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# **Cinematography and Environmental Value Positions: Analyzing the Film ‘The Lorax’**

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## **Author’s contribution**

*The sole author designed, analyzed, interpreted and prepared the manuscript.*

## **Article Information**

DOI: 10.9734/AJESS/2021/v24i330578

## **Open Peer Review History:**

This journal follows the Advanced Open Peer Review policy. Identity of the Reviewers, Editor(s) and additional Reviewers, peer review comments, different versions of the manuscript, comments of the editors, etc are available here: <https://www.sdiarticle5.com/review-history/78204>

**Review Article**

**Received 07 October 2021**  
**Accepted 14 December 2021**  
**Published 16 December 2021**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The literariness of the film “The Lorax” was determined through the environment-related sequences enhanced by dominating cinematic elements, such as, cinematography, dialogues, and sound effects. Literary concepts evidenced in the film are literature is languages, imitation, an organic unity, value-laden, imagination, a product of social construct, culture, and history. The P.D. 705, the Revised Forest Code of the Philippines is found to be the top-most violation of the characters in “The Lorax” with a range of five (5) environment-related issues, (1) abusive harvesting system; (2) clear cutting of trees/illegal logging/deforestation; (3) conversion of agriculture land to human habituation; (4) desertification; and (5) land-use management. Among the environmental issues, air pollution/commercialized air, on the other hand, is instituted to have a greater number of laws violated. On the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (UNCHE) principles, the second principle, “The natural resources of the earth, including the air, water, land, flora and fauna and especially representative samples of natural ecosystems, must be safeguarded for the benefit of present and future generations through careful planning or management, as appropriate”, turned out to be the leading principle violated by “The Lorax” characters. Based on the characters’ belief statements, 14 environmental value positions surfaced. Social revealed to be the leading as religious and recreational are found to be the least value positions. The research participants indicated four (4) modes of actions. Ecomanagement has the most number, followed by consumer action, then persuasion, and political is bared to have a lesser frequency. Four statements on the ethical standards for Filipinos were uncovered by the research participants. However, the latter revealed a greater number of statements of belief, respectfully trailed by statements of intention, responsibility and accountability, and commitment.

*Keywords: The Lorax; environmental value position; cinematography.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Greening the literature thru “The Lorax” film is a study which was anchored on the brainchild theory of Ausubel, the meaningful learning theory. Ausubel resists that learning is attained through a meaningful process of relating new events or items to already existing cognitive concepts or propositions – meaning discerning new items on existing cognitive pegs. He further claims that meaning is not an implicit response, but a clearly articulated and precisely differentiated conscious experience that emerges when potentially meaningful signs, symbols, concepts, or propositions are related to and incorporated within a given individual’s cognitive structure on a non-arbitrary and substantive basis [1].

The concepts of green education can be best introduced through the sensory and auditory effects of movies. These effects convey messages better than the printed or spoken words. Moreover, the unique qualities of film created strong experiences for viewers – thus, making it easy for learners to relate new experiences to the existing concepts they have [2].

Aristotle’s mimetic theory was also considered in this study. The theory states that literature is representation of life. The mimetic or classical theory holds that a literary work of arts is re-creation, a re-presentation, or a re-combination of what is found in reality. Further, it proposes that literature mirrors life. It upholds that a literary work gives the readers an insight into reality [3]. The correspondence theory of knowledge of reality represents accurate correspondence of statements about images of reality with the actual reality that the statements or images are attempting to represent [4].

Verbal arts like the environment-themed literatures can raise environmental awareness and consciousness. These can make people, more especially the children, one of the most vulnerable sectors, recognize the crystal-clear realities of the ceaseless environmental deterioration.

On one hand, combined arts like films, the products of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, can enhance learning and realization on the current situation of the environment through their informative and

persuasive cinematography. Thus, literatures and films are perfect partners in making the younger generation, the future of the world, see the sad whereabouts of the environment and at the same time persuade them to become responsive to the state mandate as nation builders and to the seventh environmental principle as responsible stewards of nature.

The theories of Ausubel and Aristotle also gain support in the critical theory and communicative action of Habermas. The theory has the goal of identifying and reconstructing universal conditions of possible understanding. Moreover, it posits that there are universal conditions, regardless of language or culture, under which people can reach understanding.

In relation to this study, although the film was produced by French nationals, translated into Spanish, Russian, German, and Italian, and was primarily launched in theatres in North America, but since the environment is a universal concern, the research participants were still able to understand the message that the film wants to put across. What can be more outstanding is the fact that the research participants were able to realize that with their interventions as reflected in their modes of citizen actions, enhanced by their environmental ethics, they can make a difference by essentially creating a greater and greener world.

Lastly, this study can also be tailored on Kollmuss and Agyeman’s Early United States Linear Models. These models are the most influential frameworks in understanding behaviour. The early models examining the connection between knowledge and action focused on humans as rational. These frameworks utilized a linear progression, in which environmental knowledge led to environmental awareness and concern, which, in turn, led to pro-environmental behavior. Therefore, these theories assumed that education would result in increased pro-environmental behavior.

The early linear frameworks have been termed ‘information deficit’ models of public understanding and action. “The Lorax” and “The World is Too Much with Us” are good sources of environmental knowledge which fostered the environmental awareness and concern of the research participants and eventually helped them develop pro-environmental behaviour [5].

Throughout the years, the environment has been overly used by mankind beyond its regeneration rate. Natural cycles of environmental resources have been disturbed by innovative interventions so as to pressure the environment to produce more than what it can offer to the extent of incapacitating it from its natural full recovery. Hence, human exploitation has caused the environment to lose its Eden-like features.

Environment losses have been affecting the depth and circumference of the world. To combat this global concern, the United Nations (UN), through its brain-child initiative, the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment, established the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) which primarily aims to provide a basis for comprehensive consideration and coordinated action within the UN system to counter environment problems.

To enable a sound management of the environment by the government-members of the UN, the 1992 Rio Conference on Environment and Development constituted a huge leap towards the adoption of a set of principles. It is in this conference where the comprehensive plan of action – Agenda 21 and the Statement of Forest Principles were adopted. In addition, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and Convention on Biological Diversity were opened for signature. Two (2) years later, the UN Convention to Combat Desertification was opened for signature, too.

The 1987 Montreal Protocol was very successful in reducing the global production, consumption, and emissions of ozone-depleting substances (ODSs). Its achieved climate protection is far larger than the reduction target of the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol. However, despite the massive efforts on environmentalism, application is lacking and this can be redound to educational application. The R.A. 9512, the National Environmental Awareness Act mandates the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) to integrate environmental education in their curriculum. However, as observed by the researcher in the University of Eastern Philippines (UEP), the infusion of green education is not reflected in curricular subjects like English language and literature. Though not reflected in the syllabi, there are literature teachers in the College of Arts and Communication, UEP University College,

who would incorporate environmental topics in few selections like 'Riders to the Sea'.

In the study conducted to audit the green education in the UEP in 2013, it was found out that the integration of environmental education was only "emerging" in the College of Education (COED) – University Laboratory High School [6]. To answer the current environmental problem on climate change, during the 160<sup>th</sup> Academic Council of the UEP, there was a motion raised for the inclusion of a three-unit subject on Ecology as a preparatory course in Environment Engineering (UEP, 2011).

As a classroom teacher, the researcher finds literature instrumental in infusing green education not as a highly technical and scientific agenda but as a carrier of information to awaken the learners about the current whereabouts of the environment and of inspiration to accelerate their initiatives to preserve the nature for themselves and for the future generations [7,8]. An environment-inspired poem, "The World is Too Much with Us" can be used to introduce green education.

As a millennium educator, the researcher believes that introducing green education can be his greatest contribution in strengthening the universal and the Philippine policy in envisioning an environmentally literate and proactive citizenry imbued with a sense of responsibility to care for, to protect, and to enhance environmental quality conducive to their well-being; supportive of the nation's economic development; and united with the country's pursuit of peace, social justice, and equity in the use of natural resources.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The study used a Kilgore lesson plan and two (2) session guides. The first session was an hour discussion of William Wordsworth's "The World is Too Much with Us". The objectives of the session are as follows: (1) cognitive domain, identify the figures of speech embodied in the poem, unlock uncommon words for vocabulary building, identify the theme, point of view, and tone of the poem, and name some environmental issues subtly mentioned in the poem; (2) affective domain, appreciate the beauty of living in the world where there is balance of nature and instill significant values in caring for and loving the nature; and (3) psychomotor domain, propose interventions to counter the identified environmental issues. The routinary greetings of

the teacher to the students will be the lead-off of the lesson proper.

A review on the previous lesson on Literacy Appreciation Skills: The Poem, where the teacher asked three (3) questions which were positively responded by the research participants. As regards motivation, the research participants silently and critically listen to a three-minute environment-themed music video to be played by the teacher. After this, while the students attentively listen, the teacher briefly elucidated what the children can do to care for and love the environment.

Using power point presentation, the teacher introduced William Wordsworth's "The World is Too Much with Us". In the discussion phase, the teacher was guided with five (5) statements, specifically, (1) the thematic message of the poem; (2) the lines from the poem and the figurative language embodied; (3) the vocabulary building through the uncommon words used in the poem; (4) the point of view and tone of the poem; and (5) the environment-related messages of the poem.

For the evaluation, while the students' eyes were closed, they attentively listen to the song, "Colors of the Wind". Then, the students identified the contemporary pressing-most issues and proposed parallel interventions. Before the end of the class, the teacher instructed the learners to photocopy related readings on environmental principles, Philippine environmental laws, and environmental ethics for Filipinos. Instructional materials for this session included laptop, LCD projectors, speaker, and music player.

The second session was also slated for an hour. It was intended for the film viewing of the anime environment-themed film "The Lorax". It kicked off with the teacher's overview of the film, to be followed by the briefing, the film viewing proper, and the giving of the take-home assignment. Since the class was only good for an hour, the said film viewing was be done during the vacant hours of the research participants. The film viewing was closely monitored by the researcher by having it done at the research participants' permanent classroom. After the 86-minute film viewing, the students have identified the environmental issues exemplified in the film; watched the film critically; and took down notes on significant characters, lines, events, and the like from the film. To achieve these objectives,

the researcher utilized the LCD TV, speaker, "The Lorax" VCD, notepads, and marker.

The third session was an hour meet-up devoted to the discussion of the film "The Lorax". Before coming to class, the researcher already prepares sufficient copies of the selected passages/lines from "The Lorax" film for students to easily grasp or learn environmental issues. During the class proper, the researcher reviewed the students on "The Lorax". Then, using the *completing the picture* as the lead technique and the *quote unquote* as the supporting, the research participants received copies of the passages/lines chosen. They were asked to read and note down any question they would like to ask of other research participants (who have different passages/lines). After about eight (8) to 10 minutes, the teacher asked each student to pair with another student who has been working on a different/passage line. Together, they exchanged questions, and, where possible, answered. After this, the teacher formally discussed "The Lorax" film. The students called out questions which were not yet resolved. On one hand, the teacher asked further questions and facilitated discussions.

To ensure the authenticity of the results, the third session was videotaped and recorded for the transcription of students' oral responses. For the smooth flow of the discussion, the researcher prepared 10 guide questions. While some of the questions were researcher's-made some others were taken and/or adapted from the UNC-Chapel Hill's Environmental Resource Program and the American Forest Foundation through the Project Learning Tree's "PreK-8 Environmental Education Activity Guide" [9].

## 2.1 Data Analysis

Analysis of data was done based on the sequence of objectives rostered in the introduction. The videotaped/recorded class discussions were transcribed and along with the students' written outputs were analyzed. The researcher determined the literary concepts embodied in selected environment-related sequences of the film with the aid of cinematic elements, actor/acting, cinematography, dialogue, music, production design, sound effects, and special effects.

The elicited research participants' concepts on environmental issues enabled the researcher to identify the Philippine environmental laws and

UN Conference on the Human Environment environmental principles violated by the characters in "The Lorax". Based on the characters' quotable quotes (belief statements) as recalled by the research participants, the researcher was able to describe and interpret the environmental value positions. To enrich the substance of the study, the researcher did a separate discussion on the environmental value positions, which the research participants missed to include. The interventions raised by the research participants accorded the researcher to identify their modes of citizen actions, wherefrom, their environmental ethics surfaced, which were appropriately categorized by the researcher based on the Environmental Ethics for Filipinos.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Literature as a verbal form of art is primarily words. Readers create visual images out of these words. Film, the product of the twenty-first century, a concrete example of a combined art, on the other hand, uses both words and images, coated with cinematic elements to put across ideas. Literature and film may use different medium but they both share the same foundation and reasons, to give aesthetic experience, emotional and intellectual appeals, and humanistic values to their respective target, the end-recipients.

#### 3.1 Literature is Language

Language is a primer medium in literature. Through dialogues, the story as well as the expressions and motivations of the characters in "The Lorax" are brought forth. The lines spoken and manner of delivery give justice to the characters' characterizations.

Dialogues played a very important role in stressing the film's literariness due to its language. Alliteration, assonance, consonance, and consonance are found to be present in some lines conveyed by characters. On one hand, onomatopoeia and personification are figures of speech injected in few lines.

Alliteration, the repetition of the same consonant sound at the beginning of successive words is found in the line below, as uttered by Grammy Norma.

*At the far end of town where  
the grickle-grass grows and  
the wind smells slow-and-  
sour when it blows and no  
birds ever sing excepting old  
crows... is the street of  
the Lifted Lorax.*

Aside from Lifted Lorax, alliteration is also observed in the names of animals, such as Swamee-Swans, the Brown Bar-ba-loots, and the Truffula Trees.

Assonance, a sequence of words in which the same vowel sounds are stressed, is another way in which the repetition of sounds is conveyed in "The Lorax".

*So I quickly invented my  
Super-axe-hacker which  
whacked off four Truffula  
Trees at one smacker.*

Assonance, a sequence of words in which the same vowel sounds are stressed, is another way in which the repetition of sounds is conveyed in "The Lorax".

Consonance, known as the repetition of consonant sounds at the end of stressed syllables, is also embedded in one of the lines of Lorax.

*You're glumping the pond  
where the Humming-Fish  
hummed! No more can they  
hum, for their gills are all  
gummed.*

Onomatopoeia, a word that imitates the sound that it names, is an example of figure of speech used in the film. In a sequence, Dr. Seuss attempts to describe the Once-ler and his Whisper-ma-phone, he says,

*SLUPP! Down slupps the  
whisper-ma-phone to your  
ear...*

The use of the word "slupp" to describe the sound that is created when the whisper-ma-phone slides down to where one would be standing helps the reader visualize what thing would make that kind of noise.

The line of Audrey below exemplifies personification. Personification humanizes the characteristics of inanimate things.

*Trees clean the air.*

The dialogues of Audrey set her characterization in the film. The words she conveys complement her facial expression and the movement of her hands. Indeed, both her verbal and non-verbal communication speak for who she is and the values she possesses – her being ecologic. She is a young girl who is curious with real trees.

*Those are trees. Real ones. They used to grow all around here. And people said that the touch of their tufts was softer than anything, even silk. And they smelled like butterfly milk.*

The lines of Audrey above were conveyed to Ted, while she shows a wall-sized painting of truffula trees. Tilt-up is used to establish Audrey's exaltation on trees. The camera movement is supported by the low angle camera shot to concretize Audrey's imposing dream of seeing a real tree.

The dialogues of Lorax, clearly stand for his being a guardian of the forest.

*"Look, everyone here needs the trees. And you're chopping 'em down. So we've got a big problem."*

In the movie, Lorax is portrayed as an orange-furred shortish creature. His characterization is enhanced by the color of his body as psychosociolinguistically, orange is the color of social communication and interaction. It stimulates physical confidence and enthusiasm. Thus, no matter how small he is, he can vouch to guard the forest and be the bravest messenger for its trees.

Since "The Lorax" is primarily produced for children, some dialogues are conveyed through songs, the film being partly musical in genre. The dialogue-song below reveals the selfishness and greed of the Young Once-ler.

*"This is the place!  
These Truffula Trees are  
just a  
what I need!"*

When for the first time, the Young Once-ler reached the Old Thneedville, he saw the Truffula Valley, covered with blue skies, green grass, a flowing river, woodland creatures and hundreds of tall truffula trees with their colourful tufts swaying in the afternoon breeze. A bright frame of extreme wide shot is used to establish the marvellous beauty of the vicinity. Point-of-view shots are strategically sequenced to direct the Young Once-ler of the many beautiful creatures biologically living in the unforested forest.

The Eden-like features of the valley connote observance of ecological balance and or symbiotic relationship and untouched by human interventions - innately virgin. The fauvist-inspired colors of the tufts of truffula trees bring joy, comfort, and pleasure.

Ted successfully planted the last truffulla seed at the middle of the Town Square. Together with Audrey, he piles pieces of rocks around the seed. The pile is his own way of telling other people that he truly cares and loves trees and that he wants to protect them from whatever threats. As the seed grows its stem and blossoms its leaves, a beam of lightness starts to usher, until finally, the silhouettes of the sky at the Old Thneedville are uncovered by blue rays. The blues in the sky escort messages of devotion, contemplation, peacefulness, and calmness. A frame of blue marks the end of the film to reinforce its audience, more especially the kids, to care for the environment, to be responsible stewards of Mother Nature by being exemplars of conservation and preservation of the natural resources or by simply speaking for the trees. Lastly, it leaves an impression, that more than anything else, Lorax believes and trusts them with all his heart.

### 3.2 Literature is Imitation

"The Lorax" is a re-presentation of the world's reality. The haven-like features of the Truffula Valley could have been preserved if humans harmoniously interact with the environment.

**Table 1. Literature is language**

Line/Dialogue	Type of Rhetorical Device/Figure of Speech	Seq
"At the far end of town where the grickle-grass grows and the wind smells slow-and-sour when it blows and no birds ever sing excepting old crows... is the street of the Lifted Lorax."	Alliteration	22
"So I quickly invented my Super-axe-hacker which whacked off four Truffula Trees at one smacker."	Assonance	12
"You're glumping the pond where the Humming-Fish hummed! No more can they hum, for their gills are all gummed."	Consonance	30
"Whisper-ma-phone," he says, "SLUPP! Down slupps the whisper-ma-phone to your ear..."	Onomatopoeia	32
"Trees clean the air."	Personification	88

It is never bad to log. But indiscriminate harvesting could have been avoided and replenishment could have been fostered.

In the film, some imitated real-life situations include exploitation of nature i.e. over-cutting of trees, adding pollutants to streams; man's power over nature; and youth's active involvement in environment causes.

The immaculate pristine of the Truffula forest could have not been spoiled into wilderness as landscape could have not been desolated. But as Brett Love puts it, once begun, the exploitation of nature is difficult to stop, so it is best not to start.

The birds nesting on top of a truffula tree all fly higher as the Young Once-ler cut it down. The thwacking sound effects is enhanced by a slow motion of a high angle shot to convey the powerless falling of the chopped tree. Scared with what they have witnessed, all other animals ran away.

Upon the go signal of the Young Once-ler, Brett and Chet chop down trees using axes. Their characterization is aided with their antagonist laughter.

While the background music, "How Bad can I be?" is playing, the Young Once-ler and his family are throwing the axes higher. This sequence shows their antagonism and power over the relative Others, the environment. The background is pigmented with red and so all the truffula trees become red, as well. The use of this color aided the characterization of the Young Once-ler's family as ambitious, aggressively domineering, ruthless, violent, and brutal.

Because of the spumes produced by the Thneed Company which are all afield down the flowing water, the humming fish become sick. The contaminated air make the Swomee-Swans cough. Since no tree is left other than stumps, the Bar-Ba-Loots starve from hunger.

The first time Ted pays visit in the Old Thneedville, he sees a long and wide grassless and deserted plains of a thousand stumps. The wind smells slow-and-sour. Wide-long shot is used to express the dramatic situation aided with a dramatic musical background.

The thwack of the last truffula tree signals the sad truth that the Young Once-ler cannot chop trees anymore. The slow motion of the falling tree and the long shot from the perspective of Lorax and the Young Once-ler to convey aided a dramatic sensation.

*Young Once-ler: "And nothing is going to stop me."*

*Lorax: "Well, that's it the very last one. That may stop you."*

Coated with dark background and dry musical effect, a high angle shot is used to capture the bird's-eye-view of the valley and to concretize the idea of the subject as less significant, diminished, submissive, humiliated, and powerless.

The townspeople in the Thneedville could have lost their chance from enjoying what a real tree looks like, if it were not for someone like Ted who makes them see wonders that only real tree brings. As Lorax puts it,

*“Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It’s not.”*

As a whole, the findings revealed on the concept of literature as imitation as evident in “The Lorax” confirm Aristotle’s mimetic theory which holds that a literary work of art is re-creation, a re-presentation, or a re-combination of what is found in reality.

### 3.3 Literature is an Organic Unity

Organic unity is the form and meaning of literary material which ecologically work together. In “The Lorax” each cinematic element, actor/acting, cinematography, dialogue, music, production design, sound effects, and special effects supports in cohesively achieving the purpose of educating the children (target audience) on the importance of environmental stewardship.

Symbolic images are used to concretize the joy of living in an Eden-like haven and the gloom of a wasteland barren. As an Eden-like haven, the whole area is planted with hundreds of beautifully standing truffula trees which tufts vary in colors, where the stacks of Baby animals topple over, and which fruits feed the Bar-Ba-Loots. The deep

blue flowing water is a home to three Humming Fish and the visiting Swomee-Swans. All of these animals are enjoying the grass and wet lands under the arms of the blue skies.

On the other hand, the wasteland barren, is filled with nothing other than stumps and ashes. The sky is overcrowded with silhouettes which create an air of mystery. The flowing water starts to clog until finally it has become a messy mudfield. To establish the wretchedness that the sequence brings, camera shots and angles are in total shades above normal.

Since the day Lorax and all the animals left, the Young Once-ler caged his self in the inhospitable surrounding of the Old Thneedville, in isolation. His moustache can speak for his immeasurable regrets. He does not want to talk to any one unless s/he brings him 15 cents, a nail, and a shell of a great-great-great-grandfather snail. He brought with him a sack of marshmallow, which he fed to the animals the first time he reached the Truffula Valley. So when he became a little closer with Ted, he asked the latter to give him marshmallow, too. For him the marshmallow is more than a munch stuff as it reminds him of the great friendship he once had with the animals, before his mind was totally corrupted by his selfish dream.

**Table 2. Literature is imitation**

<b>Imitated Real-life Situation</b>	<b>Cinematic Element</b>	<b>Seq</b>
Exploitation of nature <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Over-cutting of trees</li> <li>▪ Adding pollutants to streams</li> </ul>	<u>Cinematography</u> Use of high angle shot, dark shades of the frame/background <u>Production design</u> Stumps of trees, absence of various species, wasteland <u>Music</u> Dry musical background <u>Sound effects</u> Thwacking	21
Man’s power over nature	<u>Production design</u> Flying axes <u>Music</u> “How Bad can I be?”	77
Youth’s active involvement in environment causes	<u>Dialogue</u> <i>“Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It’s not.”</i>	50



The concrete area circled by a pile of rocks is one consistent symbol in the film. It is like the *musuleo* of the first chopped truffula tree, where Lorax and animals paid tribute. It is the same area, where the word “UNLESS” is carved and where Ted is standing as he open his palms to catch, taken using the extreme close-up shot to establish the subject’s prime importance, the last truffula seed. Finally, after Ted successfully planted the last truffula seed, Lorax goes back to the Old Thneedville to visit the Old Once-ler. Lorax stands on the pile of rocks and therefrom hugs the latter.

As the guardian of the forest, Lorax’ compassion for the trees timelessly reigns. Lorax bravely opposes the construction of the Thneeds Company. But, the greed of the Young Once-ler temporarily won over him. The day to day thwacking of the truffula trees seems unbearable to him. He felt insulted and maltreated by the Young Once-ler’s family. Yet, he remains firm with his responsibility to guard the forest and the flora and fauna habituating there. When the last truffula tree was chopped down, he decided to lead a massive march, enjoined by all the animals, to find a new habitat, which they can call a home anew.

Indeed, the findings cited above vertically articulate the claims of Ausubel that the meaning is not an implicit response, but a clearly articulated and precisely differentiated conscious experience that emerges when potentially meaningful signs, symbols, concepts, or propositions are related to and incorporated within a given individual’s cognitive structure on a non-arbitrary and substantive basis.

The Young Once-ler enjoyed the glory of his greed when he manipulated the Truffula Valley. It was not until the last tree was cut that he realized all his mistakes. As he ages, his eyes become yellowish, which conveys his being coward. So, he decides not to talk with anyone else again. But he wears a pair of greened gloves. The gloves show that even if he is mocked by his cowardice he remains hopeful, that the had been wasteland which he caused will be able to re-engineer its pristine beauty, with the help of someone who will bravely plant and speak for the trees.

### 3.4 Literature is Value-laden

Literature is the handmaiden of values. “The Lorax”, through the beliefs statements of the characters identified 14 environmental value positions, namely, aesthetic, cultural, ecological, economic, educational, egocentric, ethical/moral, health, legal, political, recreational, religious, scientific, and social.

The once proud, greed, and authoritative Young Once-ler changed into someone grated with humility and bloomed with peace of mind. He admitted all his faults. He repented and looked forward to correct his shortcomings.

**Table 3. Literature is Value-Laden**

Values	Situation	Seq
Social value	<u>Dialogue</u> “So you’d hammer one of nature’s innocent creatures?” As the guardian of the forest, it is the social obligation of Lorax to take care of the species living in the Truffula valley. Thus, he asks the Old Once-ler not to maltreat the innocent creatures like Pipsqueak, the baby Bar-Ba-Loot.	24
Repentance and Hope	After admitting what the Old Once-ler had done wrong in the Truffula Valley, he started to repent. He may have grown old but he never lose hope that he would be able to inspire and persuade a young one to plant the last truffula seed.	66
Strong family ties	Ted’s family always values family time together. In spite of external pressures, they frequently find time to dine together and to enjoy week-end family time.	12
Ecological value	Ted is only 12 years old. But he is more than his age. He bravely fights against the selfish Mayor and capitalist, whose only wish is to be the town’s richest man. He wins the heart of the young ones of his generation to care for the trees. Also, he is able redignify the adults’ love for trees.	82

Ted is a 12-year old boy. But he is more than his age. The greatness of his love for trees had inspired him to courageously battle against the most powerful oppressors in town. Himself, Ted is an icon of inspiration. He may be small, but he got a big heart for the trees. His unsullied voice becomes his winning piece to persuade his peers and those younger than him to allow trees to grow; and to make those older than him believe in trees, again.

Apart from the ecological values embedded in the film, strong family bond is also emphasized. Ted's family may live in the plastic and fake Thneedville but their love as a family can never be questioned. As a family they find time to eat together. The three-shot camera angle taken during one of their supper defines the kind of family that Ted has.

### 3.5 Literature is Imagination

The power of imagination brings magic in literature. It crystallizes human's passion to unleash creativity. The film kicks off with few words from Lorax. It is as if the audience of the film are watching right at the metropolis theatre. Eye-level shot is used to establish that Lorax is genuinely talking to the viewers. He wants to leave an impression that he might be as powerful as other deities he shares the same heart with the audience, the mortal beings, to care for and love the trees. As the curtain unveils, musical dialogues are serenaded while the camera strategically moves from one of its types to another so as to describe the what to see in the New Thneedville.

The New Thneedville is depicted as a city that is plastic and fake, a town without nature, not one living tree. Electric trees line the streets instead of street lamps. Plastic flowers pop up in time with the music complete with plastic buzzing bees (mechanical voice) attached to wires.

The plasticity of the New Thneedville is supported with the food that the townspeople eat. Manufactured jelly-like vegetable and fruits serve as the main dish of families.

Upon hearing from Audrey that she likes to see a real tree, Ted asks his Mom to direct him to a place where he can find the latter. But his Mom insists that trees surround their house. Further, she elaborates that they are the latest oak-automatic model which at the wink of the thumb can transform from one season to another. The

animals in the film are not portrayed as extremely non-human animals. The Humming Fish welcome the Young Once-ler with a rhythmic song. Since rooster is nowhere to be found in the Truffula Valley they initiately crow to signal the coming of the dawn.

### 3.6 Literature is a Product Of Social Construct

Social construct posits the idea that what is real depends on what is socially accepted. "The Lorax" is a film that promotes social construction of environmental concerns. It is supported by Linda Kalof [10] in her article, "Understanding the Social Construction of Environmental Concern". The film has been taped and produced for the medium is socially constructed as instrumental in educating people, more especially the kids, on environmental stewardship.

In the New Thneedville, the people do not want to know where the waste and chemicals go. It shows people's passivity on environmental issues as a result of their unfavourable level of environmental consciousness. Somehow, the townspeople believe that solid waste management is not a personal concern but a concern of the local government officials, instead.

Ted and Audrey are the teen-age lead characters in the film. Their love for trees have inspired the townspeople to reignite their longing for trees to grow. James, et. al [11] as cited in the study of Virginia Morrow [12] on "Understanding Children and Childhood", concluded that children are seen as active social agents, who shape the structures and processes around them.

The Young Once-ler is portrayed as an extreme capitalist. In the study of Fajar Amrulloh Ahmad [13] on "An Analysis Marxism Alienation in *The Lorax Movie*", the capitalism of Young Once-ler is based on the social construction that capitalists control business merely for profit. The film regarded the Young Once-ler as someone who carelessly alienated his workers and other people in the New Thneedville to monopolistically protect his business from external threats.

O'Hare shares the same extent of capitalism with the Young Once-ler. His capitalist mind is triggered by being held as the most powerful figure in town as the Mayor. He sells commercialized fresh air and leaves the consumers with no choice. He does not want

anyone to intervene in the biggery of his business.

Without anyone's knowledge, O'Hare installed customized and misleading CCTVs in all areas of exit to the Old Thneedville. One time, through the CCTV, he caught Ted leaving the town. He warns Ted to refrain from going to the Old Once-ler's house again and better yet go back to his home to continue his family time. Ted wonders why O'Hare knows his family's recent activity. To advancedly hamper the possibility of the townspeople to be informed of the real trees, O'Hare covered Audrey's painting with thick tints of white. Together with the exit gate to the Old Thneedville, Audrey's painted wall was stamped with "Property of O'Hare, Inc.". These situations concretize how powerful local leaders are.

The Young Once-ler, together with his family, Aunt Grizelda, Brett, Chet, his Mom, and Uncle Ubb caused indiscriminate harvesting of all truffula trees in the Truffula Valley since Constance L. Russel, in his article on "The Social Construction of Other Animals," cited that human beings feel at home in this environment. Not only does nature then become separate from human, but as Barbara Noske points out, nature has become the Other and the lesser. The Young Once-ler's family maltreated and tortured the animals, the Bar-Ba-Loots, the Humming Fish, and the Swomee-Swans, as what Donna Haraway puts it, animals are the second best. People consider them as reduced humans and will always be sub-humans in a particular human culture.

In general, the Young Once-ler's family pay less care on the environment as humans are socially constructed as anthropocentric. At some point, humans regard their selves as the most important element of the earth's existence. Low angle shot is used when the Young Once-ler is conversing with Lorax. This shot shows how powerful, dominant, and menacing the Young Once-ler is as regards his eye and mind-view on nature.

The article on "Anthropocentrism: A Study on Environmental Philosophy" proposes that anthropocentrism is a point of view which promotes human interest even at the expense of basic interests of member of other non-human species, or of the environment as whole. In the case of the Young Once-ler's family, they fail to recognize the moral value of the non-human species.

### 3.7 Literature is Culture and History

Literature is indeed the soul of the nation. Through letters culture is preserved. Through words the hallmark of history is printed and re-printed. Culture is reflected in the film through the presence of Lorax, a mythical creature who is the guardian of the forest and who speaks for trees. He is the exact likeness of *Bathala*, the supreme Filipino deity; Demeter, the Greek goddess of agriculture; and Pan, the Greek god of flock and pasture.

Just like the other immortal deities, Lorax appears unnaturally. Sound effects and special effects aided the authenticity of the coming of Lorax as a mythical creature. The ground starts rumbling. There is a loud noise and a flash of light as a thunderstorm shoots out of the stump. Then a series of lightning bolts hit the stump causing an explosion that reverberates through the valley. The whole thunderstorm is sucked back into the stump and out pops, the Lorax.

Pedro M. Landa, through his article "Universal Myths and Symbols: Animal Creatures and Creation", conjectures those mythical ideas permeate all languages, culture, and lives. In the paper presentation by Emeka C. Ekeke and Chike A. Ekeopara [14] on "God, Divinities and Spirits in African Traditional Religious Ontology", it was highlighted that divinities like Lorax cover the personification of God's activities and manifestations. Thus, his love for the forest is beyond compare. Mythical creatures weep a thunder when the things they watch over would die. Lorax was sad and speechless when he saw a stump of a truffula tree. Yet, as the guardian of the forest, Lorax leads a tribute-ceremony to honor the first chopped truffula tree. Together with the animals, he brings rocks and place them to surround the stump.

Quotable sayings are good foundation of culture. In a conversation which Lorax had with the Young Once-ler, he uttered,

*"A tree falls the way it leans.  
Be careful which way you  
lean."*

In another sequence, at the Town Square, Ted's Mom, Cy, and the Maintenance Workers, sing in unison the quotable lyrics below.

*“You can’t reap what you  
don’t sow plant a seed inside  
the earth.”*

“The Lorax” is an electronic narration of how the Truffula Valley lost its innate beauty and of how the townspeople in the New Thneedville win back their love for real trees.

The film started through musical dialogues showing how happy, blessed, and contented the villagers are believing that the plasticity and fakeness of all the resources exactly contribute to the make-up of the New Thneedville as a paradise.

Through Ted and the Old Once-ler’s conversation, the setting was brought back to the genesis of the Truffula Valley, where it used to be an Eden-like haven, where the sky and the flowing water were still blue, the land was still filled with beautiful and tall truffula trees, where other species of flora were wildly growing and various forms of fauna were harmoniously living [15].

The fading in of another sequence leads to the coming of the intruders, the Young Once-ler’s family, who chopped down the truffula trees leaving none other than stumps and ashes. With the extreme devastation they caused the pristine flora and fauna were gone by the wind.

As the films get into its twilight, the condoled innocence and the faded love of the adults on real trees were saved by a young hero, Ted. Giorgio Facchi seals an idea that history is a sequence of events which is concealed in an immanent link of interconnections. Thus, “The Lorax” is grounded by history that eventually qualifies it as literature.

Although the present study focused on greening literature, the findings on the literariness of “The Lorax” are in congruence on the findings revealed in the study of Verano, whose study stroked on the streamlining of the IHL in literature via the film ‘Hotel Rwanda’. These studies suggest that films like “The Lorax” and “Hotel Rwanda” are literatures in cinematic form since they both inherit Ma. Antoinette C. Montealagere’s eight (8) concepts of literature, specifically, (1) literature is language; (2) literature is imitation, (3) literature is an organic unity; (4) literature is value-laden; (5) literature is imagination; (6) literature is a product of social

construct; (7) literature is the classics; and (8) literature is culture and history.

The presence of the lead protagonists Ted and Audrey and antagonists, O’Hare and the Young Once-ler’s family create frequent dramatic situations. Hence, “The Lorax” confirms with the study of Ahmad, that a movie is one of the literatures by consideration that it is being related to drama.

The present study also agrees to the literature of Eric Rohmer as cited in the study of Leah Vonderheide [16] on “Literariness in the Films of Rohmer”, that the director of “The Lorax” Chris Renaud is already the new author; the cinema itself, through the cinematic elements such as actor/acting, cinematography, dialogues, music, production design, sound effects, and special effects, are the language; and the camera is the pen.

The findings of this study agree with the study of Kristine Mae G. Balanon-Destura [17] on “Transcontextualizing Helen of Troy from the Iliad to its Movie Adaptations in 1956 and 2003” and the study of Jennifer Doak [18] on “Al Gore, ‘An Inconvenient Truth’ and Environmental Discourse in the Public Sphere”, which revealed that the cinematic elements such as actor/acting, cinematography, dialogues, music, production design, sound effects, and special effects can enhance the literary aspect of a film.

### 3.8 Research Participants’ Recall

Table 4 presents the environmental value positions of the characters (players) in “The Lorax” based on their quotable lines (belief statements). Aloysius O’Hare, known as O’Hare, the executive officer-mayor of the new Thneedville has two (2) environmental value positions, economic and egocentric. In the film, he is portrayed as a business-minded persona, who above all, only thinks of profit out from selling commercialized air. He once attends a business meeting with the two (2) Marketing guys who offer him a new way of packaging the air using handy bottles. His economic value position is revealed with this line,

*“So in other words, the more  
smog in the sky... the more  
people will buy.”*

O’Hare is also egocentric,

*“Find the seed.”*

He is very insistent to get what he really wants. He pays visit to Wiggin's house and pleases Ted's Mom and acts like he intimately knows the family just to get the last truffula seed. He even intrudes Ted's room to find for the latter.

Audrey, the love interest of Ted Wiggins, has aesthetic, educational, egocentric, and scientific environmental values. In the film, Audrey grows up without seeing a real tree. She becomes curious of what a real tree looks like because most of the time she hears stories about it. One day, using the descriptions she heard, she tries painting a backyard fence with truffula trees. When Ted sees the painted fence, Audrey, through her educational value, conveys him of this line,

*"Those are trees. Real ones. They used to grow all around here."*

She continues with her story, this time, with her aesthetic values.

*"And people said that the touch of their tufts was softer than anything even silk. And they smelled liked butterfly milk."*

The film also reveals a combination of aesthetic and egocentric environmental values of Audrey. It has long been a dream of Audrey to finally see and touch a tree.

*"I just want to see and the touch the tree. What I want more than anything in the whole world is to see a real living tree, growing in my backyard."*

Towards the end of the film, while at the park, almost ready to plant the last truffula seed, Audrey contests with O'Hare on the importance of trees. For a long time the townspeople, whom majority witness the arguments of Audrey and O'Hare, of the new Thneedville have been blinded with the truth about real trees. O'Hare mocks his constituents that trees are filthy, spewing sticky, nasty sap polluting the city and that they bring poisonous ants and stinging bees. This situation unleashes both her educational and scientific environmental values.

*"It's a lie! It's called photosynthesis;"*

*"Trees clean the air."*

Cy, the delivery man, works in the commercial air company of O'Hare. While he is consistently portrayed as an environmentally-passive person, as the direct sales man of O'Hare's bottled air, he is able to show a twist of his real identity, his concern for the environment through his ecological value. The revelation happens when O'Hare is having an argument against Audrey and Ted at the park. O'Hare summons the townspeople to support him not to allow Ted plant the tree. But since, nobody agrees with him, he calls the attention of Cy to convey his thought. To his dismay, Cy, pronounces these lines,

*"You don't know me, but my name's Cy. I'm just the O'Hare's delivery guy. But it seems like trees might worth a try, so I say let it grow."*

In support to Cy's thought of having the last truffula seed planted, Dan and Rose, a couple whose only son is sick caused by the commercialized air, disclose their ecological and health values,

*"Our son Wesley kind of glows. And that's not good, so we suppose, we should let it (the tree) grow."*

Dr. Seuss, the author of the book, "The Lorax," wherefrom the story and the title of the film are lifted, through his timeless quotation, also disposes his social environmental value position,

*"Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not."*

Grammy Norma, the cool and number one supporter and motivator of Ted in finding the Once-ler, manifests her aesthetic and economic environmental value positions. While, at the park, she joins the solid voice of the townspeople in their united battle cry for the planting of the last truffula seed, aesthetically, she sings,

*"I'm Grammy Norma, I'm old, and I've got gray hair. But I remember when trees were everywhere."*

Through her economic environmental value position, Grammy Norma proclaims that if trees are everywhere, fresh air will forever be free. Hence, the townspeople will no longer have to pay for the air.

*"Before, no one has to pay for the air."*

Lorax, being the guardian of the forest and the messenger of the trees, possesses a great number of environmental value positions, namely, ecological, educational, ethical/moral, legal, political, and social.

Cultural value position preserves human beliefs. In this sense, Lorax himself reveals his cultural value post when he introduces his self, as,

*"I am the Lorax, guardian of the forest."*

In the film, Lorax is very consistent with his love for the trees. Hence, he is unlikely to befriend the young Once-ler, the intruder in the truffula forest. He never wants any one to step into the forest to cut down trees. Both his ecological and social environmental positions are embedded through this belief statement,

*"That's right. And on behalf of the trees, get out."*

In an unexpected situation, Lorax appears at the Once-ler's office. Then, the Once-ler angrily confronts him, backs him down his balcony steps, falls backward, and hits the ground. The young Once-ler discloses that not even the magical power of Lorax can stop him from cutting down trees. Then, both of the hear thwack and see the last truffula tree being chopped down by a super axe hacker. Then, Lorax, spills his educational value position.

*"I can't stop you, but the last tree will."*

As Lorax learns that for the first time, the young Once-ler chopped down a truffula tree, he personally talks to him and makes him promise never to do it again. However, as the buying public demand on thneedville apparels doubles, the young Once-ler invite his whole family to stay with him in the forest land to bigger the business he early on dreamt. For a faster and massive harvest of tufts, the young Once-ler decides to chop down the truffula trees using axes of

various sizes. As a concerned friend and guardian of the forest, Lorax, through his ethical/moral value position, he tells the young Once-ler,

*"Hey, you broke your promise."*

Although before the construction of the Thneed factory, the young Once-ler promises Lorax not to cut trees anymore, as the guardian of the forest, Lorax, through his ethical/moral, legal, political, and social environmental value position, he continuously reminds the young Once-ler of his warning.

*"You have been warned."*

Through his legal environmental value position, Lorax indirectly reminds the young Once-ler of his legal obligations. He informs him that to chop trees is illegal alongside the fact that the act will cause problems.

*"Look, everyone here needs the trees and you're chopping 'em down. So we've got a big problem."*

*"Did you chop down this tree?"*

Lorax is extently concerned of the trees and of those who would be benefited from it. Thus, he never stops from his social value position-inspired statements which he frequently conveys to the young Once-ler. He may be small, but he bravely tells the latter that he has a big heart and an unsullied voice for the trees.

*"I speak for the trees."*

When the last standing truffula tree was chop down, Lorax leads the massive march of the animals to find another habitat where there is ecological balance. His continued love for the animals is a manifestation of the innateness of his social value.

*"So I'm sending them off. Hopefully they'll be able to find a better place out there somewhere."*

Aside from his overwhelming love for the trees, Lorax is also compassionate to animals. He always ensures full protection of the latter. He

indirectly reminds the young Once-ler that animals are man's responsibility.

*"So you'd hammer one of nature's innocent creatures."*

Marie, a three year-old little girl, who is around during the public argument of Ted and Audrey against O'Hare at the park, also reveals her enthusiasm to see a real tree. Herself, Marie has aesthetic and egocentric value positions.

*"I am Marie. I am three. I would like to see a tree."*

Based on his belief statements, the Old Once-ler has five (5) environmental value positions, namely, aesthetic, ecological, egocentric, educational, and social.

Because he feels guilty of what he had done which ruined the whole of the Old Thneedville, he looks forward to meeting someone who can help him fulfill the ultimate request of Lorax. Lucky he is that he finds Ted Wiggins, with whom he shared his aesthetic, educational, and social value positions.

*"Go and make them realize the importance of the trees."*

The Once-ler has grown old guilty of the paradise he once lost. Yet he remains hopeful that one day the Thneedville can fully recover and that its people can work together to bring back the natural beauty of the place with real truffula trees around. Alongside his social concern, he teaches Ted Wiggins a wisdom which he can live by. He instills in Ted's heart and mind, that the last truffula seed which he will bestow upon him is more than itself.

*"I know it may seem small and insignificant but it's not about what it is... it's about what it can become. That's not just a seed."*

The preceding belief statement and the statement below are indicators of the Old Once-ler's ecological, educational, and social environment value positions. Through Ted, the Old Once-ler will be able to make the townspeople of the New Thneedville believe and care for trees again.

*"Make people believe again."*

*"Make people care for trees."*

As the cliché discloses, "experience is the best teacher", the Old-Onceler wants to leave a gem to Ted Wiggins, that even the smallest particle can cause a productive multiplier effect. This educational value position of the Old Once-ler supports his idea that, "a seed is not about what it is but what it can become".

*"One small thing can change the future of everything."*

When he was younger, the Old Once-ler deprived his self from the could-have-been environmentalism. He opted not to love and care for trees. All his green-life he just thought of pleasing his Mom and of satisfying his conceived destiny. Hence, he bartered the richness of the truffula forest in favor of his self-vested dreams. However, the Old Once-ler learns his lesson. He ends up realizing his sense of social responsibility. He may not exactly do it himself but at least he can inspire the younger generations, through Ted, to plant and take care for trees. This is indeed a clear exemplification of his social value position.

*"But now I'm thinking... well, maybe you're the reason the Lorax left that word there."*

Though an antagonist in "The Lorax", the Once-ler's Mom warns Brett and Chet, the Once-ler's brothers, to cease from throwing the Bar-Ba-Loots (bears). This situation shows her ethical/moral and legal environmental value positions.

Ted Wiggins, the lead character in "The Lorax", has six (6) environmental value positions, to wit, ecological, educational, ethical/moral, legal, scientific, and social.

The ecological and social environmental value positions of Ted Wiggins are reflected in the hereunder contexts and belief statements.

Ted converses with the Old Once-ler. He positively responds to the latter that he is guy who still cares for trees. He, too, manifests his

creed of making other people believe again in trees.

*“Well, that’s me! The guy  
who still cares.”*

Upon receiving the last truffle seed, he leaves the Old Once-ler’s house and persuades Audrey to help her plant the seed right in the middle of the New Thneedville so that the townspeople will be able to see it and eventually encourage them to bring back their love and care for real trees.

*“Yes, the last truffle seed.  
And you’re going to help  
me plant.”*

O’Hare, his goons, Mc Gurk and Mooney, as well as the two (2) Marketing Guys keep on arguing with Ted at the park. They are misleading the townspeople not to believe in Ted. Yet, they fail to stop Ted from telling the crowd of the timely and timeless significance of trees. Ted is just a 12 year-old boy but he never let these villains feel that he is belittled, outnumbered and afraid. He bravely faces them and with all his might he is able to persuade the townspeople.

*“Things aren’t perfect here  
in Thneedville. We can  
change it by planting this  
seed.”*

Without second thoughts, Ted, he hold the seed higher, so the townspeople can see it. He willingly pronounces,

*“Let it grow.”*

Aside from his ecological and social value positions, Ted also embodies educational and scientific value positions. While O’Hare is brainwashing the people not to plant trees for they produce leaves which fall wherever they want, Ted is raising his voice with his strong conviction that,

*“Trees give air for free.”*

When he says it, he does it. Ted believes in the principles of *“palabra de honor”*, that he is bounded by duty once he takes oath of something. Thus, Ted epitomizes ethical/moral alongside social environmental value positions.

*“I am Ted Wiggins and I  
speak for the trees.”*

Believing that it is his social responsibility to love and care for trees, in spite of the fact that nobody of his age cares to find for a real tree, Ted politely asks his Mom as to where he could find a real tree. Thus, Ted possesses social environment value position.

*“I am Marie. I am three. I  
would like to see a tree.”*

Ted’s Mom is a woman of ecological value position. Though at first she is contented with the oak-a-matic. But because of Ted’s persuasiveness, she is able to re-examine the need of the New Thneedville for real trees.

*“Plant a seed inside the  
earth.”*

In addition, Ted’s Mom has moral/ethical value position. She keeps on reminding the townspeople of Thneedville that they will never experience how it is to live with real trees around.

*“You can’t reap what you don’t  
sow.”*

Together with the Singing Delivery Man, the Maintenance Workers, and the Townspeople, Ted Mom’s manifest their aesthetic, educational, and social environment value positions, as they sing in unison,

*“Plant a seed inside the  
earth,  
Just one way to know its  
worth,  
Let’s celebrate the world’s  
rebirth—  
We say let it grow.”*

The townspeople of the New Thneedville, who may come from various walks of life, but they have one heart for the environment. Altogether, they have aesthetic, ecological, egocentric, ethical/moral, and social environment value positions.

The townspeople ecological value position is reflected in their in-depth view of the last truffle seed. In some ways, they agree with the Once-ler’s wisdom that the latter is more than its physical structure. These people truly holds on the fact that more than anything else, it is what they truly need.



*"It's just as seed and that's what we really need."*

However, the townspeople also resemble their economic value position. They admit that they manufacture their own trees. Since O'Hare leaves them with no other choice, they have to resort on buying the oak-a-matic trees.

*"In Thneedville, we manufacture our trees."*

The ecological, ethical/moral, and social environment value positions of the townspeople is revealed when in unanimity, they raise their angst against O'Hare and positively accept the idea re-engineering the New Thneedville with naturally authentic trees and flowers growing in the vicinity.

*"It's time to banish all your greed. Imagine Thneedville, flowered and treed. Let this be our solemn creed."*

Bad as the film portrayed him, but he Young Once-ler used to be a fan of the nature's innate beauty. Hence, he has aesthetic environment value position.

*"This is the most beautiful place I've ever seen."*

On the other hand, the Young Once-ler has egocentric value position,

*"This is the place! These truffula trees are just what I need."*

### 3.9 Researcher's Recall

To give due consideration on the belief statements, which the research participants failed to cite, the researcher collected belief statements, worth categorizing.

O'Hare has a strong economic value position. All he wanted is to be the New Thneedville's richest man.

*"I became a zillionaire because I sell air."*

Audrey exemplifies educational and scientific value positions. She persistently argues with

O'Hare, so that the hearing public (townspeople) at the park will be informed of the importance of trees.

*"We know why you're really against trees! Because they produce fresh air."*

Lorax typifies cultural value position. He shares proverbs to warn the Young Once-ler in treating the trees. Then, he gives the Young Once-ler a sad look.

*"A tree falls the way it leans. Be careful which way you lean."*

As the family of the Young Once-ler finally intrudes the Old Thneedville, to habituate and build a commercial factory, Lorax faces them to sue them away. It is not because he hates people but because he knows they will chop down the trees in favor of their monopolistic business enterprise. This situation illustrates Lorax' ethical/moral, legal, and social value positions.

*"Leave! Vacate the premises! Take your axe and get out."*

In spite of the over cutting of truffula trees done by the Young Once-ler, Lorax still listens to his heart that the latter exactly knows that what he is doing is bad and too, soon, he will stop from it. Thus, he ceases not from reminding the Young Once-ler of his oath, of his conscience, and of his legal obligations. In this instance, the ethical/moral, legal, and social value positions of Lorax are concretized.

*"You are better than this! You gotta stop! This is bad."*

Through the Young Once-ler's order, as convinced by his Mom and Uncle Ubb, Brett and Chett start running through the valley, wielding axes with big crazy smiles on their faces and begin chopping down trees. The stack of Baby animals topples over. Lorax comes in rescue. Guided with his legal and political value positions, he tries to stop them.

*"No, no, no! Stop it! Please stop! Whoa, whoa!"*

In another occurrence, Lorax manifests his social and legal value positions. As the RV house of the Young Once-ler family starts to come to life, Lorax intervenes and tortuously warn them of an unauthorized occupancy. He is concerned of the trees, the animals, and all other species wildly living in the forest land, which lives might be hampered if the young Once-ler family continues to habituate.

*"No, no, no, whoa, whoa, whoa. Time out, back up, stop, don't move an inch. Nobody's moving in here. You gotta go, goodbye."*

He may have grown old without trying to plant a tree using his bare hands, the Old Once-ler remains a principled and ecological man. He furiously ask Ted to plant the last truffula seed.

*"The last truffula seed. You need to plant it, Ted."*

The ecological, educational, and social value positions of the Old Once-ler are immortalized through his constant word of mouth for Ted to plant the last truffula seed in front of a big crowd to educate them on the importance of having real trees and at the same time stammer their frozen mind to start changing the way things are.

*"Then make them care. Plant the seed in the middle of town, where everyone can see. Change the way things are."*

Humility to accept the sins committed is one virtue that an individual should inherit. The Old Once-ler had sinned, but he admitted it and started to repent.

The Old Once-ler shows the ingenuity of his regrets on the indiscrimination of natural resources he caused when he was younger. Thus, he is a man who embraces ethical/moral value position.

*"Yes. And each day since the Lorax left I've sat here regretting everything I've done."*

*"You want to know about trees? About what happened to them? Why they're all gone? It's because of me."*

The Sunbathing Choir possess religious value position as they never forget to convey to God on their reverence for nature and in all of His creations.

*"We thank the Lord for all we've got."*

Inspired with his intention to help the Old Once-ler fulfill the finale request of Lorax, Ted Wiggins finds possible ways in bringing home the last truffula seed. For nature's sake, he is determined and strong willed to plant the tree in an open area where everyone can see. Since he knows that the seed needs nourishment for it not to hamper its growth, he thinks of watering it. He knows, too, that the seed that he is ought to plant will offer tons of benefits to the townspeople. These cases in point are concrete messages of Ted's ecological, scientific, and social value positions.

*"Gotta plant the seed. Gotta plant the seed. Okay, we're going to need... uh... water..."*

The townspeople of the New Thneedville enjoy snowboarding and surfing. It goes to show that they commonly share recreational value position.

*"We surf and snowboard right in town."*

Moreover, the Townspeople believe that the last truffula seed is just a tiny seed. But no matter how tiny it is, they believe that it would greatly support their day to day existence. They know that once grown, the tree will live longer than them. This juncture reveals their ecological, health and social value positions.

*"Let it grow, let it grow, like it did so long ago! It is just one tiny seed, but it's all we really need, it's time to change the life we lead, time to let it grow!"*

The Young Once-ler is searching the globe, obsessed with finding the perfect material for his thneed. He decides to leave home to scout for a place where he can scout the latter. Finally, he sees a long and wide area fully covered with long-trunked multi-colored or fauvism-inspired truffula trees. The whole area triggers him to unleash his aesthetic value position.

*“Until one day... I found a paradise.”*

Believing that he is currently enjoying the time of his life. He thinks of none other than fulfilling his dream for a long time. This basically describes the egocentric value position of the Old Once-ler.

*“There’s nothing you an di can’t do, so let’s all make my dreams come true.”*

Confident with what he does and believes are legal and morally upright, he Once-ler contests with Lorax on one occasion. He frankly faces Lorax and tells him he had never done wrong. The environmental values positions reflective of the Old Once-ler based on this facet are ethical/moral and legal.

*“My conscience is clear. I have done nothing illegal. I have my rights, and I intent to biggering and biggering and turning more Truffula trees into Thneeds.”*

O’Hare’s bottled air business leaves the townspeople with no other choice other than buying the product. The Woman, during the introductory part of the movie testifies that she and the rest of the townspeople in the New Thneedville buy air fresh. This is in no doubt an economic value position.

*“So we buy air fresh.”*

In a nutshell, based on characters’ belief statements as recalled by the research

participants and the researcher, there are 14 environmental value positions prevalent in “The Lorax”. These value positions were described by Hungerford et al. [19].

The study of Bologna and Doncillo [20] revealed the aesthetic quality of nature based on the poems of Robert Frost. Alongside aesthetic other environmental values positions, such as scientific and ecological were found to be embedded in the 30 poems of William Wordsworth based on the ecocriticism-study conducted by Ladeño.

The Environmental Advocacy book of Libreo and Canonizado confirms the idea that some belief statements of the characters in “The Lorax” are found to be ecological since they consider highly desirable and are deemed important in order to preserve the complex ecosystems and life, and eventually to conserve and protect the environment and natural resources.

The educational, social, and scientific value positions of “The Lorax” characters resemble their concern for public interest. On top of all, the characters like the Audrey, Lorax, Ted, the Old Once-ler, through their belief statements provide the best benefits at the maximum level for the greatest number of people. The chain started from Lorax to Once-ler, to Ted, to Audrey, and to the whole townspeople in the New Thneedville. In the absence of Lorax’ belief statements, and without the Old Once-ler bequeathing the challenge to Ted, and without the strong voice of the latter the townspeople will never try growing a tree.

The economic and health value positions of the characters, like the couple, Dan and Rose best equal the quality of life. They consider it desirable to be able to live a healthy and safe life in a natural environment where a well-developed culture exists primarily because it is the quality of life that they want. Love for trees is one culture that Ted brings in the New Thneedville.

**Table 4. Environmental Value Positions**

<b>Character (The Player)</b>	<b>Quotable Line (Belief Statement)</b>	<b>Environmental Value Position</b>
Aloysius O'Hare	"So in other words, the more smog in the sky... the more people will buy." "Find the seed."	Economic Egocentric
Audrey	"And people said that the touch of their tufts was softer than anything even silk. And they smelled liked butterfly milk." "I just want to see and touch the tree." "What I want more than anything in the whole world is to see a real living tree, growing in my backyard" "Those are trees. Real ones. They used to grow all around here." "It's not a lie! It's called photosynthesis." "Trees clean the air."	Aesthetic Aesthetic and Egocentric Aesthetic and Egocentric Educational Educational and Scientific Educational and Scientific
Cy	"You don't know me, but my name's Cy. I'm just the O'Hare's delivery guy. But it seems like trees might worth a try, so I say let it grow."	Ecological
Dan and Rose Dr. Seuss Everyone Grammy Norma	"Our son Wesley kind of glows. And that's not good, so we suppose, we should let it grow." "Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not." "I'm Grammy Norma, I'm old, and I've got gray hair. But I remember when trees were everywhere."	Ecological and Health Social Aesthetic
Lorax	"Before, no one has to pay for the air." "I am the Lorax, guardian of the forest." "That's right. And, on behalf of the trees, get out." "I can't stop you, but the last tree will." "Hey, you broke your promise! "You have been warned." "Look, everyone here needs the trees and you're chopping 'em down. So we've got a big problem." "Did you chop down this tree?" "I speak for the trees." "So I'm sending them off. Hopefully they'll be able to find a better place out there somewhere." "So you'd hammer one of nature's innocent creatures?"	Economic Cultural Ecological and Social Educational Ethical/Moral Ethical/Moral, Legal, Political, and Social Legal Legal Social Social Social

Character (The Player)	Quotable Line (Belief Statement)	Environmental Value Position
Marie (Little Girl) Old Once-ler	<p>"I am Marie. I am three. I would like to see a tree."                      "Go and make them realize the importance of the trees."                      "I know it may seem small and insignificant but it's not about what it is... it's about what it can become. That's not just a seed."                      "Make people believe again."                      "Make people care for trees."</p>	<p>Aesthetic and Egocentric                      Ecological, Educational, and Social                      Ecological, Educational, and Social                      Ecological, Educational, and Social                      Ecological, Educational, and Social</p>
Onceler's Mom Ted Wiggins	<p>"One small thing can change the future of everything."                      "But now I'm thinking... well, maybe you're the reason the Lorax left that word there."                      "Brett, Chet, stop throwing that bear."                      "I say, let it grow."                      "Things aren't perfect here in Thneedville. We can change it by planting this seed."                      "Well, that's me! The guy who still cares."                      "Yes, the last truffula seed. And you're going to help me plant it right in the middle town. Where everyone can see it."                      "Trees give air for free."                      "I won't let you down."                      "I am Ted Wiggins and I speak for the trees."                      "So... Mom, do you happen to know if there's like any place where I could get a real tree?"</p>	<p>Educational                      Social                      Ethical/Moral and Legal                      Ecological and Social                      Ecological and Social                      Ecological and Social                      Educational and Scientific                      Ethical/Moral and Social                      Social</p>
Ted's Mom	<p>"Plant a seed inside the earth."                      "You can't reap what you don't sow."</p>	<p>Ecological                      Moral/Ethical</p>
Ted's Mom, Singing Delivery Man, and Maintenance Workers Townspeople	<p>"Plant a seed inside the earth, Just one way to know its worth, let's celebrate the world's rebirth -- we say let grow!"                      "It's just a seed and that's what we really need."                      "Let it grow."                      "It's time to banish all your greed. Imagine Thneedville, flowered and treed. Let this be our solemn creed."                      "In Thneedville, we manufacture our trees."</p>	<p>Aesthetic, Ecological, and Social                      Ecological                      Ecological                      Ecological, Ethical/Moral, and Social                      Economic</p>
Young Once-ler	<p>"This is the most beautiful place I've ever seen."                      "This is the place! These truffula trees are just what I need."</p>	<p>Aesthetic                      Egocentric</p>

#### 4. CONCLUSION

“The Lorax” is a cradle of environmental value positions. Aside from the emotional and intellectual appeals that literature leaves to its readers, it also hones the humanistic values of the latter. In this sense, the film is indeed a significant material in nourishing student-viewers with morals and in instilling in them the value of environmental stewardship. Though it is an animated film, primarily produced for children, its embedded values choose no one. Literary concepts are apparent in “The Lorax”. It brings light to the idea that indeed such film like the latter is in itself literature unleashed through pop culture. Thus, films are valuable classroom materials which can intensify learners’ holistic view points on social issues, in general, and on the environment, in particular. The concepts of literariness were devised thru literary elements, intensified by the cinematic elements.

The ethical standards of the research participants serve as their guiding principles. Awareness on environmental responsibility can raise consciousness towards a well lived-life, which favors reverence with God and His pristine creations. From the lens of the film, viewers can build their respective statements of belief, which can be their pillars in immortalizing their intention, responsibility and accountability, and commitment.

The findings of this study served as the basis for the researcher-teacher in coming up with session guides in English Seven (7) showing the greenness of literature through “The Lorax”. This entails an impression that more than an entertainment medium, “The Lorax” is also an effective vehicle in informing and educating people on the current state of the environment and in persuading them become responsible torchbearers for the environment.

#### COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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