

## Answer (Question 4, part a)

In Canadian literature, the landscape is often present as a separate character. It is a source of life, it is beauty, and most of all, it is a harshness which shapes those who live in the midst of it. The presence of the landscape is so pervasive in the Canadian psyche that it becomes a character in the country's literature.

The concept of the landscape as a source of life comes from the fact that Canada is a country built on the backs of farmers and woodsmen. The play Mirage is an excellent example of this, in which the hearts of a family are tightly connected to the prairie which gives them their livelihood. The people who settled Canada's woods and fields looked beyond their doors at landscapes which would provide them with sustenance. And it was not only the settlers who drew from the landscape as means of survival. So did the First Nations people, and later the Métis. In Maria Campbell's novel, Half-Breed, she talks of the deep ties which her people shared with land. They were happiest being able to trap and farm for their food. Because the landscape has provided for the Canadian people for so long it has taken on this quality in its literary character.

It is not difficult to see the aspect of beauty in the Canadian landscape and how this transfers to Canadian literature. It is not easy for such beauty as Canada possesses not to inspire the creation of dazzling poetry in its praise. With such majesty as a background to any activity of any one person, the reason for its prevalence in Canadian literature is obvious. The poem "Between Two Furious Oceans" is an excellent demonstration of this. It illustrates the beauty of landscapes in all regions of Canada. When confronted with such an awesome landscape at every turn, it would be near impossible for Canadian writers not to allow this quality to seep into the landscape character.

The strongest expression of the landscape character in Canadian literature, however, is its harshness and brutality. To this day, Canadians continue to battle the elements of their harsh northern climate. This battle has inevitably transferred into Canadian writing. One instance of this is found in the short story "The Painted Door," by Sinclair Ross. The landscape's cold and daunting appearance grates on the woman's nerves as she sits alone at home all day long. The outdoors force their way in, to make her relationship with her husband seem as frozen as the winter. The Canadian landscape has always seemed intent on crushing the Canadian people, and it is this brutal motive which sounds forth clearest in the literary character of the landscape.

Present so irrefutably in the minds of Canada's people, the landscape takes on a life of its own as a character in Canadian literature. Three of the most obvious traits of this character are its life-giving attributes, its staggering beauty, and, above all, its severity. To anyone who has had first-hand acquaintance with this character, any explanation for its presence in Canadian literature is unnecessary.

**Marker Comments** Level 5 or  $\frac{23}{25}$

$\frac{9}{10}$

**Content**

- writing has a strong focus
- good understanding of topic
- ideas are insightful and well supported

$\frac{5}{5}$

**Organization**

- evidence of planning
- introduction and conclusion solid
- ideas progress logically

$\frac{5}{5}$

**Style**

- writer's voice and tone maintain the reader's interest
- use of effective diction and syntax

$\frac{4}{5}$

**Mechanics**

- the few mechanical errors do not impede communication
- writing demonstrates a solid control of the conventions of language

Question #4

Student #2:

PLANNING

"Content: Thought and Detail" and "Organization" form a large part of the mark for this question. Space is provided here for your initial planning. You may wish to use this space to explore and organize your ideas before you write your essay.

Characters in Canadian literature are often in conflict with themselves in their struggle to succeed.  
Support this statement.

3 references

1 Long - The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz - Mordecai Richler

1 Shorter - "The Lamp at Noon" - Sinclair Ross

1 Other - Alias Grace - Margaret Atwood (?)

Struggle to succeed -  
Survive,  
Wealth,  
Happiness,  
Land, Money.

Thesis

Canadian literature effectively portrays people with a personal struggle for success.

3 Struggles

<p><u>Duddy</u></p> <p>Struggle to buy land, get rich, conflict with conscience, family + friends. Struggles to succeed, fights to win Fighting 4 Land</p>	<p><u>Lamp</u></p> <p><u>Paul + Ellen</u></p> <p>Paul struggles between his loyalty to the land, and love for his wife. The land engages him in a conflict Fighting 4 Land</p>	<p><u>Grace</u></p> <p>Grace Markis struggles with the demons of her past, and conflict, trying to succeed at getting out of prison. Fighting 4 freedom</p>	<p>1 Intro ✓</p> <p>4 Lamp</p> <p>3 Grace ✓</p> <p>2 Duddy ✓</p> <p>5 Concl.</p>
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(concl - The characters of Can. Lit. reflect the harsh struggle for survival that is experienced throughout the country. (?)

## Answer (Question 4, part b)

Canada is a country harsh in climate, landscape, and people. The writers of this country depict characters in various kinds of conflicts. Canadian literature effectively portrays people in a personal and internal struggle for success.

Success and failure is the central theme to Mordecai Richler's classic novel, The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz. The main character, Duddy, is a scheming antihero, struggling throughout the novel to own a large parcel of land. He is constantly seeking the key to wealth, and is willing to do almost anything in order to achieve his goals. Duddy experiences deep personal conflict when presented with the opportunity to cheat and steal from a friend. He later takes this opportunity, and succeeds in owning the coveted land, but at a price to his conscience. The will to succeed overcomes Duddy Kravitz's conflict between good and evil.

Grace Marks is another character that experiences a personal conflict of good and evil. The main character of Alias Grace, by Margaret Atwood, Grace struggles for her own personal freedom and success, after being convicted of a crime she did not consciously commit. Grace struggles with the confusion that arises from a multiple-personality disorder. With the help of a psychiatrist, she slowly pieces together the events of her twisted past. When it is finally determined the Grace was clinically insane when she committed her crime, she experiences the success of freedom and justice. The story of Grace Marks is an accurate example of personal triumph over a harsh environment and society.

The characters portrayed in "The Lamp at Noon," by Sinclair Ross, are engaged in a fierce struggle for their livelihood. The main characters in this short story, Paul and Ellen, are fighting to survive life on a farm during the Great Depression. Paul struggles with his love for the land, and stubbornly holds on to his only known way of life, despite all hardships. He holds so much faith in his farmland that ". . . it had not yet occurred to him that he might or should abandon the land." (S. Ross). Paul's personal conflict is a battle between the guaranteed success of a city job, or the deep, personal success of a healthy crop. Paul's struggle with a harsh environment is a moving example of deep mental conflict.

Each of these Canadian pieces portray their characters in a struggle for success. Each main character must deal with a personal struggle for success, despite harsh landscape and environment. The people depicted in Canadian literature accurately reflect the conflict and struggle experienced throughout Canada.

**Marker Comments** Level 4 or  $\frac{20}{25}$

$\frac{6}{10}$

**Content**

- effectively makes reference to events of the selections, but avoids a recitation of plot
- some analysis evident

$\frac{4}{5}$

**Organization**

- introductions and conclusion are very basic
- does not show the promise of the body of the essay

$\frac{5}{5}$

**Style**

- pleasingly mature style is evident
- good sentence variety and a confidence with language

$\frac{5}{5}$

**Mechanics**

- complex structures effectively presented
- conventions of writing handled competently