

LEARNING RESOURCE

SPA – CREATIVE WRITING



CREATIVE WRITING IN THE DIGITAL WORLD

QUARTER 2

LEARNING RESOURCE for SPA CREATIVE WRITING

QUARTER 2 – GRADE 10

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FOREWORD

Welcome to this Learning Resource for Creative Writing.

This Learning Resource was developed by experts from the National Commission for Culture and the Arts as a reference to aid you in developing rich, meaningful, and empowering learning in the creative fields.

Every effort has been exerted to produce a Self-Learning Learning Resource that incorporates the most fundamental elements and principles of each discipline, while providing a spiraled, scaffolded, and multi-sensory approach to allow you to explore your innate creativity while building discipline and rigor in your chosen discipline.

Each lecture, activity, or reflection here is designed to be meaningful. Each one designed to build from the previous one, and each one with the objective of building up for the next skill or competence. We hope that you will find these activities challenging but empowering, and that your potential as a Filipino artist and Creative is further enhanced and inspired. These Learning Resources take into consideration the various limitations and challenges brought about by the current situation, and provides you with the flexibility to manage content and pace to your individual needs while maintaining standards for creativity, embodying 21st Century skills, and aspiring towards artistic excellence. Beyond compilations of dry information, these Learning Resources seek to develop Higher Order Thinking Skills of Analysis, Evaluation, and Creation.

If you are planning to use this Resource as a facilitator or teacher, you are expected to guide and orient your learners in the proper and efficient use of this Learning Resource. Most, if not all, activities will entail exploration, investigation, and experimentation, as such it is imperative that you, as the facilitator, establish the guidelines which will allow your students to be creative but within responsible, safe, and academically-sound limits. Your guidance and mentorship is expected and encouraged throughout the learning process. We look forward to your journey as an artist, MABUHAY!

In the baffling world of the digital, a creative writer must never lose the social purpose of creation.

--Anonymous

**TOPIC:
FINDING OUR WAY IN THE DIGITAL WORLD**

I guess I'm half traditionalist, half modern girl and I just never . . . I love the digital world and I love electronica and after I shoot, everything is digital, but I just . . . I don't know.

-- Carol Friedman, scientist and biomedical informatician

INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

Welcome back, Learners!

In the first quarter, we said that we must cope in a world that no one had anticipated to change so much -- and so quickly. Well, it seems that our world, now described as the “new normal,” will be it for some time. But know what? “New normal” is not exactly a new term; it has already been used some time ago. Thanks – or no thanks – to Covid-19, however, there is now indeed a new ring to it, underscoring our stark reality.

The pandemic threw the world in disarray, strewing the road we travel by with more hurdles than we could clear. So here’s another must-statement: We must “be stubborn about our goals and flexible about our methods.” Our goal remains the same, that is, to learn creative writing. As to method, it’s the digital world we shall explore and get a firm grasp of. But then again, it’s something we ought to do, even without the pandemic.

In this quarter of your SPA course, you must:

1. find your way in the new world of the digital;
2. with the digital platform in mind, write various literary works by sticking to what really matters in creative writing while adjusting to the exigencies of the digital media;
3. publish works online that combine conventional or traditional styles with the digital style; and
4. tap the digital technology in the production and popularization of Philippine literature to foster social relationships and creative communication.

CONTENT AND ACTIVITIES

Part 1: Discerning Key Terms and Concepts

Please go back to the topic page and read again what Carol Friedman, a scientist and pioneer biomedical informatician, said... Wait a sec, an informatician? Yes, she's someone who is into informatics... Hold it again, informatics? Well, it is "the study of the structure, behavior, and interactions of natural and engineered computational systems." Dr. Friedman's field, specifically, is health informatics, which is "the intersection of people, technology, and data to improve the safety and quality of patient care."

Now we understand that Dr. Fieldman's work as a biomedical informatician deals with patient care, and that is very laudable. But do people really need to go through a maze to better take care of patients? Life being already complicated as it is, can't we skip, uh, the complications? Like in some distant past?

In some distance past, a midwife, also called a comadrona, was simply summoned to a house to deliver a baby. No cellphones, no computers, no sophisticated technology. There was not even an ambulance. And the first instruction the midwife gave out as soon as she arrived in the house was, "Magpakulo kayo ng tubig (boil water)."

Of course, the hot water was ready even before she arrived. The folks knew it was needed: It was the third baby that the midwife was delivering in the household.

Back to Dr. Friedman. She's undoubtedly already an expert in her field in the digital world, yet she says she doesn't know, meaning, of the digital world, much remains unknown even to her. Hmmm. What does that make of us, then? Here is where we play it cool: We are not going through any maze and lose the way to our goal. We are studying creative writing, and what we shall learn about the digital world is just what we need to become good creative writers with the skill to navigate in the platform that is called digital.

So, for starters, here's an introduction to digital technology and digital media.

Digital technology. Think fingers. Yes, your fingers. When you were little, didn't you start counting with your tiny fingers? You did. Now, imagine ancient history -- yes, the Stone Age. We can safely assume that our cave-people ancestors also started to count with their fingers, right?

Small wonder that "digital" comes from the Latin word "digitus," meaning finger. In the beginning, people started counting – or computing -- with their fingers, as in one, two, three, four, five, and so on. These days, when information is generated, stored, processed, or transmitted in digital format, it is converted into numbers (zeroes and

ones/0s and 1s and so on) so that the generation, storage, processing, and transmission become possible. Call it computerization.

Digital technology, thus, is the application of scientific knowledge utilizing the system of computing that relies on digital or computerized devices as microprocessors, cell phones, tablets, video cameras, etc., to generate, store, process, and transmit data, information, and other content. Digital technology swarms all over us with its presence as the internet and social media and mp3. People simply use it, and not know how microprocessors and similar stuff work.

Digital media. First off, media. People commonly equate “media,” particularly “mass media,” with newspapers, magazines, television, radio, and other analog platforms to know the news and get information and entertainment of all sorts; it is also collectively referred to as the press. In this sense, mass media refer to the various means or technologies aimed at providing content to a mass audience or the general public.

The advent of digital technology has ushered in the digital media, also called the new media.

Digital media refer to content and information being transmitted or broadcast to people over the internet. These are text, audio, video, and graphics. Examples of digital media are all too familiar to us: social media such as Facebook, YouTube, Netflix, podcasts, digital art, video games, and websites; digital audio such as MP3, electronic documents, and electronic books or e-books.

Whenever you use your cellphone, laptop, tablet, or access web-based systems and apps to read, view, and listen to stuff, you are utilizing digital media. A listing made by Maryville University in Missouri, USA mentions five main groups of digital media. These are:

1. audio -- digital radio stations, podcasts, and audiobooks; databases of millions of songs, for example, may be accessed free or through subscriptions in Apple Music, Spotify, Tidal, Pandora, and Sirius;
2. video -- digital visual outlets providing services that stream movie and television shows and similar presentations such as YouTube and Netflix;
3. social media (or socmed) – includes Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Snapchat which enable their users to interact with one another through text posts, photographs, and videos, leaving “likes” and comments to create conversations around pop culture, sports, news, politics, and the daily events of users’ lives;
4. advertising -- advertisers have made their way into the digital media landscape, taking advantage of marketing partnerships and advertising space wherever possible; and
5. news, literature, etc. – while people have not shrugged off the habit of reading hard or physical copies of newspapers and watching news on TV, an increasing number now get their news online; people will also continuously seek actual books, but many now tend

to read them online, what with the proliferation of literary websites and e-readers like the Kindle, and the accessibility of resources like Wikipedia.

Accessibility, indeed, is the name of the game, and digital media is it. If you have the gadget with the screen, and the right internet connection, then you have quick access to whatever you wish to enjoy or know about.

Note, however, that digital media is evolving even as we define it because the technology upon which they rest continues to evolve.

Flashback: Before the advent of the digital technology, mass media meant the print media like books, journals, newspapers, magazines, and other analog media such as film, audio tapes, or video tapes. These are commonly called the traditional media and contrasted with the digital media. Curiously, traditional media employ digital technology in their production, as in the use of computers, in gathering data and in the process of printing itself.

Some forms of the traditional media have been there for hundreds of years. In the 19th century, the telegraph was invented; followed in the 20th century by radio and television.

Part 1: Activities

1. Know someone much older than you who has difficulty dealing with the digital world? Interview the person about it. Probe into his or her situation. Why the difficulty? What seems to be the cause of his or her problem in dealing with computers and the new media technology? Write a light, i.e., entertaining, fun, witty, literary piece based on your interview.
2. Do young people really have a “natural” affinity with the digital technology? Why is it that they seem to get by without much effort. Conduct a conversation about it with a friend your age, share your experiences on how you learned to use your gadgets, probe into both your insights -- and document your conversation in an essay.

Part 2: Digital Literature

To the different genres of literature that you already know, add digital literature, which has tucked in a number of subgenres under its belt. It may appear to have created a realm of its own, considering its subgenres as hypertext fiction, network fiction, interactive fiction, locative narratives, code work, installation pieces, generative poetry, flash poem, blog fiction... Stop right there, do not be overwhelmed. All we want is a random listing.

For our purposes in this course, let us understand that digital literature is literature in which a writer could incorporate digital elements such as art works, still photos, moving

images, music and so on, eventually offering “an interactive experience for the reader” who may not only read the physical text but also watch and listen – and, on a higher level of the digital design, also participate in the digital presentation.

Digital literature is also known as electronic literature. It refers to works “with an important literary aspect that takes advantage of the capabilities and contexts provided by the stand-alone or networked computer.” There is, in fact, an international group called Electronic Literature Organization “to facilitate and promote the writing, publishing, and reading of literature in (the) electronic media.” According to the official website of ELO, electronic literature consists of:

- [E-books](#), hypertext and [poetry](#), on and off of the Web
- Animated poetry presented in graphical forms, for example [Flash](#) and other platforms
- Computer art installations, which ask viewers to read them or otherwise have literary aspects
- Conversational characters, also known as [chatterbots](#)
- [Interactive](#)
- Novels that take the form of [emails](#), [SMS](#) messages, or [blogs](#)
- Poems and stories that are generated by computers, either interactively or based on parameters given at the beginning
- Collaborative writing projects that allow readers to contribute to the text of a work
- Literary performances online that develop new ways of writing
- Video Novel which combines audio, text, images and video to create vertical content for mobiles and tablets.

At the rate innovations and explorations are happening in the digital world and in the various social media platforms, including [Twitterature](#), not one definition stays as is. Everything seems to be a work in progress.

Now, before we get drowned in more terms and concepts and be intimidated by the technology, even the best interactive writers remind us about that which really counts in creative writing, that is to say: It is not the vessel (or technology) that determines the significance of one’s literary work but what you fill it up with.

“People have forgotten how to tell a story,” says Steven Spielberg. “Stories don’t have a middle or an end anymore. They usually have a beginning that never stops beginning.”

Therefore, even if digital literature is different and that “it is not read the same way as a physical text,” and “has to be written differently, too,” the fundamentals and principles of poetics and storytelling, repeat, poetics and storytelling, that constitute creative writing still determine the worth of one’s digital literature. We’re talking of BME (beginning-

middle-end) and plot, setting, POV, rhythm, sound, characters and dialogue, conflict, crisis, climax, catastrophe, resolution; and the various devices and conventions as exposition, hook, rising action, tone, style, figures of speech and imagery, plant, twists and turns, revelations, reversal of fortune, and many more.

Part 2: Activities

Click the highlighted and underscored terms listed in the boxed portion of the page to access articles about each one. Browse through the articles, particularly the introductory part, to get a sense of the field. Also, try to look for examples of these forms. Derive ideas to help you explore styles in digital composition; but do not be restricted by them. With whatever your gadget may be able to do, create your digital literature.

Choose any four of the six numbers here, but nobody is stopping you if you wish to do all six.

1. You wrote two articles in Part 1. Transform one of them into something that integrates what you've written with visuals and/or sound. Can you post them online?
2. Let us try poetry. You may write a new one, a haiku, for example, or retrieve one of your old poems. With whatever your gadget could do, can you make the poem interactive?
3. Write a flash fiction for the digital reader, incorporating the other art forms.
4. Chances are you are familiar with stories that are written on an installment basis, each episode or chapter a full narrative but ending on a cliff-hanger. Start one and encourage your classmates to co-write the story with you. A four-part story is an ideal length.
5. Identify a Philippine legend or folk story and write a digital version.
6. Choose your favorite literary piece written by a Filipino author and adapt it in the present times, using your own youthful language.

NOTES TO THE LEARNER (AND TO THE TEACHER, AS WELL): BY WAY OF AN ASSESSMENT

How has the experience been, so far? Challenging? Peanuts?

If we may guess, most of you have been tinkering with this digital stuff exploring creative work ahead of this quarter, right? That is just well and good. But we also know that a great deal of what you want to accomplish in the digital media may not be realized because of factors beyond your control, right again? Your gadget is not exactly up to the job. The internet connectivity is a bummer. And some more bummer.

Rather than look at the situation as a problem, however, treat it as a challenge that should spur your creativity all the more. Isn't necessity the mother of invention?

So let's hear it from you. How have you been with our course this quarter? Remember to be fair and to look at both sides now.

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