

On Humanity and Individuality: Lessons Drawn from Ha Jin’s “A Lecture”

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Abstract

Research projects have shown the values of introducing and teaching literature in the classroom, including the use of short stories in the classroom to encourage students to draw their own lessons of humanity and individuality in order to better prepare them to face the current world of multiculturalism, to guide them to the understanding that while the world consists of different beliefs, ideals, political views, and religions, at the center of all things, humans share common needs, desires and feelings. This kind of understanding, in the end, may lead to the existence of world peace and understanding. The research will show how this goal is reached, that through education, through literature, students may understand and embrace and accept differences facing them and exercising their own individuality. Literature may help prevent the frightening phenomenon of radicalism and fundamentalism from growing. Works of literature offer readers different situations, different human dramas in different parts of the world, leading them to the conclusions that although people are different, at the core of it all, all individuals share commonalities despite their differences in ideals, beliefs, political views and religions. Jin’s “A Lecture,” leads readers to understand that the values of humanity and individuality may be found in different parts of the world. Even though Jin’s characters are characters living in Communist China, they portray men displaying the commonality of human beings, with their needs, desires and feelings resembling those of common individuals. Abstract text should have 1 cm indentation from left and right and be written in one-column format in one paragraph. Text must not exceed 250 words.

Keywords: *multiculturalism, humanity, individuality, predicaments, choices*

Introduction

The Chinese American novelist and poet Jīn Xuěfēi has won a number of prestigious literary awards for his works. He was first awarded the PEN/Hemingway Award for *Ocean of Words* (1996), a collection of twelve short stories. One of the twelve stories is “A Lecture,” which becomes the focus of this paper. One of the possible reasons why Ha Jin’s works are intriguing is that they try to spotlight “painful and very complex” problems that result from a culture that restricts its adherents (societies in Communist China) and brave individuals (his characters) of those particular societies who desire to live in dignity as human beings - to fulfill their personal needs. His works talk about humanity in a society that denies its citizens his or her individuality.

Ocean of Words, sometimes titled as *Ocean of Words: Army Stories*, is Ha Jin’s debut short-story collection. It was originally published in the United States in 1996 and comprises of twelve stories highlighting the lives of Chinese military personnel during a period when tension between Communist China and the Soviet Union were high, a historical situation in which Jin has actual experience. The stories are set in the border between China and Russia in the early 1970s. The twelve stories are “compelling”, “powerful in their unity of theme” and that they “offer glimpses of human motivation that defy retelling....” A reviewer notes how Ha Jin delves into the characters and reveals the “predicament of these simple, barely literate” characters “with breathtaking concision and humanity.”

The Judges of The 1997 Ernest Hemingway Foundation/PEN Award for First Fiction states the following:

Ha Jin’s collection of stories *Ocean of Words* portrays army life in China with subtlety, grace, and infinite complexity. With his fine attention to the manners of his time, and evident technical mastery, he has created out of perverse reality, pure art. The best of these tales wreak pleasure from pain and resound with an irony that distances us not from the characters but from the harshness of their world. Ha Jin has christened a whole new territory in American literature. This debut book, of simple style and understated beauty, is occasion for real celebration (Jin, 1998).

Ha Jin read Tolstoy’s *War and Peace*, and a revelation came to him. In an interview, he stated “What a revelation this is. I’m here fighting the Russians, and Tolstoy showed me that the Russians were just like me.” From his statement, then, it is understandable that even though Jin’s characters are characters living in Communist China, they portray men displaying the commonality of human beings, with their needs, desires and feelings resembling those of common individuals.

It can be safely concluded that the stories included in Jin's *Ocean of Words*, of which "A Lecture" is one, the strength lies in the theme espoused by the stories: themes of humanity and individuality. In a discussion about theme, one talks about ideas and also values: "[L]iterature embodies values along with ideas" (Roberts, 1999, p.100). Further, value is defined as "a standard of what is desired, sought, esteemed, and treasured". In addition, ideas and values, or in short theme, is what writers want to communicate through works of literature. Theme is vital "to understanding and appreciating literature" (Roberts, 1999, p. 101).

Finding and analyzing theme, as expressed in ideas and values present in a work of literature, is different from finding and analyzing character and setting. To establish a theme in literature, readers need to "consider the meaning" of what they are reading and then "develop explanatory and comprehensive assertions" (Roberts, 1999, p.102).

On Humanity

The word *humanity* is the one word that keeps surfacing when discussing works by Ha Jin. Humanity is the human race, which includes everyone on Earth. It's also a word for the qualities that make us human, such as the ability to love and have compassion, be creative, and not be a robot or alien. The word humanity is from the Latin *humanitas* for "human nature, kindness." Humanity includes all the humans, but it can also refer to the kind feelings humans often have for each other....But when you talk about humanity, you could just be talking about people as a whole. When people do bad things, it tests your faith in humanity. When people ask for money to help feed starving children, they're appealing to your sense of humanity (vocabulary.com).

The stories that Ha Jin offers teach us about humanity. Readers learn about humanity from the struggle or the predicament that Jin's characters experience in the context of Communist China, a totalitarian state in which the government watches every move of its citizens. His characters experience what people in all other parts of the world experience: They feel love, they aspire to be somebody, they stand up for humane causes. They long for the fulfillment of the same desires and needs: the need for love, affection, belongingness, self esteem, and self actualization. To fulfill these needs, Jin's characters have to deviate from the accepted norms. They have to become a nonconformist. Therefore they stay true to themselves. As already mentioned previously, his characters are brave individuals. His characters, although they live in a society that demands uniformity and conformity, are brave enough to deviate, to take different actions from what is expected of them as members of a Communist society. Jin's characters are in conflict with the society they live in. They are forced to choose what is not popular in their contexts.

A review mentions the following about Jin's works:

[This] is an absorbing work by a deeply gifted writer, spare yet rich, witty yet heart-rending. Despite the pain these characters endure, Jin rejoices in the humanity he so aptly depicts. (Huang, 2003, p. 113)

Further reviews that talk about the themes of humanity and individuality as found in Ha Jin's stories are the following:

[Ha Jin's stories] deal with the painful and very complex problems that arise out of the conflict between a rigid society that politicizes all aspects of life and the deeply personal needs of those who must find a way to live in that society with some dignity or be destroyed by it. (thelifelonglearningacademy.com)

On Individuality

Another theme in the story is individuality. There are several words that can be used to describe Ha Jin's protagonists, namely deviant and non-conformists. This is so because they excel in keeping their individuality, despite the fact that they are put in a setting that demands conformity. What is the meaning of individuality? Individuality means the inward act of choosing for yourself regardless of social and communal situations. Individuality is the state or quality of being an individual; a person is separate from other persons and possessing his or her own needs, goals, and desires.

The Importance of Setting

The story *A Lecture* is set at a time in a historical period called The Cultural Revolution. In order to understand the story clearer, readers need to be familiar with some events and real Chinese historical personalities: The Long March, The Cultural Revolution, Mao Zedong,

The Long March

One important event in the history of Communist China is The Long March (October 1934 - October 1935), also known as Ch'ang Cheng. The Long March is mentioned in the story *A Lecture*, in which the main character, Liu Baoming, is a portrayal of a veteran of the Long March. It is part of a civil war between the Chinese Communists, led by Mao Zedong, and the Chinese Nationalists, led by Chiang Kai-shek. The civil war in China between the Nationalists and the Communists broke out in 1927. The march itself lasted 368 days and covered 6,000 miles. It is through this war, the leader of the Chinese Communists, Mao Zedong, or also known as Chairman Mao, emerged as the undisputed leader of Communist China. During the Long March, the troops of the Red Army crossed 18

mountain ranges and 24 rivers. The heroism attributed to the troops participating in the Long March is mentioned in the story A Lecture as it becomes the inspiration of many young Chinese to enlist in the Chinese Communist Party. In the end, the communists defeated the Nationalists and overcome China. Mao's leadership was then strongly established.

The Red Army/the People's Liberation Army

The Chinese Red Army or The Chinese Workers' and Peasants' Red Army (traditional Chinese: 中國工農紅軍; simplified Chinese: 中国工农红军; pinyin: Zhōngguó Gōngnóng Hóngjūn), or simply the Red Army, was the armed forces of the Communist Party of China. It was later known as the People's Liberation Army. It was created on May 25, 1928, at the beginning of the Chinese Civil War.

The Red Guards

The Red Guards are students who abused and humiliated those who are deemed to be Mao's "political enemies" in order to eradicate the "Four Olds," namely old ideas, old customs, old culture, and old habits of China to answer Mao's call to continue the revolution. The Red Guards destroyed historical sites and cultural relics. Chinese people feared the Red Guards. As they became more extreme, the People's Liberation Army was needed to put them back in control.

The Cultural Revolution

The Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) is also known as the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. It was a movement in China started by Mao Zedong, the Chairman of the Communist Party of China. Its goal was to stay true to the ideology of Communism and imposing the thought of Maoism, the dominant ideology of the Party. Mao Zedong wanted to reassert his authority over the Chinese government. Therefore, he wanted to eradicate the old elements of Chinese society and restore the spirit of the revolution or the revolutionary spirit. The Revolution ended with Mao's death in 1976. However, its effects last until the present time.

During the Cultural Revolution, schools were shut down (schools were considered too academic and too elitist), books were burned, students formed the Red Guards, who attacked teachers and other intellectuals. This was touched by Jin in the story Ocean of Words.

Mao Zedong

Then, during the time of Chinese Cultural Revolution existed a personality cult of Mao Zedong. This cult is strengthened by the existence of "Little Red Book," a book containing Mao's quotations (Jin's characters also quote Mao in the stories included in the collection Ocean of Words). The book was printed and distributed all over China.

Mao Zedong, or sometimes referred to as Mao Tse-tung was born on December 26, 1893, in Shaoshan, Hunan province, China. Mao Zedong was the principal Chinese Marxist theorist. He was also a soldier. He was famous for being the statesman who led China's communist revolution. He was the leader of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) from 1935 until his death. He was also the chairman (chief of state) of the People's Republic of China (1949-1959). He chaired the party until he died on September 9, 1976 in Beijing. Mao Zedong is considered the principal architect of the new China. This actual figure is mentioned in A Lecture.

Mao aimed to create a China in which peasants, workers and educated people work together. His China was a classless China - a China in which everyone were equals. A source stated the following: Some 1.5 million people were killed during the Cultural Revolution, and millions of others suffered imprisonment, seizure of property, torture or general humiliation. The Cultural Revolution's short-term effects may have been felt mainly in China's cities, but its long-term effects would impact the entire country for decades to come. Mao's large-scale attack on the party and system he had created would eventually produce a result opposite to what he intended, leading many Chinese to lose faith in their government altogether. (<http://www.history.com/topics/cultural-revolution>)

The Cultural Revolution caused many casualties, for example. The army made their targets "the authorities on campuses, then party officials and "class enemies" in society at large." There were also reports of cannibalism, a fact mentioned in the story A Lecture. Austin Ramzy in his article titled China's Cultural Revolution, Explained, mentioned:

They carried out mass killings in Beijing and other cities as the violence swept across the country. They also battled one another, sometimes with heavy weapons, such as in the city of Chongqing. The military joined the conflict, adding to the factional violence and killing of civilians. The pogroms even included cannibalization of victims in the southern region of Guangxi. <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/15/world/asia/china-cultural-revolution-explainer.html>

“A Lecture”

Liu Baoming in the story "A Lecture" is addressed as "Old Liu" and even "leader". He is an old, retired member of Chairman Mao's first generation of military/militiamen, the Red Army. Liu has also participated in the legendary Long March, an actual historical event considered pioneering and patriotic, which was led directly by Chairman Mao. These events both in Liu's life and in history are considered to be feats which make him a kind of pioneering veteran who is highly respected by other characters in the story.

In "A Lecture", he is invited to give a lecture to soldiers of Radio Company by Party Secretary Si Ma Lin. Liu Baoming is supposed to share patriotic stories to raise the spirit of the young soldiers. However, his stories are not what the superiors expect. Liu does tell of the Long March, but almost all of the deeds he recounts are neither

glorious nor heroic. His candid storytelling resembles more of a truth-revealing testimony interspersed with black humor and personal confessions than a lecture.

Through his "lecture" Liu Baoming defends humanity and his individuality by telling the bare truth to the young soldiers despite the consequences that may await him after the lecture. The character Liu Baoming in the story "A Lecture" is not an active personnel of the military. In the story he is sometimes addressed as "Old Liu" and even "leader". (Jin, 1998, pp. 125,129) He is an old, retired member of Chairman Mao's first generation of military/militiamen, the Red Army. Liu participated in the legendary Long March, an actual historical event led directly by Mao and is considered a pioneering, glorious, patriotic, and heroic deed. These events both in Liu's life and in history are considered to be feats which make him a kind of a pioneering and heroic veteran who is highly respected by other characters in the story and his society at large.

With such high respect comes certain assumptions and expectations about Old Liu Baoming. Si Ma Lin assumes that he is patriotic and therefore expects him to give "a vivid lecture [that] would arouse the soldier's interest in the Party's history" (Jin, 1998, p.124). Moreover, Si Ma feels "that there might be something worth writing in the old revolutionary's experience" that Si Ma may use to better his own reputation (Jin, 1998, p.124).

Si Ma asks Liu to teach the soldiers about the party's "glorious history" by recounting his experiences in the Long March, the "heroic deeds" done during the march (Jin, 1998, pp. 126-127). Liu does tell of the Long March, but almost all of the deeds he recounts are neither glorious nor heroic. Liu starts his speech by admitting that the first reason he joined the Red Army was so that he "could have something to eat", a reason which is rather unheroic. (Jin,1998, p. 126) Then, at Si Ma's specific request, he tells of the time when he and his comrades were climbing snow mountains. He says that due to wearing summer clothes in a winter weather, they were "trembling with cold and fear". He believes that they "could hear ghosts and spirits screaming on the mountain and in the black sky". He even mentions losing his own sandals, a rather laughable trivial matter. Then when a hailstorm came, hailstones "as big as eggs" pounded them to the ground. Liu remembers being "knocked down on [his] butt, [his] eyes filled with sparks". While many of their faces were smashed and bloody, some of them "knelt down kowtowing to the mountain peak", obviously begging the mountain for mercy. Eventually, to survive the hailstorm, they buried their heads in the snow and let the hailstones strike their buttocks because "[t]he flesh is thicker there, more durable, you know". He ends this part of his recounting by laughing a "Ha-ha-ha!" (Jin, 1998, pp. 127-128). So far, Liu's "lecture" is more of a tragicomedy than a heroic/glorious story. In response to Liu's narration, some of the soldiers attending the lecture "titter", laugh restrainedly, while the one may also laugh freely and felt pity and guilt at the same time. Next, Liu recounts his experiences in "the grass marshes". He recalls the time when he helplessly watched his comrades die sinking into quicksand in the form of mud. "I can't stand to recall it, my stomach will ache again. Their screams were horrible, I can still hear them", says Liu. Still in the marshes, they had to eat "shoes, clothes, waistbands, anything that water can boil." During this part of Liu narration, a bit of heroic deed is told: "Chairman Mao had his horse shot and gave the meat to some sick men." The next part of Liu's recounting is the time when they were chased off by Tibetan villagers. Some of them were killed while some others including Liu were "scared half to death" and escaped. Their horses ran away in the process. In response to this particular part, some soldiers at the lecture "put their hands to their mouths" to hold back laughter while a few laugh out loud. Quite panicking and seeing that the lecture is resulting an very undesirable response, Si Ma Lin again politely asks Old Liu to tell "something about the battles and victories."

Ironically, Liu Baoming's recounting of his experiences results almost the opposite of Si Ma Lin's expectation. His candid storytelling resembles more of a truth-revealing testimony interspersed with black humor and personal confessions than a lecture, let alone a lecture about a "glorious history" as Sima wants. Herein lies the conflict: Liu wants the harsh realities of the Long March to be known while Sima wants these potentially discouraging parts of history to stay unknown.

Liu's "lecture" also brings forth a worst-case scenario for Si Ma. Si Ma's rather frantic reactions to Liu's "lecture" are mainly motivated by either his own denial of the truth, the harsh realities that Liu speak of, or the fear of being reported by Company Commander Pei Ding to higher authority about the rather unpatriotic/counterrevolutionary lecture, considering that the relationship between Pei and Sima is on "uneasy terms" due to Pei's rank being slightly lower than his (Jin, 1998, pp. 125, 133).

Liu Baoming is a bold character. Liu dares to tell the truth in a candid manner, without any euphemism or hyperbole whatsoever, in a society where everyone seems to be demanded, not only expected to glorify the Party and its history. Liu does have the benefit of being a respected veteran, a hero of sorts, but he still faces a grave risk by saying what he says. In the beginning of the story, it is told that there was a person named Lin Biao who "had been [called] "the Wise Marshal," but the next year he [was determined as being] a traitor throughout the history of the Chinese Communist Party" [Jin, 1998, 124]. As is Chairman Mao, Lin Biao is an actual historical figure and as is the Long March, his tragic change of status from hero to traitor is an actual historical occurrence. Lin Biao had been Vice Chairman of the Communist Party and had been named as Chairman's Mao successor. If such tragic treatment could befall a man of Lin Biao's caliber, one can only imagine what can happen to Liu Baoming the veteran. It is unlikely that Old Liu does not know the risk of his telling the rather discouraging, if not shameful, stories of his experiences. Nevertheless, he goes on to the truth, what he actually experienced, in all honesty to the point of shedding tears.

This risk that Liu takes shows that his decision to tell the truth can be a hard choice to make. He may seem to just casually spout out the truth with ease, but imagine what one would choose if he/she is put in Liu's position. Liu is described to have been living his retirement by playing chess "every day", a rather leisurely daily activity. He is also repeatedly described to be highly respected (Jin, 1998, 125). Living a relatively comfortable life like such, would one tell the truth and open the possibility of being persecuted or let the truth be untold (not necessarily lying) and continue to live a comfortable, safe life? The much easier choice is obvious, yet Liu chooses the hard one.

It may be, however, that Liu's candor, his straightforwardness in recounting his experiences is a result of his being aware that he is highly respected and his confidence that no one will dare report him to the authorities, but it is likely that he upholds an honorable principle encouraging him to plainly tell the truth, to simply be honest. Considering the manner of his speech, the importance of the truth he tells, and the gravity of the risk he faces, it is believed that the latter motivation is more at play. According to Liu, the soldiers have "all heard of those victorious battles lots of times and must have calluses in their ears. Let me think of something else" [Jin, 1998, 129]. Liu is not saying that there aren't any victorious battles and heroic deeds that make the Party's history glorious. Rather, he is testifying that not all of the battles were victorious, not all deeds were heroic, and that the Party's history is not perfectly glorious. He thinks that the soldiers, his juniors, need to realize that that is the truth. Liu is fully aware that they have been taught to glorify the Party by being told only the glorious stories, the kind of stories Party Secretary Si Ma Lin wants them to hear. By saying that the soldiers have been told about the victorious battles many times, Liu implies that they have been repeatedly shown an incomplete picture of the Party's history that may hinder them from making a fair assessment of history. Si Ma assumes that the Long March was all heroic and victorious, but Liu bears witness that the reality of the march is almost completely the opposite. Liu does not seem to intend to smear the Party's reputation although his speech may be interpreted counter-revolutionary. He merely wants a fair and balanced assessment of history in pursuit of truth, the truth that no human being, and human creation, is perfect. "The truth will set you free", it is said. Would Liu have told the truth if he does not, consciously or not, believe the aforementioned? At least one may not believe he would. And would he have shared the truth he had witnessed if he does not care about his juniors? No, he would have kept it to himself. It's worth noting, therefore, that in the very beginning of his speech he addressed them as "Sons". Indeed, Old Liu treats his juniors as if they were his own sons by being honest to them. [Jin, 1998, 126]

Teaching “A Lecture”

“A Lecture” was selected to be part of the teaching material in a course titled “ASIAN LITERATURE.” The class is taken by students majoring in English literature -- 11 females and 7 male students. These students are in their 3rd semester. The course is concerned with introducing its participants to the Asian people, their cultures, languages, history and politics, through Asian literature (read literature in English or translated into English by Asian writers). The story itself is written by Ha Jin, an immigrant writer from China. However, the story is found to be suitable for the course because the story talks about one period in the history of China - the Cultural Revolution. Through the story, it is hoped that the story may offer insights to the students regarding various historical, sociological and politics of China, which may still have its impacts to the present day. It can be safely assumed that students nowadays are not familiar with China and past events taking place in the country. The story may also remind the students of the danger of extreme beliefs and setting a figure as a cult, such as Mao Zedong or even Adolf Hitler.

Pre-reading activities

1. Students (Ss) are given a small piece of paper. They are asked to give their own definitions and examples of three words related to the story, namely “humanity,” “conformity,” and “individuality.” One finding is that more students are still not familiar with the words “conformity,” and “individuality. Some students claim that they do not know the meaning of “conformity.” Furthermore, they mistake “individuality” with “egotism.”
2. Ss are shown pictures related to the themes “humanity,” “conformity,” and “individuality.” Students are asked to identify whether the pictures show “humanity,” “conformity,” or “individuality.” This activity aims at strengthening students’ understanding of the three key words above. They now understand more of the meaning of the words.
3. Teacher (T) shows pictures of the Chinese leader of Cultural Revolution “Mao Zedong.” T checks whether the students are familiar with the history of China. Teacher asks questions to check what the students know about the history of China.
4. T shows pictures related to Chinese of the time of the story, the Communist China. T talks about the Long March, the war between the Nationalists and the Communist.
5. T explains concepts of “humanity,” “conformity,” and individuality.”

While reading

1. Ss read the assigned reading. T asks how they find the stories - easy or hard.
2. T gives several comprehension questions to check the students’ understanding.
3. T goes over the story together with the students.
4. T asks students whether they understand the story. T explains points in the reading that Ss may not understand.

Post reading

1. Ss are asked to write an individual reflective paper, with a set of questions to guide them in their writing. The questions are:
 - a. Is the story hard? Why?
 - b. What are the predicaments faced by the main character(s)?
 - c. What conflicts do they have to face?
 - d. What hard choices or decisions do they have to make?
 - e. What lessons about humanity and about individuality did you get from reading the story?
 - f. What new information about China did you learn from “A Lecture”?
What do you think of the situations posed in the stories? What would you do if you were Liu

- Baoming? Would you do the same? Or would you do something different? What do you understand now from the short stories about China? Any change in perspectives?
- g. How different is the culture of China and your own culture?
 - h. Do we have the same history? What would you do if we had the same situations here in Indonesia?
 - i. What lessons about humanity and individuality did you get from reading the two short stories and knowing the two characters? What resolutions about life do you have now after the readings?

On Humanity and Individuality: Lessons Drawn from Ha Jin's "A Lecture"

What lessons of humanity and individuality did the students draw from reading Ha Jin's "A Lecture?" The reflective paper result in the following lessons (language is unedited, taken as is):

Student 1: Lessons of Humanity that described in the story of A Lecture when the Long March experiences. When they (young soldiers) have to face the heroic epic. They have to climb the snow mountain, and stoned by their enemies until bleeding and they death one by one. The lessons of humanity has described when conversation between Feng Shun and Liu Baoming. Feng Shun taught Liu to eat his enemy's meat, he said Liu must learn to, and mustn't take an enemy as a man. Liu was scared when heard Feng Shun statement. Liu was wise man, so he said to Shun he never eat his enemy's meat although he hate Chiang Kai-shek and all the reactionaries.

Student 2: The individual in this story is the writer tried to look different from the other who are forced to be communism or Red Army. In the situation in this story is communism tried to manipulated China land because of the people are being to forced so people who are rich are suffered for their life. Lesson about humanity is the importance of maintaining togetherness, putting the common good, being a devout person and carrying out order from any boss of his form. The lesson about individuality in these two stories is to dare to be different fight flow but remain in a sustained truth.

Student 3: There are some lesson about humanity from the story. That to help each other like when the Red Army caught the Rich men and left the poor folks share their wealth. From both stories the lesson about humanity and individuality is aabout help each other, and to be be a good person you don't have to judge each other, even you don't like their hobby. From the two characters i've learned how to be patient, if you're considered weird. And we don't have to be like anybody if you want to be succes.

Student 4: Things can be learned from this story that is about humanity and individuality. The lesson about humanity when the troops red army long march and many troops are starved and finally killed.

Student 5: As humans sometimes we forget the one thing that make us humans and that is, humanity. We often prefer to have power or play safely rather than defending human rights. And we have to be brave, doing something right even when we're alone while doing it. Liu Baoming refused to do the same as her comrades even when he's risking himself.... My resolution is to be humble and stay kind to the others, even if i'm already successful.

Student 7: The lesson about humanity that we can learn is in the story "A Lecture" is when the troops of The Red Army long march and many troops are starved and finally killed, the remaining troops helped other troops who died.

Student 10: The lesson about individuality is sometimes it is a better choice. Individuality could be the only option. The lesson about humanity is every person has the rights to do what they like and they deserve freedom in any form.

Student 11: Things that can be learned from this story that is about the humanity and individuality. Humanity here means that in those days in china people ruler not concerned with where the ruler more concerned with its own welfane, and those who resist will be tortured so many casualties at the time. And individuals here it means standing alone to uncover the truth.

At the time it was for the people who want to oppose the dictator ruler Assembly and referred to them as the red army.

Student 12: The lessons I get from the stories about individuality is sometimes it is a better choice. Individuality could be the only option in order to have a good life. Sometimes we have to stand alone if others were on the bad or wrong path. We have to take care of ourselves, we have to be smart.

Student 14: By reding the stories, i get lessons about humanity and individuality. The lesson about humanity is how we can share love each other, helping each other just like Zhou and Liang have done. And the lesson about individuality is how we can be just the way we are....

From the two characters, i know that we do not have to be afraid to do something that we think it is good or to against something that is bad. And after the reading, the revolution do i have now is keep study hard and keep doing all the good things.

Student 15: At the time its citizens are not allowed to embrace any religion. What can be learned from this story is about humanity and individuality. Difficult circumstances encountered in a lecture story that is stuck in difficult icy rain. Difficult circumstances encountered in the ocean story is Zhou Wen who likes to read books.

Humanity here means at that time in the ruling China did not attach importance to the people where the ruler is more concerned with in his own welfare and for those who resist will be tortured and so many victims at that time. And the individual here stands alone to reveal the truth. In those days for the people who wanted to oppose the dictator’s rules gathered and referred to them as Red Army.

Conclusions and Recommendations

From the teaching of the selected story and from the clipped parts of the reflective papers by the students, it may safely be concluded that indeed the students are now can grasp the three concepts introduced in the lesson, namely “humanity,” “conformity,” and “individuality.” They are also able to draw lessons regarding humanity and individuality from the short story given. From stories like “A Lecture” students are taught ideas important in multiculturalism. Students are introduced to different ideas and are invited to celebrate diversity that they may come across in their daily lives. One can see these from the following ideas that students write in their reflective papers:

1. the importance of maintaining togetherness, putting the common good, being a devout person
2. to dare to be different fight flow but remain in a sustained truth.
3. some lesson about humanity from the story. That to help each other
4. to be a good person you don’t have to judge each other, even you don’t like their hobby.
5. learned how to be patient, if you’re considered weird. And we don’t have to be like anybody if you want to be succes.
6. As humans sometimes we forget the one thing that make us humans and that is, humanity. We often prefer to have power or play safely rather than defending human rights. And we have to be brave, doing something right even when we’re alone while doing it.
7. My resolution is to be humble and stay kind to the others, even if i’m already successful.
8. The lesson about individuality is sometimes it is a better choice. Individuality could be the only option. The lesson about humanity is every person has the rights to do what they like and they deserve freedom in any form.
9. individuals here it means standing alone to uncover the truth.
10. The lessons I get from the stories about individuality is sometimes it is a better choice. Individuality could be the only option in order to have a good life. Sometimes we have to stand alone if others were on the bad or wrong path. We have to take care of ourselves, we have to be smart.
11. The lesson about humanity is how we can share love each other, helping each other
12. the lesson about individuality is how we can be just the way we are....
13. we do not have to be afraid to do something that we think it is good or to against something that is bad.

From this experience of teaching the values of “humanity,” and “individuality,” it is recommended that students be given more stories that may teach them values celebrated in multiculturalism. Teaching world literature offers such opportunity. Students may further be encouraged to take up projects connected to multiculturalism after encountering ideas of “humanity,” and “individuality.” Students should be encouraged also to be more courageous to embrace their “individuality” while at the same time endeavors to uphold values of “humanity” in their own “world” in order to create a better world for people of different beliefs, social, political and cultural backgrounds.

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