

“Where the World Began”-Margaret Laurence

This essay is an intriguing essay that questions Canadians values and beliefs. It looks at the joys of childhood, the oddities of society and the pride one should take in being Canadian and knowing where your world began.

1. Please find the contextual definitions to the following words:
 - a. Multitudinous
 - b. Jubilation
 - c. Profound
 - d. Repressive
 - e. Moccasins
 - f. Don
 - g. Chokecherry
 - h. Meringued (look up meringue)
 - i. Banshee
 - j. Deities
 - k. Undaunted
 - l. Wodges
 - m. Succulently
 - n. The Goths
 - o. Fraught
 - p. Connotations
 - q. Methuselah
 - r. Stultifying
 - s. Vestigial
2. Why does Laurence repeat her title in both her opening and closing? What does the title of the essay ultimately mean?
3. Point out three qualities of her hometown that Laurence later sees in her nation. Cite a passage to illustrate each comparison.
4. Why does Laurence begin with a pair of opposites: “A place of jubilation and of mourning, horrible and beautiful”?
5. Explain her adage “Scratch a Canadian and you’ll find a phony pioneer”.
6. “Why on earth did generations of Canadians pretend to believe this country dull?” Laurence asks in paragraph 14. What is your answer? How dull or exciting do you consider your corner (your province, your city, or your neighbourhood) of Canada? Why?

Lenses Project: Where I Come From...

PART ONE: THE VISUAL

Through the symbol of eyeglasses or something that suggests looking into or closer (a window? telescope? A camera?) create a visual representation that shows how your perspective/identity has been shaped by your surroundings.

There will be two parts to the visual: close up or central things that you focus on. In the periphery, or sides, things you are not aware of, or do not pay attention to.

- Why do you see the world as you do?
- Do you have any blind spots?
- Are you near-sighted?
- Your visual must incorporate the following:
- Colour
- Space
- Images (at least 5)
- Quotes (at least 5) – these can be your own personal quotes (things you say) or quotations you find inspiring

PART TWO: THE INFORMAL ESSAY

Write an informal essay (750 words plus) that explains your “vision”. The discussion should include specific references to the text, symbols, images and arrangement in your visual. While you may use informal language in this type of essay, you should strive to create your own “voice” and use language creatively and effectively.

Things to consider:

- Where I come from, people...
- My eyes were formed ...
- My culture is like a...
- What I see when I look in the mirror...
- I see the world...
- I’m not _____, I’m _____
- Life began in...
- Create a web with a “Where I come from...”
- My horizon is...

CR A30.1, A30.4; CC A30.1a, A30.2