Marquez and magical realism reading passage

Marquez and magical realism

A
When Gabriel Garca Márquez died in 2014, readers around the world remembered his 1967 novel, One Hundred Years of Solitude, which sold more than 25 million copies and earned Márquez the 1982 Nobel Prize in Literature.

B
Márquez was born in 1927 in Aracataca, a small town on Colombia's Caribbean coast, and grew up immersed in Spanish, black, and indigenous cultures. Religion, myth, and superstition may trump logic and reason in such remote locations, or they may operate as parallel belief systems. Certainly, his grandmother's ghost stories had a profound impact on the young Gabriel, and a pivotal character in his 1967 epic is a ghost.

Márquez grew up in a poor family with twelve children, and his father worked as a postal clerk, telegraph operator, and occasional pharmacist. Márquez spent a large part of his childhood with his grandparents, which may explain why the main character in One Hundred Years of Solitude resembles his maternal grandfather. Despite the fact that Márquez left Aracataca at the age of eight, the town and its inhabitants never seemed to leave him and infused his fiction.

C
One Hundred Years of Solitude was Márquez's fourth novel, but he was also a passionate and prolific journalist.

Márquez lived in Bogota during La Violencia, a period of great political and social upheaval in which approximately 300,000 Colombians were killed. Journalists were never safe, and after writing an article about corruption in the Colombian navy in 1955, Márquez was forced to flee to Europe. In Paris, he discovered that European culture was not more rich than his own, and he was disappointed by Europeans who were condescending to Latin Americans. Márquez returned to the southern hemisphere and wrote for Venezuelan newspapers as well as the Cuban press agency.

D
Márquez was a left-wing politician. In Chile, he campaigned against General Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship; in Venezuela, he funded a political party; and in Nicaragua, he defended revolutionaries. He regarded Cuban President Fidel Castro as a close friend. Because the US was hostile to Castro's communist regime, which Márquez supported, the writer was barred from visiting the country until President Clinton invited him in 1995. Márquez's novels are infused with his politics, but that doesn't stop readers from enjoying a good yarn.

E
Márquez maintained that in Latin America, much of what is real appears fantastic elsewhere,

while much of what is magical appears real. He was a practitioner of the genre known as Magical Realism.

'If you can explain it, it's not Magical Realism,' said Mexican critic Luis Leal. This demonstrates how difficult it is to define the genre and which writers belong to it.

The term Magical Realism is usually associated with literature, but it was most likely coined in 1925 when a German art critic reviewed Surrealist paintings.

Many of its detractors define Magical Realism by what it is not. Realism describes lives that could be real; Magical Realism employs the detail and tone of a realist work while also including the magical as if it were real. The ghosts in One Hundred Years of Solitude and American Toni Morison's Beloved are presented as normal by their narrators, so readers accept them without hesitation. In a Magical Realist novel, a character can live for 200 years. Surrealism is concerned with dream states and psychological experiences, whereas Magical Realism is not. Science Fiction, as in Aldous Huxley's Brave New World, describes a new or imagined world, whereas Magical Realism depicts the real world. Magical Realism is not fantasy, as in Franz Kafka's Metamorphosis, in which an ordinary man wakes up to find himself transformed into a cockroach. This is because the writer and reader of the story are unable to decide whether the event was caused by natural or supernatural forces. In Márquez's work, on the other hand, the world is both natural and supernatural, rational and irrational, and this binary nature fascinates readers.

Because the acts of writing and breeding are self-reflexive, magical realism and postmodernism share some ground. A narrative may not be linear, but may double back or be discontinuous, and the concept of character is more elusive than in other genres.

Naturally, some of these elements disturb the reader, despite the enormous success of One Hundred Years of Solitude and hundreds of other Magical Realist works by authors as diverse as Norway, Nigeria, and New Zealand.

F
Latin America has a long history of conquest, revolution, and dictatorship; of hunger, poverty, and chaos, but it also has rich cultures and warm, emotional people, many of whom, like Márquez, remain optimistically utopian. Gabriel Garcia Márquez has died, but his fiction will undoubtedly live on.

Marquez and magical realism reading questions

Questions 1-3

Do the following statements agree with the information given in the Reading Passage?
TRUE *if the statement agrees with the information*

FALSE *if the statement contradicts the information*
NOT GIVEN *if there is no information on this*

1) The ghost stories that profoundly affected young Gabriel were narrated by his sister.

2) Journalist's lives were never safe.

3) Gabriel Garcia has been fond of science since a young age.

Questions 4-10

Passage 1 has six sections, **A-F.**

Which section contains the following information?

*Write the correct letter, **A-F,** in boxes **4-10** on your answer sheet.*

NB: You may use any letter more than once.

4. Márquez's history
5. what Márquez thought of Europe
6. Márquez's influences
7. the extent of Márquez's celebrity
8. why the US did not welcome Márquez
9. What exactly is a Magical Realist work?
10. other works of significance to Márquez

Questions 11-13

Complete the summary below using the dates or words, **A-L,** below.
*Write the correct letter, **A-L,** in boxes **11-13** on your answer sheet.*

A accept	**B** adapting	**C** adopting
D believes	**E** fantasy	**F** non-linear
G novel	**H** rational	**I** supernatural
J use	**K** 1925	**L** 1927

What is Magical Realism?

Márquez's fiction is classified as Magical Realism, a term that was first applied to a painting in 11..................... Magical Realism is frequently described negatively, as not being Realism, Surrealism, Science Fiction, or 12.....................
In a Magical Realist novel, the world in which people live - the real world - is described in detail, but magical or 13.................... elements intrude.