



UNIVERSITI  
PENDIDIKAN  
SULTAN IDRIS  
الجامعة الإسلامية  
الاسلامية سلطان ادریس

SULTAN IDRIS EDUCATION UNIVERSITY

**BIS 3093**

**LITERATURE FOR YOUNG ADULT**

**ASSIGNMENT 1**

**NOVEL REVIEW**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>MATRIC NUMBER</b>
NELLY NGOI	D20151070644
FARAHANA BT RAHMAN	D20151070652
SITI NUR FAQIHAH BT IMRAN	D20151070660

**Group: B**

**Lecturer's Name:** Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ainon Omar

**Submission Date:** 19<sup>th</sup> April 2018

## **INTRODUCTION**

For this assignment, we are required to look for a novel that is suitable to be a young adult literature text. Due to this requirement, we looked upon Top 100 chosen fictions for young adults and best novels for adolescent charts and many more. With that being said, we came across this novel – *The Summer That Changed Everything* by Ann Brashares. In the first place, her debut book entitled *The Sisterhood of the Travelling Pants* made it in the Top 100 of Young Adult Read and we actually wanted to do that novel. However, we could not find it in the library and found this book instead.

After a thorough discussion, we decided to read and resolve whether this book fits the best of all the criteria that are needed to be a young adult literature text. The reason why we have chosen the novel is because the different narrations that we can see through the entire story. We think that it is rare and having many narrations in a story can actually make the young adults understand the characters in the story more deeply.

## **SYNOPSIS AND REASONS**

The Summer That Changed Everything is a beautiful summer tale of friendship, love and loss.

The four girls from The Sisterhood of the Travelling Pants were mentioned throughout the novel and one of them even made a cameo appearance in this novel. In the eyes of Ama, Polly and Jo, those girls and their story are legendary and magnificent. It seems like the stories of the Sisterhood are teenage rites of passage and The Summer That Changed Everything seemed to bring this to younger generations and make their own version of sisterhood, so it is like passing those beloved teen classics down to your little sister.

The idea of this book is totally refreshing and it has those throwback feelings where it reminds you of your friendship and how everything has changed due to years passing by. The Summer That Changed Everything is full of a different kind of life and energy from what we always reach for to read. It reads like the soft, warm fulfilment of a day spent out in the sun enjoying life. No doubt, this book may provide you that tranquil feeling that you seek for after a busy life and you just want to sit back, enjoying blue sky turns to red colour and you just get drawn to each words of this book.

Although The Summer That Changed Everything is a subtle, warm-summer read, it also deals with bigger issues that young adult face growing up, such as parent divorce, alcoholism, kissing another girl's boyfriend and drifting away from your friends. However, all those issues were not forced down your throat at all, yet they were set in different backgrounds and having that silent effect on the lives of the girls just as they really would. True to that, it makes the reading more delicate and in peace.

The best part about The Summer That Changed Everything is its format. We rarely come across books with split narration because somehow when author try to do that, it creates confusion and distress to readers to understand the characters. However, that doesn't happen with this book. Ann Brashares did a good job with split narration format with the main characters. Ama, Polly and Jo are three very different girls that live very contradict summers and their story probably would have been impossible to tell in any other way. Another fact that we love about this book is how Ann Brashares include willow trees scattered between the chapter as that is the only underlying string that keep the girls together despite they are drifting away from each othe

## **PLOT**

The plot of the story is rather gradually slow as most of the early chapters only talk about the characteristics of the main characters which are Ama, Jo and Polly and what revolves around their lives in the past. As we get into the story, the story starts portraying more about the characters by having split narration in which Jo portrays the life of the three the most and as for the falling action, Polly's mother named Dia gets admitted to the hospital due to alcohol addiction and Polly starts calling Jo to ask for help from her father who is a doctor. Polly even calls Jo and the three meet each other at the hospital.

After waiting for quite some time, Polly decides that it is best for Jo and Ama to leave as she does not want her burden to become theirs but the two refuse to go home and accompany her until her mother wakes up. This incident clearly shows the starting point of reconciliation between the three main characters which then lead to them heading together into the woods to check the plants they have planted when they were at the end of their third grade. It turns out the three they have planted are connected to each other and the three girls finally realize that their lives revolve around one another and it is impossible to cut the ties that has been existing since day one.

The ending is expected but due to the split narration from the three main characters, the development of the story in the beginning becomes quiet slow as it mainly talks about the introduction of the characters in the story. The plot of the story is considered logical and natural and it is about the broken friendship and family institution. This could also happen to us, the readers in life and the plot is believable enough as someone's life can affect other's life in which in this story, we can see that Jo's life changes after the death of his Brother, Finn.

The story does not provide enough amount of predictability except at the beginning of the story, it tells about the trees that were planted by Ama, Jo and Polly and how at the end of the story the three visit the trees back together after they reconcile.

The plot is indeed carefully constructed as we can see that due to having split narration by the three characters in the novel, readers are able to know more about each character's emotion and this gives more overview to other side of the other characters and it also reflects the theme of the story.

## **CHARACTER**

The characters' emotions, actions, thoughts and words are consistent and believable as the three main characters display different characteristics in the story and as readers, we can relate to every character as we can see and feel it through the conflicts they encounter in their lives. We have to say that the characters in the story are realistic as what they are facing in their lives in the story are what some people in reality encounter and the actions done by them are not something that is unexpected to us the readers in real life.

The characters complement each other because every single decision done by the character, they always think about what the other say about the decision or action made by them would. For instance, when Jo kisses a stranger on a night ride on the bus, she instantly regrets her decision and suddenly wonders what Ama would think about her action of kissing someone she does not know on the bus.

The characters do contribute to the action and believability of the plot as each character has distinct personality, emotion and conflict in which makes it easy for the readers to differentiate the three characters in the novel.

The characters do not have any stereotype being put on them because as the story goes on we can see changes in every character starting from their personality. As an example, Ama portrays a very obedient, vocal and smart individual in the beginning of the story but towards the end we can see that she is actually someone who is only seeking for her parents' approval.

As the readers, especially the adolescents, we can say that we learn different things from different characters. The characters have distinct feature in their traits so it is not hard to differentiate their characters. In our opinion, readers can learn a lot from the three main characters. Starting from Ama, she shows us the readers the struggles of wanting to follow the parents' expectation of her and then it leads her to the pressure of being as good as her sister, Esi who manages to get to good colleges by getting good scholarship. She worries a lot on her grades as she is afraid she will not be getting into good college just like her sister.

When it comes to Jo, the broken relationship between her parents causes her to become despair but she tries to hide her sadness by acting as if she cannot care less about what happen between them although at the end she actually manages to put everything into a puzzle and realizes that the reason why she isolates herself from her friends is because of the

death of his brother, Finn. As for Polly, she is having an identity crisis due to her uncle telling her that her grandmother was a model and then it leads Polly on wanting to join a modelling camp. Although her mom rejects the idea of her joining a modelling camp, she eventually agrees to let her to join the camp. Towards the end, Polly actually regrets her decision of joining the runway.

Since this story is part of the series books written by the same author, we have to say that the adolescents will want to continue the series to see the development of the reconciliation of the friendship between the three main characters after being drifted apart for quite some time.

## **SETTING**

Even if imaginary, the setting is appropriate and consistent because each character has fixed background setting which really helps the development of the story. The background setting for Ama is the mountain in Jackson Wyoming. In the beginning of the story, Ama receives the letter of enrolment from the Student Leader Foundation which lead her to Wild Adventures in Jackson, Wyoming. The development of Ama's life does transforming her from a nerd student that study in the library all the time into an individual that poses tough appearance.

As for the major development within Jo, the setting revolves in Jo's house. The house is the setting that provides the insight of the connection between the family members. Jo is a child that lives under the mental stress of her parents. She is aware that her family is not living happily ever since the death of her brother. As Jo's life that mainly focuses on the family, Jo's house would be the fixed background setting of her part of life.

The setting complements literary elements such as characterization greatly. The setting that takes place in each character are totally different. It affects the way a person think of a subject differently. This can be seen in the story when Ama, the character that enjoys studying during her childhood begin to accept the truth that going to Wild Adventures is not going to be wasted as she manages to make herself to become a tough person that have courage to do things that she used to be scared of.

## **THEME**

This story describes the reconciliation of friends that have drifted apart, which are Ama, Polly and Jo. The friendship between three of them root when they decided to move their willow tree plants from the pot to the bottom of the Pony Hill. These three persons have their own fate of future as they have different goals for their life. Ama wishes to study in school that has top academic reputation because she wants to be succeed like her sister did, Polly wish to pursue her study in modelling sector, and Jo wants to run away from her family problems. They contact lesser with each other and eventually they are being awkward to each other.

Although they are being separated by distance, they still think about each other a lot when they are facing conflicts of friendship with new friends out there. Jo is happy to know that there are people out there that she can consider as a good friend. For an example, one of the employees in the restaurant report the restaurant manager about Effie's evil act of knocking Jo down, which lead to the accident, happened in the restaurant. Jo realised that it is true that a friend in need is a friend indeed because there are people who will stand by our side although we do not ask for it. Same things happens when Polly's mother admitted to the hospital because her once upon greatest friends, Ama and Jo accompany her by side when she is facing problems in life.

This theme is appropriate for adolescents because it is about friendship. The story focus on the friendship between adolescents and it describe on how friendship poses impact in each other's life. The adolescents will be able to understand the theme as friendship is the essential stage that individuals would surely experience throughout their life. The plots of the story are highly related to things that adolescence will face in their life. The theme revealed to the reader well in subtle way because it appears that each stage and every chapter in the story always centred around the friendship between Ama, Polly and Jo.

## **POINT OF VIEW**

As mentioned earlier, this story is written with split narration format in which really describes Ann Brashares's work. She is known for her split narration style of writing in which she thought it is a strategic action for her readers to understand and communicate more with her fictional characters. Indeed, her action deserves praises as split narration format actually make the readers to put themselves in her fictional characters' shoes which make them wonder on what the readers would do and think if they are in characters' place.

To begin with, the provided points of views are undeniably appropriate for the plot and characters. Due to split narration from all three main characters, it helps with the development of the plot and unexpectedly create a more smoother but impactful climax and finish it with warm and content as for the ending. Furthermore, readers can totally observe the expansion of characters' trait from the beginning of the story till the end.

The given points of views here are appropriate as the themes of the story actually speak through throughout the whole story and can affect the developmental level of the intended reader which is the adolescent in a positive way. Despite the story talks on issues like alcoholism and parents separating up, it actually may provide a good insights to adolescents on what can they do if they are facing those issue. Hence, the character's point of views here is entirely appropriate for the adolescent and can create a thoughtful thinking process for their age.

All the way through this story, the author successfully maintained the consistency of the points of views which are the split narration format and it does help the readers to understand and appreciate the story even more. Considering the use of split narration format, the readers eventually are able to determine how objective and crystal clear the points of views. Ama, Polly and Jo's narration always tell about their characters' progress – their thoughts, emotions, actions and words whenever they are in hard situations which eventually bring the readers more closely to these three characters.

Certainly, the points of views are credible and maintained throughout the book since almost each chapter provides all main characters' narration. This consistency deserves praises because readers especially adolescents can be more understanding for both the characters and the story and initiate a good connection to the characters more.

Hence, Ann Brashares did an exceptional job here for her split narration format because we believe this could make adolescent more attentive to read the story and try to construct a wonderful meaning behind their journey of reading this story.

## STYLE & TONE

Ann Brashares does comprise several literary devices that scattered all over this story such as simile, metaphor, personification and oxymoron. Furthermore, the author uses a simple, straightforward language but still give that warm, summery content feeling to the readers. Due to that, her style is absolutely appropriate for the plot, theme and adolescent in which would not create any issue or confusion among the readers.

The author's style of writing actually create a subtle, earnest and contented feeling as the theme of this story is actually about friendship. This created mood allows readers to reminisce back about their own childhood friendship or even think about their current friendship. Plus, it also creates inquisitiveness desire to know more about the characters' emotions, thoughts and actions every time the characters are facing a hard situation. Therefore, this mood is actually good for adolescent because they will get something to ponder on about their friendship such as do they friends with good or bad people, are they getting good or bad influences from their friends and are they shaping their identities from their circle of friends.

Subsequently of the author's style of writing, it is complement the other literary elements especially for the progression of characters, the development of the plot and the theme. Furthermore, author's style surely benefits the readers to understand the story even further alongside with the usage of the literary devices that comprise around the story. Hence, the author successfully maintain the same style throughout the book because her language constructions and the used of literary devices that complement the literary elements do harmonise the split narration format.

The tone of the story does aid young adults to understand the author's perspectives biases because of how the author managed to strongly portray Ama, Jo and Polly emotions and thought when she describes the situations that the characters are facing at the moment. Unquestionably, the tone can be partially appeal to the adolescent and partially not because the beginning of the story has flashbacks that appears in several chapters and it make a quite slow rising which doesn't help much to attract adolescent to keep reading the book. Furthermore, the tone is actually doesn't ignite enough curiosity or desire for readers to be anticipated about the story.