

### Expository Essay

Write a multi-paragraph four page double-spaced essay on **one** of the following poems: Joy Kogawa’s “What do I Remember of the Evacuation” or Wilfred Owen’s “Dulce et Decorum Est”. Make sure that your essay is word-processed, titled and includes your name. Use correct conventions (spelling, capitalization, punctuation) and clear word choice. Maintain effective organization throughout the paper by presenting a logical progression of ideas linked together with transitions between sentences and paragraphs. Support your claims with valid reasoning and relevant quotes from the text.

#### Choose A Topic:

1. What did Japanese-Canadians living in Canada experience during World War II according to Joy Kogawa’s “What do I Remember of the Evacuation”?
2. How does the speaker convey the message that it is not sweet and fitting to die for one’s country in Wilfred Owen’s “Dulce et Decorum Est”?

CATEGORY	Exceeding Expectations 4	Fully Meeting Expectations 3	Minimally Meeting Expectations 2	Not Yet Within Expectations 1
<b>Completeness</b>	Thorough completion, four pages double-spaced response with an in-depth answer.	Solid completion, four pages double-spaced response with a detailed answer.	Decent completion, four pages double-spaced response with an adequate answer.	Partial completion, not four pages double-spaced response with an inadequate answer.
<b>Understanding</b>	Excellent poem understanding, supporting claims using text details.	Good poem understanding, supporting claims using text details.	Basic poem understanding, supporting claims using text details.	Insufficient poem understanding, not supporting claims using text details.
<b>Conventions</b>	Proficiently written response, thoroughly edited – contains few or no errors.	Thoughtfully written response, moderately edited – contains several errors.	Competently written response, slightly edited – contains many errors.	Unsatisfactorily written response, not edited – contains numerous errors.
<b>Organization</b>	Superb organization, response has a smooth flow of ideas and is word-processed.	Nice organization, response has a clear flow of ideas and is word-processed.	Okay organization, response has a vague flow of ideas and is word-processed.	Limited organization, response has no flow of ideas and is word-processed.
<b>Intro/Thesis</b>	Great introduction, grabs attention and has a clear, concise, arguable thesis.	Good introduction, informs and interests the reader and has a clear thesis.	Decent introduction, informs the reader and has an awkward thesis.	Unclear introduction, does not interest the reader and has an awkward/wordy thesis.

TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_ / 20

# Joy Kogawa

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**Joy Kogawa** is a poet and novelist who is best known for her first novel, *Obasan* which deals with the trauma of a Japanese-Canadian family up-rooted from their home in Vancouver to the Prairies during World War II. Kogawa regards her later novel, *The Rain Ascends* (1995) to be as important as *Obasan* (1981). She began her professional career as a poet with her first volume *The splintered moon* (1967). Some of the poems in *A choice of dreams* (1974) deal with Kogawa's trip to Japan and the short lines of verse demonstrate the influence of Japanese poetry like haiku. In *Jericho Road* (1977) the language is more metaphorical and is further developed in the verse in *A woman in the woods* (1985) and *A song of Lilith* (2000). Her selected poems are in *A Garden of Anchors* (2003).

Kogawa is also an accomplished children's writer and produced *Naomi's Road* (1986) based on her adult novel, *Obasan*. After *Naomi's Road* was published in Japanese an expanded version of the book was reprinted in Canada and was adapted as a play (1995) and as an opera in Vancouver in 2005. In *Naomi's Tree* (2008) the young woman returns to her childhood home.

Kogawa's other adult novels are *The Rain Ascends*, and *Emily Kato* (2005). The sequel to *Obasan* is *Itsuka* (1992), a semi-autobiographical novel about the struggle for a redress settlement. This story is reimagined in *Emily Kato* after the trauma of the 9/11 experience in North America.

An important book on Joy Kogawa was edited by Sheena Wilson in 2011 and contains many details about her life and writing in the short biography, and a revealing interview. See *Joy Kogawa: Essays on Her Works* (Guernica Editions, 2011).

Joy Kogawa was born in Vancouver in 1935. At the outbreak of WWII all people of Japanese background were evacuated from the west coast to internment camps in the interior of B.C. and to the Prairies. Kogawa and her family lived through this trauma, a subject which she explores in a number of her books.





## WHAT DO I REMEMBER OF THE EVACUATION

Joy Kogawa

I remember my father telling Tim and me  
About the mountains and the train  
And the excitement of going on a trip.  
What do I remember of the evacuation?  
I remember my mother wrapping  
A blanket around me and my  
Pretending to fall asleep so she would be happy  
Although I was so excited I couldn't sleep  
(I hear there were people herded  
Into the Hastings Park like cattle,  
Families were made to move in two hours  
Abandoning everything, leaving pets  
And possessions at gun point.  
I hear families were broken up  
Men were forced to work. I heard  
It whispered late at night  
That there was suffering) and  
I missed my dolls.  
What do I remember of the evacuation?  
I remember Miss Foster and Miss Tucker  
Who still live in Vancouver  
And who did what they could  
And loved the children and who gave me  
A puzzle to play with on the train.  
And I remember the mountains and I was  
Six years old and I swear I saw a giant  
Gulliver of Gulliver's Travels scanning the horizon  
And when I told my mother she believed it too  
And I remember how careful my parents were  
Not to bruise us with bitterness  
And I remember the puzzle of Lorraine Life  
Who said "Don't insult me" when I  
Proudly wrote my name in Japanese  
And Tim flew the Union Jack  
When the war was over but Lorraine  
And her friends spat on us anyway  
and I prayed to the God who loves  
All the children in his sight  
That I might be white.

## "What do I Remember of the Evacuation" Vocabulary

Abandon- To leave and never return to.
Bitterness- Unhappy and angry because of unfair treatment.
Bruise- A black-and-blue spot on the body or a dark spot on fruit caused by an injury or damage.
Cattle- Cows, bulls, or steers that are kept on a farm or ranch for meat or milk.
Evacuation- To withdraw from a place in an organized way especially for protection.
Herd- A typically large group of animals of one kind kept together under human control.
Horizon- The line where the earth or sea seems to meet the sky.
Insult- To do or say something that is offensive to (someone).
Possessions- Things that are owned and belong to someone.
Pretend- To act as if something is true when it is not true.
Scan- To look at (something) carefully usually in order to find someone or something.

### Summarize what happens in the poem

The speaker remembers her father telling her and her brother Tim about going on a train ride. She remembers her and her parents being forced to leave their home. Her mother wrapped her in a blanket and she pretended to sleep in order to make her mother happy. However, her excitement made her unable to sleep. She also felt sad because she was unable to take her dolls with her on this journey.

The speaker recalls that she heard that people were treated like farm animals and crowded into the Hastings Park internment camp. Entire families were removed from their homes with only two hours notice. These people were forced by police who carried guns to leave behind their possessions and pets. Individuals became separated from their families, men were forced to work and people endured physical, mental and emotional pain.

The speaker remembers Miss Foster and Miss Tucker (from Vancouver) who cared deeply about the Japanese children who were detained. In fact, they kindly gave the speaker a puzzle to play with during the train ride. When the speaker was six years old she imagined that she saw Gulliver the giant (from Jonathan Swift's short story, "Gulliver's Travels") looking at the horizon. This may be significant because in Swift's story, Gulliver travels to a place called Lilliput. The Lilliputians are a race of mini men who are at war with another group of mini men. Gulliver is a giant that attempts to end the war between these two groups. This allusion may hint at the faith the speaker has that someone will come to save them.

The speaker's parents were careful not to express any feelings of anger or resentment about being discriminated against because they wanted to protect her from experiencing painful feelings. Lorraine and her friends treat the speaker and her brother disrespectfully because of their Japanese-Canadian heritage. The narrator prays to God to make her white-skinned so that she wouldn't be mistreated.



## Wilfred Owen



### Related Schools & Movements: First World War

On March 18, 1893, Wilfred Edward Salter Owen was born in Shropshire, England. After the death of his grandfather in 1897, the family moved to Birkenhead, where Owen was educated at the Birkenhead Institute. After another move in 1906, he continued his studies at the Technical School in Shrewsbury. Interested in the arts at a young age, Owen began to experiment with poetry at 17.

After failing to gain entrance into the University of London, Owen spent a year as a lay assistant to Reverend Herbert Wigan in 1911 and went on to teach in France at the Berlitz School of English. By 1915, he had become increasingly interested in World War I and enlisted in the Artists' Rifles group. After training in England, Owen was commissioned as a second lieutenant.

He was wounded in combat in 1917 and evacuated to Craiglockhart War Hospital near Edinburgh after being diagnosed with shell shock. There he met another patient, poet Siegfried Sassoon, who served as a mentor and introduced him to well-known literary figures such as Robert Graves and H. G. Wells.

It was at this time Owen wrote many of his most important poems, including "Anthem for Doomed Youth" and "Dulce et Decorum Est." His poetry often graphically illustrated the horrors of warfare, the physical landscapes that surrounded him, and the human body in relation to those landscapes. His verses stand in stark contrast to the patriotic poems of war written by earlier poets of Great Britain, such as Rupert Brooke.

Owen rejoined his regiment in Scarborough in June 1918, and in August, he returned to France. He was awarded the Military Cross for bravery at Amiens. He was killed on November 4 of that year while attempting to lead his men across the Sambre-Oise canal at Ors. He was 25 years old. The news reached his parents on November 11, Armistice Day. The collected Poems of Wilfred Owen appeared in December 1920, with an introduction by Sassoon, and he has since become one of the most admired poets of World War I.

**"Dulce et Decorum Est" by Wilfred Owen**

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,  
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,  
Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs  
And towards our distant rest began to trudge.  
Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots  
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame; all blind;  
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots  
Of tired, outstripped Five-Nines that dropped behind.

Gas! Gas! Quick, boys!—An ecstasy of fumbling,  
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time;  
But someone still was yelling out and stumbling  
And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime...  
Dim, through the misty panes and thick green light,  
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.

In all my dreams, before my helpless sight,  
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.

If in some smothering dreams you too could pace  
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,  
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,  
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;  
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood  
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,  
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud  
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,—  
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest  
To children ardent for some desperate glory,  
The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est  
Pro patria mori.



## "Dulce et Decorum Est" Vocabulary

Ardent- Characterized by strong enthusiasm.
Beggar- A person, typically a homeless one, who lives by asking for money or food.
Ecstasy- A state of being carried away by overwhelming emotion.
Fatigue- Temporary loss of strength and energy from hard work.
Flounder- To move in an awkward way with a lot of difficulty and effort.
Flung- To throw something hard or without care.
Fumble- Use the hands clumsily while doing or handling something.
Gargle- To hold (a liquid) in the mouth or throat and agitate with air from the lungs.
Hag- An ugly or evil-looking old woman.
Lame- Unable to walk normally because of an injury or illness affecting the leg or foot.
Limp- Walk with difficulty, typically because of an injured or stiff leg or foot.
Plunge- To drop suddenly downward.
Smother- Deprive of oxygen and prevent from breathing.
Stumble- To walk unsteadily or awkwardly.
Writhe- Respond with great emotional or physical discomfort to a violent or unpleasant feeling/thought
Zest- Great enthusiasm and energy.

### Summarize what happens in each of the stanzas of the poem

Stanza One- Soldiers are limping back from the battlefield. Young men who are in the prime of their youth are reduced to a state of infirmity. Barely awake from lack of sleep, they are struggling to walk upright through mud. They are in a state of mental exhaustion and do not hear gas shells falling nearby.
Stanza Two- Suddenly the call goes up – Gas. But, one soldier is too slow to put on his gas mask (helmet) which would save his life by filtering out the toxins. Deprived of oxygen and unable to breathe, this man yells out, falls to the ground and gasps for air. The speaker watches helplessly as this soldier suffocates.
Stanza Three- All of the speaker's dreams are haunted by this image of the man choking in front of him.
Stanza Four- The speaker addresses the reader and wishes that in a dream he or she could walk behind the wagon that the soldiers threw the gassed soldier in and visualize the pain and deformity inflicted upon him and hear him gargling blood. Then, with these horrors seared into the memory, the reader would not enthusiastically tell children the old lie: it is sweet and fitting to die for one's country.

**Five-Nines** – German cannon shells that often discharged poison gas when they exploded.

**Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori** –This means: "It is sweet and fitting to die for one's country."