

## Perspective of Reality

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### INTRODUCTION

Understanding someone's perspective is a lesson that all of our students need to learn. So much misunderstanding results from people's different points of view. So many times I have told a student that he or she is behaving disrespectfully, and what I hear from him or her is something like: "I was just having fun." I need to explain to the student the affect of his or her behavior on me. Many do not realize that their perspective is not the only perspective.

Perspective is also important when we determine what is real and true. What we think is true depends a great deal on who we are: our traditions and culture. The conflict between the West and the Muslim world is a problem of perspective. The West perceives a cartoon depicting the Prophet Mohammed wearing a turban shaped like a bomb as free expression, expressing the view that Islam is a violent religion or Islam is being perverted into a violent religion. From the perspective of Muslims, the cartoon vilifies the Prophet Mohammed as someone who is not a holy prophet but a fraud who teaches barbarity.

Perspective is connected to probability because so often our conclusions are completely incongruous with the facts. People commonly believe that they have a lucky number; that if they move the prompt around the computer screen, the computer will run faster; that exposure to cold or rain causes colds; or that a full moon causes disruptive behavior. For the past several years doctors and nutritionists have taught us that a low-fat diet would lessen the chance of heart disease and cancer, but a study finds that a people on a low-fat diet have the same rate of cancer and heart disease as people on a non-regulated diet (Kolata). Probability is the touchstone that pulls us out of our perspective and reveals the true world to us.

The power of our perspective is poignantly shown in Gabriel García Márquez's *Of Love and Other Demons*, a novel that shows that we cannot be sure of the truth because our conception of the truth is twisted by our perspective. In this curriculum unit, the students will read, study, and write about *Of Love and Other Demons*, focusing on the perspective of the characters and how it forms their conception of the truth.

At the conclusion of this unit, the students will learn that much of what we believe is a matter of perspective not of fact. Just as probability dissects fact from perspective, the students, as readers, are dissecting fact from perspective in the novel. However, they must be aware that just as probability statistics are subject to interpretation, their view of the novel is an interpretation based on their perspective.

### A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHOR

Gabriel José García Márquez was born in Aracataca, a town in northern Colombia, on March 6, 1928, and was raised by his poor, struggling grandparents. He was a quiet, shy boy who listened more than talked. As he grew up, he heard war stories from his grandfather, a former colonel who fought in Colombia's civil war, and tales of supernatural people from his grandmother. His grandparents were the primary influence on his literary career.

His grandfather died when he was eight years old, and because his grandmother was going blind, he went to live with his parents in Sucre, where his father was working as a pharmacist. His parents sent him to a boarding school in Barranquilla, a port city at the mouth of the Magdalena River. His classmates remember him as a shy boy who wrote poems and drew cartoons. Because he was so serious and non-athletic, he was nicknamed "the Old Man" by his classmates. When he was twelve, he won a scholarship to a secondary school for gifted students, run by Jesuits. His studies deeply engaged him, and during the evenings he read books aloud to his classmates in the dormitory. Because he had such a great love for literature, his classmate expected him to be a writer; however, after he graduated, he enrolled in the Universidad Nacional in Bogotá as a law student. At this time he met a wondrous thirteen-year-old girl named Mercedes Barcha Pardo. Later, Márquez commented that she was "the most interesting person" he had ever met (qtd. in "Gabriel García Márquez"). Before entering the university, he proposed to her. They agreed to wait until he finished school. They were not married until fourteen years later.

Not interested in law, García Márquez skipped classes and did not study. Instead, he read poetry and wandered around Bogotá. One day a friend gave him a copy of Franz Kafka's *The Metamorphosis*, a book which amazed him. Kafka's work made him aware that literature could be very imaginative, with events seemingly beyond this world. Later he explained that Kafka's voice was similar to his grandmothers: they would tell of the "wildest things with a completely natural tone of voice" (qtd. in "Gabriel García Márquez").

García Márquez decided to become a writer. He avidly read and wrote. To his surprise, a newspaper published his first story, "The Third Resignation." García Márquez published ten more stories over the next few years. Later, he wrote a daily column for *El Universal*, a Cartagenan newspaper. By 1950, though, he gave up his study of the law, and devoted himself to writing. Faulkner and Sophocles became his two biggest influences. He admired how Faulkner narrated his childhood into a mythical past in a made up town and county and how Sophocles portrayed the abuses of power. García Márquez realized that he had to change his style and write in a way that incorporated Faulkner's and Sophocles' achievements. At first, publishers turned away his work, but over the course of time, they published some of his novels, but they were not successful. He had to support himself and his wife as a newspaper columnist. He felt like a failure as a writer.

García Márquez was restless and frustrated. All that he wrote seemed artificial to him. He felt that within his stories were eager to burst forth, but he could not find the right perspective, tone, and voice. While living in Mexico, in January of 1965, he took his family on a vacation to Acapulco, and while driving he was struck with inspiration. Later he wrote, "All of a sudden -- I don't know why -- I had this illumination on how to write the book... I had it so completely formed, that right there I could have dictated the first chapter word by word to a typist" (qtd. in "Gabriel García Márquez"). In another article, García Márquez explained:

"The tone that I eventually used . . . was based on the way my grandmother used to tell stories. She told things that sounded supernatural and fantastic, but she told them with complete naturalness.... What was most important was the expression she had on her face. She did not change her expression at all when telling her stories and everyone was surprised. In previous attempts to write, I tried to tell the story without believing in it. I discovered that what I had to do was believe in them myself and write them with the same expression with which my grandmother told them." (qtd. in "Gabriel García Márquez")

For the next eighteen months he wrote in a fury, writing thirteen hundred pages of a novel whose title came to him as he composed its final pages: *One Hundred Years of Solitude* was published in

June 1967, and within a week all 8000 copies were gone. It went on to sell half a million copies within three years. It was translated into over two dozen languages.

Garcia Márquez went on to write other novels that have been well received: *Love in the Time of Cholera*, *The General in his Labyrinth*, and *Strange Pilgrims*. In 1982 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature. He has become one of the most prominent writers of our time.

Garcia Márquez struggled for many years trying to find the right perspective to tell his tales. All of us struggle trying to find the right perspective. When we realize that what we believe is affected by our perspective, we come to see the world more clearly. Just as Garcia Márquez used perspective to create fiction, all of us use perspective to create a fiction of our world.

## A SYNOPSIS OF THE NOVEL

*Note: All parenthetical references in this section are from Of Love and Other Demons*

On the first Sunday in December in a little Colombia town during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a twelve year old girl is bitten by a dog while she is shopping with her maid in the market. Dog bites were common in the town and the maid is not concerned. However, a few days later the maid sees the “carcass of a dog that had been hung from an almond tree to let everyone know it had died of rabies. One glance was all she needed to recognize the blaze on the forehead and the ash-grey coat of the dog that had bitten Sierva María” (Garcia Márquez 14). About a month later an Indian woman tells Sierva María’s father that they are “threatened by a plague of rabies” (15). She connects it to the total eclipse of the sun that would occur in two months, for eclipses and comets foretell plagues. She tells Sierva María’s father that two of those people bitten by the dog in December were “spirited away by their people to try to cure them with magic” (15), and a third had died of rabies two weeks after the dog bit Sierva María. She told him that a fourth victim that had not been bitten but “only spattered by the dog’s spittle” (15) was dying in the hospital. Based on this information, it was concluded that Sierva María was bitten by a rapid dog and that rabies was incubating in her. What was not considered was that during the week before the Sunday that Sierva María was bitten, many African slaves died of a mysterious disease on a ship in the port and their bodies were thrown in the water to conceal the disease so that the others could be sold at a good price. The bodies had washed ashore. According to the narrator, “it was verified that the cause of death was food poisoning” (7); however, earlier, Garcia Márquez makes it apparent that the narrator is not to be trusted, for he is affected by perspective, too. It is possible and, perhaps, likely that the one that died a week after that first Sunday in December contracted the disease that infected the Africans. The other two people could have been sick with any disease. The Indian woman and others in the town did not study the situation to see how many people who were not bitten by the dog were sick. Nor did they know for sure that the dog hanging on the almond tree was the same dog that bit Sierva María and the three others. Undoubtedly, there were several dogs with an ash-gray coat and a white blaze on its forehead.

With this information, many assume that Sierva María had rabies. Others, such as the bishop and the rector of the convent in the town, see rabies as one of the signs of the devil. So Sierva María is torturously treated for rabies and then torturously exorcised of demons. Meanwhile, Sierva María exhibits no symptoms of rabies or demonic possession. Her episodes of rage are caused by the raucous treatment she receives from the people treating her for rabies and demonic possession.

This bishop assigns a young priest, Father Cayetano Delaura to oversee Sierva María’s case. He is a well-read man and understands the faulty conclusions and superstitions surrounding Sierva María. He tells the bishops, "With all due respect, Father... I do not believe the child is possessed... I believe she is only terrified" (90). Further, he falls in love with Sierva María. He tells her, “For you I was born, for you do I have life, for you do I have life, for you will I die, for

you am I now dying" (90). The questions he faces is standing up for Sierva María, which means standing up for the truth, or submitting to the bishop's authority and accepting the ignorant persecution of Sierva María and the truth. Sierva Maria begs him to take her out of the convent but he refuses and says, "The Bishop is a good and wise man" (131). He leaves her in the convent and when he comes back the next day, he cannot get in the convent because the passage is closed. Sierva Maria thinks that Father Delaura has abandoned her. Sierva Maria ends up dying in the convent because of torture and heartbreak. Father Delaura lives the rest of his life with a broken heart, in anguish over the loss of Sierva Maria.

## **CONDITIONAL PROBABILITY AND THE NOVEL**

Conditional probability refers to the relationship of two events. Conditional probability is the probability of some event  $A$ , given the occurrence of some other event  $B$ . Conditional probability is written  $P(A|B)$ , and is read "the probability of  $A$ , given  $B$ " (Conditional Probability). *Of Love and Other Demons* is connected with probability in a psychological way. People see an effect and they come up with an explanation that they think is certain, but their explanation is not based on study and data. To their mind it seems logical and convincing. In *Of Love and Other Demons*, people were convinced that some people died because a rapid dog bit them. In the same way, people were sure that the gray dog that bit Sierva Maria was the same dog that had rabies. No account of the number of gray dogs in the town was done. A question we would ask is: What is the probability that the gray dog that bit Sierva María was the same dog that had rabies? Another good question is: How certain are we that this certain dog had rabies?

Another psychological phenomenon is that people expect an outcome based on their belief. Some people fully believed that Sierva María had rabies because she was bitten by that particular dog; therefore, she was exhibiting signs of someone who had rabies. However, her peculiar behavior could be explained by the negligence of her parents. Nobody did a test on Sierva María, and the doctor of the town stated that if Sierva María was bitten by a dog, it does not necessarily follow that she has rabies.

The bishop and the nuns believed that rabies was the work of the devil, so they thought Sierva María was possessed. The bishop even admits, "We still lack definitive proof, but the poor creature is possessed by the demon" (García Márquez 102). Any event that deemed peculiar was, in their view, caused by the demonically possessed Sierva María. When, for example, a scaffold collapsed, killing a bricklayer and injuring seven other workers, they attributed it to Sierva Maria. The nuns proceeded to exorcise the demons out of Sierva María, but what they were doing was torturing her and driving her mad. They hosed her down, cut off all her hair, poured urine down her throat, and confined her in a straitjacket. Their conclusions were not based on an examination of Sierva María. It was based on the belief that she had rabies and, therefore, was possessed by demons.

The proper way to understand Sierva María's condition was to examine her. This is what Father Cayetana Delaura did, and he soon realized nothing was wrong with her. However, he lacked the courage to oppose his bishop. Thus Sierva María was doomed.

## **INTERPRETATION OF THE NOVEL**

The students will focus on the conflict between what is accepted as fact in the minds of the characters versus what is actually true. Sierva Maria symbolizes nature and what is real. The narrator often compares her to things in nature. She can "agitate the birds and animals when she imitated their voices" (García Márquez 12). Her hair has never been cut and would have interfered with her walking if they had not braided it into loops every day (12). She has begun to "blossom" as if she were a cherry tree. She has "radiant hair" as if it was burned by the sun (12). Her mother hangs a "cowbell around her wrist so she would not lose track of her in the shadows

of the house” (12). She is like a natural human being untouched by civilization. She identifies with the people of Africa. She spends most of her childhood living with the African slaves and is able to sing in various languages of Africa.

Every character has a distinct view of Sierva Maria, just as each of us has a distinct view of reality and truth. Even the narrator’s account is affected by his perspective. We learn in the preface that he cannot be trusted. He tells a story of when he was a newspaper reporter sent to cover the destruction of a convent for the construction of a hotel. However, records indicate that “in the spring of this year, the hotel was still on the drawing board” (Dinnage). The narrator then explained how the dead corpse found in the crypts had hair that measured twenty-two meters long. Hair cannot grow twenty-two meters from a dead corpse. The narrator’s view of Sierva María is affected by his personality just as the character’s view of Sierva María is affected by their personality.

Bernada, Sierva Maria mother, is addicted to cacao and sex and, as a result, she is most unaware of Sierva Maria, like a drug and sex addict is unaware of reality and truth. Sierva Maria walks around, and Bernada does not hear her. She ties a cowbell around Sierva Maria so she can know she is coming, and when she hears racket coming from the slave quarters, she is surprised to hear that they are celebrating Sierva Maria’s birthday. Though she is Sierva Maria’s mother, she cannot stand to be around Sierva Maria, like an addict cannot stand reality. She “hated [Sierva Maria] from the moment she nursed her” (García Márquez 42).

The Marquis is lazy and uncaring about Sierva Maria. He knows little about her and does not care to know her. When hearing racket from the slave quarters, he, like Sierva Maria’s mother, is surprised when he is told that they are celebrating Sierva Maria’s birthday. After she is bitten by the dog, he feels guilty about how he has neglected her and makes some attempts to take care of her, but he loses interest, just as a lazy person feels guilty about the pointless life he is living and makes some futile attempts to live in a more worthwhile way.

The Bishop especially demonstrates the tendency of human beings to believe the improbable because of their belief system. The bishop is convinced that Sierva Maria is possessed by demons. When Father DeLaura points out that people think Sierva Maria has rabies, the bishop says that “one of the demon’s numerous deceptions is to take on the appearance of a foul disease in order to enter an innocent body” (García Márquez 55). His perspective is twisted by Medieval Catholicism, meaning he believes demons interact with nature and take possession of people. He tells the Marquis to take Sierva Maria to the convent, where they persecute her. In the same way, the Catholic Church, during periods of its history, persecuted people who discovered and revealed truths about nature.

The nuns, too, believe the improbable. Any occurrence they consider peculiar is attributed to the demonic powers of Sierva Maria. When they saw birds migrating the wrong way, they believed Sierva Maria’s powers caused this. When a scaffold collapsed, the said Sierva Maria’s demon caused it. The nuns see the world through the glass of their beliefs in the devil and his corruption of nature. They are blinded to the actual cause of events.

Abrenuncio, the doctor, sees the world completely scientifically. He tells Father Delaura, “The fact is that some people contract rabies and others do not” (García Márquez 20). He means that even though a dog with rabies bit Sierva Maria, there was some chance that she did not catch rabies. He knew that nothing was wrong with Sierva Maria because he states, “Good health was plain to see, eyes clear-sighted, her feet calm, her hands adroit” (30). Although he knows there is nothing wrong with the child, he does nothing to save Sierva Maria from the nuns and the bishop. Additionally he states, “I think that killing her would have been more Christian than burying her alive” (72). He avidly analyzes nature and comes to reasonable conclusions using the scientific

method, and though his view of reality is not twisted by dogma, his inclination to observe and analyze predisposes him from actively involving himself in the state of affairs.

Father Cayetano Delaura is an enlightened person, who reads a lot. His home was “the library, where he spent as many fourteen hours a day working and reading” (García Márquez 74), and he “knew life through books” (78). He collects information, closely observes the patient, investigates the accusations and, using reason, and comes to the conclusion that there is nothing wrong with Sierva Maria. In probability terminology, Father Cayetano Delaura analyzes the data and makes the most highly probable conclusion: nothing is wrong with Sierva Maria. He tells his the bishop his findings, but when the bishops insists that Sierva Maria is possessed, Father Delaura backs down.

While the students read about Father Delaura’s conflict with the bishop, I will have them research Galileo on the Internet and compare the two people. Both men made discoveries that were unacceptable to Church authorities, felt intimidated by the Church authorities, and submitted to the Church authorities despite the truth of their discoveries. We will further discuss this in light of Sierva Maria’s symbolizing nature. Galileo was studying nature just as Father Delaura was studying Sierva Maria. Galileo loved nature, just as Father Delaura falls in love with Sierva Maria, a symbol of nature. Galileo’s backing down in the face of Church authorities damaged the progress of science; Father Delaura’s backing down in the face of the bishop destroyed Sierva Maria.

Father Delaura’s love for Sierva Maria, in symbolic language, reflects the love Father Delaura has for nature and truth. Throughout his life he has sought knowledge about the universe, and done so secretly. In the same way, he secretly sneaks into Sierva Maria’s cell in the convent to be with her. In books are truths about the world; truths which the Medieval church authorities refused to accept because it overthrew their present world view—a Ptolemaic and Aristotelian world in which the earth is the center of the cosmos and every creature was created with a fixed nature. This knowledge is forbidden by church authorities in their ignorance; in the same way, Sierva Maria is forbidden to Father Delaura because the bishop in his ignorance believes she is possessed by a demon.

Another interesting motif about Father Delaura is that he becomes blind in one eye when he looks at an eclipse. The sun and sunlight symbolize knowledge. In Plato’s allegory of the cave, the cave dweller receives enlightenment when he leaves the cave and sees the sun. The eclipsing sun, therefore, symbolizes knowledge being covered up, which is what is happening with Sierva Maria in this novel. Her true self is being covered up by people’s perspective. The eye symbolizes our ability to perceive and understand. Father Delaura’s eye being covered by the patch is a symbol of him covering up the truth about Sierva Maria; he will not proclaim her innocent and normal. He is afraid of the bishop. Later, after he has expressed his love to Sierva Maria, she, in a tender moment, removes the patch and all is well with the eye. Father Delaura, in these private moments with Sierva Maria, expresses his love for her, and, as a result, his concealing the truth because of his dedication to the Church, symbolized by his patch, is removed. Sierva Maria, who symbolizes reality and truth, reveals the truth to him. He fully understands that she is not possessed and he loves her—symbolically saying that he loves truth.

However, Father Delaura lacks the courage to stand up for Sierva Maria. When she asks him to save her from the bishop and nuns, he expresses devotion to the bishop. The next day, his secret passage is closed up, and later when he enters the convent, he cannot find her. By refusing to help Sierva Maria, Father Delaura sentenced himself to ignorance. He never sees Sierva Maria again. By accepting the authority of the ignorant bishop, he closed himself off from nature and truth. As a result, Sierva Maria is destroyed, tortured to death, and he is destroyed, too. When we let ignorance reign, we are destroyed with truth.

*Of Love and Other Demons* may seem very critical of the Catholic Church, so a teacher should stave any indignation by first holding a discussion about some misbehavior of priests as well as ministers of other churches. The discussion should include Islam and the common view that it is a “terrorist religion.” The discussion should proceed to examine if a church or religion is itself at fault or corrupt when some of its officials act immorally. The teacher should steer the conversation to the following point: a religion or church may have some highly moral, enlightening, and beautiful teachings, but officials of a religion can get in the way of these teachings, imposing their personal views as if they are God’s. As a Catholic priest told me once: God works through the Catholic Church but sometimes human beings get in the way.

### **READING THE NOVEL**

The students will read the novel outside of class. They will keep a journal about their reading. The journal entries will pertain to a specific amount of assigned pages. At periodic times, I will collect the journals and make comments about what they wrote. This will be done in short intervals because it is human nature to procrastinate and then try to do a short cut. Therefore, every two or three days I will collect the journals.

The comments will deal with the content. Receiving comments from a teacher about what they wrote is very encouraging to students. It makes them feel that what they are writing is meaningful; that it is not just something they must do to get a grade. They feel flattered that a respected adult thought enough of their writing to make comments, and when they add to their journal, they will write more painstakingly because they are doing it to receive a reaction from the teacher; the writing has become real—they are communicating their thoughts.

Further, the students will highlight passages that deal with the theme: our individual perspective twists our view of truth. During class, the teacher will lead discussion of the assigned readings. One aspect that will be covered is which passages deal with the theme.

Another way we will deal with the assigned readings is to have individual students lead discussion about the assigned pages. Some students are quite confident and adept at standing in front of the class. Others are reserved. Therefore, instead of assigning students to do this, I will make it voluntary. Those who do not want to lead a discussion can make up the grade by writing a two-page response to an assigned reading.

During class we will discuss the section of the novel that they read. We will investigate the figurative meaning of the characters and events and highlight and notate. I will assign pages to individual students, and they will present that page to the class, highlighting the important passages and leading discussion. After each student presents his or her page, I will amplify what was said and discussed and point out omitted passages for notation. Our main focus will be on the motif of the influence of people’s perspectives on their perception of truth.

During discussions, I will direct our attention to applying the theme of individual perspective to our nonfiction world and not understanding that we all have a distinct perspective leads to conflicts. In today’s environment (2006), a good example of conflicting perspectives is the Western perspective and the Middle East perspective. People in the West think people in the Middle East are violently crazy. Those in the Middle East think people in the West are depraved and domineering. In our school, conflicts result from distinct perspectives. For example, students often fight because one student interprets another’s comment as a personal affront, even though the person making the comment did not mean it that way.

### **LITERARY ANALYSIS PAPER**

After completing the novel, the students will write a paper that analyzes *Of Love and Other Demons*’ depiction of the theme: our individual perspective twists our view of truth.

During the reading, the students will highlight and notate passages that deal with this theme. We will use these notations to create an outline of our paper. I will put the students in groups and give them an incomplete sketch of the outline and have them complete it. This way they will learn what the outline will look like, and they will be forced to consider and search for what will go into the outline. We will review the outline and the format of the paper. Details of this lesson are in the lesson plan section.

The students will go to the computer lab and use EBSCO to find at least three articles on *Of Love and Other Demons*. They will write down the bibliographic information in the proper MLA format. I will provide a sheet that explains this. During our first day in the computer lab, they will compose the bibliography for the paper. I will print the articles and make copies for the entire class. I have them do the bibliography first because I have found that after they have completed the paper they are so tired of it, they rush through the bibliography, doing an inadequate job.

Using the notated text and the outline, the students will compose the paper in the computer lab. I will roam around, giving assistance. Writing a paper for many of them is difficult because they are used to answering questions, not composing a coherent explanation of several pages that uses documentation.

We will spend about three class periods composing the paper in the computer lab, and then the students will have to finish the paper on their own. I prefer they begin the paper in class, so I can be sure they are heading in the right direction. My students are not experienced in composing papers, and most do not have someone at home who can help them. Another problem is less than half of my students have computers at home. Those that do not can come before and after school or they can go to the library.

### GRADING RUBRIC FOR THE PAPER

The students will be given a grade for each section of the paper based on the criteria of the rubric. Breaking down the grades like this better informs the students what exactly was good and not so good about their paper. Further, in some school districts, like mine, teachers are required to have a minimum number of grades during the grading cycle. Since reading and analyzing *Of Love and Other Demons* and writing about it is a long project, grading the paper this way will provide a sufficient number of grades.

Criteria	1	2	3	4
Introduction	Incoherent and incomplete	Coherent but lacking depth	Coherent and developed but lacking eloquence	Coherent, in depth, and eloquent.
Thesis elaborates the theme of the novel	Different theme than one elaborated in the paper	Incoherent and incomplete	Coherent but lacking depth	Coherent, in depth, and eloquent.
Elaboration about the narrator	Incoherent and incomplete	Coherent but lacking depth	Coherent and developed but lacking eloquence	Coherent, in depth, and eloquent
Elaboration about Sierva Maria	Incoherent and incomplete	Coherent but lacking depth	Coherent and developed but lacking eloquence	Coherent, in depth, and eloquent



<b>Criteria</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
Elaboration about the Marquis	Incoherent and incomplete	Coherent but lacking depth	Coherent and developed but lacking eloquence	Coherent, in depth, and eloquent
Elaboration about Bernarda	Incoherent and incomplete	Coherent but lacking depth	Coherent and developed but lacking eloquence	Coherent, in depth, and eloquent
Elaboration about the Bishop	Incoherent and incomplete	Coherent but lacking depth	Coherent and developed but lacking eloquence	Coherent, in depth, and eloquent
Elaboration about Nuns	Incoherent and incomplete	Coherent but lacking depth	Coherent and developed but lacking eloquence	Coherent, in depth, and eloquent
Elaboration about Abrenuncio	Incoherent and incomplete	Coherent but lacking depth	Coherent and developed but lacking eloquence	Coherent, in depth, and eloquent
Elaboration about Father Cayetano Delaura	Incoherent and incomplete	Coherent but lacking depth	Coherent and developed but lacking eloquence	Coherent, in depth, and eloquent
Commentary about the theme	Incoherent and incomplete	Coherent but lacking depth	Coherent and developed but lacking eloquence	Coherent, in depth, and eloquent
Closing	Not connected to the paper	Incomplete and incoherent	Coherent but lacking eloquence	Coherent and eloquent

## LESSON PLANS

### Lesson 1: Discussing the Introduction

The central point I want bring up about the Introduction is that it seems like a factual account of how García Márquez came up with the idea of writing this novel when actually we cannot be sure. Some points do not correspond with facts and others do not seem likely.

The following will be the questions I will raise:

- A. What kind of writing style is the Induction?  
*Nonfiction prose*
- B. What does García Márquez say that makes it seem like these were actual events?  
*The date, he was a reporter given an assignment—reporters report actual events, the detail in which he describes*
- C. What does García Márquez say that cast doubt on these events being actual?  
*The extraordinary length of the corpse's hair*

D. What clue does García Márquez give us that he is “pulling our leg?”

*He tells us of the time when his grandmother told him a legend of a twelve-year-old girl who had hair that trailed behind her like a bridal train. Like his grandmother, Márquez is telling us a magical story.*

At this point I will explain *magical realism* and have the students read an article from *Wikipedia* ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magical\\_realism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magical_realism)).

To demonstrate that García Márquez cannot be trusted we will read and discuss Rosemary Dinnage’s “Melting into Air.” In this article the author points out that some of the details in the introduction do correspond to the facts, in particular the date, the first words of the introduction.

The point I want my students to understand is that the author cannot be trusted, and actually none of us can be completely trusted when we tell a story. Each of us has a distinct perspective, which is influenced by our environment and our personality.

This discussion leads us into one of the central themes of the novel: Each of us perceives the world in a distinct way. What we perceive is true, may not be true.

This lesson will probably consume two class periods of 50 minutes.

## **Lesson 2: Creating a Outline for the Literary Analysis Paper**

Teacher will lead the class in sketching an outline that resembles the following:

- I. Introduction
  - A. *Of Love and Other Demons* focuses on the truth that each person has his or unique perspective
- II. Theme: Our perspective of truth is clouded by our experiences, culture, beliefs, and attitudes
- III. Body
  - A. Narrator’s point of view
    1. Preface: story of finding corpse is untrue—memory is faulty
      - a) Hair growing so long is not possible
- IV. Sierva Maria
  - A. Represents reality and truth
  - B. Associated with nature
  - C. Each person has a distinct point of view about her, just as we each have a distinct point of view of what is real and true
- V. Bernarda: Perspective controlled by her addictions
  - A. Sensuality
  - B. Cacao
  - C. Pays hardly any attention to Sierva Maria
- VI. Marquis: Perspective obscured by his slothfulness
  - A. Unaware of Sierva Maria
  - B. Inattentive to her
- VII. Bishop: Perspective blinded by his Medieval Catholic beliefs
  - A. Convinced Sierva Maria is possessed by a demon
- VIII. Nuns: Perspective clouded by their obsession with demonic possession

- A. Persecute Sierva Maria because they think she is possessed
- B. Drive Sierva Maria to madness and death
- IX. Abrenuncio: Perspective guided by his insensitive rationalism
  - A. Does nothing to save Sierva Maria
  - B. Understands that human perspective clouds the truth but has not empathy for the victims that are persecuted by the ignorance of others
- X. Cayetano Delaura: Torn between traditional dogma and the truth
  - A. Loves Sierva Maria but will not break his connection with the Church to give himself to her
  - B. He loses Sierva Maria and lives the rest of his life in misery
  - C. Knows what is true but cannot oppose tradition and authority to stand up for the truth.
- XI. Commentary about the theme
- XII. Closing: Recap the theme in the novel.

### **Lesson 3: Writing the Literary Analysis Paper**

The objective for this lesson is the following: In a coherent, fluid, and in depth narrative, students will introduce the novel and its theme, demonstrate the theme by analyzing characters, narrating quotes, paraphrasing, and synthesizing the information, and close by reiterating and explicating the theme. Students will follow the principles of grammar and the MLA method.

The students will write in the computer lab. The first part of the paper that will be composed is the bibliography. I have created a poster on bulletin board paper that demonstrates how to write the citations for books, journal articles, and web sites. Students will follow the model. When they have finished, they will alpha sort the list.

On the board, I will demonstrate how to head the paper in the MLA method. The students will follow the model. Then they will begin writing their paper, using the outline. I will circulate and give assistance.

We will send three 50 minute classes and one 90 minute class in the computer lab writing the paper. After the four days, the students must finish the paper either at home, at the library, or before or after school.

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