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# The Epitome /iˈpitəmi/

Academy of Language Studies, UiTM Kedah Branch

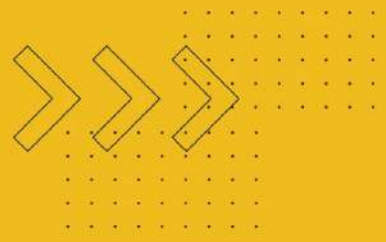
Unleash the epitome  
of creative writers

Volume 2 Issue 6

2026

*The*  
**Epitome**  
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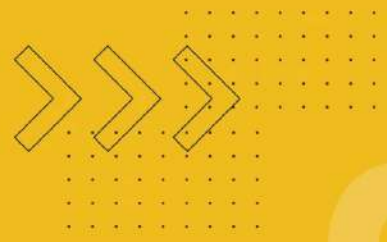
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# Synopsis

The Academy of Language Studies at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) is thrilled to unveil the vibrant sixth edition of its e-magazine, The Epitome. This publication celebrates our passionate commitment and unwavering dedication to the art and craft of language and literature.

THE EPITOME emerges as a dynamic platform for a community of writers, educators, scholars, poets, and researchers, all eager to share their unique perspectives, breakthroughs, wisdom, and tales. This edition showcases a mix of creative writing genres, from the dramatic twists of Playwriting to the introspective depths of Personal Essays, including Short Stories, Songs, Speeches, Memoirs, Literary Journalism, Humorous Writing, Lyric Essays, and Innovative Essays. With a rich tapestry of voices, presenting and embracing works in English, Bahasa Melayu, Mandarin, and Arabic, each adding its own uniqueness to the realm of language and literature.

Synopsis



*The*  
**Epitome**  
/i'pitəmi/

# Preface

**Puan Robekhah Harun**  
Acting Head of Faculty  
Academy of Language Studies  
UiTM Kedah Branch

Welcome to Epitome, the 6<sup>th</sup> Issue. Epitome is the platform where writers transformed moments into meaning and emotions into language, offering readers a mirror in which they may recognize parts of themselves. The theme for this publication is Stories That Stay - A timeless collection of powerful narratives – memories, questions, friendships, losses, and life-altering choices.

Stories That Stay is a quiet yet powerful reminder that the most enduring narratives are often born from moments of reflection rather than spectacle. The stories collected within this bulletin encourages readers to pause, to listen, and to engage with experiences that linger long after the final page is turned.

The writers have approached their work with sincerity and depth, transforming personal moments into shared understanding. In doing so, they remind us that stories do not end on the page; they continue within the reader, shaping thought, emotion, and perspective.

I extend our heartfelt congratulations to the editorial team and all the contributors for bringing Stories That Stay to life. Your dedication, creativity, and thoughtful curation have resulted in a body of work that resonates with sincerity and depth. May this publication serve not as an endpoint, but as a beginning. Continue to write, to publish, and to trust in the power of your voices. The world needs stories like these – stories that stay.

May Epitome serve as both recognition and encouragement for writers to continue to write with honesty, to publish with purpose, and to trust that your words matter. In a world that often moves too quickly, your willingness to slow down and tell stories that endure is invaluable.





# Editor's note

Assalamualaikum and warmest greetings,

Dear gentle readers,

Alhamdulillah, by the grace of Allah SWT, we are delighted to present the 6th issue of our e-magazine, centered on the theme "Stories That Stay." These are not just stories – they are living reminiscences, deepest questions, treasured friendships, deep losses, and life-changing choices that remain with us long after the moment has passed.

Every narrative in this issue carries a spark – a reminder that our journeys are written with wisdom, by the One who knows us best. Some stories teach, some heal, and others strengthen us when we feel we cannot go on. May these pages offer you reflection, comfort, and renewed strength, Insha-Allah.

As the Chief Editor, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all the contributors who poured their hearts into their writing, and to you – our beloved readers – for your continuous support. May Allah bless your path as you read, reflect, and grow through these timeless stories.

Happy reading, and may your heart find what it needs.

**With love and gratitude,  
Hajah Razanawati Nordin  
Chief Editor**



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# A Room OF QUESTIONS

**Mimi Sofiah Ahmad Mustafa**

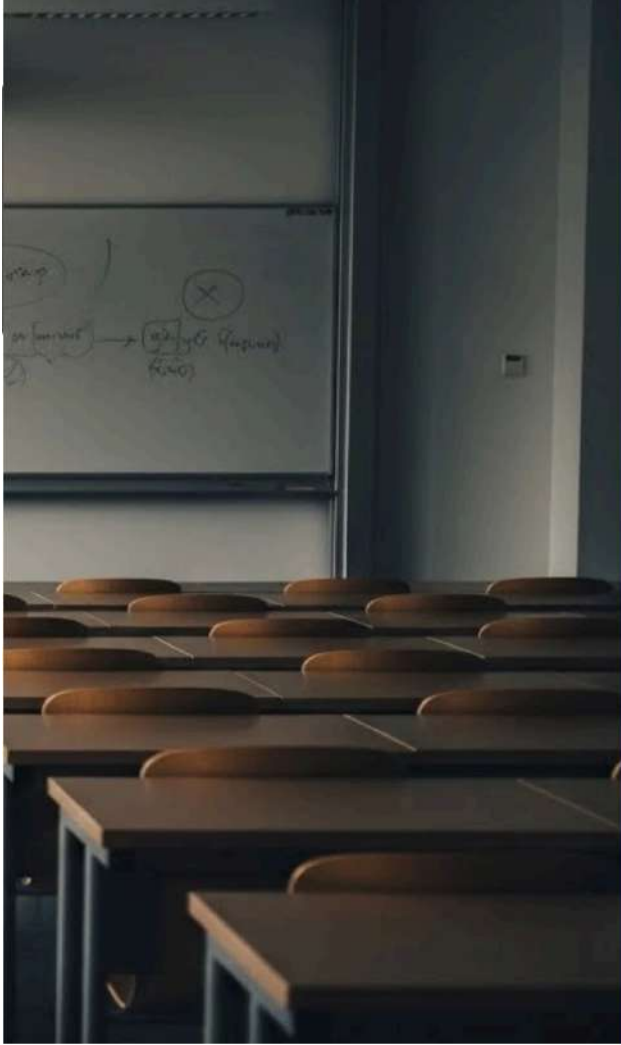
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*I stand at the doorway, a sentinel of ideas. The room hums with potential, a quiet storm of thoughts yet to form. My fingers brush the edge of the desk—wood polished smooth by years of hands like mine—and I take a breath. This space, this room, is both an altar and a battlefield. A place where questions rise like smoke and answers rarely settle. If they decipher, it is almost mandatory questions*

The silence before I speak is the sharpest. But my smile is always the frankest. This I can pledge as they reciprocate invariably offering an answer stipulated for a question that would change their world. Eyes blink back at me, their expressions are a constellation of curiosity, apprehension, and distraction. I know this silence well; it is not empty. It is the pause before the overture, the inhale before the leap. My voice breaks it, threading through the room, seeking to connect. I wonder if they know how much I listen as I speak. And that they fake their focus as they squint sideways at that forbidden obsession that glares every time a message disembarks. I know! I know! I know!

The whiteboard becomes my canvas. The black whiteboard marker eagerly lingers around my fingers, ghostly traces of my intent. The Liquid Crystal Display (LCD) hangs majestically radiating the white screen to intelligently spill the sacred librettos from the laptop. The act feels ancient, a ritual of transmission. Legal principles, cases, plaintiff, defendant, they stretch across the white expanse, glowing briefly in the projector's light. The ideas take shape, only to scatter like dandelion seeds the moment they are spoken. I watch as they land, some taking root, others carried away by the breeze of indifference. A handful either scratches non-itchy heads or automatically exposes wrinkled foreheads feigning intelligent thinking.



Some faces I remember forever: the ones that light up in the middle of a lecture, their eyes widening as if they've discovered something entirely new, smiling satisfactorily like patting on their own shoulder. Others remain a blur, a mosaic of glances and half-smiles. Not to mention the shy ones, those who insentiently and reflexively look away when our eyes meet, displaying fearful upshot of being nailed to answer a question. Also, a minority who seem to be ready to grill for copious analysis at the expense of others' already adequately comfortable discernment. And then there are the ones I cannot forget, not because they understood, but because they did not, and I could not find the right words to bridge the gap.



"Why does it matter?" they ask, and I'm caught off guard. The question weighs a hundred tonnes! My answer feels insufficient, fragile against their expectations. But this is the moment I cherish most: the crack in the facade of certainty.

"It matters," I say, "because you're here. Because the act of asking—of not knowing—is where all things begin." And that opens the floodgate. They are not bothered with curiosity-kills-the-cat attitude. Taking the chance to probe into each hesitation that causes the unnecessary qualm in their being. As for my being, I am too scrupulous to be exultant and victorious for the cognizance of not teaching robots.

***Long after they leave, the room remains. Desks, empty and still. The air carries the echoes of what was said, and what was left unsaid. I sit for a moment; the weight of the day settled into my bones. The silence now is different. It holds not potential, but memory. I wonder if the room will remind me of when I'm gone.***



### Biodata of author(s)

Mimi Sofiah Ahmad Mustafa is a senior law lecturer serving in UiTM Cawangan Melaka for 31 years. She loves writing both as a researcher and will never abandon her passion in creative writings. Graduated from one of the universities in England, the author has published several indexed articles and two books in the area of law being her qualified field of study. The author also led several innovative projects with her colleagues and collaborated with them to complete three research grants. She finds solace in novels mostly by Jodi Picoult, Sydney Sheldon and John Grisham.



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