main idea gives focus and will ascertain other following aspects of the story. Certain details in a story's main premise need to be made clear. The issue, question, and the conclusion of the story are included in the clarification of a critical thinking process in the writing. At this stage, I remind myself to have a clear intention of what I am about to write and what message that I try to communicate. In the process of brainstorming the idea, it is important to identify the focus of the story. A good story is an expansion of a single powerful idea. I usually put down the idea that I have in the center and eventually surround it with the additional ideas that should build up the structure of the story. Below is the core idea about my story, Tsumibito:

I wanted to make a story where the whole cast is intertwined by the red thread of destiny, how one person’s choice affected other people’s lives.

As a writer, I want my readers to be able to tell the main idea of my story almost immediately; but I should not put it verbatim, I must show it. It occurs to me that I tend to begin to write a story whenever I want to convey a specific idea or a message. My influence in writing some of my stories can be easily seen in other literature or books that inspire me. During my lifetime, I have been collecting authors that resonate with me; they emit certain themes or a certain message that they carry within the story. Here are my thoughts on starting one of my short stories, “Neverland 2.0”:

I wanted to make a story about planets and the universe, and I immediately thought of Ursula Le Guin. (...) I have a specific image of how the aesthetic of my story should look through the description and narrative so I followed my heart.

Ursula K. Le Guin is one of the women who shape modern science fiction. Her famous short story, “The Ones Who Walks Away from Omelas” left a great impact on me as same as everybody else. Her utopic depiction of a perfect society

and its grave consequences was engraved deep in my consciousness. It is only natural for me to be inspired by her. Literature was not created to be used in the classroom. As an alternate, they address topics and issues that were important to the author at the time they wrote them (Maley, 1989). Literary texts possess authentic humanity.

#### 4.2 Basis of Decision

In constructing the plot of the story, there are many precisions to be sought. Despite the fact that I write fictional stories, information and details of certain knowledge are to be observed and judge well. Elbow (1981) utilized the writing process to obtain new knowledge. Arranging the plot and the structure of a story required me to be well informed of the field I wrote, to judge the credibility of the knowledge I obtained, and to judge the evidence I collected. All writers need to conduct research to complete their story. Researching for me, specifically, helped me understand my subject matter better. Below is my reflection on writing my story, “Solar Plexus” after conducting thorough research:

There have been myths and poems circulating about the origin of the sun and the moon, including their love story. I decided to adopt this and write an actual story about their personification. (...) I named the sun, “Helios” from the Greek language and “Luna” from Latin for the moon. (...) For the sun and the moon to meet at night, it must be a lunar eclipse. (...) I chose “Solar Plexus” as the title as a reference to the chakra frequencies, (...).

Ennis (1996), demonstrated that reflective thinking is concerned with choosing what to believe or do and that critical thinking is reasonable. I must filter and choose the elements I use for the story. Short stories are intended to teach us how to examine and evaluate the value of stories in education to support academic activities (Glesne&Pugach, 2018). Though not all stories are suitable for the classroom learning activity, providing false and defective information will be detrimental to the reader and society. In writing my story “Solar Plexus”, I encountered the familiar element of the human chakra and the natural aspect of the universe. And though I am quite familiar with the field, an in-depth research is still needed to make sure I do not present false information to the reader. I do not have to make sense of the fantasy realm, I just have to make sure that the details of the information that exists align with the plot and the structure that I want to create. Though I read some, I did not have to know about all the various poems and myths surrounding the love story between the sun and the moon. I just have to make sure that the names I use for these nature deities are the exact meaning of their names in various languages. For example, I use “Pertiwi” from the Indonesian language for the mother earth and “Bayu” from Sanskrit to represent the god of wind. I did the same research in doing my other story, “Neverland 2.0” where I use the Sanskrit language to name all the planets that humankind builds in the future. I use Sanskrit because it’s the oldest language in the world, it’s the roots of every language in the

world and I would imagine future generations will always want to circle back to humanity's roots as they rebirth the world. I reflected on my research and my thought process in my journal:

I took the names from the Sanskrit language and started to create 4 planets: Pra, Madya, Antara, and Karma. I made sure the meaning of the names aligned with the planets.

The word Pra in Sanskrit means “Pre” as in previous to or before. The Pra planet will be inhabited by children. The adults will be placed in “Madya”, meaning the middle planet. “Antara” means in between, it is a planet for those who are originally from the earth. And “Karma” is a belief in the rebirth of a future existence according to previous actions. In my story, the character named Vince is the only one who had the courage to keep moving forward and grow from Pra to Karma, setting the right example for the main character Kira and her best friend, Finn.

#### 4.3 To include inference

A writer's storyline will generate new theories that need to be examined, clarified, and drawn to a conclusion. The arise and the resolve of a conflict will require the writer to take account of the total situation. Since creativity is linked to higher-order cognitive abilities (Sotto, 1994), I must use my cognitive capacity to choose the outcome of my story. My thought process about my attempt to explore many hypotheses of my story, “Neverland 2.0” was recorded in my journal:

As I built the planet, I started to think about the plot. How did this planet ever exist? What could have happened for a perfect utopia to be engineered? (...) Since there is a specific planet inhabited by children, I think it will contribute better to the plot if I added other planets. (...) If I follow through with my initial idea that these planets are made by scientists to preserve humankind, I need to think of how they transport humans from the earth to these planets. There are some options that I had in mind: teleportation doors, spaceships, and carrying the humans while they're in another form.

In his book "Writing with Power," Elbow (1981), focused more on the impact of the writing process than the final product. He combined two skills—creating and criticizing—that are completely contradictory and frequently clash in the writing process. I employed my cognitive abilities to ensure that there are no plot holes in the story and to make sense of it. As I write, I found myself continuously trying to foresee how my narrative or prediction may ended. Everytime I found a slight jarring context, I went through all my little notes to found out details I might have missed from my previous pages--it could be a name or a background story. Neverending ideas do not always mean a good thing; it means a neverending correction, and the longer the story is, the more I have to do a rigorous re-check of all the plot holes in my stories. My internal conflict with a plot hole and how I resolved it was recorded in my journal:

There is one plot hole that I needed to think about in the story; Marguerite still had a little bit of self-awareness because she decided to take the fate of Antara, so she remembered about the earth and the apocalypse. But would Vince possess the same inherited knowledge? Should Vince be aware of the existence of other planets? But if he isn't aware, why did he help those children? How did he know the existence of children? (...) Departing from this new revelation, I decided to make Vince fly Planet Pra and went to Madya for the sake of growing up to be an adult.

To make sure that the plot of my story is working and comprehensible, there are problems that need to be solved, perspectives to change and conflicts to conclude and reason. These issues shouldn't lead to disputes with the main plot or contradict any previous narratives. This is why writing a short story demands high-order thinking and sometimes mentally draining.

#### 4.4 Metacognitive Ability

Nussbaum (2001) illustrates the function of critical thinking as a human capacity to empathize with others and their living conditions, through which we can envision what it is like to be in another person's shoes. She refers to this as the "narrative imagination." Such an approach to point of view is essential to a human emotional and moral existence. To be a writer is to experience things through the eyes of the characters. And to deliver a good story is to draw the reader to be amongst the character—inside the story. The power of empathy and this narrative imagination is what we writers, have been struggling with all along. Some elements contribute to formulating this ability. As a writer, I should always be reflectively aware of my own beliefs and principle but I also have to be open-minded to consider other perspectives from different points of view—this is the balance I strive for. I often feel overwhelmed by my own thoughts since I seem to constantly be intruded by so many ideas. Fortunately, I have a sister who shares my mindset, and with whom I can discuss my thoughts and writings. How my sister's perspective tend to save me from my own writer's block was reflected in my writing:

My sister broadens my perspective, gives me insights, and points out details that I can improve. (...) After spending plenty of time reflecting, I decided to just ask my sister for her opinion and she said she liked the idea of teleportation doors and I instantly felt light and fine and okay again to include them in the story. Sometimes a simple affirmation from someone you can trust is the only thing you need, especially when you can't see your thoughts clearly because your judgments are all clouded.

Having her opinion is not only helpful for the sake of continuing my stories, but also to act as another mirror to reflect on my thoughts and feelings. Writers are demanded to be sensitive to their feelings, to understand their potential but also be aware of their limitations. Ennis (1989) and Nussbaum (2001) encourage critical thinking as a tool for self-reflection and to use critical thinking to reflect on one's own thinking, feelings and value. This is the approach I used when I was

creating short stories. Before I start writing, I not only make a note of the entire plot, but I also create a separate note for each character, in which I try to describe them as best as possible as if I were their friend or one of them. My understanding of the discipline of anthropology is also improved by having many perspectives and being aware of many relationships that exist. The following are excerpts from my reflection:

The story didn't have a sole main character, it switched point of views among all the seven characters. I realized that by doing this, it unraveled the story beautifully and at a good pace. (...) Though I am quite stubborn as a writer, having many characters with different personalities helps me grounded and prevents me from being self-absorbed when writing the story. Character's various reactions and thought processes will make the story more real and believable.

Another important journal that I have is the one where I record my thought and feelings about every little detail that intrigues me from my own story. There are times when my ideas did not work as I imagined or times when I had to take a different turn and consider the alternatives. Having to change the structure completely and multiple fail attempts are very familiar to me:

I originally had the plot sorted out and already wrote drabbles for the plot but then after some thought, I decided to rebuild the structure of the story almost entirely.

With the plot holes and the lack of depth, I feel like I have to shift the plot and the moral value that I initially created.

I reckoned that I have strayed from the main idea of the story. Whenever I'm overwhelmed by the events of my story, going simple is the best. Simple is more and better. Since my initial plot/structure didn't satisfy me, I looked for other alternatives.

I always have a specific idea/moral value that I want to deliver. I was pretty sure about the moral value that I want to deliver at the beginning, but as the story progressed, I realized my initial idea won't work. My moral value was weak and vague.

After reading it so many times, I reflect on how most of my interpretations of love are rather corny and merely for the sake of the poetry.

Like many authors before me, I use writing as a medium of self-expression. The theme I selected and the message I want to convey are very vital to me. The focus of the majority of my stories, including "Neverland 2.0" and "Solar Plexus," would be spirituality and self-discovery. However, I am unable to ignore the intensity I experience each time I crafted a tragic tale like "Tsumibito." I always made sure that the readers understood the moral of the story, regardless of the genre I chose to write in. I wrote down my thoughts and feelings when I wrote "Tsumibito" and "Solar Plexus" as followings:

I enjoy writing a twisted and dark story like Tsumibito but I have a strong moral compass and I centered my story around my ideology. (...) I grounded my thinking and treated my story as a simple thought experiment. I hoped to provoke



deeper thought and emotion in the reader as well.. Overall, I feel quite satisfied and proud of Tsumibito.

I am happy to include some elements of religion and spiritualism in this story because I believe love is a little bit of both. I don't think religion and spiritualism should exist without the presence of love and vice versa. I am also satisfied with the hint of sadness that these deities have (...).

Like many young aspiring writers, I am bound to trials and errors. My lack of experience in writing certain topics, my poor execution, and the need for inspiration are the limitations that I have to overcome and thrive to pursue my passion for creative writing. Despite these boundaries and turbulence, I also realize that writing is the most fundamental thing in my life that sharpen my skills, ignites my creativity, and perseveres my criticality—and even brought it into my daily life.



## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

#### 5.1 Conclusion

Creativity and critical thinking are urgently needed in the educational field since they increase engagement and problem-solving skills in students. In the modern world, critical thinking abilities are seen to be essential for success in a variety of academic and professional fields. People who demonstrate high critical thinking skills can function well in society, perform better in the workplace or class, and make better personal or business decisions. For many years, educators all around the world have been attempting to solve the dilemma of how to include critical thinking in the classroom. But thinking is an active process, not a passive one. While students use their critical thinking abilities, such as when writing, excellent outcomes can be reached (Tosuncuoglu, 2018). To assist this process, I entrusted writing short stories to reflect its benefit in critical thinking. Stories have always been effective in delivering feelings and ideas in the enhancing way possible. The use of literature in language instruction would foster students' creativity and critical thinking skills while giving them a true sense of the discourse and culture. Through a reflective study, I recorded my thoughts and feelings about my writing experiences throughout my life. As anticipated, the capacity for self-reflection and critical thought has been a part of my writing process. I learned how creating short stories aids my critical thinking when I read my reflections. High order thinking, the capacity for self-reflection, and metacognition ability are necessary for short story writing. Building a short story involves several different components, all of which clearly demonstrate the application of critical thinking skills. I must involve clarification in my own thinking to identify the topic, the theme, and the lesson I wish to convey before I can decide on the story's focal point. In developing the plot of the story, I must use my ability to filter and select elements that I want to make decisions that I used in my story. There is also a reasoning and analysis to be done considering the hypotheses that emerged during the writing process. And finally, I must use my metacognitive and self-reflecting ability as a writer to deeply comprehend my characters, to engage readers in the narrative, to perceive the story in different perspectives, and to be adaptable to changes. The study I conducted helped me better understand who I am as a person and made me aware of how frequently the stories I write alter who I am.

#### 5.2 Suggestions

There is no reason why writing needs to be one of the most dreadful subjects in learning English. Creative writing is a friendly approach to establishing better cognitive skills seamlessly through students' likeness and diverse personalities. Short story writing is not difficult for students to do on their own; there are many options for varied interests and preferences, and it may be used with

students of all ages, shifts, and English proficiency levels (Pardede, 2011). Analyzing a simple short tale from anyone can provide you a window into how they feel and how they think about certain issues. It is obvious that this study is bound to a certain context and that further research is required. My reflective study, however, sheds light on the potential of short story writing as a practical tool that contributes to critical thinking abilities. This study suggests that critical thinking skills are implemented in every component in the writing process of short stories. Additionally, incorporating story writing into a learning process will support the use of literature as authentic language learning material. It is encouraged to conduct more study to show the advantages of short story writing on critical thinking skills.



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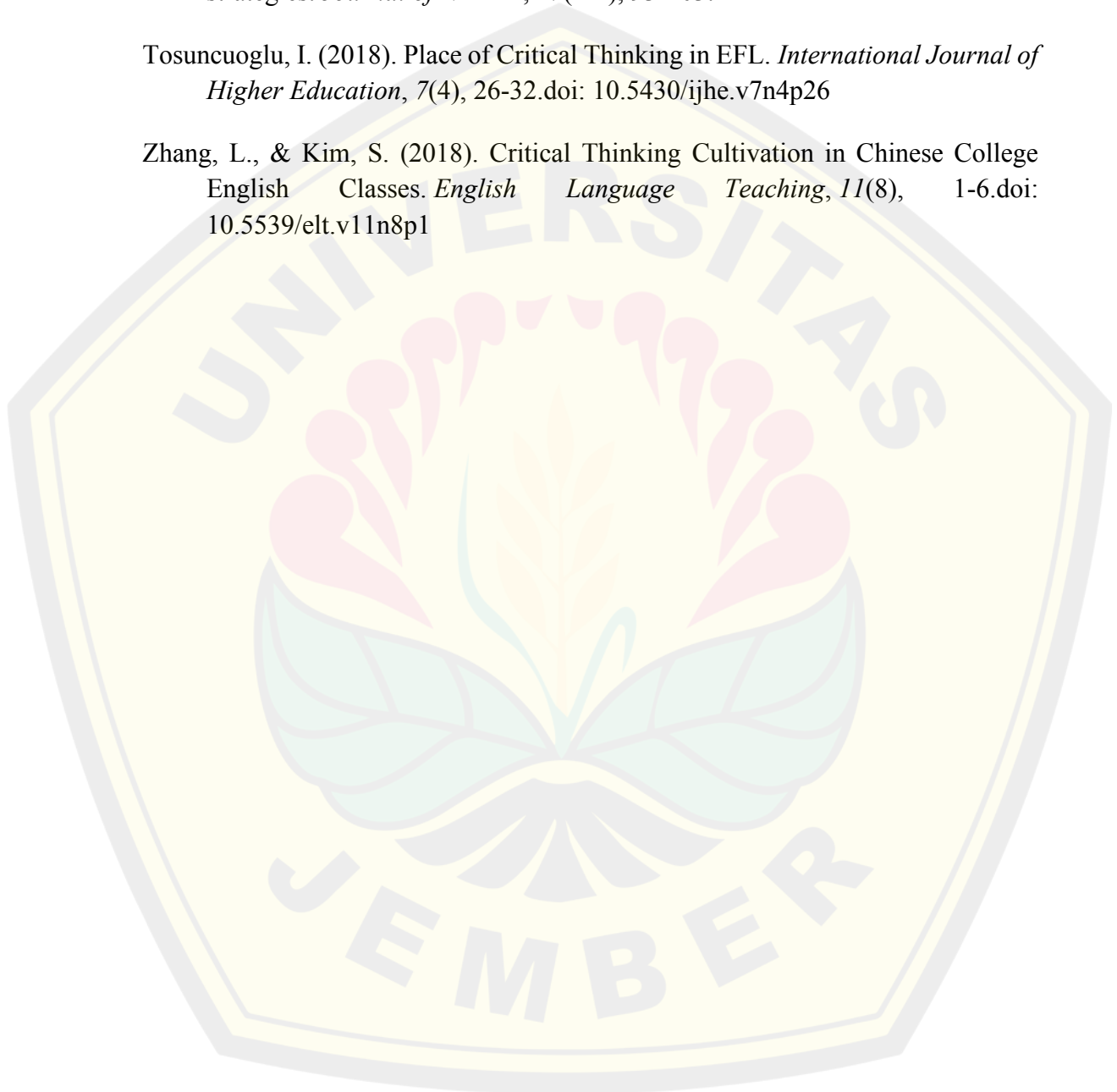
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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A

1. To Involve Clarification
  - a) To identify the focus: the issue, question or conclusion
2. The Basis of Decision
  - a) To try to be well-informed
  - b) To seek as much precision as the situation require
3. To Include Inference
  - a) To reason and analyze hypotheses
4. Metacognitive Ability
  - a) To be open-minded and look for alternatives from other point views
  - b) To be reflective on one's own thinking, feelings and value

### APPENDIX B

#### Reflection Entry 1

When I first wrote stories, I did it to escape reality. I was 12 and a sixth grader at my school. I had the entire year of my schedule packed with studying and extra lessons to be accepted into the junior high of my dream. My mom supported my hobby of reading so she built a small library at home. At first, I would try to copy the way other young writers write their stories. After some unfinished drabbles and impromptus, I finally followed through with a simple idea and made it by writing a short novelette about it. My first novelette was a simple story about friendship, family, and teenage crushes. I took inspiration from tween novels and short stories made by young writers my age, also magical girls anime and Disney tv shows. My stories revolve around problems appropriate for my age at that time. My writing was messy and scattered. My characters were two-dimensional and my conflict resolution tended to be absurd. I executed every idea poorly using simple sentences and only focusing on finishing the story. Entering the junior high school of my dream was one of the highlights of my life. My school implemented English in every day's teaching and learning process. My school also had a really good art program and they appreciated my achievements in English competitions and art in general. I had a group of friends I looked up to and we were all aspiring writers. During my junior high years, my writings got darker and deeper due to the influence of my surroundings and everyday media. I started to write stories with different



genres such as angst, gore, and tragedy. I learned to take things slowly by brainstorming my ideas and building a believable character. I rooted my teenage angst into my writing and as result, produced heavily emotional narratives but was still lacking in structure and plot-wise. One thing that helps me whenever I experience writer's block is reading. For me, reading and writing are equal to the inhale and exhale process—both needed to be in a good balance. After I read books and other people's work, I became inspired and I gained more insights into executing my idea. Taking turns in reading each other's work with my friend group was inspiring, motivating, and helped me to stay productive. I wrote a lot of dark and depressing stories during this era simply because I wanted to challenge myself. In the end, I found myself working best when I have a deep moral value to convey. Since then, I never do less for my stories.

## **APPENDIX C**

### **Reflection Entry 2**

I mostly wrote melancholy poetry and self-indulged short stories during high school. Some of which I can't even remember the title, and some are untitled. It was not until my university days that I set the intention to myself to write stories more seriously. I was fed up with writing only for myself. I want to make a story with a good structure and a well-thought plot. Stories with beginning, conflicts, and an end. Stories with concise and sharp messages, but delivered smoothly and seamlessly through context. Stories with characters others can relate to. Stories that people can carry within themselves forever as a reminder. So I started to give my drafts to my younger sister. She is also an aspiring young writer and has always been my partner in life, literature, arts, and pretty much everything. We have a very distinct writing style so I always value her opinion on my work. My sister broadens my perspective, gives me insights, and points out details that I can improve. The other thing that I do to inspire myself is to surround myself with a good support system. I gathered some good friends and told them that I need them to read my drafts and give suggestions. This idea has been working pretty well so far hence I have been quite productive in my writing. Having readers and feedback seem to motivate me better than only having myself alone as a sole reader. The character difference between me, my sister, and my friends inspired me so much—as they slowly become my muse in creating stories and characters.

## **APPENDIX D**

### **Reflection Entry 3**

I have always liked to combine science fiction and fantasy, making it accessible for multiple interpretations for the mind. I wanted to make a story about planets and the universe, and I immediately thought of Ursula Le Guin. She is the mother of modern science fiction and her story, "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas", is probably my favorite tale of all time. I have a specific image of how the aesthetic

of my story should look through the description and narrative so I followed my heart. Another significant story that inspired me to create this new tale is “The little prince” by Antoine de Saint-Exupery. I went along with my idea and started building a planet where it is only inhabited by children age of 7. I wanted to make the planet well-engineered and sustainable for children, much like the city of omelas’ utopia. As I built the planet, I started to think about the plot. How did this planet ever exist? What could have happened for a perfect utopia to be engineered? Thus, for the plot, I decided to raise the issue of climate change and global warming. I concluded that this utopia must have been created after a huge catastrophe, a dystopia. The planet earth is dying and scientists, engineers, artists, architects, teachers, and all other great thinkers get together and design new planets to preserve humankind. They have long mastered the new technology, astrophysics, and genetic engineering due to the apocalypse—bringing fantasy into reality. Since there is a specific planet inhabited by children, I think it will contribute better to the plot if I added other planets. I took the names from the Sanskrit language and started to create 4 planets: Pra, Madya, Antara, and Karma. I made sure the meaning of the names aligned with the planets. I originally had the plot sorted out and already wrote drabbles for the plot but then after some thought, I decided to rebuild the structure of the story almost entirely. If I follow through with my initial idea that these planets are made by scientists to preserve humankind, I need to think of how they transport humans from the earth to these planets. There are some options that I had in mind: teleportation doors, spaceships, and carrying the humans while they’re in another form. Though I already feel like the teleportation doors would be suitable for the story, I was fighting against this idea for a long time. To clear my doubts, I surfed the internet and searched for teleportation devices used by many science-fiction stories. I didn’t know why I considered having a teleportation door too weird for my story. I made scientists build actual planets, so to be weirded out by teleportation doors is quite unnatural. After spending plenty of time reflecting, I decided to just ask my sister for her opinion and she said she liked the idea of teleportation doors and I instantly felt light and fine and okay again to include them in the story. Sometimes a simple affirmation from someone you can trust is the only thing you need, especially when you can’t see your thoughts clearly because your judgments are all clouded. The main character of this story is Kira, a young girl from Planet Pra. One day when she was playing with her best friend, Finn, they stumbled upon an old manual guidebook from the ground. The book contained the history and pieces of information about their planet and also mentions of other engineered planets. Intrigued, Kira and Finn used their spaceship to discover the other planets to then report to their group. Having wanted to leave their planets and being curious about the other planets, Kira was beyond thrilled. Finn, who was very cautious at the beginning, was willing to join Kira to protect her and make sure she wasn’t getting into any trouble and so their adventure began. The first planet they went to is Madya. Madya is a planet inhabited by only adults. They quickly were disappointed by their expectation towards the planet and the residents but were

saved by a kind man named Vince when they got themselves into trouble. They finally know that not all adults are rude and ignorant. Sometimes you will encounter adults that are kind and caring with a glimpse of an inner child much like they are. Vince cleaned and fed them; he also gave them a new spaceship so they could go back home safely. But the coordinate of their new spaceship took them to another planet, Antara. Antara is a peaceful and deserted planet with small houses, gardens, and meadows. There, they met Marguerite, a sweet old lady with a bad memory and delicious pies. Marguerite told them that they are originally from a place called the earth, but the planet was dying so they had to divide the humans according to their fate, that's why the scientists created these planets. After hearing it, Kira decided to go to the last planet before they went home. They landed their spaceship in Karma and were welcomed with extraordinary scenery of various flora and fauna. The biodiversity of the ecosystem, the vibration of their life, and the strength of each of the species left Kira and Finn speechless. Not to mention that they heard the plants and the animals were able to talk and communicate. They found a beautiful sunflower and the sunflower greeted them like an old friend. The sunflower turned out to be Vince, and time had dilated and moved differently as they traveled, making them just in time to meet Vince at his sunflower form in Karma. Kira asked Vince the question she has always had in mind, and as Vince gave her the final answer, she felt assured and content. Kira said thank you to Vince and told Finn that they are going home. There is one plot hole that I needed to think about in the story; Marguerite still had a little bit of self-awareness because she decided to take the fate of Antara, so she remembered about the earth and the apocalypse. But would Vince possess the same inherited knowledge? Should Vince be aware of the existence of other planets? But if he isn't aware, why did he help those children? How did he know the existence of children? I always have a specific idea/moral value that I want to deliver. I was pretty sure about the moral value that I want to deliver at the beginning, but as the story progressed, I realized my initial idea won't work. My moral value was weak and vague. With the plot holes and the lack of depth, I feel like I have to shift the plot and the moral value that I initially created. Kira is discontented with her perfect life in Pra because she has the enormous and unstoppable curiosity to always seek more. It is much similar to how very curious and optimistic children are before they enter adulthood. Though Kira's optimism was soon crushed when they discovered Madya, Vince was able to prove to her that not all adults are cold and rude. I reckoned that I have strayed from the main idea of the story. Whenever I'm overwhelmed by the events of my story, going simple is the best. Simple is more and better. Since my initial plot/structure didn't satisfy me, I looked for other alternatives. Sometimes I am stubborn and decide prematurely on the outcome/solutions to the conflict of the story. During this time, I reflect on the alternatives to allow myself to be mindful and have better compassion as a human being. I had wanted Vince to be the role model for Kira and Fenrir, to be the tiny hope amidst the despair. At this point, I'm trying to deepen the plot with the help of my sister. She suggested making Vince a previous resident at

Pra, a dissatisfied curious child much like Kira. Departing from this new revelation, I decided to make Vince fly Planet Pra and went to Madya for the sake of growing up to be an adult. Though encountered hardships in Madya, Vince grew up to be a good adult, possessing both kindness and wisdom. It is very hard to do so even in our reality. Therefore, I changed a few dialogues and made Vince reveal his origin story to Kira and Finn. Everything Vince and Marguerite did was supposed to help Kira and Finn to have faith about growing up, no matter how the world or the entire universe is trying to bring them down. One must not let their inner child die. I now feel very much satisfied with the plot of my story. It is much stronger and deeper than the previous one.

## APPENDIX E

### Reflection Entry 4

There are so many things that could be the kickstart of writing inspiration for me. It's not always necessary from other literature. Sometimes, it could be a movie, music, or a specific feeling that I want to preserve. I wrote "Tsumibito" after I discovered an amazing art website that allows you to create your own characters. I like to use this website to spend time and just for fun. But the artwork specifically by the artist that I found, ignited my imagination and my brain hurriedly created a whole background story as I'm playing and designing my characters. The original artwork is heavily influenced by Japanese mythology, and since I am not foreign to Japanese culture, it didn't take much consideration to settle upon the setting of the story. Choosing the title was a no-brainer either, "Tsumibito" means, the sinner in Japanese. The artworks of the characters included some graphic features so I follow through with the dark tone and write it accordingly. I wanted to make a story where the whole cast is intertwined by the red thread of destiny, how one person's choice affected other people's lives. The story didn't have a sole main character, it switched point of views among all the seven characters. I realized that by doing this, it unraveled the story beautifully and at a good pace. This is also the kind of story where the beginning of the story is placed at the end of the story, unveiling the true motives of each character at the ending. Like the title, Tsumibito is about how these seven sinners make up their lives trying to resolve their karma. The story opened with Ether, a young human girl who lost her sanity after being betrayed by her lover and is cursed for eternity after eating her lover alive. Ether now is a fallen goddess of the dark forest trapping lost men into her meal. Ether shared the forest as a resting place with her friend, a ghost called Hantu Musim Semi. One day Ether encountered Mal and his snake friend, Laika. Mal is one of the children of Medusa, assigned to record and track the sins of the sinners. Realizing that Ether has lost her ability to have a logical conversation, Mal was annoyed and left Ether. The narrative then shifted to tell the story of the 17 years old Kurenai Rin. The Kurenai family and Mirei family have been in a long descent rivalry in performing arts. Rin, who didn't inherit the talent of art, can't help but feel jealous of Ito Mirei. Rin was daunted by

the fact that her parents put huge weight and pressure off her shoulder to carry the family traditions. Multiple times Rin tried to end her life but she never really dared to do it. On her way home from school. Rin encountered mysterious lighting and decided to follow the lightning's source. Next, we have the story of the long misery of Darko Saverine. Darko Saverine, who has been suffering through an eternity of long punishment, can't even remember who he is, his life story, and what sin he committed to be sentenced to an endless inferno. On the brink of his despair, Darko heard a voice calling his name. The voice belonged to Haruka, the goddess of dance and music. Haruka reached for Darko from the other side to comfort him. Haruka told Darko to stay strong and remind Darko to find the key to his freedom. Haruka turned out to be the goddess that the Mirei family kept in their temple to provide the family with the gift of their talent. In the meantime, the lightning that Rin followed earlier turned out to be Mal executing a sinner. Intrigued by the petrifying scenery before her, Rin proposed to Mal to take her as an apprentice. Mal refused but Rin threatened him until Mal got furious. He ordered Laika to hurt Rin but only until Rin was on the brink of death. The setting of the story then switched to a hot spring; a fallen god named Ikki was deep in the nostalgia of a conversation he used to have with a dying human girl. They talked about human's natural desire to start a war and how to cleanse the world from it. Ikki's thoughts were interrupted by the presence of Haruka. Ikki welcomed Haruka as his honored guest and poured her a cup of tea. Haruka told Ikki that she has been set free by the Mirei family and the news brought a surprise for Ikki. What had happened was that Rin woke up from her encounter with Mal and Laika feeling disoriented and feral. All of the sudden, Rin went into a frenzied state and trespassed into the Mirei household. With her new power, Rin assassinated the whole Mirei clan in rage. She found Haruka at her temple and found out Mirei's family secret to their success. Haruka offered her eternal gift, talent, and prosperity. Realizing that Rin never wanted to fulfill her parents' desire, she refused and soon became self-aware of the grave sin she had committed. Rin went manic and ran to escape reality, leaving the house and everything in this world behind her. At the same time, Darko has arrived in the dark forest and came across Ether. After telling Ether that he came there looking for a key, Ether took Darko to Hantu Musim Semi's grave deep inside the forest. In his sudden confusion, a wave of melancholia washed over him and brought all his memories back to him. Hantu Musim Semi was a dying young girl assigned to him. And as the children of Medusa, Darko was supposed to be the one who collected her soul but instead, Darko gave her one more day to live. That remaining time allowed Hantu Musim Semi and Ikki to carry out their plan to poison the entire city's drinking water and committed a mass genocide; making her the infamous "Pendosa Nomor Satu." Hantu Musim Semi smiled and thanked Darko without acknowledging the damage she had created. She freed Darko from his misery and wished him well in his freedom. The story ended with Hantu Musim Semi and Ikki reuniting after they paid their karma. Ikki hurriedly closed his hot spring in excitement to leave the place. He jokingly notified Hantu Musim Semi that Haruka

came by and told the story of how she had found a suitor for the new “Pendosa Nomor Satu.” Tsumibito tells a story of multiple characters and how their fates are intertwined but it was surprisingly effortless to write. Though I am quite stubborn as a writer, having many characters with different personalities helps me grounded and prevents me from being self-absorbed when writing the story. Character’s various reactions and thought processes will make the story more real and believable. I spent only a night writing the story from start to finish. I have mapped the character and their background story before that. I didn’t feel strange contributing a little bit of mythology and my fantasy to the story. I do a little research every time I gather the material for my story. Researching is probably my favorite part of the writing process because I get to learn about new things. The fact that the story’s elements seem natural to me may be because I’ve read a lot of Japanese manga containing references to other mythologies and even classic literature. I didn’t meet many difficulties or feel conflicted as much as when I wrote Neverland 2.0. I enjoy writing a twisted and dark story like Tsumibito but I have a strong moral compass and I centered my story around my ideology. With that all being said, I often use dark stories to remind the readers about the consequences. Much like dystopian writers using their story as warnings. I grounded my thinking and treated my story as a simple thought experiment. I hoped to provoke deeper thought and emotion in the reader as well.. Overall, I feel quite satisfied and proud of Tsumibito.

## **APPENDIX F**

### **Reflection Entry 5**

I have never written a romance story before and I never actually wanted to. Nevertheless, one day I pondered and decided to give it a try. I don’t have any references on how to write a good love story, perhaps because I never like to read teen lit, chick flicks, or romance in general. For this story, I wanted to write an intimate and timeless love story, one that people might find hard to relate to but would leave them in flutters anyway. I want a love story between two ethereal entities with infinite wisdom. There have been myths and poems circulating about the origin of the sun and the moon, including their love story. I decided to adopt this and write an actual story about their personification. They can be a god and a goddess, or deities, astral entities, or the actual sun and moon; I will leave it to the readers to interpret. I named the sun, “Helios” from the Greek language and “Luna” from Latin for the moon. I also included some other characters from other elements’ personifications like stars, clouds, volcanoes, wind, ocean, and mother earth. The plot of the story itself is very simple, it is only about a cycle. For the sun and the moon to meet at night, it must be a lunar eclipse. Once every lunar eclipse, Helios and Luna get the chance to be in each other’s presence and become the lovers that they are. Their meeting was short but always profound. The story ends with Luna watching Helios rise after their very short encounter. I chose “Solar Plexus” as the

title as a reference to the chakra frequencies, where the Solar Plexus point is placed right around the abdomen—above the belly button. The Solar Plexus is also where Helios felt his intense emotional whiplash upon the arrival of his lover, Luna. I am happy to include some elements of religion and spiritualism in this story because I believe love is a little bit of both. I don't think religion and spiritualism should exist without the presence of love and vice versa. I am also satisfied with the hint of sadness that these deities have due to the destruction that humankind has been doing to mother earth. Because of their nature as the holy guardians of the universe, they keep providing and keep on loving despite the corruption. Some things made writing this story harder than other of my stories. I really pay attention to the details of the writing style. I want to do it justice by making sure that every line is poetic and seamlessly delicate—like love. The challenge is also to avoid repetitive words. To manage this, I replace the word with its synonym or paraphrase the whole sentence. After reading it so many times, I reflect on how most of my interpretations of love are rather corny and merely for the sake of the poetry. Perhaps it is due to my lack of experience. I then read some love poems and prompts on the internet to gain some inspiration. As a result, I managed to add more lines and more depth to the dialogue. I am still not able to say that I am proud of this story, but it was a really good exercise. Perhaps I will be better at writing romance in the future, hopefully.

## **APPENDIX G**

### **Data Generation Table**

When I first wrote stories, I did it to escape reality. I was 12 and a sixth grader at my school. I had the entire year of my schedule packed with studying and extra lessons to be accepted into the junior high of my dream. My mom supported my hobby of reading so she built a small library at home. At first, I would try to copy the way other young writers write their stories. After some unfinished drabbles and impromptus, I finally followed through with a simple idea and made it by writing a short novelette about it. My first novelette was a simple story about friendship, family, and teenage crushes. I took inspiration from tween novels and short stories made by young writers my age, also magical girls anime and Disney tv shows. My stories revolve around problems appropriate for my age at that time. My writing was messy and scattered. My characters were two-dimensional and my conflict resolution tended to be absurd. I executed every idea poorly using simple sentences and only focusing on finishing the story. Entering the junior high school of my dream was one of the highlights of my life. My school implemented English in every day's teaching and learning process. My school also had a really good art program and they appreciated my achievements in English competitions and art in general. I had a group of friends I looked up to and we were all aspiring writers. During my junior high years, my writings got darker and deeper due to the influence of my surroundings and everyday media. I started to write stories with different genres such as angst, gore, and tragedy.



<p>I learned to take things slowly by brainstorming my ideas and building a believable character. I rooted my teenage angst into my writing and as result, produced heavily emotional narratives but was still lacking in structure and plot-wise. One thing that helps me whenever I experience writer's block is reading. For me, reading and writing are equal to the inhale and exhale process—both needed to be in a good balance. <b>After I read books and other people's work, I became inspired and I gained more insights into executing my idea.</b> Taking turns in reading each other's work with my friend group was inspiring, motivating, and helped me to stay productive. I wrote a lot of dark and depressing stories during this era simply because I wanted to challenge myself. In the end, I found myself working best when I have a deep moral value to convey. Since then, I never do less for my stories.</p>	<p>-To try to be well informed</p>	<p>The Basis of Decision</p>
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<p>I mostly wrote melancholy poetry and self-indulged short stories during high school. Some of which I can't even remember the title, and some are untitled. It was not until my university days that I set the intention to myself to write stories more seriously. I was fed up with writing only for myself. I want to make a story with a good structure and a well-thought plot. Stories with beginning, conflicts, and an end. Stories with concise and sharp messages, but delivered smoothly and seamlessly through context. Stories with characters others can relate to. Stories that people can carry within themselves forever as a reminder. So I started to give my drafts to my younger sister. She is also an aspiring young writer and has always been my partner in life, literature, arts, and pretty much everything. We have a very distinct writing style so I always value her opinion on my work. My sister broadens my perspective, gives me insights, and points out details that I can improve. The other thing that I do to inspire myself is to surround myself with a good support system. I gathered some good friends and told them that I need them to read my drafts and give suggestions. This idea has been working pretty well so far hence I have been quite productive in my writing. Having readers and feedback seem to motivate me better than only having myself alone as a sole reader. The character difference between me, my sister, and my friends inspired me so</p>	<p>-To be open-minded and look for alternatives from other point views</p>	<p>Metacognitive</p>

<p>much—as they slowly become my muse in creating stories and characters.</p>		
<p>I have always liked to combine science fiction and fantasy, making it accessible for multiple interpretations for the mind. I wanted to make a story about planets and the universe, and I immediately thought of Ursula Le Guin. She is the mother of modern science fiction and her story, “The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas”, is probably my favorite tale of all time. I have a specific image of how the aesthetic of my story should look through the description and narrative so I followed my heart.</p>	<p>-To identify the focus: the issue, question or conclusion</p> <p>-To identify the focus: the issue, question or conclusion</p>	<p>Clarification</p>
<p>Another significant story that inspired me to create this new tale is “The little prince” by Antoine de Saint-Exupery. I went along with my idea and started building a planet where it is only inhabited by children age of 7. I wanted to make the planet well-engineered and sustainable for children, much like the city of omelas’ utopia. As I built the planet, I started to think about the plot. How did this planet ever exist? What could have happened for a perfect utopia to be engineered? Thus, for the plot, I decided to raise the issue of climate change and global warming. I concluded that this utopia must have</p>	<p>-To reason and analyze hypothesis</p> <p>-To identify the focus: the issue, question or conclusion</p>	<p>Inference</p> <p>Clarification</p>

<p>been created after a huge catastrophe, a dystopia.</p>	<p>-To reason and analyze hypothesis</p>	<p>Inference</p>
<p>The planet earth is dying and scientists, engineers, artists, architects, teachers, and all other great thinkers get together and design new planets to preserve humankind. They have long mastered the new technology, astrophysics, and genetic engineering due to the apocalypse—bringing fantasy into reality. Since there is a specific planet inhabited by children, I think it will contribute better to the plot if I added other planets.</p>	<p>-To seek as much precision as the situation require</p>	<p>The Basis of Decision</p>
<p>I took the names from the Sanskrit language and started to create 4 planets: Pra, Madya, Antara, and Karma. I made sure the meaning of the names aligned with the planets.</p>	<p>-To try to be well informed</p>	<p>Metacognitive</p>
<p>I originally had the plot sorted out and already wrote drabbles for the plot but then after some thought, I decided to rebuild the structure of the story almost entirely. If I follow through with my initial idea that these planets are made by scientists to preserve humankind, I need to think of how they transport humans from the earth to these planets. There are some options that I had in mind: teleportation doors, spaceships, and carrying the humans while they're in another form. Though I already feel like the teleportation doors would be suitable for the story, I was fighting against this idea for a long time. To clear my doubts, I surfed the internet and searched for teleportation devices used by many science-fiction stories.</p>	<p>-To be open-minded and look for alternatives from other point views</p>	<p>Metacognitive</p>
<p>I originally had the plot sorted out and already wrote drabbles for the plot but then after some thought, I decided to rebuild the structure of the story almost entirely. If I follow through with my initial idea that these planets are made by scientists to preserve humankind, I need to think of how they transport humans from the earth to these planets. There are some options that I had in mind: teleportation doors, spaceships, and carrying the humans while they're in another form. Though I already feel like the teleportation doors would be suitable for the story, I was fighting against this idea for a long time. To clear my doubts, I surfed the internet and searched for teleportation devices used by many science-fiction stories.</p>	<p>-To reason and analyze hypothesis</p>	<p>Inference</p>
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<p>I originally had the plot sorted out and already wrote drabbles for the plot but then after some thought, I decided to rebuild the structure of the story almost entirely. If I follow through with my initial idea that these planets are made by scientists to preserve humankind, I need to think of how they transport humans from the earth to these planets. There are some options that I had in mind: teleportation doors, spaceships, and carrying the humans while they're in another form. Though I already feel like the teleportation doors would be suitable for the story, I was fighting against this idea for a long time. To clear my doubts, I surfed the internet and searched for teleportation devices used by many science-fiction stories.</p>	<p>-To be reflective on one's own thinking, feelings and value</p>	<p>Metacognitive</p>
<p>I originally had the plot sorted out and already wrote drabbles for the plot but then after some thought, I decided to rebuild the structure of the story almost entirely. If I follow through with my initial idea that these planets are made by scientists to preserve humankind, I need to think of how they transport humans from the earth to these planets. There are some options that I had in mind: teleportation doors, spaceships, and carrying the humans while they're in another form. Though I already feel like the teleportation doors would be suitable for the story, I was fighting against this idea for a long time. To clear my doubts, I surfed the internet and searched for teleportation devices used by many science-fiction stories.</p>	<p>-To be open-minded and look for alternatives from other point views</p>	<p>Metacognitive</p>

I didn't know why I considered having a teleportation door too weird for my story. I made scientists build actual planets, so to be weirded out by teleportation doors is quite unnatural. After spending plenty of time reflecting, I decided to just ask my sister for her opinion and she said she liked the idea of teleportation doors and I instantly felt light and fine and okay again to include them in the story. Sometimes a simple affirmation from someone you can trust is the only thing you need, especially when you can't see your thoughts clearly because your judgments are all clouded.

The main character of this story is Kira, a young girl from Planet Pra. One day when she was playing with her best friend, Finn, they stumbled upon an old manual guidebook from the ground. The book contained the history and pieces of information about their planet and also mentions of other engineered planets. Intrigued, Kira and Finn used their spaceship to discover the other planets to then report to their group. Having wanted to leave their planets and being curious about the other planets, Kira was beyond thrilled. Finn, who was very cautious at the beginning, was willing to join Kira to protect her and make sure she wasn't getting into any trouble and so their adventure began.

The first planet they went to is Madya. Madya is a planet inhabited by only adults. They quickly were disappointed by their expectation towards the planet and the residents but were saved by a kind man named Vince when they got themselves into trouble. They finally

know that not all adults are rude and ignorant. Sometimes you will encounter adults that are kind and caring with a glimpse of an inner child much like they are. Vince cleaned and fed them; he also gave them a new spaceship so they could go back home safely. But the coordinate of their new spaceship took them to another planet, Antara. Antara is a peaceful and deserted planet with small houses, gardens, and meadows. There, they met Marguerite, a sweet old lady with a bad memory and delicious pies. Marguerite told them that they are originally from a place called the earth, but the planet was dying so they had to divide the humans according to their fate, that's why the scientists created these planets. After hearing it, Kira decided to go to the last planet before they went home. They landed their spaceship in Karma and were welcomed with extraordinary scenery of various flora and fauna. The biodiversity of the ecosystem, the vibration of their life, and the strength of each of the species left Kira and Finn speechless. Not to mention that they heard the plants and the animals were able to talk and communicate. They found a beautiful sunflower and the sunflower greeted them like an old friend. The sunflower turned out to be Vince, and time had dilated and moved differently as they traveled, making them just in time to meet Vince at his sunflower form in Karma. Kira asked Vince the question she has always had in mind, and as Vince gave her the final answer, she felt assured and content. Kira said thank you to Vince and told Finn that they are going home.

<p>There is one plot hole that I needed to think about in the story; Marguerite still had a little bit of self-awareness because she decided to take the fate of Antara, so she remembered about the earth and the apocalypse. But would Vince possess the same inherited knowledge? Should Vince be aware of the existence of other planets? But if he isn't aware, why did he help those children? How did he know the existence of children?</p>	<p>-To reason and analyze hypothesis</p>	<p>Inference</p>
<p>I always have a specific idea/moral value that I want to deliver. I was pretty sure about the moral value that I want to deliver at the beginning, but as the story progressed, I realized my initial idea won't work. My moral value was weak and vague. With the plot holes and the lack of depth, I feel like I have to shift the plot and the moral value that I initially created. Kira is discontented with her perfect life in Pra because she has the enormous and unstoppable curiosity to always seek more. It is much similar to how very curious and optimistic children are before they enter adulthood.</p>	<p>-To be reflective on one's own thinking, feelings and value</p>	<p>Metacognitive</p>
<p>Though Kira's optimism was soon crushed when they discovered Madya, Vince was able to prove to her that not all adults are cold and rude. I reckoned that I have strayed from the main idea of the story. Whenever I'm overwhelmed by the events of my story, going simple is the best. Simple is more and better. Since my initial plot/structure didn't satisfy me, I looked for other alternatives. Sometimes I am stubborn and decide prematurely on the outcome/solutions</p>	<p>-To be open-minded and look for alternatives from other point views</p>	
<p>Though Kira's optimism was soon crushed when they discovered Madya, Vince was able to prove to her that not all adults are cold and rude. I reckoned that I have strayed from the main idea of the story. Whenever I'm overwhelmed by the events of my story, going simple is the best. Simple is more and better. Since my initial plot/structure didn't satisfy me, I looked for other alternatives. Sometimes I am stubborn and decide prematurely on the outcome/solutions</p>	<p>-To be open-minded and look for alternatives from other point views</p>	<p>Metacognitive</p>
<p>Though Kira's optimism was soon crushed when they discovered Madya, Vince was able to prove to her that not all adults are cold and rude. I reckoned that I have strayed from the main idea of the story. Whenever I'm overwhelmed by the events of my story, going simple is the best. Simple is more and better. Since my initial plot/structure didn't satisfy me, I looked for other alternatives. Sometimes I am stubborn and decide prematurely on the outcome/solutions</p>	<p>-To be reflective on one's own thinking, feelings and value</p>	

<p>to the conflict of the story. During this time, I reflect on the alternatives to allow myself to be mindful and have better compassion as a human being. I had wanted Vince to be the role model for Kira and Fenrir, to be the tiny hope amidst the despair. At this point, I'm trying to deepen the plot with the help of my sister. She suggested making Vince a previous resident at Pra, a dissatisfied curious child much like Kira. Departing from this new revelation, I decided to make Vince fly Planet Pra and went to Madya for the sake of growing up to be an adult. Though encountered hardships in Madya, Vince grew up to be a good adult, possessing both kindness and wisdom. It is very hard to do so even in our reality. Therefore, I changed a few dialogues and made Vince reveal his origin story to Kira and Finn. Everything Vince and Marguerite did was supposed to help Kira and Finn to have faith about growing up, no matter how the world or the entire universe is trying to bring them down. One must not let their inner child die. I now feel very much satisfied with the plot of my story. It is much stronger and deeper than the previous one.</p>	<p>-Identify the focus: the issue, question or conclusion</p>	<p>Clarification</p>
	<p>-To reason and analyze hypothesis</p>	<p>Inference</p>
	<p>-Identify the focus: the issue, question or conclusion</p>	<p>Clarification</p>



<p>There are so many things that could be the kickstart of writing inspiration for me. It's not always necessary from other literature. Sometimes, it could be a movie, music, or a specific feeling that I want to preserve. I wrote "Tsumibito" after I discovered an amazing art website that allows you to create your own characters. I like to use this website to spend time and just for fun. But the artwork specifically by the artist that I found, ignited my imagination and my brain hurriedly created a whole background story as I'm playing and designing my characters. The original artwork is heavily influenced by Japanese mythology, and since I am not foreign to Japanese culture, it didn't take much consideration to settle upon the setting of the story. Choosing the title was a no-brainer either, "Tsumibito" means, the sinner in Japanese. The artworks of the characters included some graphic features so I follow through with the dark tone and write it accordingly. I wanted to make a story where the whole cast is intertwined by the red thread of destiny, how one person's choice affected other people's lives.</p>	<p>-To seek as much precision as the situation require</p>	<p>The Basis of Decision</p>
	<p>-To identify the focus: the issue, question or conclusion</p>	<p>Clarification</p>

<p>The story didn't have a sole main character, it switched point of views among all the seven characters. I realized that by doing this, it unraveled the story beautifully and at a good pace.</p> <p>This is also the kind of story where the beginning of the story is placed at the end of the story, unveiling the true motives of each character at the ending. Like the title, Tsumibito is about how these seven sinners make up their lives trying to resolve their karma.</p>	<p>-To be open-minded and look for alternatives from other points of view</p>	<p>Metacognitive</p>
<p>The story opened with Ether, a young human girl who lost her sanity after being betrayed by her lover and is cursed for eternity after eating her lover alive. Ether now is a fallen goddess of the dark forest trapping lost men into her meal. Ether shared the forest as a resting place with her friend, a ghost called Hantu Musim Semi. One day Ether encountered Mal and his snake friend, Laika. Mal is one of the children of Medusa, assigned to record and track the sins of the sinners. Realizing that Ether has lost her ability to have a logical conversation, Mal was annoyed and left Ether. The narrative then shifted to tell the story of the 17 years old Kurenai Rin. The Kurenai family and Mirei family have been in a long descent rivalry in performing arts. Rin, who didn't inherit the talent of art, can't help but feel jealous of Ito Mirei. Rin was daunted by the fact that her parents put huge weight and pressure off her shoulder to carry the family traditions. Multiple times Rin tried to end her life but she never really dared to do it. On her way home from school. Rin encountered mysterious lighting and decided to follow the lightning's</p>		

source. Next, we have the story of the long misery of Darko Saverine. Darko Saverine, who has been suffering through an eternity of long punishment, can't even remember who he is, his life story, and what sin he committed to be sentenced to an endless inferno. On the brink of his despair, Darko heard a voice calling his name. The voice belonged to Haruka, the goddess of dance and music. Haruka reached for Darko from the other side to comfort him. Haruka told Darko to stay strong and remind Darko to find the key to his freedom. Haruka turned out to be the goddess that the Mirei family kept in their temple to provide the family with the gift of their talent. In the meantime, the lightning that Rin followed earlier turned out to be Mal executing a sinner. Intrigued by the petrifying scenery before her, Rin proposed to Mal to take her as an apprentice. Mal refused but Rin threatened him until Mal got furious. He ordered Laika to hurt Rin but only until Rin was on the brink of death. The setting of the story then switched to a hot spring; a fallen god named Ikki was deep in the nostalgia of a conversation he used to have with a dying human girl. They talked about human's natural desire to start a war and how to cleanse the world from it. Ikki's thoughts were interrupted by the presence of Haruka. Ikki welcomed Haruka as his honored guest and poured her a cup of tea. Haruka told Ikki that she has been set free by the Mirei family and the news brought a surprise for Ikki. What had happened was that Rin woke up from her encounter with Mal and Laika feeling disoriented and feral. All of the sudden, Rin went into a

frenzied state and trespassed into the Mirei household. With her new power, Rin assassinated the whole Mirei clan in rage. She found Haruka at her temple and found out Mirei's family secret to their success. Haruka offered her eternal gift, talent, and prosperity. Realizing that Rin never wanted to fulfill her parents' desire, she refused and soon became self-aware of the grave sin she had committed. Rin went manic and ran to escape reality, leaving the house and everything in this world behind her. At the same time, Darko has arrived in the dark forest and came across Ether. After telling Ether that he came there looking for a key, Ether took Darko to Hantu Musim Semi's grave deep inside the forest. In his sudden confusion, a wave of melancholia washed over him and brought all his memories back to him. Hantu Musim Semi was a dying young girl assigned to him. And as the children of Medusa, Darko was supposed to be the one who collected her soul but instead, Darko gave her one more day to live. That remaining time allowed Hantu Musim Semi and Ikki to carry out their plan to poison the entire city's drinking water and committed a mass genocide; making her the infamous "Pendosa Nomor Satu." Hantu Musim Semi smiled and thanked Darko without acknowledging the damage she had created. She freed Darko from his misery and wished him well in his freedom. The story ended with Hantu Musim Semi and Ikki reuniting after they paid their karma. Ikki hurriedly closed his hot spring in excitement to leave the place. He jokingly notified Hantu Musim Semi

<p>that Haruka came by and told the story of how she had found a suitor for the new “Pendosa Nomor Satu.”</p>		
<p>Tsumibito tells a story of multiple characters and how their fates are intertwined but it was surprisingly effortless to write. Though I am quite stubborn as a writer, having many characters with different personalities helps me grounded and prevents me from being self-absorbed when writing the story. Character’s various reactions and thought processes will make the story more real and believable. I spent only a night writing the story from start to finish. I have mapped the character and their background story before that. I didn’t feel strange contributing a little bit of mythology and my fantasy to the story. I do a little research every time I gather the material for my story. Researching is probably my favorite part of the writing process because I get to learn about new things. The fact that the story's elements seem natural to me may be because I've read a lot of Japanese manga containing references to other mythologies and even classic literature. I didn’t meet many difficulties or feel conflicted as much as when I wrote Neverland 2.0. I enjoy writing a twisted and dark story like Tsumibito but I have a strong moral compass and I centered my story around my ideology. With that all being said, I often use dark stories to remind the readers about the consequences. Much like dystopian writers using their story as warnings. I grounded my thinking and treated my story as a simple thought experiment. I hoped to</p>	<p>-To be reflective on one’s own thinking, feelings and value</p>	<p>Metacognitive</p>
	<p>-To be open-minded and look for alternatives from other point views</p>	
	<p>-To try to be well informed</p>	<p>The Basis of Decision</p>
	<p>-To be reflective in one’s own thinking, feelings and value</p>	<p>Metacognitive</p>
	<p>-To seek as much precision as the situation require</p>	<p>The Basis of Decision</p>
	<p>-To be reflective on one’s own thinking, feelings and value</p>	
	<p>Metacognitive</p>	

<p>provoke deeper thought and emotion in the reader as well.. Overall, I feel quite satisfied and proud of Tsumibito.</p>	<p>-To be reflective on one’s own thinking, feelings and value</p>	
<p>I have never written a romance story before and I never actually wanted to. Nevertheless, one day I pondered and decided to give it a try. I don’t have any references on how to write a good love story, perhaps because I never like to read teen lit, chick flicks, or romance in general. For this story, I wanted to write an intimate and timeless love story, one that people might find hard to relate to but would leave them in flutters anyway. I want a love story between two ethereal entities with infinite wisdom. There have been myths and poems circulating about the origin of the sun and the moon, including their love story. I decided to adopt this and write an actual story about their personification. They can be a god and a goddess, or deities, astral entities, or the actual sun and moon; I will leave it to the readers to interpret. I named the sun, “Helios” from the Greek language and “Luna” from Latin for the moon. I also included some other characters from other elements’ personifications like stars, clouds, volcanoes, wind, ocean, and mother earth. The plot of the story itself is very simple, it is only about a cycle. For the sun and the moon to meet at night, it must be a lunar eclipse. Once every lunar eclipse, Helios and Luna get the chance to be in each other’s presence and become the lovers that they are. Their meeting was short but always profound. The story</p>	<p>-To identify the focus: the issue, question/conclusion</p>	<p>Clarification</p>
	<p>-To try to be well informed</p>	
	<p>-To seek as much precision as the situation require</p>	
	<p>-To seek as much precision as the situation require</p>	
	<p>-To seek as much precision as the situation require</p>	<p>The Basic of Decision</p>

<p>ends with Luna watching Helios rise after their very short encounter.</p>		
<p>I chose “Solar Plexus” as the title as a reference to the chakra frequencies, where the Solar Plexus point is placed right around the abdomen—above the belly button. The Solar Plexus is also where Helios felt his intense emotional whiplash upon the arrival of his lover, Luna. I am happy to include some elements of religion and spiritualism in this story because I believe love is a little bit of both. I don’t think religion and spiritualism should exist without the presence of love and vice versa. I am also satisfied with the hint of sadness that these deities have due to the destruction that humankind has been doing to mother earth. Because of their nature as the holy guardians of the universe, they keep providing and keep on loving despite the corruption. Some things made writing this story harder than other of my stories. I really pay attention to the details of the writing style. I want to do it justice by making sure that every line is poetic and seamlessly delicate—like love. The challenge is also to avoid repetitive words. To manage this, I replace the word with its synonym or paraphrase the whole sentence.</p>	<p>-To be reflective on one’s own thinking, feelings and value</p>	<p>Metacognitive</p>
	<p>-To be open-minded and look for alternatives from another point of views</p>	
	<p>-To identify the focus: the issue, question or conclusion</p>	<p>Clarification</p>
<p>After reading it so many times, I reflect on how most of my interpretations of love are rather corny and merely for the sake of the poetry. Perhaps it is due to my lack of experience. I then read some love poems and prompts on the internet to gain some inspiration. As a result, I managed to add more lines and more depth to the dialogue. I am still not able to say that I am proud of this story, but</p>	<p>-To be reflective on one’s own thinking, feelings and value</p>	<p>Metacognitive</p>
	<p>-To reason and analyze hypotheses</p>	<p>Inference</p>

<p>it was a really good exercise. Perhaps I will be better at writing romance in the future, hopefully.</p>		
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**APPENDIX H**

**Categorical-Content Analysis Table**

CATEGORY	CODES	EXCERPTS
<p>CLARIFICATION</p>	<p>To identify the focus: the issue, question or conclusion</p>	<p>I wanted to make a story about planets and the universe, and I immediately thought of Ursula Le Guin.</p>
		<p>Thus, for the plot, I decided to raise the issue of climate change and global warming. I concluded that this utopia must have been created after a huge catastrophe, a dystopia.</p>
		<p>I had wanted Vince to be the role model for Kira and Fenrir, to be the tiny hope amidst the despair. At this point, I'm trying to deepen the plot with the help of my sister.</p>
		<p>Therefore, I changed a few dialogues and made Vince reveal his origin story to Kira and Finn.</p>
		<p>I wanted to make a story where the whole cast is intertwined by the red thread of destiny, how one person's choice affected other people's lives.</p>
		<p>I don't have any references on how to write a good love story, perhaps because I never like to read teen lit, chick flicks, or romance in general. For this story, I wanted to write an intimate and timeless love story, one that people might find hard to relate to but would leave them in flutters anyway. I want a love story between two ethereal entities with infinite wisdom.</p>



		<p>The challenge is also to avoid repetitive words. To manage this, I replace the word with its synonym or paraphrase the whole sentence.</p>
		<p>I have a specific image of how the aesthetic of my story should look through the description and narrative so I followed my heart</p>
<p>THE BASIS OF DECISION</p>	<p>To try to be well-informed</p>	<p>After I read books and other people’s work, I became inspired and I gained more insights into executing my idea.</p>
		<p>I made sure the meaning of the names aligned with the planets.</p>
		<p>I do a little research every time I gather the material for my story.</p>
		<p>There have been myths and poems circulating about the origin of the sun and the moon, including their love story. I decided to adopt this and write an actual story about their personification.</p>
	<p>To seek as much precision as the situation require</p>	<p>I took the names from the Sanskrit language and started to create 4 planets: Pra, Madya, Antara, and Karma.</p>
		<p>To clear my doubts, I surfed the internet and searched for teleportation devices used by many science-fiction stories.</p>
		<p>The original artwork is heavily influenced by Japanese mythology, and since I am not foreign to Japanese culture, it didn’t take much consideration to settle upon the setting of the story. Choosing the title was a no-brainer either, “Tsumibito” means, the sinner in Japanese.</p>
		<p>The fact that the story's elements seem natural to me may be because I've read a lot of Japanese manga containing references to other mythologies and even classic literature.</p>

		<p>I named the sun, “Helios” from the Greek language and “Luna” from Latin for the moon.</p>
		<p>For the sun and the moon to meet at night, it must be a lunar eclipse.</p>
		<p>I chose “Solar Plexus” as the title as a reference to the chakra frequencies, (...).</p>
<p>INFERENCE</p>	<p>To reason and analyze hypotheses</p>	<p>As I built the planet, I started to think about the plot. How did this planet ever exist? What could have happened for a perfect utopia to be engineered?</p>
		<p>Since there is a specific planet inhabited by children, I think it will contribute better to the plot if I added other planets.</p>
		<p>If I follow through with my initial idea that these planets are made by scientists to preserve humankind, I need to think of how they transport humans from the earth to these planets. There are some options that I had in mind: teleportation doors, spaceships, and carrying the humans while they’re in another form.</p>
		<p>There is one plot hole that I needed to think about in the story; Marguerite still had a little bit of self-awareness because she decided to take the fate of Antara, so she remembered about the earth and the apocalypse. But would Vince possess the same inherited knowledge? Should Vince be aware of the existence of other planets? But if he isn’t aware, why did he help those children? How did he know the existence of children?</p>
		<p>Departing from this new revelation, I decided to make Vince fly Planet Pra and went to Madya for the sake of growing up to be an adult.</p>
		<p>Perhaps it is due to my lack of experience. I then read some love poems and prompts on</p>

		the internet to gain some inspiration. As a result, I managed to add more lines and more depth to the dialogue.
<p>METACOGNITIVE</p>	<p>To be open-minded and look for alternatives from other point views</p>	My sister broadens my perspective, gives me insights, and points out details that I can improve.
		I originally had the plot sorted out and already wrote drabbles for the plot but then after some thought, I decided to rebuild the structure of the story almost entirely.
		After spending plenty of time reflecting, I decided to just ask my sister for her opinion and she said she liked the idea of teleportation doors and I instantly felt light and fine and okay again to include them in the story. Sometimes a simple affirmation from someone you can trust is the only thing you need, especially when you can't see your thoughts clearly because your judgments are all clouded.
		With the plot holes and the lack of depth, I feel like I have to shift the plot and the moral value that I initially created.
		I reckoned that I have strayed from the main idea of the story. Whenever I'm overwhelmed by the events of my story, going simple is the best. Simple is more and better. Since my initial plot/structure didn't satisfy me, I looked for other alternatives.
		The story didn't have a sole main character, it switched point of views among all the seven characters. I realized that by doing this, it unraveled the story beautifully and at a good pace.
		Character's various reactions and thought processes will make the story more real and believable.

		<p>Some things made writing this story harder than other of my stories. I really pay attention to the details of the writing style. I want to do it justice by making sure that every line is poetic and seamlessly delicate—like love.</p>
	<p>To be reflective on one’s own thinking, feelings and value</p>	<p>I didn’t know why I considered having a teleportation door too weird for my story. I made scientists build actual planets, so to be weirded out by teleportation doors is quite unnatural.</p>
		<p>I always have a specific idea/moral value that I want to deliver. I was pretty sure about the moral value that I want to deliver at the beginning, but as the story progressed, I realized my initial idea won't work. My moral value was weak and vague.</p>
		<p>Sometimes I am stubborn and decide prematurely on the outcome/solutions to the conflict of the story. During this time, I reflect on the alternatives to allow myself to be mindful and have better compassion as a human being.</p>
		<p>Though I am quite stubborn as a writer, having many characters with different personalities helps me grounded and prevents me from being self-absorbed when writing the story.</p>
		<p>Researching is probably my favorite part of the writing process because I get to learn about new things.</p>
		<p>I enjoy writing a twisted and dark story like Tsumibito but I have a strong moral compass and I centered my story around my ideology.</p>
		<p>I grounded my thinking and treated my story as a simple thought experiment. I hoped to provoke deeper thought and emotion in the reader as well.. Overall, I feel quite satisfied and proud of Tsumibito.</p>

		<p>I am happy to include some elements of religion and spiritualism in this story because I believe love is a little bit of both. I don't think religion and spiritualism should exist without the presence of love and vice versa. I am also satisfied with the hint of sadness that these deities have (...).</p>
		<p>After reading it so many times, I reflect on how most of my interpretations of love are rather corny and merely for the sake of the poetry.</p>

