READINGS THAT HELP STUDENTS READ THE WORLD

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Abstract

Literature is known as an effective aid to help students improve their reading skills, it is also a good way to let students learn about differences across cultures. However, the teaching of literature should never stop at those two skills, instead, literature teachers nowadays are faced with a bigger challenge — to use literary texts as a means to introduce students of literature classes to the world. This is where an appropriate selection of reading materials comes to importance. Motivated to provide fun to students, literature teachers are sometimes tempted to present only nice stories to their students, which could bring disadvantages in the long run, because students are not well-informed about their surroundings and therefore could not find solutions to problems they face. Therefore, this paper emphasizes on how important it is to start presenting our students with the darker side of life through literary texts and hopefully, with a balanced exposure to both the bright and dark sides of the world, students will learn much more than extended reading skills and about different cultures. The starting point of this paper is a discussion about Nathanael Hawthorne’s short story, ‘The Minister’s Black Veil’, a classic story with a puritan era setting that teaches us to have enough courage to take any possible step to initiate social transformation, even if it has to be by controversial deeds.

Keywords: literature, selection of literary texts, social transformation.

INTRODUCTION

One distinguished characteristic of a great piece of writing is its ability to go beyond time boundaries. Having that quality is arguably the hardest challenge every writer of different eras faces, for an issue relevant in
one era might not be a relevant talking point in a different era. Many have tried, yet only a few have survived the test of time. Among the few whose writings successfully transcended the time limit, we have Nathanael Hawthorne with one of his masterpieces, ‘The Minister’s Black Veil’, which was written a long way back in 1836, which is still considered as one of the greatest work of all times. It is now nearly two centuries after Nathanael Hawthorne first offered his thoughts to the world through that celebrated short story, yet an important point still stands out as a major talking point in our current time. Of some points worth discussing and messages tactfully inserted in ‘The Minister’s Black Veil’, I spot one point that deserves closer attention, which is the importance of a total personal sacrifice as a direct response to our innate desire to make wherever we live a relatively better place to be. Furthermore, there is one interesting finding here that even before ‘social transformation’ became a jargon, Nathanael Hawthorne proposed the idea of transforming the world, and this paper aims to analyze how Hawthorne’s main character, Minister Hooper, was presented as an influential person who strived for a transformational action despite the dear price he had to pay. This paper also seeks to confirm that other ‘Mr. Hoopers’ also existed long before his initial appearance in Hawthorne’s short story by presenting some figures who have tried or have been trying to reach the desired social circumstances regardless of the risks they have put themselves into.

THE MINISTER’S BLACK VEIL: THEME AND CONFLICTS

The story held the stage for the main character of the story, Minister Hooper, who was presented as one unique character in that short story. His entrance to his church wearing a black veil could be his personal way to express his dissatisfaction with what had been going on in the Puritan community he was in, as well as telling the people there that some things had to change. That personal rebellion, however, went very silently, involving no physical assault that could have made matters worse instead of initiating positive changes. Later in the story it was shown that what he had on his mind turned out to be his most obvious source of power.

Throughout the ages, we have always found and will keep finding people who feel that there should be changes made in their environment, either physical changes or in terms of belief or point of view – which will be the focus of this paper. Interestingly enough, however, I noticed that most people tend to show their discontent in two extreme ways, they are by gathering people who have relatively similar thoughts then leading the newly-
formed mass to revolutionary (and sometimes destructive) acts and by simply taking no action – a decision that could be triggered by very low self confidence that each individual can actually be an agent of change. Obviously enough, neither option promises an expected result. The second option, to do nothing, is no longer an option as by doing nothing we are likely to get nothing. The first option, to revolt against any unwanted condition, now seems interesting because working with other people who share similar thoughts like those of ours is surely encouraging – more people, more power. However, there is an apparent downside of this pick. Jeff Goodwin, in his book, *No Other Way Out: States and Revolutionary Movements* (p.5) as cited from Wikipedia on September 25, 2007, proposed an example of the downside by defining a revolution as “*any and all instances in which a state or a political regime is overthrown and thereby transformed by a popular movement in an irregular, extraconstitutional and/or violent fashion.*” What was proposed by Goodwin is a clear example, that revolutions, which should help some people to achieve their goals, might have to sacrifice other parties for any kind of violence attached to it – their original goals might not be at hand, yet people (can be many of them) are likely to serve as a direct sacrifice of that particular revolutionary attempt.

Now the idea remains in how to bring positive changes wherever we live, yet without making anyone a victim of any dream we wish to achieve. This is where the unique character of Minister Hooper, the main figure of Nathanael Hawthorne’s ‘The Minister’s Black Veil’ serves as an excellent example. Another thing more appealing to this paper is the way Minister Hooper started the expected social transformation, he decided that no one but himself could make a better start and that he was ready for any risk. This Nathanael Hawthorne parable starts with a description of a jolly Sunday morning when the village people were ready for that Sunday sermon led by a preacher, Mr. Hooper, who had earned himself a good reputation. There could not have been more cheerfulness to open this story with, as Hawthorne vividly wrote, “*the old people of the village came stooping along the street. Children, with bright faces, tripped merrily beside their parents, or mimicked a graver gait, in the conscious dignity of their Sunday clothes. Spruce bachelors looked sidelong at the pretty maidens, and fancied that the Sabbath sunshine made them prettier than on weekdays.*” Good news from the well-mannered Mr. Hooper would now surely be the icing on the cake to the merry Sunday, however, that was not to be as Mr. Hooper gave everyone an unpleasant surprise by coming into the church with his face covered by a black veil. No one in the congregation really knew what
message Mr. Hooper was trying to send through wearing the controversial veil, but surely the accessory has now caused discomfort among the congregation. An old woman said she did not like the way Mr. Hooper looked by saying that he had changed himself into something awful by wearing the veil, while Goodman Gray, who was also in the church, even boldly cried, "Our parson has gone mad" at this shock. Gray’s shock proves to be an evident clue that at that time someone who wished to be different or tried to make any kind of change to a belief they had been strongly holding on to was considered as a crazy person. To suit his shocking appearance, Mr. Hooper gave a sermon on hidden sins, a sermon in which ‘pathos came hand in hand with awe’ that got the congregation to pay close attention to it. When the sermon came to an end, not unexpectedly Mr. Hooper and his black veil became the major points of discussion as some people formed some circles and started talking about the new experience. As the story went on, Mr. Hooper and his black veil would become somewhat inseparable. Not only did he wear that to Sunday sermons, but also to special occasions such as funerals and weddings.

Among the shocked members of the congregation, there was one person, Elizabeth, Mr. Hooper’s promised wife, who seemed unable to live with the eccentricity. Her request that the veil be removed from his face was met with a direct rejection. Soon after, it became much more obvious that Mr. Hooper was on a personal mission by keeping his face hidden behind the transparent black veil, a mission he wanted to complete until the end of his life that he still refused to unveil himself even in the dying moments of his life. His last effort to maintain the mystery was when he exerted a sudden energy to keep his veil on as his response to reverend Clark’s offer to lift the veil.

The conclusion of this parable saw the good minister pass away with the mysterious black veil still covering his face.

For one to be able to grasp the real messages this short story has, one starting point is a deep discussion about Mr. Hooper, the main character. There is not much written about Mr. Hooper let alone his comprehensive profile, yet through what he did and said, plus what others did toward and said about him, much was revealed.

THE MINISTER’S BLACK VEIL: THE DISCUSSION

To begin this analysis, I would like to begin with a word that is likely to come to readers’ minds when reading the parable for the first time. The word is controversial. As a parson he had been known as a good person
that Hawthorne used the word ‘venerable’ to sum him up, and a good person he was indeed that some members of that Sunday morning congregation referred to him as ‘good Parson Hooper’ or simply ‘good Mr. Hooper’. Against everyone’s expectations, however, that Sunday the good Parson was not in the mood of living up to the good quality he had always been entitled with. The opening scene of the parable explained Mr. Hooper was no longer ‘good’ in some members’ eyes as a direct consequence of his covering his face with a black veil. It was an unpleasant view to everyone in the building not to be able to clearly see the face of the gentlemanly person of about thirty. Only fair was it for the dumbfounded people to gather around right after the sermon ended and get involved in fervent discussions about the sudden change in Mr. Hooper’s appearance that day. The next things Mr. Hooper did (and said) seemed to keep adding weight to the word ‘controversial’. It was written that Mr. Hooper attended two important religious events after his shocking Sunday appearance; they were a funeral and a wedding ceremony, still with the black veil on.

No one in the short story could understand what messages he was trying to send, not even Elizabeth, his fiancée. Mr. Hooper refused to unveil himself, not even before Elizabeth, who found Mr. Hooper’s mysterious change unacceptable and later decided to go away (though only to return to Mr. Hooper’s side approaching his death).

No matter how controversial Mr. Hooper was in the story, however, we should be aware that, like many others, Mr. Hooper must have had a good reason for doing what he was doing. More importantly, Mr. Hooper was so aware that being a respected person in the Puritan community where he was, gave him a huge advantage. That huge advantage would be that anything he did, either good or controversial, would quickly be brought under the spotlight, which meant he did not need to make any extra effort just to be given the attention he needed. Now when everyone was giving Mr. Hooper attention in abundance, which was when it was the right time to communicate his ideas to the people who had been attentively listening to him on Sunday sermons and addressing him as a respectable person with a strong influence in the community. **He was the right person at the right position at the right time to deliver his mysterious messages.**

This is where we arrive at the point to ask, what messages?

To find what message(s) Mr. Hooper was trying to deliver we must never neglect the facts that the story was written back in the 1800’s and that the community he lived in was one dominated by the Puritans, who firmly held to their belief that the Bible was God’s true law (http://www.nd.edu/~rbarger/www7/ puritans.html - August 16, 2007), therefore everything they did had
to be based on the holy scripture, and that it was common in that era to punish people after a judgment based solely on the Bible. Firmly holding that belief, it is also understood that members of the community put very high expectations on Mr. Hooper, their religious leader, who in that time was also considered as a political leader in that Puritan community (http://www.nd.edu/~rbarger/www7/puritans.html - August 16, 2007). Therefore, it was only fair for the members of the congregation in the village to expect that Mr. Hooper could be their role model, in the first place, religiously. The people's fear and dislike about what they saw on the jovial Sunday morning could then be justified, for a parson with his face hidden was not the thing they came to the church for. As a community that surrendered themselves to the exact words of God, a religious leader should have a good attitude as well, something that Mr. Hooper decided not to show starting from that day.

This research finds out that there was more than fear and dislike about how Mr. Hooper looked on that particular day, but furthermore, they felt that the person whom they put so much respect in was trying to somehow make a protest (that might initiate social changes) to what had been going on for a long time in the community. Unfortunately enough, the word 'change' is a term that did not find favor in the community which put attempts to 'purify' the church and their own lives on the top of their priority list. People in the area where Mr. Hooper lived were actually quite satisfied with what they had had, even with Mr. Hooper around, before he showed up to the church with the black veil. However, it turned out to be Mr. Hooper himself who stood out from other people and showed enough confidence to propose that there should be a change in that community.

The venerable parson really wanted to show that everybody was actually wearing their own black veil, yet most of them chose not to wear that in public. The black veil, which caused discomfort among the people in the story, was actually the sin that we are born with, that we are living with. Therefore, when Mr. Hooper was introduced to the story wearing his black veil which stood for his sin, he was actually trying to send a message to his congregation at the same time, that there was no use to keep hiding their sins behind their good manners because if other people could not see their sins, God could. That was a direct invitation for others to bring darkness to light, not for others to see, but for each individual to start living a better life and at the same time to stop judging people because none of them was free from sin. That first message leads to another, which seems more acceptable for people in general, that social change is possible only if we are aware enough that each of us is an integral part of a society, therefore, if we
are dreaming of a big change, we are responsible to start a smaller one in ourselves, at all costs, even if that might cost us our personal pleasure and our position in the public's eyes. It is surely not a minor task, let alone if we are a respected figure, just like what Mr. Hooper was. It was found from the story how torturing the task was for Mr. Hooper. Wearing his black veil everywhere, he put such a heavy burden on his shoulders. Even he never willingly passed before a mirror, nor stooped to drink at a still fountain for fear that seeing his face covered by the black veil might frighten himself. However, that was the price he had to pay to reach his mission, to start a change.

However, no matter how demanding the task might sound, it was proven in the short story that the theory worked. Approaching the end, Mr. Hooper was described as 'a very efficient clergyman' who gained his respect back from the people. The parson successfully extended his influence from behind the mysterious black veil. He became a more familiar figure during his last days and attracted more people to attend his service, a fact that confirmed the success of Mr. Hooper's controversial approach, a person who had the rare ability to 'sympathize with all dark affections', who was cried aloud for by dying sinners, and trusted to preach at a governor's election sermon. The achievements all started from his shocking appearance at a jovial Sunday morning service, which at first found deep disagreement and displeasure from his congregation.

At the end of the short story it was true that Mr. Hooper passed away still with the black veil on as he refused to uncover his face though he had been asked to do so by Reverend Clark. He then passed away, and the short story came to a happy ending marked by the death of a respected figure of Minister Hooper, yet the short story also left a precious legacy in the form of a social pattern that gives a good explanation to the widely accepted proverb 'it is good to be important, but it is important to be good' into 'being important is the best policy (if we can offer good things to our community)' Mr. Hooper gives us a good example of how this theory was executed, because had he not been an important figure in his Puritan community, he surely would have had difficulties in delivering his messages.

OTHER MINISTER HOOPERS WHO CHANGED THEIR COMMUNITY

Although this short story was written almost two hundred years ago, the theory still proves to be a workable one. Using that finding as a media to view our present life, I can find some people with strong intentions to change
the communities they are living in following that pattern. To name a few, I would like to propose the Burmese heroine, Aung San Suu Kyi, and the South African Nelson Mandela who fervently fought against apartheid.

Aung San Suu Kyi, who is known for her ardent struggle for democracy in her country, is one good example of how being different, if not controversial, can be a good option. Knowing that the need of social transformation has become somewhat acute, Suu Kyi almost single handedly shows the whole nation just that. Her continuous attempts to restore democracy in Burma, which has been under the strict rule of the military junta since 1989, has made her a regular visitor of various prisons in Burma. However, that never lets her down, instead, she has been more than able to have her mind fixed on her dreams, to bring peace and democracy back to her country. As a result of her tireless efforts, she has now been getting international support that of course confirms that what she has done so far finds agreement worldwide.

Another person who took more or less a similar path to what Mr. Hooper had taken is the living icon of South Africa, Nelson Mandela. Mandela, who is best known for his fights for racial equality in his country, was an extraordinary person for he was undaunted by the constant pressure given by the white authority, especially during the 1980's. Having to live in exile while imprisoned on Robben Island for about 27 years simply did not make him stray from his ultimate goal, racial equality and justice in his homeland. His hard work paid off as in 1994 he was elected president of South Africa through its first ever representative elections, a result that shows that he was successful in terms of getting people’s support as a result of his constant struggle.

From the two examples above, it has become more obvious that the pattern found in Nathanael Hawthorne’s ‘The Minister’s Black Veil’ is still workable as it has been used by the two world icons in their efforts to achieve their goals. Both Suu Kyi and Nelson Mandela strive for things good in their views, yet found enormous challenges from the majority of people. However, by making themselves as real examples, people eventually understood their good intentions and started to support them.

**BEING A REVEREND HOOPER IN A LITERATURE CLASS**

The effectiveness of Mr. Hooper’s approach in his attempt to initiate social changes should give enough inspiration to a person who has arguably the highest authority in a class, a teacher. A teacher, whose main duty is to transfer his/her knowledge to students, should realize that he/she is
actually in the right place to start social changes by stimulating students to think outside of the box, to go beyond their personal cultural boundaries which stand between them and their better life opportunities.

It is understood that having the position of a respected parson spending his life under a black veil was not pleasant, however, reading the short story more carefully will help us understand that wearing the black veil was indeed workable, as proven by the fact that more people were drawn to come to his church to listen to Mr. Hooper’s sermons of social change.

Knowing that what Mr. Hooper, Aung San Suu Kyi, and Nelson Mandela did are ideal examples of how an individual can initiate social changes, teachers are now faced with a challenge to make use of their influence in literature classes. Surely enough, teachers are not expected to wear black veils while discussing literary works with their students. Rather, wearing a black veil here could be replaced by their attitudes when it comes to selecting reading materials for students, for students learn a great deal of lessons through what they read, and consequently their deeds will be more or less influenced by elements of reading in a story, namely a story’s characters, conflicts, or how characters in a story react to problems they face. The kinds of reading materials teachers choose can and should motivate their students to be able to express themselves. They should motivate students through reading, which would confirm the long accepted belief that ‘reading is the window to the world’.

WHAT LITERARY TEXTS CAN SERVE AS AN EFFECTIVE BLACK VEIL?

To allow students to get lessons and inspiration from reading, we as teachers should first strive to introduce the joy of reading to the whole class, by convincing students that there are hidden pleasures behind reading. Besides rewards, reading helps readers strengthen their language mastery, broaden their vocabulary range, and gives a precious chance to learn about other cultures, since enjoyment is one of the things that will make students willing to walk an extra mile – in the form of opinion papers, presentations, and journals, besides classic methods of evaluation such as comprehension tests and up quizzes.

Of some effective ways to stimulate students’ reading habits, a few methods stand out from the rest. Two of them are mentioned in this paper; the first is a method that gives a literature teacher the freedom to select literary texts suitable for students. Undoubtedly, this method requires a literature teacher to have a deep understanding of his/her students as the tar-
get audience to whom he/she would like to send his/her messages to. The teachers’ choice of literary texts to be presented in a classroom setting here of course is a critical element as no teacher wants to end up providing their students with inappropriate reading materials, for instance when a text is either too easy or too difficult, culturally not suitable, or even texts that might mislead their readers. On the other hand, the second method suggests that literature students are given only some reading themes and the next step is for students themselves to find the reading materials of their own preference, for instance, asking students to find any reading that has social oppression as the theme for a session, and the next week assigning them to find another reading that belongs to another theme. Both the first and the second are designed to meet the goal of any reading activity that is to bring enjoyment to readers. However, there is one approach that might prove to be controversial, though proven to be very effective in Nathanael Hawthorne’s short story, when it comes to selecting reading materials for students in a literature class. The proposed controversy here is mainly for teachers to carefully select readings that can clearly reflect the real condition of today’s life, as vivid as a text can be, despite an enormous possibility that it might not give a good first impression to students.

The above idea surely looks like a direct counter to the previous statement that reading should be made as enjoyable as possible; however, actually it is not.

CHOOSING SUITABLE LITERARY TEXTS FOR STUDENTS

In order to muster students’ reading motivation and make independent reading a habit in the long run, teachers are sometimes tempted to spoil their students by providing stories that have both flattering openings and happy endings. Up to today, this approach is of course still an effective way to get students interested in reading and almost simultaneously show them the beauty of life – that truth will finally prevail over the bad, that all hard workers will finally be rewarded, that the pretty young lady will finally ride on a white horse together with her Prince Charming, just to name a few.

Although the purpose of this paper is not to persuade its readers to change their sub conscious perspective that reading nice stories is enjoyable, this paper might be construed as a friendly reminder that it is now time to go in another direction, to choose stories of totally different genres that suggest different characterizations, conflicts, and how characters in a story react to their problems. This paper suggests that literature teachers try
another direction because by constantly feeding students with only nice stories, there is a set of hidden threats for students, threats that seem certain to decrease students’ ability to see life critically. Pattiwael (2007) in her paper presented during a seminar on creative writing and literature proposes that teachers have to be more selective when it comes to choosing reading materials for students of literature class. She puts forward that it is now time to provide students with various kinds of literary texts that encourage students’ mental growth as well as give students a chance to develop their own philosophical concepts.

As a consequence, instead of giving students nice stories all the time, teachers are advised to present stories that might contain violence, social oppression, prejudice, or injustice, to name a few, so that students will get used to those elements of life, which have become phenomena of a developing world (Pattiwael, 2007). This paper fully understands that presenting stories which contain the unexpected sides of life might bring displeasure to students at first, as well as contradict a widely accepted reading principle that reading should bring pleasure to readers. However, as what we have learned from the case of Mr. Hooper, we can be convinced that sometimes we need to present not only the beautiful side of life, but also its dark side, so that we, and students in particular, come to realize that the world we are living in is not perfect, rather it has so many dark sides, and this is where we as humans are needed to bring the dark side into the light, to begin social transformation and in the long run to make the world a better place to be. The goal seems so big, but to reach the goal we can start with a feasible step related to our profession as literature teachers, that is by introducing students of literature class to both sides of life. This paper proposes that by becoming Mr. Hooper in a literature class, which means having enough confidence to introduce literary texts which do not always show the beauty of life, students will be equipped with the skills below:

1. They will possess precious knowledge of each individual’s position and function in his/her society. Literary texts are good ways to reflect our lives because through texts we often find similarities between ourselves and characters in texts. This is positive, because students who are reading particular texts might find new role models for themselves. By presenting students with more characters, students will consequently find that they have similarities not only with one character, but more than that, they will find that there is a little bit of them in many characters. At this point, students will be aware that actually they can function as many different elements of life in their community and therefore find their place in their society.
2. They will be aware of things that have happened or are happening in and around their society. Having found similarities between themselves and characters in literary texts, students should now be challenged to think whether they are also living in similar circumstances as character in literary texts do. This is the stage where students will actively try to make these further comparisons:
- between readers and characters
- between the setting of a literary text and students’ real surroundings

Up to this point, we can expect students to analyze the comparisons above and the results of their own comparison will be critical as that will mark their entrance into the society.

3. They should have the ability to critically analyze ongoing problems and suggest possible solutions that students have learned from literary works. Having entered their society, students will now understand that life is not only about tests and assignments, but more than that, life also offers spontaneous challenges and long term duties which require them to deal with many people with different characteristics. Literature, which helps students to grow emotionally and intellectually (Nan, 1992) serves as a good reference for students who try to analyze problems and solve them, since students who are used to analyzing and finding patterns of problems in literary texts will find it quite easy to apply some possible solutions in real life. According to Kirszner and Mandell (1994), people’s ability to analyze literary works enables them to be involved in the community as scholars entitled to share their ideas. That is encouraging for students to earn a place in their community as people whose opinions are given a respectable place in the community.

Those are the three very useful kinds of knowledge students can get from reading. Reading of more realistic stories, which sometimes include violence, injustices, and social oppression, might not be pleasant at first, but bearing in mind that we are now living in such a world, preparing students with that knowledge is now a must instead of optional.

Characteristics of texts which are in line with this paper’s proposal that literature classes should be a course that equip students with life skills are:

1. They should be realistic (not exaggerated). Once we have decided to help our students to become better people both in and out of classrooms through literary texts, choosing realistic texts is critical. We don’t want to frighten students with too much violence and injustice,
but on the other hand, we should not keep giving them lullabies which seem to always make them happy. It is good to choose reading materials that can be analyzed historically, so that students get a sense that anything presented in a story can also happen to them and their surroundings and by analyzing that students can then prepare themselves for possible similar cases.

2. They should motivate students to live their lives to the full. Pattiwael (2007) proposes that literary texts are useful to value human life and promote life quality, therefore, when it comes to selecting literary texts, teachers should be aware of the capacity of their students. Setting a goal in motivating students to be agents of change does not mean that we can give students literary texts that contain messages or philosophies that seem to be out of their reach. Our awareness of our own students' level should be acute enough, so that we will not end up presenting texts that are too difficult for students. Furthermore, if given very difficult texts, students will be uninterested instead. It is clear that teachers, through literary texts should help students promote their knowledge about current issues in their surroundings is clear, but once we are ready to do that, it is good to help our students enjoy the process of getting familiar with their environment and what Rockminto (2005) wrote that although enculturation, or cultural transmission is the goal, we must never neglect our students' capacity to understand literary texts, let alone if we depend on literary texts to help motivate students to become agents of change.

3. They should provide students with enough information of the ongoing condition. For students to initiate transformation, knowledge about their surroundings is vital. Once again, literary texts can provide solutions through their ability to give students update on what is going on this world. However, if we are discussing about literary texts’ ability to help students update their knowledge, we should not forget the existence of classic literature, despite the fact that most of those classics were written a long time ago and cannot perfectly mirror today's condition, but this is the time for teachers to work very closely with their selected reading materials to urge students to note down as many elements in their texts to be compared with those of a real life setting. By doing so, teachers, with the enormous help of literary texts will make students aware that history tends to repeat itself. Social issues and philosophies considered as obsolete are actually still around, and by presenting students with literary texts that contain enough information about what has happened or is still happening in
their surroundings, students will come to realize what is around them and possess the necessary ability to propose possible actions.

As this paper comes to a close, it should convince us that though reading should be made fun, we should also realize that teaching is most effective when it equips students with understanding about themselves and their society. The rapid daily changes are a reminder for teachers to start teaching students the art of living, and in this case, through careful selection of literary texts. Providing students of literature class with texts that focus on life's dark sides might not please students at first, but just like what Mr. Hooper has shown, it has a silver lining at the end. Being critical learners, students will realize that reading more realistic texts might bring them straight to the dark side of life, but only in darkness will we strive to find the light.

REFERENCES


