



ABC CLARION

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Words, Words, Words

by Sydney Peng

When people point to the decline of our generation, cell phones are often tossed in there, and where cell phones go, texting is sure to follow. Aside from (rightfully) getting blamed for driving accidents, texting has gotten a bad rep when literacy is concerned.

There's an entire language of acronyms over texting, as well as questionable grammar or punctuation and so many errors that even spellcheck screws up all the time. For a quintessential example, English language purists may clutch figurative pearls at seeing the phrase 'laugh out loud' reduced to 'lol' and sprinkled everywhere as punctuation, to the point where it doesn't even mean anything anymore.

Does this kind of shorthand

really indicate the end of civilization and literacy as we know it, however? I'm sure that if you walked up to any teenager prone to texting and asked them to spell out the acronym's actual wording, they'd be perfectly capable of doing so. Tell them to write a grammatically correct sentence, and they'd be perfectly capable of doing so as well, though commas might get a bit iffy.

Really, when evaluating the literacy of a generation, then perhaps one shouldn't judge it based on casual conversation. Listen to any dialogue between two people, in wildly different eras, and you're likely to find placeholder mumbles, repeated words, liberal use of 'thing' or 'stuff', and not many sentences that include more than two clauses.

Texting isn't meant to be some

kind of epic classic--it's just to get the point across, as quickly and simply as possible. After all, it has to be ten seconds faster to type 'lol' than 'Oh, that video was really funny!' It's a form of condensation, a method of compressing messages.

Is simplifying the English language a decline, then? On one hand, it'll be rather tragic that some words will be utterly forgotten save for a trivia question, confined to old books and dictionaries; meanwhile, elegant or long-winded sentence construction is likely heading to be a thing of the past. On the other, simpler English makes communication easier and faster, which is pretty useful nowadays. Should people be expected to type out whole sentences when three letters would suffice?

The speakers decide the language, and while I'm kind of dreading any writer using 21st century vernacular in their books, a la Mark Twain's novels with his contemporary slang, I have to say, texting and shorthand does

make communication quick and easy. And whether one likes it or not, it's definitely ingrained itself into the generation and its communication, so it isn't likely to go away soon.



What Monsters Truly Are by Audrey Zhou

Children believe that monsters roar and are covered in spikes, slime, and fur. They think that monsters smell like rotten eggs and that they eat humans for dinner.

Children believe that monsters are mean. That they have red eyes. And will tear apart anyone they've seen. And in one bite, That they will literally eat them alive.

Children believe that monsters are incapable of speech. For their minds are shallow and empty, That they are stupid beasts. But then how is it That they always win in our nightmares?

I believe that monsters will be smiling and that they are covered in skin. I believe monsters seem inviting And try to earn our trust before Their quest begins.

I believe that monsters act sweet and have kind eyes. That they are human-like. They wear a smile to seem pleased While they await Our fear that comes with night.

I believe that monsters are masters of word And can even read our thoughts. They use our faces to tell what is unheard. I believe that monsters will hurt us with language until we can't be hurt anymore. I believe that a monster is nothing like what we are taught And that a skilled monster never gets caught.

The Old Man and the Boy

by Paschal Park

The Old Man was outside again. The Boy was too terrified to act and decided to run back home.

"What happened?" cried his mother once the Boy crashed through the door. The Boy paid no mind and ran up to his room.

The Boy was with his friends playing on their phones. The Boy was stuck on a level in his game but his friends stopped playing and started to talk about girls. The Boy was confused and scared so he decided to find new friends.

The Boy joined the high school's "Academic Club" and met some new faces. They were older but they seemed to like the Boy. They made him the club secretary and he would be sent out to keep the teachers distracted. The club members said they needed to study and the Boy was just too fun and distracting so he had to be the club secretary or else no studying will ever be done. The Boy was ecstatic to have made new friends especially with the Guy and the Girl.

The Guy was throwing a party and asked the Boy if they could throw it at his house while once

his mother was gone. The Guy also asked the Boy to get some "groceries" for the big party. The Boy told the Guy that he doesn't have any money on him so the Guy told him to grab his mother's wallet and take some money. She won't even notice, he said.

The Boy was amazed by how many people came. Once everyone settled in the Guy asked the Boy to get some last minute groceries. The Boy couldn't find some of the items on the list. He tried asking some of the supermarket clerks but the bitter Old Lady kicked him out. The Boy was scared to upset the Guy.

The Boy came in not knowing what to expect. The Boy was surprised to see everyone gone. The Girl said everyone left to finish their school project. The Boy tried to explain how he couldn't find some of the items and the Girl listened intently with a myriad of sighs and mhm's. She pulled out a rolled up, wrinkled piece of paper and asked if the Boy wanted some. The Boy was puzzled and the Girl gave up and decided to help herself.

The Boy heard the sound of

cars pulling into the driveway but it was just the Guy and the others. The Girl groaned and asked if the Boy had any issues to which the Boy happily replied no. She seemed unsatisfied.

The Boy never realized how much her breath smelled (it smelled like his Uncle's). The guys outside kept yelling unintelligibly but the Boy followed the Girl and chose to ignore them. The Boy was starting to almost gag and instinctively pushed the Girl off. She seemed unsatisfied.

The Girl left the house and the Boy watched the cars pull out of the driveway. Later that night, his mother angrily berated the Boy for "God knows what" but the Boy just wanted to know what was on the last minute grocery list.

Paschal Park The Boy wasn't allowed back into the Academic Club and was called down to the Main Office. He was suspended for "wrongful actions" and "unjustifiable sexual affronts". The Boy was confused and began to cry but there weren't any tissues.

Moral: Don't go near the Old Man

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