

EDUCATOR'S LESSON PLAN AND NOTES

The educator's lesson plan has been designed to accompany the microsite resource, *little red comma: The Ostrich of Kampong Glam* by Kane Wheatley-Holder.

Class (Level and Stream)	Lower Secondary and Upper Secondary
Subject	Language & Literature
Unit & Topic	Interpreting Humour, Experiencing Multiple Perspectives
Prior Knowledge (Context of Lesson):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students should have the knowledge of some devices such as satire, irony and hyperbole Students should have knowledge of basic essay writing skills such as writing a topic sentence, making a claim with supporting evidence
Lesson Objectives: Aligned with learning Outcome/s from the 2019 Literature in English syllabus (p. 22)	Outcomes: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> understand and communicate the effects of the writer's use of humour in five forms: satire, bathos, incongruity, self-deprecating humour, hyperbole and understatement understand how a narrator / character may look to create particular impressions of themselves articulate their own feelings and personal responses to a vulnerable character, with textual evidence

Brief Overview of Lesson
Pre-reading Activity

This can be done in a class prior to individually reading the short story *The Ostrich of Kampong Glam* on the microsite, as a means of introducing students to the topic of humour and making them aware of the various forms of humour used by people.

1	15 mins	Pre-reading Activity 1: What makes something funny?
2	5 mins	Pre-reading Activity 2: Overview of <i>The Ostrich of Kampong Glam</i> Microsite

Lesson 1 of 2:

1	5 mins	Settle down, Lesson Materials & Lesson Objectives
2	15 mins	Activity 1: Whole-class Discussion Teacher to lead class with Question 1.
3	10 - 15 mins	Activity 2: Small-group Discussion Teacher to assign students into groups to answer Questions 2 to 5

4	15 - 25 mins	Whole-class Discussion on Question 2 to 5 <i>Consider discussing optional Question 6.</i>
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Lesson 2 of 2:		
1	5 mins	Settle down, Lesson Materials & Lesson Objectives
2	10 - 15 mins	Complete discussion of Activity 1: Question 2 to 5 from Lesson 1. <i>Consider discussing optional Question 6.</i>
3	20 mins	Activity 2: Small-group Discussion Assign students to respond to Question 1 to 3
4	10 - 20 mins	Whole-class Discussion on Question 1 to 3

LESSON OUTLINE

Lesson 1 of 2 (50 - 65 mins)		
Time / Duration	Activity	Materials Required / Notes (if any)
5 mins	<p>Settle down, Access Check & Lesson Objectives</p> <p>Teacher to ensure access to <i>little red comma</i> microsite is consistent for all students, with at least 1 working Personal Learning Device per pair.</p> <p>Teacher to check in if students have read the story.</p> <p>Teacher to give out Handout 1: Uses and Effects of Humour</p> <p>Teacher to explain that students will learn about different aspects of humour and how they can interpret its effects in this story.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projector • Laptop • Personal Learning Devices <p>• Student Handout 1: Uses and Effects of Humour</p>
15 mins	<p>Activity 1: Whole-class Discussion</p> <p>Teacher to lead class with Question 1.</p> <p>Teachers can solicit responses from students and make use of suggested answers to explain how students identify the use of satire from the excerpt / passage, before proceeding to comment on its effects.</p> <p>Teachers can also help students explain how satire works.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projector • Laptop • Personal Learning Devices <p>• Student Handout 1: Uses and Effects of Humour</p>

10 mins	<p>Small-group Discussion: Questions 2 to 5</p> <p>Teachers assign students to groups to respond to each of the three questions in Handout 1.</p> <p>Before sending students into groups, teachers should use the handout to explain and define each of the different uses / aspects of humour.</p> <p>To capture student responses in writing, teachers can alternately create a Padlet, collaborate on a shared document on Google Documents or SLS, or have students handwrite their responses and prepare to share on the visualiser.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projector • Laptop • Personal Learning Devices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Handout 1: Uses and Effects of Humour
10 - 20 mins	<p>Whole-class Discussion: Question 2 to 5</p> <p>Teachers to discuss the answers to Question 2 to 5.</p> <p>Teachers can focus on making connections between the use of the type of humour, the evidence in the text, and the suggested effect.</p> <p>Teachers can also encourage multiple acceptable answers as shared in the Suggested Answers.</p> <p>Teachers can ask other students to consider the logical validity of each others' claims.</p> <p><i>Consider discussing optional Question 6.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projector • Laptop • Personal Learning Devices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Handout 1: Uses and Effects of Humour
Lesson 2 of 2 (50 - 60 mins)		
5 mins	<p>Settle down, Access Check & Lesson Objectives</p> <p>Teacher to ensure access to <i>little red comma</i> microsite is consistent for all students, with at least 1 working Personal Learning Device per pair.</p> <p>Teacher to give out Handout 2: Experiencing the Narrator and Ostrich 12B's perspective</p> <p>Teacher to explain that students will learn about how to analyse the symbol of the binoculars and the motif of seeing and its relationship to memory.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projector • Laptop • Personal Learning Devices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Handout 2: Experiencing the Narrator and Ostrich 12B's perspective
10 - 15 mins	Complete discussion of Activity 1: Question 2 to 5 from Lesson 1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projector • Laptop

	<p>Teachers can continue rounding up the discussion from the previous lesson (unlikely to have been completed by students) on the different uses and effects of humour in the story.</p> <p><i>Consider discussing optional Question 6.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Learning Devices • Student Handout 1: Uses and Effects of Humour
20 mins	<p>Activity 2: Small-group Discussion Assign students to respond to Question 1 to 3.</p> <p>Teachers assign students to groups to respond to each of the two questions in Handout 2. There may be repeat groups.</p> <p>Before sending students into groups, teachers should use the handout to explain and define the parameters of the story that students can look into as evidence.</p> <p>To capture student responses in writing, teachers can alternately create a Padlet, collaborate on a shared document on Google Documents or SLS, or have students handwrite their responses and prepare to share on the visualiser.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projector • Laptop • Personal Learning Devices • Student Handout 2: Experiencing the Narrator and Ostrich 12B's perspective
10 - 20 mins	<p>Whole-class Discussion on Question 1 to 3.</p> <p>Teachers to discuss the answers to Question 1 to 3.</p> <p>Teachers can focus on making connections to written assessment questions for both questions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projector • Laptop • Personal Learning Devices • Student Handout 2: Experiencing the Narrator and Ostrich 12B's perspective

PRE-READING ACTIVITY 1: What makes something funny?

Understanding our enjoyment of humour

In this pre-reading activity, teachers can introduce the topic of humour in storytelling—to have a better understanding beyond what funny stories we like, but how the comedy works to create a strong effect on us.

Teachers can start by asking the class the following two questions in whole-class discussion:

1. Have you ever wondered what makes a story or a piece of content funny?
Teachers may want to limit students to brief summaries of examples so as not to take up too much time recounting these stories.
2. From our collective experiences of laughing and experiencing humour, what kinds of humour can you think of?
Teachers may want to limit students to brief summaries of examples so as not to take up too much time recounting these stories.

After taking several responses, teachers can review the long list of different types of humour with students.

Possible responses: (Source: <https://smartblogger.com/types-of-humor/>)

1. **physical or slapstick humour** – exaggerated effects (+ onomatopoeia: e.g. boink, boop)
2. **deadpan or dry humour** – delivered with straight face, neutral tone
3. **wordplay and dual meanings** – e.g. double entendres, puns, cheeky metaphors, and pickup lines
4. **toilet humour** – e.g. fart jokes, jokes about excrement
5. **lowbrow humour** – crude, profane, and offensive, tasteless
6. **witty or highbrow humour** – dry and clever and relies on the listener's intellectual engagement; usually requires a certain level of education or knowledge to understand.
7. **satirical humour** – poke fun at human vices and flaws; draw attention to current events or political issues.
8. **dark humour** – makes light of a tragic event or subject matter; often used as a coping mechanism.
9. **cringe humour** – when someone acts or speaks in an embarrassing way in a social situation that makes people present feel awkward.
10. **ironic humour** – e.g. situational irony—Emerson Moser: The former senior crayon maker for Crayola who made over 1.4 billion crayons, was colour blind.
11. **observational humour** – subtly criticize the world around us by pointing out overlooked aspects of our lives—the humour comes from the recognition of shared experience or revelation.
12. **self-enhancing humour** – use the power of laughter to improve their happiness and well-being during difficult times; can help you maintain perspective, reduce stress, or be a coping strategy to maintain mental health during hard times.
13. **self-deprecating humour** – to degrade oneself with a joke; shows you don't take yourself too seriously.
14. **surreal or absurd humour** – replacing logic with illogical thoughts, making them funny because they are ridiculous or unexpected.
15. **one-liner humour** – short, concise, and just one sentence or phrase, with a perfect set-up and a punchline that inverts the set-up.

16. **epigrammatic humour** – paradox and irony to make satirical or thought-provoking statements.
17. **anecdotal humour** – recalls an event from the past, usually light-hearted and humorous; can communicate a message, emphasize a point, or entertain people with an interesting story.
18. **hyperbolic humour** – exaggerates a person’s emotional state in a humorous way.
19. **farcical humour** – the plot includes improbable coincidences and heavy exaggeration. And the dialogue is often ridiculous.
20. **parody** – mocks and imitates an original work or person, typically for comic effect.
21. **aggressive humour / roasts** – used to bully or intimidate others by making them the butt of jokes. Perpetrators often attempt to pass off the jokes as teasing.

PRE-READING ACTIVITY 2: Overview of the *The Ostrich of Kampong Glam* Microsite

Teachers can share the following explanatory notes from the web developers of the microsite before sending students off to read the short story for the main class:

Notes from *The Ostrich of Kampong Glam* Microsite web developer

1. For this microsite, the story requires that you interact with various ‘buttons’ that help unfold the story along with the augmented reality (AR) effect of using Google Maps, drawings and animations.
2. Viewers cannot go back and re-read a page.
3. It is recommended that teachers borrow a copy of the original anthology *this is how you walk on the moon: an anthology of anti-realist fiction* from NLB and distribute a copy of the short story to the class after students have completed the experience on the site. It is also available at Ethos Books.

ACTIVITY 1: Uses and Effects of Humour

Apart from amusing, entertaining readers and drawing their attention, humour also helps to forge deeper connections to a story's characters, and to even push readers to reflect or even shift how they think about others and the world.

In this story, the self-aware narrator reconstructs his own account of Ostrich 12B's escape through Kampong Glam by a combination of investigative journalism and his own imagination of the ostrich's perspective. Often, this is done in a very light-hearted and humorous manner. But rarely do we discuss how humour is created and the effects it has on us as readers of Literature.

Thus, we explore five uses of humour in this story and its effects:

1. Satire

When a writer, narrator or character uses a serious tone to raise a ridiculous or absurd subject, there is a form of satire at work. Often, satire also consists of the use of exaggeration, irony, or ridicule to criticise and expose flaws in human nature and behaviour.

Question 1: Read the passage below from the start of the story that shows the official reports of the first ostrich's death.

- a. How does the writer use satire with the narrator in this passage?
- b. What does the satire imply about the circumstances surrounding the death of the first ostrich?

The first male ostrich:

"It was a replacement for a male ostrich that had died in his sleep at the Singapore Zoo. No one knew why it had passed away. There was talk that the bird despised his keepers, Singaporeans, foreigners, and its caged existence. It died of a self-induced heart attack. That was what the report said, so I am inclined to believe there is some truth to it."

Possible answers: The writer uses a satirical and serious tone with the narrator to imply that there may have been a cover-up, or an attempt to prevent people discovering the truth about what led to the death of the male ostrich. Firstly, the declarative and matter-of-fact tone that the narrator uses to explain the lack of knowledge about the actual cause of death ("No one knew why it had passed away", the summary of rumours ("there was talk that the bird despised his keepers... and its caged existence") and the official stance that it "died of a self-induced heart attack" all point to the lack of an objective truth, which creates a sense of ridicule that there were no satisfying answers.

Furthermore, the oxymoron of "a self-induced heart attack" makes the official report even more unlikely, given that the ostrich passed away in its sleep. More importantly, the narrator's sincere trust in the official report ("That was what the report said, so I am inclined to believe there is some truth to it") further raises the reader's suspicions that the truth is not what it seems. Taken together, the writer's use of satire in the narrator's commentary hints at a criticism of how official reports of deaths appear to conceal the truth of the circumstances, rather than publicly state the real facts.

2. Bathos (anticlimax)

Bathos occurs in a situation where a serious, emotional and/or heartfelt story full of feeling, emotion (and even insight) is first set up, but suddenly subverts it to something trivial, insignificant or everyday. It can turn a dramatic moment into something humorous in the anticlimactic surprise, and may even hint at a commentary on the larger narrative at play.

Question 2: The author often punctuates his recount of Ostrich 12B's escape with bathetic / anticlimactic comments that refer to the subjective nature of his recount. In the following examples of bathos below, can you explain how these moments can be considered bathetic or anticlimactic?

“There was even the odd Glam tree, which once bestowed the area its name, a symbol of a once-prominent fishing village at the mouth of the Rochor river. **But of course, the ostrich didn't know that.**”

Possible answer: The writer sets up the historical significance of the Glam tree to highlight the rich history of the area in Singapore. However, the bathetic line “But of course the ostrich didn't know that” suggests that not only are these aspects of history and culture completely meaningless to the ostrich, but they may also be deemed trivial and insignificant by other people as well.

“His nest soon took shape as an oval portal. He was meticulous; he enjoyed every detail; it was a masterpiece. **I am assuming all of these things, of course, I cannot delve into the mind of an ostrich. If one were able to do just that, I am sure this account would be very different.**”

Possible answer: The writer sets up the majestic aura of Ostrich 12B's nest construction and his skilful mastery, only to offer the anti-climactic self-aware reflection “I am assuming all of these things, of course, I cannot delve into the mind of an ostrich”. This use of bathos subverts the initially heartfelt and celebratory tone of Ostrich 12B's imagined nest construction, by calling out the impossibility of a human knowing how a bird feels and thinks.

3. Incongruity

The juxtaposition of two unrelated ideas, objects, persons or entities. It can also refer to something that is out of harmony, and inconsistent with expectations or surroundings. The humour is usually generated from the surprising or unexpected juxtaposition.

Question 3: On the final two pages of the original, the story ends with the juxtaposition of the “ostrichless story of [Khairul's] recovery” and the following image “Fig. 3: How I remember him” of Ostrich 12b. What is incongruous about closing the story these two ideas?



(Fig. 3: How I remember him.)

Possible answers: The effect of closing the story with the two incongruous points of Khairul's recovery story without Ostrich 12B and the narrator's own drawing of the bird can be seen as a surprising juxtaposition in terms of reinforcing just how poignantly insignificant Ostrich 12B's death is to the public at large.

On the one hand, the sheer lack of detail of Ostrich 12B in Khairul's story with Rosa is humorous because the death of Ostrich 12B continues to remain trivial and insignificant in the minds of those who had a direct role in causing it to escape and eventually be killed, even after the narrator's trouble of tracking him down by social media.

At the same time, the narrator's detailed sketch of Ostrich 12B with its careful shading and the caption "How I remember him" gives a sense of sorrow and sadness as the narrator clearly continues to commemorate Ostrich 12B in his mind.

4. Self-deprecating humour

When the speaker or character makes fun of himself or herself, the character is made vulnerable to the readers because their flaws or errors of judgement may be exposed to them. Nonetheless, it can also connect readers to characters if the point of the self-deprecating remark is relatable.

Question 4: Read the passage below.

- a. Identify the lines that reflect the presence of self-deprecating humour.**
- b. What do these lines of self-deprecation suggest about the narrator's reflection about Ostrich 12B's behaviour?**

"I have often thought about this moment during sleepless nights and stuttering MRT rides. Why did he regard them with distaste? Perhaps it was because pigeons were free, yet they chose to remain tied down and urbanised. I am sure an even more salient question emerged in his mind: why were they not wild and untethered? But then again I am no Professor Chatterjee. Perhaps this is simply my imagination running away with me."

Possible answers:

- a. The lines reflecting self-deprecating humour are “But then again I am no Professor Chatterjee. Perhaps this is simply my imagination running away with me.”
- b. In the last two lines of self-deprecation, the narrator makes himself vulnerable by admitting that he is no expert in the study of birds, unlike Professor Chatterjee. Moreover, his suggestion that “perhaps this is simply my imagination running away with me” suggests that he may be doubting his own human ideas of how birds interact with one another.

5. Hyperbole and Understatement

Hyperbole – also known as *exaggeration*, or *overstatement*. In short, to present something or someone as greater than it is for emphasis and effect, and often not to be taken literally.

Understatement – An expression that uses an obviously lesser emphasis than is expected, usually to downplay a situation or reaction, and often used in an ironic manner. The key is that the reader can understand the full extent of the actual situation and is aware of the ridiculous understatement at play.

Question 5. Read the following passage below.

- a. Identify lines and/or phrases that can be considered hyperbole. Explain why.
- b. Identify lines and/or phrases that can be considered understatements. Explain why.
- c. What could the author be highlighting with this contrasting use of hyperbole and understatement?

Ostrich 12B:

“Twelve days later, a medical report came back. The slew of tranquilisers had caused a surge of etorphine and cyclohexylamine to course through 12B’s bloodstream. It was a deadly concoction, a veterinary calamity. We had fired too quickly, too much, without thought. 12B’s heart had collapsed in twenty-two seconds.

The official reports were sent a month later after timelines had been affirmed. It was delivered to a select panel of government officials. It was dubbed “a series of anomalous accidents”. 2001 came and went.”

Possible answers:

- a. The line “the slew of tranquilisers had caused a surge of etorphine and cyclohexylamine to course through 12B’s bloodstream.” can be considered hyperbole because of the scientific jargon explaining the chemical reactions.

The phrases “deadly concoction” and “veterinary calamity” exaggerate the disastrous and brutal nature of killing Ostrich 12B.

The phrase “a series of anomalous accidents” is a form of understatement. It downplays

the killing of Ostrich 12B as something unintentional when it was clearly an act that could be controlled by the authorities.

The phrase “2001 came and went” can be considered an understatement. The short sentence suggests that there was indifference from society about this killing, and that this event only happened in passing and was easily forgotten.

- b. *The writer juxtaposes the use of hyperbole in the copy of the medical reports that he kept and the use of understatement in the official report’s statements to show how the responsibility for the violent death of Ostrich 12B was downplayed in public reports.*

On one hand, the hyperbole used in the medical report reflected just how excessive the use of force was on Ostrich 12B by the animal control team. The phrase “slew of tranquilisers” reflects the violent and uncontrollable attack by the team, and the polysyllabic chemical terms “etorphine and cyclohexylamine” also seem to exaggerate the scientific report, supported by the other hyperbolic phrases “deadly concoction” and “veterinary calamity”.

On the other hand, this responsibility of negligence and excessive use of force was not reflected in the official account, where it was reduced in an understatement to being “dubbed ‘a series of anomalous accidents’”. Here the use of understatement in official language serves to expose the shirking of responsibility and cover-up that was being put out to the public.

Moreover, the understatement in the short sentence “2001 came and went” further expresses the abrupt downplaying of the significance of this event, as if to erase it quickly from conscious memory.

[OPTIONAL] EXTENSION ACTIVITY: Parody in the Web Developer’s Design

You may have noticed that the web developers have chosen to create an “crime investigation” theme in the design of this microsite experience. This can be seen as a parody of the serious genre of crime investigations.

Question 6: How is the “crime investigation” theme in the microsite’s design a form of parody?

Possible answers:

- a. *Noticeboard with visual clues connected by string: The web developers parody the genre of crime investigation where detectives are trying to decipher the clues of a serious case. The web developers may be mimicking (or mocking) the exaggerated seriousness taken by the narrator in uncovering this trail of disconnected clues to piece the story of the crime together.*
- b. *The re-enactment of the various scenes by superimposing colourful mock-up images of Khairul, his girlfriend, Ostrich 12B, the lorry, passers-by, and the animation of the tranquiliser darts create a rather cartoonish effect which echoes the bizarre, strange and unusual nature of the story being investigated and reflected.*

ACTIVITY 2: Experiencing the Narrator and Ostrich 12B's perspective

"I am assuming all of these things, of course. I cannot delve into the mind of an ostrich. If one were able to do just that, I am sure this account would be very different."

In this story, the narrator often imagines the thoughts, feelings, and emotions of Ostrich 12B as it escaped from the van it was transported in, all the way to the fateful moment of its demise at the hands of the animal control team. It is important to note that our experience of Ostrich 12B's perspective is always coloured by the narrator, who is the one who attempts to imagine and reconstruct the truth of Ostrich 12B's last moments.

Question 1: From the Web Developer's Perspective

Having read the story on the microsite, how do you think the web developers have distinguished the point of view of the narrator and Ostrich 12B throughout the story?

Possible answers:

The web developers use changes in sound and the colour in Street View photos to distinguish between the narrator's and Ostrich 12B's point of view. The black and white Google Street View, coupled with the superimposed images represent the narrator's perspective, whereas the use of full colour and first-person perspective in Google Street View represents Ostrich 12B's perspective.

Optional: If you have the original printed text of the story, you can further consider how the web developers and the author distinguish between these two points of view.

Possible answers:

Compared to the web developer's distinctions, in the original story the narrator's voice primarily dominates the perspective of Ostrich 12B. Our imagination and perspective of Ostrich 12B is always filtered through that of the narrator.

Question 2: Narrator

After reading the story on the microsite, answer the following questions about the narrator:

- Who is the narrator?** Support your answer with evidence from the story.
- Why do you think the narrator wrote this story?** Support your response with at least two pieces of evidence.
- Pick two examples of the narrator's self-aware reflections on reconstructing this account of Ostrich 12B. What kind of impression is the narrator trying to create of himself to the reader?**

Tip: Pay attention to the narrator's personal commentary throughout his reimagining of Ostrich 12B's escape, and his own reflections about his role in its death and the aftermath.

Possible answers:

- The narrator was one of the officers deployed in the animal control team that shot down Ostrich 12B and eventually killed it.*

- b. *The narrator likely wrote this story to alleviate his guilt over being responsible for the death of Ostrich 12B.*

This can be seen in how he asserts that “I will never forget that scream”, given that “[t]hrough recessions, divorces and my lonely hours – it nestles in my brain.” This suggests that the narrator clearly has been traumatised and deeply disturbed over many years as a result of his and his teammates’ actions.

This is also seen in how he describes the way the event of Ostrich 12B’s death has continued to affect him— “lingered in me like a piece of tinder, igniting from time to time”. This imagery of a flammable object suggests how volatile and unpredictable the traumatic memory of the death is for the narrator.

The narrator likely wrote this story to create a sense of closure for himself with the truth of the death of Ostrich 12B.

This is because the lack of reporting and coverage of this incident has left him with a sense of unease, and he reasons that he is following up on it because “[p]erhaps it is to rid myself of the truth”. The fact that he writes at the start that “It is only now, nearly two decades later, that I understand the intricacies of it”, suggests that it was necessary for him to resolve the loose ends and complexities of the story for himself.

Teachers can accept other reasonable answers.

- c. *The narrator seems to be creating the impression to the reader that he was not entirely responsible for the death of Ostrich 12B, and that he was merely following instructions. This can be seen when he explains how he “was too slow” compared to his teammates who already “took aim” at Ostrich 12B when it advanced upon them. The narrator may be implying that he was not instinctively violent as all his other teammates were, and thereby less culpable. Moreover, he describes how he only joined in “following orders and split decisions”, suggesting that he had no control over his part to play in the death of Ostrich 12B.*

Moreover, the narrator appears to be creating the impression to the reader that he was a kind, tender and thoughtful person despite being part of the team that killed Ostrich 12B. This is seen in how he describes the way he “wrapped his body in a powder blue tarpaulin that matched the colour of his eyes”. Here, his attentiveness in giving Ostrich 12B the due care of its corpse suggests that he wanted to show how he was gentle, caring and good natured despite his guilt by association in the team that killed Ostrich 12B.

Other examples:

“This is all taken from their interview transcripts. I don’t think they are the lying type.”

→ The narrator might be trying to present himself as someone who can reliably read the intentions of others.

“I am inclined to think that Khairul lifted his eyes from the busy road. One can infer that he needed to get closer, to speak to her, to make things right.”

→ The narrator might be trying to present himself as someone sympathetic to Khairul’s relationship difficulties, to help explain how his negligence may be because of legitimate reasons.

Teachers can accept other reasonable answers.

Question 3: Ostrich 12B

After reading the story on the microsite, answer the following questions about Ostrich 12B:

- a. **How do your feelings for Ostrich 12B change over the course of the story? Explain why you feel that way.** Offer at least two to three points and support them with evidence.

Possible answers:

- a. *I feel sympathetic and compassionate towards Ostrich 12B because it was likely extremely frightened and disoriented in a foreign land. As the narrator imagines, Ostrich 12B would have noticed that Kampong Glam had “no endless savannah, no rustling trees, and no slithering creatures twining through leaves between his toes.” The complete incongruity of the wild ostrich being set free in an urban environment would have left it feeling bewildered and confused, which makes me feel sympathetic for Ostrich 12B who had no control over this situation.*
- b. *As he moves through Kampong Glam (albeit in the narrator’s imagined reconstruction of its experience), I feel a sense of sorrow and anguish when I read about the ostrich peering at its own reflection in a shophouse’s window. The narrator’s speculation that the ostrich may have been “looking for the African savannah imprinted upon his mind” makes me feel sorrow for the ostrich would have been incredibly lost in the urban world of Singapore.*
- c. *I feel indignant at Ostrich 12B’s death caused by the animal control team. It/He was simply minding its/his own business “curled up in his nest... croon[ing] softly, content” when it was being provoked and attacked by the animal control team. Ostrich 12B was simply an innocent creature that was in a very unfortunate circumstance not of its/his own control, and its/his defensive response of “[lunging]” forward when feeling threatened was only natural, and the fact that it/he was killed in its/his own nest—the very place where it/he created to feel a sense of safety and security—makes me feel indignant on behalf of Ostrich 12B.*

Teachers can accept other reasonable answers.