

# ENHANCING STUDENTS' CRITICAL RESPONSES BY REPRESENTING SYLLABUS IN CRITICAL READING CLASSES

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## Abstract

A syllabus guides the course of study and outlines expectations for the quarter. It consists of assignment agendas, essential documents, rules, regulations, and course policies. A syllabus can inform nearly everything we need to understand about how a course will be conducted and what will be watched for. Critical Reading is one subject that is taught by the third semester in English Literature students. This subject asks students to be active in reading any text types categorized into critical genres. Students are introduced to steps of critical reading which include pre-, during, and after reading. This research aimed to show the syllabus in Critical Reading. The subjects were the third students of English Literature Universitas Negeri Semarang. The research used qualitative. Before breaking down some parts of the syllabus, the researchers evaluated this course by seeing the graduate learning outcome (CPL), course learning outcome (CPMK), and description of the course that is divided into seven units. Those units include what critical reading in reader response approach, how to analyze a text during pre-reading and reading process, doing an annotation and outline when we analyzed a text, how to review a text how to summarize a text effectively. The researchers saw there was an importance thing in learning Critical Reading among third-semester students of English Literature because this subject showed the awareness of critical reading skills and strategies which include identifying texts' structure; annotating, outlining, summarizing, and reviewing texts; distinguishing main and supporting ideas as well as facts and opinions in the texts; analyzing writer's purpose and point of view as well as tone and attitude in the texts; and conducting rhetorical analysis of the texts. All of those steps are intended to help students uncover the hidden messages of any type of critical genre. The researchers gained knowledge about the reader response approach among students by lecturing and answering some questions. The result showed to overcome the SLO and CPMK, I redesigned the syllabus. In the new design, I included a reader-response approach to improve students' understanding. The reader response approach is an approach that focuses more on how communication between the reader and the text occurs. In this theory, the relationship between the reader and the text is very important - because the text without the reader will be meaningless or in other words, the text does not exist without the reader. A text will not live without readers.

**Keywords:** Syllabus, Critical Responses, Critical Reading Class

## Introduction

Critical reading is one of the courses taught to 3rd-semester students majoring in the English Literature Study Program at Universitas Negeri Semarang. Critical reading is important for students because this course can increase awareness and ability of critical reading strategies including identifying text structure, making annotations, outlining, summarizing, and reviewing texts, distinguishing main and supporting ideas as well as facts and opinions in texts, analyzing the author's purpose and point of view as well as tones and attitudes in texts, and conducting rhetorical analysis of texts.

A lesson is a structured period where learning is intended to occur. It typically focuses on a particular topic or skill, with objectives and activities designed to facilitate understanding. According to the Collins Dictionary, lesson is used by teachers in a school that mentions the structure and format of lessons in detail. Meanwhile, according to the Minister of Education and Culture Regulation No.22 of 2016, chapter III, point 2 defines a Lesson Plan as a plan of learning activities developed from a syllabus for one or more meetings to direct student learning activities to achieve basic competencies. All teachers are required to make a

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complete and systematic lesson plan so that the lesson can take place interactively, be fun, efficiently, and neatly arranged to provide sufficient space for students according to their interests, and talents. Meanwhile, according to Reiser & Dempse (2007) in Seel, Lehmann, Blumschein, & Podolskiy (2017: 1) lesson plan is defined as a systematic procedure in which education and training programs are developed and structured with the aim of substantial learning improvement.

A syllabus is different from a lesson plan in that a syllabus outlines the overall structure, goals, and content of a course, serving as a guide for the entire duration of the course. According to Zainal, a syllabus is a learning plan for a particular subject or theme that includes competency standards, basic competencies, indicators of competency achievement, learning materials, learning activities, assessment, time allocation, and learning resources (Zainal Arifin, 2011: 193). The syllabus is the foundation of learning objectives and materials that guide the development of specific course learning plans. Every curriculum period there is only one valid syllabus for one course. According to Şanal (2016), The syllabus that has been prepared by the curriculum development team will be checked by the Head of Study Program and approved by the dean.

In a lesson, teachers must determine the syllabus design that will be used in the teaching and learning process. Sabbah (2018) said that there are 9 kinds of syllabus designs including structural syllabus, situational syllabus, thematic syllabus, topic-based syllabus, national-functional syllabus, process syllabus, procedural syllabus, syllabus based on ktsp, and mixed syllabus. In this study, researchers will use the thematic syllabus model. Thematic syllabus is a syllabus model developed by the Center for Curriculum and Bookkeeping. According to A Ghoni (2020), the thematic syllabus can be taken by education units by taking themes that are

tailored to the characteristics of the education unit. Researchers chose the thematic syllabus model because the syllabus was considered more adaptive than other syllabus models. The thematic syllabus is considered more adaptive than other models because it integrates content across various topics and subjects, allowing for a more flexible and holistic learning experience. It is adaptable because it centers around themes relevant to students' interests or real-world issues, making the learning process more engaging.

The preparation of thematic learning is prepared by containing the subjects to be combined in the form of a matrix, basic competencies, and indicators to be achieved, subject matter, strategies, and steps to be taken.

### **Methodology**

The participants of this research were 3<sup>rd</sup> semester students of English Department, Faculty of Languages and Arts, Universitas Negeri Semarang. The subjects were 45 students with 35 female students and 15 male students. The method used in this research was qualitative, focusing on the naturalistic inquiry process. that seeks an in-depth understanding of social phenomena in their natural setting. It focused on the "why" rather than the "what" of social phenomena and relied on the direct experiences of human beings as meaning-making agents in their everyday lives. Rather than by logical and statistical procedures, qualitative researchers used multiple systems of inquiry for the study of human phenomena including biography, case study, historical analysis, discourse analysis, ethnography, grounded theory, and phenomenology. There were three major focus areas individuals, societies and cultures, and language and communication. Although there were many methods of inquiry in qualitative research, according to Gering J (2017), the common assumptions were that knowledge was subjective rather than objective and that I learned from the

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participants to understand the meaning of their lives. To ensure rigor and trustworthiness, I attempted to maintain a position of neutrality while engaged in the research process.

Tests were chosen as the instruments in this research, which were mid test and final test. In mid test, students analyzed one literary work in one period. They also inserted the development of languages. In final test, students analyzed two literary works from different periods. They also mentioned the languages that influenced the literary works. Students were given list of questions about development of language.

### **Finding and Discussion**

Despite others, syllabus is one of the important components to determine the success of the learning process. A well-constructed syllabus can be the key to successful teaching. With a good syllabus, teachers and students will more easily achieve the learning objectives as set out in the curriculum. The syllabus is a source of information for students. In addition to being important information, a student-oriented syllabus can also be an important learning tool that will reinforce the goals, roles, attitudes, and strategies that teachers will use to achieve active, useful, and effective teaching.

### **Steps for Preparing Syllabus**

The preparation of the syllabus needs to be done carefully and thoroughly in order to produce a syllabus that is suitable for teaching and learning activities in an educational unit. The preparation of the syllabus needs to be based on an outline, summary, overview or learning material. The thematic syllabus is organized as follows:

1. The basic competencies of each course that cannot be linked in thematic learning are arranged in a separate syllabus.
2. The format of the syllabus is arranged in the form of a matrix and contains the subjects to be combined, the basic competencies and indicators to be

achieved, the subject matter, the strategies or learning steps to be carried out, the time allocation required, and the source of reference materials.

I wanted students to learn about Critical Reading especially how to analyze literary works, and increase their ability of critical reading strategies. I would use and give knowledge about how to annotate, outline, review, and summarize texts, and in how I checked for students' understanding, I gave them tests, such as mid-test and final tests. After knowing what I should do in this subject, I evaluate this course by seeing the learning outcome (CPL), course learning outcome (CPMK), and description of the course. Then I divided into seven units. First, Introduction, the syllabus discussed what critical reading in reader response approach is by giving an acknowledgement how to apply reader response in analyzing a text. Second unit discussed how to analyze a text during pre-reading and reading process. Third unit applied the meaning and purpose of doing an annotation when we analyzed a text. Fourth unit talked about how to create some questions based on the text. Fifth unit discussed how to outlining a text by applying reader response approach. Sixth unit talked about how to review a text, and the seventh discussed how to summarizing a text effectively.

After breaking down the syllabus from each unit, I saw graduate learning outcome (CPL) and course learning outcome (CPMK). In graduate learning outcome (CPL), students were hoped to get attitude competency, knowledge competency, general skill competency, and specific skill competency. In attitude competency, students should appreciate diversity in cultures, opinions, religions and believes, as well as points of view or original findings of others, and being competent at cooperating and possessing social sensitivity as well as caring for the community and the environment. In Knowledge Competency, students should master at English training technique and

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theoretical concept by applying innovative and sophisticated technological approaches having cultural insights. In General Skill Competency, students should be competent at applying logical, critical, systematic and innovative ways of thinking in the context of developing or implementing science and technology that takes into account and applies the values of humanities which are relevant to his/her expertise. In Specific Skill Competency, students should be competent at implementing logical, critical, systematic, and innovative thought in contexts of science and/or technology development and implementation based on his/her expertise.

In the course learning outcomes (CPMK), students are expected to acquire knowledge of critical reading and be able to perform the steps of critical reading, which include pre-reading, during reading, and post-reading activities. Additionally, they will develop an awareness of critical reading skills and strategies, such as identifying text structures, annotating, outlining, summarizing, and reviewing texts. They will also learn to distinguish between main and supporting ideas, facts and opinions, analyze bias, propaganda, the author's purpose, and tone, and conduct rhetorical analysis. These skills aim to help students uncover hidden messages in various types of texts.

After seeing all aspects from the syllabus, there was a gap between the description and the course learning outcome (CPMK). In description, this subject discussed about the Critical Reading, students are engaged in active reading of any text types categorized into critical genres, including the multimodal ones. Students are introduced to steps of critical reading which include pre-, during and after reading. In addition, they are also made aware of critical reading skills and strategies which include, but are not limited to, identifying texts' structure; annotating, outlining, summarizing, and reviewing texts; distinguishing main and supporting ideas as well as facts and

opinions in the texts; analyzing bias and propaganda in texts; analyzing writer's purpose and point of view as well as tone and attitude in the texts; and conducting rhetorical analysis of the texts. All of those steps, skills and strategies are intended to help the students uncover the hidden messages of any types of critical genres. In graduate learning outcome (CPMK), it only focused on the conducting critical text analysis. Students did not learn about identifying texts' structure; annotating, outlining, summarizing, and reviewing texts; distinguishing main and supporting ideas as well as facts and opinions in the texts. There was also lacks of sources. Students only got sources from books (e-books). They seldom learned this subject from journals or articles. This syllabus needed to be redesigned where the development of language and culture involved in this learning process, not only the literature. To overcome the SLO and CPMK, I redesigned the syllabus. In the new design, I included a reader-response approach to improve students' critical responses. The reader response approach is an approach that focuses more on how communication between the reader and the text occurs. In this theory, the relationship between the reader and the text is very important - because the text without the reader will be meaningless or in other words, the text does not exist without the reader. A text will not live without readers. In Reader Response to Dockside Reading (2023), Isabel Hofmeyr introduces a new reading strategy called Dockside Reading. This strategy is designed to increase students' motivation and confidence in comprehending and responding to reading texts. The book that is completed by storylines, illustrations, and simple language, is eased readers to be able to connect the content and the use of familiar characters, events, and settings. Hofmeyr introduces the hydrocolonialism that brings together land and water, empire and environment. Readers enthusiastically gave

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their responses related the topic. While Spirovska, Elena (2019) in *Reader-Response Theory and Approach: Application, Values and Significance for Students in Literature Courses*, mentions the research talks about the application of the reader response theory and approach in the context of a literature course (English Literature 1) to study the benefits and values of the reader response theory implied in the described context, long with possible pitfalls that show the readers' way of comprehending and insights of a literary text, together with the experience of the reader, the impact, and the relation between the reader and the text. Mart, Cagri Tugrul (2019) in *Reader-Response Theory and Literature Discussions: A Springboard for Exploring Literary Texts*, states the foundation of reader-response theory is the idea that a literary work exists in the reciprocal interaction between the reader and the text because meaning is built by an exchange between the reader and the text in a specific setting.

In this study, I provided an understanding of the reader response approach to students by giving a detailed explanation and providing question and answer session. After explaining the understanding of the reader response approach, I asked students to read two novels entitled *Five on A Secret Trail* and *Five Have Plenty of Fun*. After reading the novels, students will answer 5 questions related to the novels. Below is the result of my response approach to students.

#### **Sample Questions and Answer from Famous Five On a Secret Trail by Enid Blyton**

1. **Q: What struck/influenced you about the novel?**

**A1:** The thing that struck/influenced me in the novel “Five On A Secret Trail” by Enid Blyton is how the writer can make such a simple novel with a great storyline. I say this novel is simple because there is no complexity going on in the story. Of course, it has a conflict and a climax, but it is not as complicated as the other novels I have read

like “To Kill A Mockingbird” by Harper Lee for example. Also, the storyline is great for me. I can easily follow the storyline and because of this, I felt like I was entering the exciting adventure of these five friends.

**A2:** What influenced me was the inclusion of elements like secret trails and hidden passages. It supports the story by creating tension and bravery. It also adds a mysterious element that makes me curious. This makes the novel exciting.

**A3:** The thing that influenced me to read this series of five famous novels was that I was so curious about the continuation of the adventure and also because this was chapter 15, which was a continuation of chapter 14, and I really wondered whether it would be more exciting or not. Another reason that influenced me to read this novel was because it had words in English that were easy to understand.

**A4:** The book impressed me with the adventures they had together, where they were able to work as a great team with their supportive with each other to solve the mystery and also with their hopelessness in the face of various situations that pressed them.

2. **Q: What would you like to talk about after reading this novel?**

**A1:** I want to talk about how important it is to find your true friends. The friends who always accompany us in every condition even when we are at a very deep point in our life. True friends will give their time to take care and ask about our condition. Meanwhile, the fake friends will not be willing to accompany us in every condition. They only come when they need something. If what they're looking for is fulfilled, they'll just leave and the friendship isn't as close as a true friend.

**A2:** I want to talk about how the mix of mystery and adventure in the story makes it really interesting. There are secrets to solve, and the characters go on exciting journeys. It creates a fun and suspenseful reading experience.

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**A3:** I would like to say I wasn't too interested in reading it because the story conflict took too long to appear which made the story boring.

**A4:** After I read a five-person book with a series of mystery secret tracks, I liked the mysteries contained in the story, so I still wanted to discuss their compactness in the face of the problem so that they could solve the problem.

**3. Q: What issues did you raise for you?**

**A1:** Conflict between characters can be an issue in the story. It may be between members of the group itself or with other characters in the story. These problems can stem from differences of opinion, egos, or conflicting feelings.

**A2:** As I said before, this story is a bit boring because the conflict takes too long, so I don't really get interested and enjoy when reading it. That was my issue when reading this series of Famous Five.

**A3:** The most crucial issue revolves around the mysterious elements, which are considered heritage that needs preservation but is targeted by irresponsible individuals. This highlights the tension between those who value and protect the mysteries of the environment and those who seek to exploit or harm them.

**A4:** The issue that arises for me is about parenting in the novel "Five On A Secret Trail." I can say the parenting in the novel is far from perfect to be a good role model for their children. It can be seen in the Uncle Quentin character. Whenever someone calls Uncle Quentin to talk about something, he always shows up with an unpleasant attitude. Such as in the line that says "George! What's this row about? Here am I in the middle of some very difficult..." and "George! How many times am I to tell you to not to shout when I'm working? Oh. My goodness me, who are all these?" These two lines are the example that shows his unpleasant attitude. I know it is his character that is grumpy, but

to be a good role model as a parent, you cannot always show that attitude. Your children will somehow imitate what you usually do. If the attitude that Uncle Quentin has occurred in real life, I think the children raised by parents like Uncle Quentin will be rude, irritable, and sensitive just like George's character. That is why it is better to try your best as a parent to be a good role model where your children imitate the good things.

**4. Q: Did anything upset you or make you angry?**

**A1:** I don't think anything upset or makes me angry in the novel "Five On A Secret Trail." Instead, I feel so enjoy because the story is quite fun to read. I may say this novel can be recommended for any age, especially a grown person. You can fill your free time by reading this novel.

**A2:** I got upset when the bad guys intentionally scared the kids for their irresponsible plans to succeed.

**A3:** So far so good, there is no something that make me upset or angry.

**A4:** The upsetting moment for me was at the beginning of this story or the start of their adventure. It was in George's selfish character from when he went with Timmy and only left a letter without asking his mother's permission first and when George didn't want to let go of Timmy's grip which made Timmy bark even louder.

**5. Q: What do you think of friendship when you read the novel and nowadays? Give some examples/ moments that was shown by the author show, and some examples/events that are seen nowadays.**

**A1:** On the themes of friendship, the Famous Five series often portrays its characters as loyal and supportive of each other, working together to solve problems and overcome obstacles. This can be seen in the way the characters rely on each other's strengths and support each other in difficult situations. In modern times,

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examples of friendship can be seen in various contexts, such as in social movements, community projects, and personal relationships.

**A2:** The friendship shown in this novel is a friendship that often occurs in our lives. There are feelings of sadness over not being together and happiness over togetherness. The feelings of sadness over not being together came when George and Anne felt sad that Julian and Dick had not come to Kirrin Island because they were in Paris. They felt sad because their adventure was supposed to be done together, and without Julian and Dick, it felt different. The feelings of happiness and togetherness were shown when Julian and Dick finally came to Kirrin Island to spend the rest of their vacation joining George and Anne's adventures. An example of feeling sadness over not being together nowadays is when one of your friends doesn't come to an event and it feels like something is missing. An example of feeling happiness and togetherness nowadays is when you and your friends get together at an event.

**A3:** Friendship is about caring for each other and fighting for the truth. An example from the novel is when the main characters help each other and work together to uncover a mystery and find the truth. In nowadays, I find it when my friends and I contribute to boycott products that support Israel because they do not respect human rights.

**A4:** I think the friendship in the novel is well established. The proof is when George goes

camping alone, Anne is happy to meet her and keep her company. “Tell Anne if she wants to join me, to come to the end of Carters Lane on the common and I will show her where I’m camping. Tell her to come at twelve.” & “At twelve o’clock Anne was standing patiently at the end of Carters Lane.” Shortly after, Julian and Dick arrive although they come late because they have a tour in France. “Oh! It can’t be – surely it can’t be Julian and

Dick!’ shouted George, in sudden delight, and she shot off after Timmy. This proves that their friendship is still going strong despite the many adventures they have gone through.

### **Sample Questions and Answer from Famous Five Have a Plenty of Fun by Enid Blyton**

1. **Q: What struck/influenced you about the novel?**

**A1:** The thing that struck/influenced me in the novel “Five Have Plenty Of Fun” by Enid Blyton is how the writer can make such a simple novel with a great storyline. I say this novel is simple because there is no complexity going on in the story. Of course, it has a conflict and a climax, but it is not as complicated as the other novels I have read like “To Kill A Mockingbird” by Harper Lee for example. Also, the storyline is great for me. I can easily follow the storyline and because of this, I felt like I was entering the exciting adventure of these five friends.

**A2:** I was influenced about the novel because of the brave characters, especially George, who showed remarkable courage when mistaken for Berta during a kidnapping. I’m also impressed by how they resolved the kidnapping faster than the police, showcasing their quick thinking and teamwork.

**A3:** The things that influenced me to read this series of famous five novels are that I am so curious about the continuation of their adventure and whether it will be more exciting or not. The other reason that influenced me to read this novel because it has an easy word in English that is understandable.

**A4:** The novel was influential for its emphasis on adventure, friendship, problem-solving, and depiction of children taking the lead in solving mysteries.

2. **Q: What would you like to talk about after reading this novel?**

**A1:** Do they face challenges that affect their personalities or relationships? The novel provides a framework for deeper

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exploration and understanding of the themes, characters, and overall impact of the book.

**A2:** I would like to say that this series of Famous Five was fun and exciting story to read.

**A3:** What I want to talk about after reading the novel is I'm really impressed with the amazing teamwork of the children. They didn't think about their egos but focused on problem-solving, doing their best to handle the situation. Jo, who also helped towards the end of the story, showed care and empathy.

**A4:** After reading the novel, I realized that to realize our dreams, we should not be afraid to face all the obstacles, which is a process to achieve those dreams. Julian and Dick for example. In the story, they have a mission to rescue George who has been kidnapped by Grino the night market owner. Inevitably they have to go to the place where George was kidnapped. On their way to help George, they encountered many obstacles. Like cycling a long way to get to where George was locked up and then having to be locked up when they almost made it out of the place. Julian and Dick weren't scared at all, instead, they continued their journey with no fear in sight. That's the kind of attitude we must have in realizing our dreams. There must be obstacles in our process. If there are no obstacles, then we can't develop ourselves to be a better individual. Therefore, we must conquer the fear within us and keep going.

**3. Q: What issues did you raise for you?**

**A1:** The issue that arises for me is about the evil side of humans. It can be seen in the character who tries to kidnap Berta. "Yes, Berta. Well, Elbur, her father, has been warned that she's going to be kidnapped." Seeing the criminal in the story like this makes me think that humans sometimes do evil things to other humans, especially those people who target children. There is a

lot of news about child abduction nowadays. In Pekalongan for example. According to detik.com, residents in Pekalongan Regency were shocked by three videos of alleged child abduction circulation on various social media. In the video, it is narrated that two perpetrators of child abduction have been put into a truck. This is just one of the examples. There is still other news about child abduction such as child abduction in a swimming pool in Bogor, child abduction with a motive of eating bakso, abduction of employer's children by domestic assistants, and many more. This issue is very important to pay attention to, so it's important to take care of children and give them more attention.

**A2:** The issue I noticed the most is how the police underestimated the children who presented evidence related to George's kidnapping, which could have helped them find George faster. The police here seemed to feel that only they could solve the case and moved slowly, as if the kidnapping was not an urgent matter.

**A3:** I did not find any issues when I read this story because I could easily understand the plot.

**A4:** Realism vs Fantasy, these stories often strike a balance between realistic settings and adventurous, unlikely scenarios. This can encourage conversations about the balance between escapism in fiction and realism in storytelling.

**4. Q: Did anything upset you or make you angry?**

**A1:** This novel suggests a potential misunderstanding or deception involving one of the Five. This may cause feelings of sadness or frustration for readers who have invested in a strong bond.

**A2:** So far so good, there is no something that make me upset or angry.

**A3:** What makes me angry is when the police forbid the children to intervene even though they



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found evidence, and in the end, it is they who find George and capture the kidnappers.

**A4:** I'm upset with the unpleasant attitude that George shows to Berta. In the story, George doesn't like Berta. We can see it in the way George responds to Berta's wishes. When Berta wants her dog to sleep with her in the room where George and others also sleep in that room, George refuses because Timmy doesn't like other dogs hanging around. "George picked up her ears a that bit of news! 'a dog!' she said. 'We can't have a dog here. Mine would never allow that. Would you, Timmy?'" What George says is in stark contrast to when Timmy and Berta's dog met. Timmy welcomed her dog. "Then he and the poodle played a most ridiculous game of dodge and run..." George responds to Berta's wishes with a grim face and it makes anyone who comes for the first time feel uncomfortable. George herself is arguably older than Berta but the way she responds is like a child. Even so, at the end of the story, George accepts the existence of Berta and her dog. "George heaved a sigh of relief. That was all right then. She wouldn't mind Berta as a girl, even though she was a silly girl."

5. What do you think of friendship when you read the novel and nowadays? Give some examples/ moments that was shown by the author show, and some examples/events that are seen nowadays.

**A1:** I think the friendship in the novel is well established. As we know, George has a stubborn nature. "'I said we must lock the doors and the windows, I said we must tell the police – and then Miss George has to go down all by herself into the garden!' she said." She also prefers to look like a man. With all of George's quirks, Julian and others still wanted to be friends with her no matter how stubborn she was everyone accepted her trait. Nowadays, this kind of friendship still can be seen in our daily lives. My experience for example. I like doing jokey things to my classmates. My

friends know about it and it's not uncommon for some to feel annoyed by my actions, but I keep the boundaries of joking as much as possible. I don't want my friends to be bothered by what I do. Even though I have a hobby of teasing my classmates, I still maintain a good relationship with my classmates. No one treats me as a stranger.

**A2:** Friendship is about prioritizing a friend in need over less urgent personal needs, as long as we are able. We find it in the novel that Jo is willing to go out at night to find out about Gringo. In nowadays, I find it when my friend helped me to take me home from railway station even though it was raining and also at night.

**A3:** The friendship shown in this novel is a friendship that often occurs in our lives. There are feelings of sadness and joy. The feelings of sadness were shown when George suddenly disappeared because he was kidnapped by kidnappers who thought she was Berta. The feelings of joy were shown when George was found and brought home by Julian, Dick, and Jo after being kidnapped for several days. An example of feeling sadness nowadays is when one of your friend's family members gets into an accident. As friends, we also feel the sadness that he feels. An example of feeling happiness nowadays is when your friend gets accepted into his dream university. As friends, we also feel that happiness.

**A4:** It gives us support, affection, and togetherness. In this novel, friendship is portrayed as a strong and supportive relationship. The five friends are always there for each other, both in joy and sorrow. They trust each other, respect each other, and help each other. Long-distance relationships are a form of friendship that involves using technology such as video calls, instant messaging, and social media to facilitate long-distance relationships. Friendships are maintained even when friends are in different geographical places.

From the sample questions and answers from the students above, it can be seen that

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students can answer questions according to instructions. These questions can hone students' critical reading skills. They began to understand the meaning and content of the story by elaborating their answers well. This is inseparable from the thematic syllabus that has been evaluated in learning critical reading with a reader response approach.

### Conclusions

The evaluation of thematic syllabus in learning critical reading with reader response approach proved effective to improve students' analytical skills because by answering questions given by lecturers, students can automatically think critically. It is proven that students can answer questions according to the context and indirectly write their critical thinking. Indirectly, students can think critically by seeing the side of struggle, friendship, and solidarity in the story.

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