

Literature II – 2

Unit 2: The Short Story for Unfolding Truth

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This LightUnit goes with
pages 40-101 of
Perspectives of Truth in Literature.

Section 1

Lesson 1

Introduction to Short Stories

Note the page picture for this unit. Just as the picture was taken from a mountain looking out over a valley of roads, fields, trees, and buildings, so a good author allows us a thorough picture of the setting of the story.

The man represents *characters* in a story, and more specifically one of the characters you will read about. He is stooping to pick up a piece of string.

The magnifying glass represents *point of view*. In the omniscient (or all-knowing) point of view, the reader is able to watch the actions of a character even if the character is alone.

The rising line symbolizes the *plot*: the buildup of conflict to the story's climax. Minor climaxes that do not fully resolve the conflict are reached along the way. Only the climax near the end of the story satisfactorily concludes the story.

In this short story unit, you will spend time studying *theme*, *character*, and *plot*. This LightUnit especially focuses on theme.

You will write a full-length short story at the end of this unit (in LightUnit 4), putting to practice the techniques you have studied. In this LightUnit and the next, you will be given smaller assignments to prepare you to write your story.



Read the Introduction to Unit 2 (pp. 41, 42).



Answer the questions.

1. What two things can a story more easily do than other kinds of writing?

2. How do we know God approves of communicating truth through stories?

“Those Who Will Not Learn Must Feel”



Find the word in the story. Look at how it is used and write the letter of the best answer.

3. _____ dune a. sand ridge b. desolate c. dull brown

Lesson 1

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| 4. _____ fledgling | a. fluttering | b. young | c. flighty |
| 5. _____ supple | a. ignorant | b. flexible | c. wily |
| 6. _____ sedately | a. calmly | b. somberly | c. groggily |
| 7. _____ sauntered | a. blended | b. staggered | c. walked leisurely |
| 8. _____ preening | a. smoothing | b. clipping | c. erasing |
| 9. _____ contemptuous | a. stormy | b. aggressive | c. scornful |
| 10. _____ disdainful | a. argumentative | b. proud | c. impolite |



Read “Those Who Will Not Learn Must Feel” (pp. 44-49).



Write the name of the author.

11. _____ was born in the Netherlands in 1906 and immigrated with his family to the United States when he was eight. As an adult he began writing children’s stories at the suggestion of a librarian. He was the first American to win the International Hans Christian Andersen Award.



Write the letter of the correct answer.

12. _____ The old woman had to give up knitting because
a. she had to go work on a distant farm.
b. the cat needed training.
c. the needles reminded the magpie about food.
d. wood had to be gathered from the dunes.
13. _____ The old woman loved the magpie because
a. birds were her favorite pets.
b. it cost little to keep.
c. the magpie was a companion.
d. she was not superstitious.
14. _____ The woman was different from the dune farmer because she
a. had pets.
b. did not see the kitten’s blue eye.
c. lived closer to the sea.
d. was not superstitious.

15. ____ When the cat suffered pain, the old woman
 - a. removed the cause for the suffering.
 - b. found herself suffering pain also.
 - c. enjoyed watching the cat's misery.
 - d. took the magpie from the cage.
16. ____ The woman shows that a wise person will always be
 - a. poor.
 - b. merciful.
 - c. quiet.
 - d. hard to please.
17. ____ The old woman rescued the freezing magpie because she
 - a. was lonely and wanted a companion.
 - b. needed it to train her cat.
 - c. was so poor that she needed it for food.
 - d. believed in the value of all life.
18. ____ To teach the cat, the old woman had to
 - a. hang the magpie's cage at a different place.
 - b. use pain for wrongdoing.
 - c. put the magpie into a cage.
 - d. refuse to give the suffering cat any comfort at all.
19. ____ By the end of the story
 - a. both the cat and magpie have been trained.
 - b. only the magpie has been trained.
 - c. only the cat has been trained.
 - d. the woman has been trained.
20. ____ To get the magpie from the table to the floor at the end of the story, the old woman had to work on the magpie's
 - a. hunger.
 - b. anger.
 - c. pride.
 - d. fear.
21. ____ The old woman knew that the cat was completely trained when it
 - a. quit jumping at the cage.
 - b. licked its sore paws.
 - c. ignored a free feast.
 - d. was no longer afraid of the magpie.
22. ____ What does the magpie best represent in the life of a young person?
 - a. sin
 - b. emotion
 - c. pride
 - d. temptation

“Those Who Will Not Learn Must Feel”

Sometimes, a writer does not say exactly what he means. He expects us to read between the lines and figure out what he means.



Follow the directions and answer the questions.

- ☐ 1. By studying the dune farmer, describe the result of superstitious beliefs.
- _____
- _____
- _____
- ☐ 2. *Because she was wise, she was also merciful.* Do you agree with this conclusion? Will a wise person always be merciful?
- _____
- _____
- _____
- ☐ 3. The woman and her cat could symbolize a parent with a child. The woman shows an exemplary balance between love and discipline. What will happen to a child who receives only love and no discipline? _____
- _____
- _____
- ☐ 4. What will happen to a child who receives only discipline and no love?
- _____
- _____
- _____
- ☐ 5. The title of the story can be true in our own lives, not just in the life of a small child. Show how the magpie is like the temptations we face and give an example that could occur in the life of a person like you. _____
- _____
- _____
- _____



Read the excerpts from the story and write the letter of the best meaning.

She saw the blue eye blink up at her. She did not cross herself. She did not throw the kitten back into the sea. She was a wise old woman; she did not believe in evil eyes, and witches, and witches' cats.

6. _____ The woman
- a. feared what would happen.
 - b. was not superstitious.
 - c. liked blue-eyed cats.
 - d. had been looking for a cat.

The pesky magpie would cock its mocking head and flute inviting notes, until it had the kitten's mouth watering.

7. _____ The magpie
- a. didn't understand the cat.
 - b. was trying to comfort the cat.
 - c. sang to entertain the woman.
 - d. tempted the cat on purpose.

Try again the cat did—every day—for it is in the nature of cats to be endlessly persistent. It merely waited long enough for the wise old woman to be gone.

8. _____ This shows that the cat was
- a. sly.
 - b. mature.
 - c. stupid.
 - d. strong.

The room settled back in its Sunday silence. The woman pretended another nap.

9. _____ The old woman was
- a. hoping for a chance to rest.
 - b. about to fall asleep.
 - c. taking notice on the sly.
 - d. sure everything would be all right.

Nervous quivers came to the cat's tail. Its mouth seemed to water, it swallowed hard. The eyes grew enormous. Now the eyes went back to the busy magpie; from the magpie they lifted to the high reed cage, and then all roundness left the cat's eyes.

10. _____ The cat had
- a. changed its mind.
 - b. observed that the cage was empty.
 - c. lost its hunger.
 - d. become afraid of the magpie.

LOOKING BACK . . .



Write the correct vocabulary word.

sauntered	disdainful	sedately	supple
contemptuous	preening	fledgling	dunes

11. _____ grooming or primping
12. _____ in a calm manner
13. _____ not very old
14. _____ often found near bodies of water
15. _____ having a holier-than-thou manner
16. _____ bendable
17. _____ walked in a casual way



If the statement is true, write *true*. If it is false, write a word or phrase that could replace the underlined word or phrase to make it true.

18. _____ Both the old woman and the cat experienced pain in the discipline.
19. _____ Quiet and humble accurately describe the magpie.
20. _____ The old woman and her cat and bird lived near the seaside.
21. _____ The cat's greatest temptation was the woman's knitting needle.
22. _____ At the end of the story, the woman had trained both animals.
23. _____ The old woman could be described as both wise and cruel.

Lesson 3

Creative Writing

A good writer uses words that present a clear picture in the reader's mind. On page 46, the author writes the following: *The pesky magpie would cock its mocking head and flute inviting notes, until it had the kitten's mouth watering.* An average writer might have said this: *The mischievous magpie teased the kitten with its singing.* Notice what makes the first sentence stronger: