

## The Power of Place

The concept of “place” or “setting” in English arguably plays a major role in shaping characters and the lives they live. As we prepare to begin our reading for this year, I’d like you to consider more deeply the function and form of place in writing by looking at how that’s worked in your own life.

Ponder these questions (which we’ve discussed in class) as you work your way through this assignment:

- To what extent does environment/place/setting play a role shaping who we are?
- How does place “get inside of us”?
- How do you account for large numbers of people staying relatively close to a “place” of familiarity, some people returning back to (or never leaving) the same place they grew up in?

After reading the David James Duncan’s short story Northwest Passage, work on the following assignment:

- Come up with a place that’s significant to you and describe/discuss how it’s molded or shaped you as a person, either good, bad, a mix, or somewhere in between.
  - Remember, place as a concept has many layers and can exist on many different levels:
    - Micro, macro, historical, psychological, physical/literal, metaphorical, etc.
- Write in first person. This is a narrative.
- Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation
- Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
- Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole.
- Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.
- Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.
- Strive to write about a page of single spaced or two pages of double spaced writing.
- Typed work is preferred.

Criteria	Exceptional	Skilled	Proficient	Developing	Inadequate
<b>EXPOSITION:</b>  <i>The text sets up a story by introducing the event/conflict, characters and setting.</i>	The text creatively engages the reader by setting out a well-developed conflict, situation, or observation. The text establishes one or multiple points of view and introduces a narrator and/or complex characters.	The text engages and orients the reader by setting out a conflict, situation, or observation. It establishes one or multiple points of view and introduces a narrator and/or well-developed characters.	The text orients the reader by setting out a conflict, situation, or observation. It establishes one point of view and introduces a narrator and/or developed characters.	The text provides a setting with a vague conflict, situation, or observation with an unclear point of view. It introduces a narrator and/or underdeveloped characters.	The text provides a setting with a vague conflict, situation, or observation with an unclear point of view. It introduces a narrator and/or underdeveloped characters.
<b>DEVELOPMENT:</b>  <i>The story is developed using dialogue, pacing, description, reflection and multiple plot lines.</i>	The text demonstrates sophisticated narrative techniques, such as engaging dialogue, artistic pacing, vivid description, complex reflection, and multiple plot lines to develop experiences, events, and/or characters	The text demonstrates deliberate use of narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.	The text uses narrative techniques, such as dialogue, description, reflection, that illustrate events and/or characters.	The text uses some narrative techniques, such as dialogue or description that merely retells events and/or experiences.	The text lacks a sequence or progression of experiences or events or presents an illogical sequence of events.
<b>ORGANIZATION:</b>  <i>The text follows a logical sequence of events.</i>	The text creates a seamless progression of experiences or events using multiple techniques—such as chronology, flashback, foreshadowing, suspense, etc. —to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole.	The text creates a smooth progression of experiences or events using a variety of techniques—such as chronology, flashback, foreshadowing, suspense, etc. — to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole.	The text creates a logical progression of experiences or events using some techniques —such as chronology, flashback, foreshadowing, suspense, etc. —to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole.	The text creates a sequence or progression of experiences or events.	The text lacks a sequence or progression of experiences or events or presents an illogical sequence of events.
<b>STYLE:</b>  <i>The text uses sensory language and details to create a vivid picture of the events, setting, and characters.</i>	The text uses eloquent words and phrases, showing details and rich sensory language and mood to convey a realistic picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.	The text uses precise words and phrases, showing details and controlled sensory language and mood to convey a realistic picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.	The text uses words and phrases, telling details and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.	The text uses words and phrases and telling details to convey experiences, events, settings, and/or characters.	The text merely tells about experiences, events, settings, and/or characters.
<b>CONCLUSION:</b>  <i>The text provides a conclusion that follows from the course of the narrative. The conclusion provides a reflection on or resolution of the events.</i>	The text moves to a conclusion that artfully follows from and thoughtfully reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.	The text builds to a conclusion that logically follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.	The text provides a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.	The text provides a conclusion that follows from what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.	The text may provide a conclusion to the events of the narrative.