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The **Epitome** */iˈpitəmi/*

Academy of Language Studies, UiTM Kedah Branch

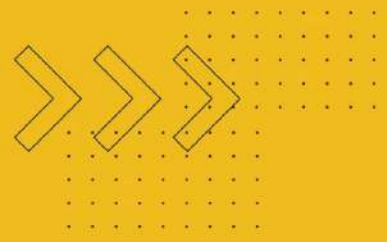
Unleash the epitome
of creative writers

Volume 2 Issue 6

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The
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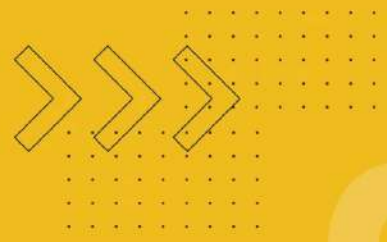
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Synopsis

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
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Preface

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

Welcome to Epitome, the 6th 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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The beauty of low-maintenance friendships

QUALITY OVER QUANTITY

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Recently, I was scrolling through TikTok and came across a post about low-maintenance friendships (LMF). What exactly are low-maintenance friendships?

Reading about LMF reminded me of my best friend and how we've managed to sustain an LMF for over ten years. Low-maintenance friendships are those where you stay connected, share moments, and maintain the friendship without needing to be in constant, daily communication.

In my journey through adulthood, it's incredibly comforting to have friends who understand that "life is life-ing." We're all juggling jobs, managing homes, caring for children, supporting aging parents, finding time to exercise, and looking after our own health. Having friends who don't stress over the lack of constant communication but are always there when needed is an absolute blessing.

For me, true friendship is about recognizing the value of those we occasionally meet—our real, sincere friends, especially in an LMF. When we do catch up, it feels natural to pick up right where we left off, thanks to the strong bond we share. These friends are our safety net, a shoulder to cry on that comes devoid of the day's environmental context or office politics.

Friendship in adulthood doesn't seem very similar to that big group of friends that people may have during childhood and adolescence. LMF is not how distant you may be from the friend but how close you are in your feelings. When we do get time to sit down and relax, it feels so good—it's as if we could discuss anything at all, from kids/family to Korean drama, or things that have absolutely nothing to do with work. And that is why these friendships matter at all; it is the chance for real life interaction that we value.

In the current phase of my life being in my early 30s, I would consider myself an LMF friend. While people often share glimpses of their lives on social media, I rarely keep up—not out of indifference, but because adulthood can be exhausting. That said, when I do get the chance to meet up with friends, I genuinely cherish those moments and have so much fun catching up. To me, that's the essence of how LMFs work—they thrive on understanding, occasional reconnection, and making the most of the time we have together during life's busyness.

I've been in an LMF with my close friend, Lyna Kamal, since our university days, and it has been over ten years now. She lives in Bangi, Selangor, while I'm in Sungai Petani, Kedah. Occasionally, we catch up when she visits her family in Kulim, Kedah. We don't talk every day, and we both have other friends, but with Lyna, it's always easy and comfortable. Even though we don't interact frequently, every time we meet, it feels natural, warm, and as though no time has passed at all.

For me, best friends don't need to have everything in common. In fact, our differences often make the friendship more enjoyable and meaningful. I believe that if a friend is truly committed to maintaining the relationship, they'll make the effort, even if long periods pass between meetings. Choosing to keep a friend means prioritizing them and finding ways to stay connected, no matter how busy life gets.

As life becomes more demanding, even something as simple as a birthday wish can make a big difference in an LMF. Even if it's late, it's better than not wishing at all. I know how overwhelming work can be, but I strive to be an LMF friend who understands when others are equally strained.

With LMFs, I do not necessarily ask these friends for help whenever I am in need since they may not always be aware of what I am going through at work. However, being cherished is not one of the significant parts of friendship, let alone an LMF, where the option of discussing the larger picture for a friend or discussing a significant matter when it is necessary is a rather joyous experience.

LMFs are special types of friendship where people are willing to compromise and do not require high levels of investments. These friendships do not depend on frequent communication, they can sustain the affection while the person fulfills his/her obligations and more. LMFs are simply arrangements of people with whom friends can occasionally 'run into' each other and feel at ease to catch up and narrate their experiences and challenges in their lives without being judged.

While life grows dense, LMFs stress that the quality matters rather than the distance and confirm that not only friends can share the warm feelings between each other. While they may not be close friends and might rarely speak if they don't share a common interest, a simple happy birthday message or an occasional call will help foster the bond. Finally, LMFs learn that real friendships should respect and appreciate each other as friends as well as still be able to communicate with each other even though there are complex adult responsibilities pulling them apart.

Biodata of author(s)

Hanani Hussin teaches and writes, and she has a passion for growing her knowledge in business and management writing. She loves writing and has a passion for interpersonal communication business and management. She has a Master's Degree in Office Systems Management from UiTM Shah Alam, Malaysia. As an educator, she enjoys organizing events and exploring the field of business technology management.



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