



Teaching Character Development Through Movie Analysis: A Case Study Of Setting And Psychology In *The Hunger Games: The Ballad Of Songbirds And Snakes*

Ida Ayu Nadyaswari Putri Pidada¹, I Gusti Ngurah Parthama²

Universitas Udayana^{1,2}

Received: 2 November 2025
Revised: 14 November 2025
Accepted: 29 November 2025

Abstract

*This study examines how setting influences the psychological development of the main character in the movie *The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes* and explores its pedagogical relevance in literature and character education. Using William Kenney's theory of setting and Elizabeth Hurlock's theory of character development, the study analyzes the transformation of Coriolanus Snow as a result of his social environment. The findings highlight how literary and cinematic analysis can be applied in classroom settings to teach students about the interplay between environment and psychological growth. This article offers educators a model for using narrative texts to foster deeper understanding of character development and moral complexity.*

Kata Kunci: *Character Development, Setting, Psychological Changes, Literature, Literature Education*

(*) Corresponding Author: idaayu.nadyaswari@gmail.com¹

How to Cite: Pidada, I., & Parthama, I. (2025). Teaching Character Development Through Movie Analysis: A Case Study Of Setting And Psychology In *The Hunger Games: The Ballad Of Songbirds And Snakes*. *Jurnal Ilmiah Wahana Pendidikan*, 11(12.B), 330-333. Retrieved from <https://jurnal.peneliti.net/index.php/JIWP/article/view/12239>.

INTRODUCTION

Literary texts and movies serve not only as entertainment but also as tools for developing critical thinking, empathy, and psychological insight in students. In an educational context, stories and narratives can stimulate discussions around ethical dilemmas, emotional development, and identity. Movies, in particular, offer dynamic and engaging representations of character growth influenced by environment, culture, and social interaction. Their audio-visual nature makes them accessible and impactful for learners across various levels of education.

One of the most compelling aspects of storytelling in both literature and movie is character development. Understanding how and why a character changes over the course of a story allows students to critically engage with the psychological and emotional layers of narrative. This is especially useful in teaching literature and character education, where students are encouraged to explore not only what characters do, but what motivates them and how they are shaped by their settings.

In this context, setting and character development become central elements of literary and filmic analysis. According to Kenney (1966), setting encompasses not only the time and place in which the story unfolds, but also the atmosphere that surrounds the characters and influences their actions and decisions. A well-developed setting can act as a catalyst for conflict and transformation within a narrative.

Hurlock (1992) defines character development as the gradual psychological and emotional growth that occurs as a result of life experiences, environmental factors, and interpersonal relationships. Hurlock emphasizes that while some personality traits remain stable, others can shift over time due to exposure to new environments, challenges, and societal

pressures. This view aligns with other scholars such as McKee (1997), who suggests that a character's true nature is often revealed through the choices they make under pressure.

In literature classes, movie analysis can act as a bridge between theory and application, allowing abstract concepts such as personality transformation, ambition, morality, and psychological stress to be visualized and internalized. By identifying the factors that lead a character toward growth or decline, students develop interpretive skills that are transferable to real-life contexts.

This article investigates how setting shapes the protagonist's development in *The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes* and suggests its utility in educational settings. The movie offers a complex case study of Coriolanus Snow, whose psychological evolution reflects broader themes of power, ethics, and the human condition. Through this lens, the study proposes that cinematic texts can effectively be used to enhance students' understanding of character development and moral complexity in both literary and real-world settings.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive qualitative method. Data collection was conducted through close observation of the movie *The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes* (2023), with particular attention to scenes and dialogues that reflect the character's psychological transformation. The sample focused on the character of Coriolanus Snow, as portrayed through various environmental settings.

This research presents data without manipulation or statistical processing, focusing on the interpretation of narrative content. The primary sources in the development of this article include the selected movie itself and relevant supporting literature, including theoretical works by Kenney and Hurlock. The aim of this article is to provide deeper insight, particularly for educators and literature instructors, into how environmental factors in storytelling can influence character formation and be utilized for teaching purposes.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Capitol and the Academy

The Capitol and the Academy are portrayed as environments driven by wealth, status, and competition. Coriolanus Snow, despite his declining family status, is determined to restore his social rank. His psychological development is shaped by fear of poverty and public humiliation. Students can explore how the desire to conform to societal expectations can compromise personal ethics.

The Hunger Games Arena

The Arena becomes a space of moral ambiguity. As a mentor, Coriolanus initially helps his tribute, Lucy Gray, out of duty, but later uses manipulation and fear to assert control. His moral descent is evident in his acceptance of violence as a means to survive and succeed. Analyzing this can help students understand the impact of trauma and environmental stress on decision-making.

District 12

Exiled to District 12, Coriolanus experiences a reversal of power. The harsh setting forces him to choose between love and survival. His betrayal of Lucy Gray marks the completion of his psychological transformation. Educators can use this setting to discuss moral

conflict and the influence of environment on ethical choices.

Educational Implications

This movie can be a powerful resource in literature and character education curricula. Educators may find the movie particularly effective in illustrating how setting functions not merely as a backdrop, but as a critical influence on character psychology and moral decision-making. By guiding students through the layered analysis of setting and its psychological effects on Coriolanus Snow, teachers can prompt deeper reflection on issues such as ambition, ethical compromise, and the human response to social pressure. Discussions generated from such a movie can help students draw parallels between fictional character arcs and real-world situations, where environment, family background, and institutional structures shape one's development and values. Furthermore, the movie's exploration of internal conflict and external manipulation provides a valuable opportunity to address character education themes, such as empathy, responsibility, and the consequences of power. When used thoughtfully in the classroom, movie analysis like this encourages students not only to appreciate narrative structure but also to develop their own critical voice and moral reasoning.

CONCLUSION

The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes demonstrates that setting plays a critical role in shaping character psychology. By applying Kenney's and Hurlock's theories, this study offers a practical example of how movie analysis can be integrated into educational contexts to deepen students' understanding of character development. Teachers can use such narratives to cultivate empathy, ethical awareness, and critical thinking in learners.

Furthermore, the story of Coriolanus Snow allows educators to highlight the complexities of human motivation, revealing how external environments can nurture or destroy one's moral compass. Through classroom discussions, students can evaluate how social class, survival pressure, and institutional power influence ethical decision-making. This understanding contributes not only to academic knowledge but also to the emotional and moral maturity of students.

As education moves toward more holistic approaches, incorporating media literacy and psychological insight, movie analysis emerges as a powerful pedagogical tool. Analyzing movies like *The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes* allows educators to bridge entertainment with instruction, transforming passive viewing into active learning. Ultimately, such integration fosters multidimensional learning encouraging students to analyze, question, and relate literature to the world around them. It is hoped that the framework presented in this study will serve as inspiration for further incorporation of literary theory into practical, classroom-based interpretation of media and narrative.

REFERENCES

- Bordwell, D. et al., 2010. *Film art: An introduction* Vol. 7. McGraw-Hill, New York.
- Creswell, J.W., 2014. *Research design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. SAGE.
- Darmayanti, N. P. E., Jayantini, S. R., & Juniarta, I. W., 2024. An Analysis of Types of Setting in Literature to Construct Plot in Sherlock Holmes Movie. *Traverse: Journal of Language and Applied Linguistics*. 05, 34-43. <https://dx.doi.org/10.22334/traverse.v5i1>

- Hurlock, E., 1992. *Developmental Psychology: A Life Span Approach*, 6th ed. Tata McGraw-Hill, New Delhi.
- Kenney, W. P., 1966. *How to Analyze Fiction*. Monarch Press.
- Mckee, R., 1997. *Story: Substance, Structure, Style, and the Principles of Screenwriting*, 1st ed. Harper-Collins Publishers, New York.
- Susilowati, D., 2019. *The Beast Character Development As Seen in Beauty and the Beast Movie* (thesis). Yogyakarta: Universitas Teknologi Yogyakarta.