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Writing a Novelette Entitled Angel Blooms in the Darkness

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ABSTRACT: This study presents the process of writing a novelette entitled Angel Blooms in the Darkness, developed as part of a Research and Development (R&D) project using Plomp's model. The research addresses identified issues including low student awareness of writing skills, insufficient motivation to write, limited knowledge of novelettes as a literary form, and inadequate understanding of novelette structure. The study employed five stages: preliminary investigation, design, realisation/construction, test and evaluation, and implementation. The resulting novelette—7,631 words, 41 pages in A5 format—follows the drama romance genre featuring Generation Z protagonists and applies Freytag's Pyramid narrative structure across its prologue, eleven chapters, and epilogue. Four experts, two in literary writing and two in English, validated the manuscript, yielding an average score of 3.19 out of 4 from literary writing experts and 3.00 out of 4 from English experts. The validated product was subsequently published on Wattpad. Findings confirm that the novelette serves as an effective and accessible medium for developing students' creative writing skills and increasing their motivation to write.
Keywords: *Freytag's Pyramid, Generation Z, novelette, Research and Development, writing skills*

Writing is a fundamental skill that enables individuals to express thoughts, feelings, and ideas through textual form. As a medium of indirect communication, writing requires adherence to linguistic conventions and structural rules, which often lead students to perceive it as a challenging and uninviting activity. Graves, as cited in Trismanto (2022), observed that many individuals find writing disengaging because they are unaware of its purpose, resulting in a perception that they lack writing competency. This disengagement is seldom a product of familial or environmental factors alone; rather, it frequently stems from an absence of intrinsic motivation cultivated during formal education.

The significance of writing proficiency is well established across both academic and professional domains. Trismanto (2022) emphasised that at advanced levels of education, writing skills are indispensable, as students are required to produce theses, dissertations, and extensive academic reports. Beyond academia, professional communication demands writing competence, from composing formal correspondence to drafting curriculum vitae. Hairston, as cited in

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DiYanni and Borst (2020), articulated several reasons why writing is critical: it facilitates the acquisition of new knowledge, supports the development and connection of ideas, clarifies and organises concepts, trains problem-solving abilities, and promotes active academic engagement. Despite these manifold benefits, many students continue to resist writing due to fear of beginning, confusion regarding structure, and linguistic constraints.

In the digital era, writing as a component of broader literacy practices must be actively nurtured. Barhate and Dirani (2022) defined Generation Z (Gen Z) as individuals born between 1995 and 2012—a cohort that has grown up immersed in technological environments. Sari et al. (2024) noted that technology has made information retrieval effortless for Gen Z, which both facilitates and challenges the cultivation of literacy. UNESCO, as cited in Lestari et al. (2021), affirmed that literacy enhances critical thinking, data processing, analysis, and clear ideational expression—competencies that are essential for Gen Z to leverage technology productively.

Among literary forms, the novelette has emerged as a particularly suitable medium for developing writing skills. Nurgiyantoro in Mulyanah (2022) defined the novelette as a work of fiction shorter than a novella but longer than a short story, typically comprising 7,000 to 16,000 words across 60 to 100 pages. Addone et al. (2022) further identified the novelette as a literary form that fosters creative thinking through the process of story creation. Its concise structure makes it accessible for beginning writers, offering a manageable entry point into creative literary production.

Motivated by these considerations, the present study undertook the development of a novelette entitled Angel Blooms in the Darkness. The novelette follows Seraphina Amara Chelestya, a Gen Z protagonist navigating love, loss, and self-development amidst the challenges of early adulthood. The title encapsulates the story's thematic core: "angel" alludes to the protagonist's name, inspired by the seraphim; "blooms" signifies her journey of personal growth;

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and "in the Darkness" denotes her path toward self-realisation through adversity. The study aimed to document and evaluate the novelette development process as a means of enhancing student motivation and understanding of novelette structure.

The problem formulation guiding this research was: what was the process of writing a novelette for Gen Z entitled Angel Blooms in the Darkness? The development objective was to describe the procedural steps in composing this novelette and to assess its potential as an effective tool for improving students' creative writing skills. Upon completion, the novelette was printed in A5 format and published on Wattpad, an online platform for fiction and non-fiction stories, under the author account @nadirasafaamira21.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Importance of Writing Literacy

Writing literacy occupies a central position in contemporary education. Dalimunthe (2019) argued that written work is critical in educational institutions, as subject matter—including textbooks—constitutes the foundational material for both teachers and students. Aryanti et al. (2021) further emphasised that writing activities become engaging and interesting when imbued with creativity, resulting in what may be termed creative writing. Through the fusion of imagination and innovation, creative writing enables authors to build emotional connections with readers that transcend the informational constraints of non-creative texts.

The Role of Literary Work as Creative Writing

Setiyono and Khotimah (2024) contended that student interest and writing ability can be significantly enhanced through the practice of literary writing across diverse topics, particularly those reflecting social realities close to students' lived experiences. According to Aryanti (2021), creative writing encompasses multiple genres, including poetry, scripts, screenplays, creative

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non-fiction, and various forms of prose fiction such as short stories, novelettes, and novels. These literary forms provide writers with the freedom to explore complex emotional and social landscapes in ways that formal academic writing does not permit.

The Differences Between Short Story, Novelette, and Novel

Understanding the distinctions among fictional prose formats is essential to contextualising the novelette's unique pedagogical potential. Rasyidin et al. (2018) characterised the novelette as a work of fictional prose that occupies an intermediate position in terms of length—neither as concise as a short story nor as expansive as a novel. Nurgiyantoro (2015) specified that a novelette ranges from 7,000 to 16,000 words across 60 to 100 pages, and can typically be read in a single sitting of one to two hours. This characteristic enables the storyline to be concise and direct, focusing on the narrative core without the elaborate subplots and extended characterisation associated with novels. In contrast, novels may exceed 50,000 words, requiring sustained engagement over multiple reading sessions and demanding careful management of complex, interwoven plot lines.

The Benefits of Writing a Novelette

The act of writing a novelette confers multiple cognitive and creative benefits comparable to those of other literary forms. Harida et al. (2024) affirmed that creative writing develops both critical and imaginative thinking—skills fundamental to academic and professional life. Akhadiah et al., as cited in Kafrawi and Evizariza (2021), enumerated additional benefits: the exploration of personal abilities and potential, the broadening of horizons and knowledge, the development of objective opinion-expression, and the cultivation of analytical thinking. It may therefore be concluded that composing a novelette supports students in developing a range of higher-order cognitive competencies.

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The Structure of a Novelette

A novelette shares its structural elements with other fictional prose forms. According to Nurgiyantoro (2015), the principal structural elements include plot, theme, character, setting, message or mandate, point of view, and language style. The plot of a novelette typically centres on a single main conflict, rendered more concisely than the multiple interwoven plots of a novel. The theme articulates the story's central problem in a focused manner, while characters—both primary and supporting—enact the events of the plot.

One effective approach to structuring a novelette is Freytag's Pyramid. Cahyani (2018) described this method, developed by the nineteenth-century German literary critic Gustav Freytag, as a dramatic framework dividing the storyline into five stages: Exposition, Rising Action, Climax, Falling Action, and Denouement. The exposition introduces characters, settings, and initial conditions, planting the seeds of conflict. The rising action escalates tension through a series of obstacles and complications. The climax represents the pivotal moment of decision or turning point. The falling action shows the consequences of that decision as tension subsides. Finally, the denouement resolves the central conflict and establishes a new equilibrium. Widowati et al. (2018) further distinguished between main characters and additional characters as essential components, while Rokhmansyah et al. (2018) addressed the mandate—the moral message conveyed implicitly through the narrative.

METHOD

This research employed the Research and Development (R&D) methodology, utilising Plomp's model as the procedural framework. As described by Arianatasari and Hakim (2018), Plomp's model encompasses five interconnected stages: preliminary investigation, design, realisation/construction, test and evaluation, and implementation. The research was conducted over three months.

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Preliminary Investigation

The first stage involved gathering theoretical knowledge pertaining to the novelette through a range of sources, including e-books, academic journals, online articles, and published novelette examples. This investigation covered the conceptual foundations of literary work, the defining characteristics of the novelette as a form, its structural elements, and the procedural steps involved in its composition. The documentation technique was employed for data collection, as detailed by Sugiyono (2017), who defines documentation as the systematic collection of data from existing written sources such as books, journals, meeting minutes, and photographs.

Design

During the design stage, the writer developed the novelette outline following the methods proposed by Kens (2022). This involved a structured brainstorming process encompassing: (1) identifying a title that would capture reader attention while reflecting the story's emotional tone; (2) developing a compelling main character with a detailed backstory, distinct personality, and clear motivations; (3) selecting an inspiring and contextually grounded setting; and (4) focusing on a specific and coherent theme. The drama romance genre was selected to create emotional engagement, and the title Angel Blooms in the Darkness was chosen to convey the story's central narrative arc.

Realisation/Construction

The realisation stage involved drafting the complete manuscript. Following Ken (2022), this required: (1) creating a strong opening that immediately establishes the central conflict and character relationships; (2) developing the central conflict according to Freytag's Pyramid structure; (3) limiting subplots and supporting characters to maintain narrative focus; and (4) crafting a compelling ending that provides satisfying closure. The manuscript was developed

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using a standardised template, and the final draft comprised 7,631 words across 41 pages in A5 format with 2-cm margins throughout. A book cover was designed using Canva's online graphic design platform.

Test, Evaluation, and Revision

The testing and evaluation stage involved expert validation from four specialists: two literary writing experts (Rahmadila Eka Putri, S.Pd., Gr., M.App.Ling. and Mutia Nasution, M.Hum.) and two English language experts (Pratiwi Lestari, M.Pd. and Koryati, S.Pd., M.Pd.). Assessment rubrics were developed based on Nurgiyantoro (2013) and customised to reflect each expert group's area of specialisation. Literary writing experts evaluated story length, theme, title, characterisation, setting, opening, conflict, ending, plot development, dialogue, and writing style, using a four-point scale (1 = Needs Improvement, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Excellent). English experts assessed grammar, vocabulary, and cohesion and coherence. Prior to expert review, the complete draft was shared with a peer novelist, Adinda Putri Aisyah—author of Trauma Masked Boy (published by Komunitas Sasri Publisher, February 2025)—who provided feedback on storyline development and dialogue authenticity.

Implementation

Following the completion of all revisions, the finalised novelette was published on Wattpad under the account @nadirasafaamira21 and printed as a physical book in A5 format with standardised novel layout specifications.

FINDINGS

Preliminary Investigation

The preliminary investigation established the theoretical and practical foundations for the novelette's development. Through extensive review of relevant literature, the writer identified

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core principles for effective novelette composition: maintaining a limited number of characters due to word-count constraints, avoiding complex subplot structures, and ensuring that the narrative arc leads purposefully to a satisfying climax. These findings directly shaped the subsequent design decisions.

Design Stage

The design stage produced a comprehensive outline for Angel Blooms in the Darkness. The selected theme—Drama Romance—was chosen to create emotional suspense and reader engagement. Four main characters were developed to drive the central narrative: Seraphina Amara Chelestya (protagonist—calm, cheerful, loving, yet spoiled and dependent), Elrino Dalvaren (Seraphina's boyfriend—hardworking, responsible, but unfaithful), Lucas Chelestya (Seraphina's older brother—protective and assertive, yet temperamental), and Priska (Seraphina's best friend—wise, trustworthy, and loyal). The primary setting was established at Braveda University, a fictional hospitality campus, with a secondary setting at The Exquisite Hotel Bali, where Elrino pursues his career. These settings enabled the writer to portray the campus atmosphere of student life alongside the demanding realities of the hospitality industry.

Realisation/Construction

The manuscript was developed across a prologue, eleven chapters, and an epilogue, structured according to Freytag's Pyramid as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Story Structure Based on Freytag's Pyramid

Structure	Chapters	Summary
Exposition	Prologue & Chapter 1	Seraphina reflects on heartbreak. She prepares for her thesis with Elrino and Priska. The emotional tone and core relationship are introduced.
Rising Action	Chapters 2–6	Elrino moves away and begins working in Bali. The long-distance relationship weakens. They break up. Lucas's grudge and Seraphina's memories deepen the

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Structure	Chapters	Summary
		tension.
Climax	Chapters 7–9	Seraphina receives a farewell video from Elrino. He lets go through metaphor. She finally accepts the end and whispers goodbye during a morning run.
Falling Action	Chapter 10	Seraphina leaves for graduate school. She grows stronger, studies abroad, and graduates with honours. She no longer waits for Elrino.
Denouement	Chapter 11 & Epilogue	Seraphina meets Elrino again. Maya appears as his fiancée. Seraphina walks away silently, realising she has found peace and closure.

The novelette opens during the Cheng Ho Festival in Malang—a culturally rich setting that foreshadows the central theme of difference and longing. The revised prologue, titled Before the Fall, employs poetic imagery and sensory detail to immerse the reader in Seraphina's emotional world: "The lanterns swayed above Seraphina's head, casting a crimson glow on the crowd below" (Amira, 2025, p. 1). The rising action spans Chapters 2 through 6, depicting Elrino's career development in Bali, the strain of long-distance commitment, his infidelity with Maya, and the eventual dissolution of the relationship. Chapters 7 through 9 form the climactic arc: a flashback to first love, the weight of anniversary memories, and Seraphina's receipt of Elrino's metaphorical farewell video. Chapters 10 and 11 trace Seraphina's transformation—her scholarship to the University of Melbourne, her MBA with distinction, and an unexpected professional reunion with Elrino at her new workplace. The epilogue depicts Seraphina as a visiting lecturer at Braveda University, having fully reclaimed her identity and inner peace.

Minor and supporting characters were carefully managed to avoid diluting narrative focus. Maya, Elrino's workplace confidante who later becomes his fiancée, represents a pivotal subplot character whose presence catalyses the central conflict. Lucas's backstory—involving the death of his best friend Roy in an accident linked to Elrino's past recklessness—provides psychological depth to his protective antagonism. Priska functions as an emotional anchor for Seraphina

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throughout the narrative. The book cover, designed on Canva, features an angelic feminine figure with white wings, symbolising Seraphina's vulnerability, inner light, and ultimate transcendence.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Expert Validation Results

The manuscript underwent a four-expert validation process, yielding the results presented in Table 2. The two literary writing experts provided assessments across eleven criteria, while the two English experts evaluated three key domains.

Table 2. Expert Validation Results

Criteria	Expert 1	Expert 2	Note
Length	3	4	Good–Excellent
Theme	3	4	Good–Excellent
Title	4	4	Excellent
Character	3	4	Good–Excellent
Setting	3	3	Good
Opening	2	3	Fair–Good
Conflict	3	4	Good–Excellent
Ending	3	4	Good–Excellent
Plot Development	3	4	Good–Excellent
Dialogue	2	3	Fair–Good
Writing Style	2	3	Fair–Good
Average Score	2.82	3.55	Good

The literary writing experts demonstrated strong inter-rater agreement, consistently awarding the highest scores to the novelette's theme, title, conflict, ending, and plot development.

Expert 2 assigned the maximum score of 4 (Excellent) to these criteria, while Expert 1 provided scores of 3 (Good), reflecting an overall consensus that the manuscript's core narrative strengths were well-realised. The title received a perfect score from both experts, affirming its poetic resonance and thematic alignment with the story's emotional arc.

Areas identified for improvement included the opening, dialogue, and writing style, where Expert 1 assigned scores of 2 (Fair). These assessments precipitated substantive revisions aimed at enhancing the naturalness of dialogue, refining the language style for greater literary fluency, and strengthening the narrative opening. As the first expert noted regarding the initial draft's opening: it was "mildly engaging, but the initial dialogue and exposition could be refined to better hook the reader" (Expert 1, 2025). Expert 2 similarly observed that while the opening "situates the reader in a culturally rich festival and introduces the central relationship," the language "could be refined for greater clarity and immediacy" (Expert 2, 2025).

English language experts evaluated three domains—grammar, vocabulary, and cohesion and coherence—and each awarded an average score of 3 (Good). The first English expert identified the need for consistent use of the simple past tense in narrative sections, noting that "events, descriptions, and actions should be expressed using past tense verbs" and that "avoid switching to present tense unless it is used in direct speech (dialogue) or character thoughts" (Expert 3, 2025). Additional feedback addressed noun phrase redundancy, pronoun clarity, verb form accuracy, and scene transition coherence. These recommendations were systematically incorporated into the revised manuscript.

Revision Process

The revision process was comprehensive and iterative, spanning all sections of the manuscript from prologue to epilogue. The most significant structural transformation occurred in the prologue, where straightforward expository narration was replaced with immersive, sensory-

driven prose. The original opening—"Today is the celebration day of the Cheng Ho festival, so as a native Chinese Seraphina would not miss this precious moment"—was revised to emphasise atmosphere and emotional interiority: "The lanterns swayed above Seraphina's head, casting a crimson glow on the crowd below. The scent of incense hung thick in the air, curling around her like a memory she could not quite place" (Amira, 2025, p. 1). This shift from 'telling' to 'showing' represented a consistent editorial principle applied across all eleven chapters.

Chapter titles were uniformly revised to carry greater metaphorical and thematic weight. Literal titles such as 'Graduation Day,' 'Become a Hotelier,' 'Break Up,' and 'Love in the First Sight' were replaced with evocative alternatives: 'Before the Storm,' 'Promises Made,' 'The Garden Goodbye,' and 'The Girl in Emerald,' respectively. This editorial choice reflected Kens's (2022) guidance on creating compelling narrative openings that draw readers into the emotional world of the story.

Dialogue revisions prioritised naturalness and character authenticity. Stilted formal exchanges were replaced with contracted, emotionally resonant speech that accurately reflected each character's personality and social register. The revision of Chapter 8, for example, transformed the formal exclamation 'Damn, you really know what I want. Please bribe me!' to the more colloquial 'Ugh… You really know how to get to me. Feed me' (Amira, 2025, p. 88), in alignment with the expert's recommendation to use informal contracted language in spoken interactions between close friends.

Structural revisions to the plot addressed pacing and temporal coherence. Several chapters were restructured to employ non-linear storytelling through controlled flashback sequences, as in Chapter 5 (Our Happy Memories), which layers the protagonist's present grief with memories of past celebration and romance. This approach enriched emotional depth while maintaining the novelette's characteristic narrative economy. The epilogue was expanded into two distinct parts—

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What Stayed, What Left and Her Own Light—to provide comprehensive closure on Seraphina's transformation and the thematic resolution of the story.

Publication on Wattpad

Following the completion of all expert-recommended revisions, the finalised novelette was published on Wattpad under the author's account (@nadirasafaamira21). Wattpad, as an online community platform for writers and readers, provides immediate access to a global readership predominantly comprising Gen Z users—the novelette's primary target audience. This implementation stage fulfilled the dual purpose of making the completed product accessible to its intended readership and demonstrating the viability of digital platforms as distribution channels for student-authored literary works. The physical book was simultaneously printed in A5 format with layout specifications consistent with published novel standards, including a title page, copyright page, dedication, opening quote, table of contents, author biography, and closing acknowledgements.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This study documented the complete process of writing a novelette entitled Angel Blooms in the Darkness, employing Plomp's Research and Development model across five sequential stages: preliminary investigation, design, realisation/construction, test and evaluation, and implementation. The resulting product—a 7,631-word drama romance novelette structured according to Freytag's Pyramid and validated by four subject-matter experts—demonstrated that the novelette format is a viable and effective medium for developing Gen Z students' creative writing competencies. Expert validation yielded average scores of 2.82 and 3.55 from literary writing experts and a uniform average of 3.00 from English language experts, confirming that the manuscript met publication-quality standards across literary and linguistic dimensions. The study further established that systematic expert review and iterative revision are essential to producing

a novelette that functions both as a literary work and as an educational product. It is recommended that future researchers explore the novelette as a pedagogical tool across broader student populations, investigate its impact on writing motivation through empirical pre-test and post-test designs, and consider incorporating reader response data from the Wattpad platform to further assess the novelette's effectiveness as an educational literary medium.

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