



MARC GARNEAU COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE

**TOPS English Exam  
2021**

Date: Saturday, November 27, 2021.

Time limit: 3:00pm-5:00pm

Please ensure this document is completed and submitted back to the google form by  
5:00 pm!

You can use scrap paper to create drafts of your answers. Please only type your final  
draft into the document

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click “PDF Document (.pdf)”

Please click the link below to submit the pdf of the completed exam:

<https://forms.gle/nM8wYcZ9oR7EVrmC7>

This portion of the exam has two sections. The first section is focused on a social justice issue and asks you to demonstrate your ability to consider issues through a critical lens and to communicate your ideas clearly and effectively. The second section is focused on exploring your creative thinking skills and your ability to engage readers with beautiful writing.

## Section 1: Critical Thinking Response

### 1 Question ( /20 Marks)

1. After reading the article below, compose a 300-400 word response that explores ways that non-Indigenous Canadian teenagers can participate in the process of reconciliation. Make sure to explain what reconciliation means in your own words and make specific reference to the information provided in this article to support your thinking. You may also incorporate any background knowledge or experiences you have in relation to truth and reconciliation. (40 marks)

Modern Canadian teenagers have access to everything they need. Young teens like me should have all heard of Residential schools before in their life. Without a doubt, it retains no relation to non-Indigenous Canadian teenagers whatsoever. Or does it? Who was the first to occupy this land? Does this land indeed belong to us? In this brief passage I will be discussing the meaning of reconciliation and the connection of Indigenous societies to modern teenagers such as myself.

Reconciliation is a very abstract topic, but understanding and incorporating this concept into our head is worthwhile because we get to learn about past mistakes, misunderstandings, and we get to discover the history of our land. The first people to occupy our land were the Indigenous communities. They existed long before we entered the land. Later, our ancestors also entered the land. The Indigenous communities embraced us with extended hands, expecting an outstanding bond and friendship between the communities. What our ancestors welcomed them with was assimilation, colonization, and cultural genocide. Our community did not acknowledge their beliefs and they were forced to become like us. They were treated extremely harshly and were forced to attend residential schools. This is a brief history of atrocities committed to Indigenous communities, as there would be so much it would be uncountable.

Although the past is irreversible, we are able to reconcile. This means to raise awareness, understand and acknowledge our past, and move past it. The treatment of Indigenous communities in the past is unacceptable, but we cannot alter it. We must remember the painful experiences that these Indigenous people went through and must not make the same mistakes again in the future. We should respect people of all sorts. We can slowly reconcile and become a greater, more glorious Canada than before.

## **What Reconciliation Is And What It Is Not**

**August 16, 2018**

**From Indigenous Corporate Training Inc.**

**<https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/what-reconciliation-is-and-what-it-is-not>**

For a very long time, mainstream Canadians were unaware of the horrors and conditions that 150,000 Indigenous children endured in the Indian residential schools over a period of more than 100 years. For many Canadians, the first inkling of the atrocities the children suffered was when then Prime Minister Stephen Harper delivered the Statement of Apology on behalf of Canadians for the Indian residential school system in 2008.

St-Michael's-Indian-residential-school. The grassroots Idle No More movement raised awareness of Indigenous issues in 2012 with round dances, rallies, teach-ins, and social media. The movement gained significant media attention which brought it onto the radar of mainstream Canada.

The next hit of awareness was in 2015 with the publication of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) report and 94 calls to action. The calls to action, in particular, awoke in many individuals, organizations, and governments a realization that they had not just a role to play but a moral responsibility to make amends for the past.

It's now five years since the TRC report and reconciliation is a familiar term to most of us. But, there's still confusion over what it means and who is responsible, which could lead to reconciliation becoming nothing more than a platitude.

The TRC definition of reconciliation:

“... Reconciliation is about establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in this country. In order for that to happen, there has to be awareness of the past, an acknowledgement of the harm that has been inflicted, atonement for the causes, and action to change behaviour.” [1]

To flesh out what reconciliation is and is not, here's a list of considerations that may contribute to understanding reconciliation.

Reconciliation is:

- Critical
- Complex
- Multifaceted
- Continuous
- A process
- About working towards solidarity as a society and country
- The responsibility of every Canadian
- Honouring treaties
- Acknowledging and respecting Indigenous rights and title
- Acknowledging and letting go of negative perceptions and stereotypes
- Acknowledging the past and ensuring that history never repeats
- Learning about Indigenous history
- Recognizing the inter-generational impacts of colonization, attempts at assimilation, and cultural genocide
- Recognizing the critical roles, Indigenous Peoples have held in the creation of Canada, their contributions to world wars to protect Canada
- Taking responsibility as a person, a parent, an employee, an employer to:
- Never utter, accept, or ignore a racist comment
- Never utter, accept, or ignore a statement that includes a stereotype about Indigenous Peoples
- Respect for:
- Indigenous individuals
- Indigenous beliefs, cultures, traditions, worldviews, challenges, and goals
- Recognition and support of the deep connections Indigenous Peoples have to the land.
- Supporting the reclamation of identity, language, culture, and nationhood
- Healing for all Canadians
- Good people doing good things
- Building relationships
- Never giving up despite setbacks
- Humility
- An opportunity to move forward
- A commitment to taking a role and assuming responsibility in working towards a better future for every Canadian

Reconciliation is not:

- A trend
- A single gesture, action, or statement
- A box to be ticked
- About blame
- About guilt
- About the loss of rights for non-Indigenous Canadians
- Someone else's responsibility

I believe Canada has moved to a point at which we no longer ask "whether reconciliation is possible" but "how is reconciliation possible." And from that position, increasingly non-Indigenous Canadians are asking "what can I do?"

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## **Part 2: Creative Expression**

### **2 Questions ( /20 marks)**

Read the following excerpt from the book *In the Wild Light* by Jeff Zentner:

#### **Excerpt from *In the Wild Light* by Jeff Zentner**

Instead of getting better, I'm only finding new and subtle shades of experiencing loss. Turns out it's like the people you love are riding a teeter-totter across from you. And when they're gone, you plummet down and have a hard time getting back up. You never reach the heights you used to.

Papaw dying is a completely different experience from when my mama died. I guess you don't get good at mourning. There are no grieving muscles you can train. You start over each time.

I miss him at the times I'd expect, like when I'm talking to Mamaw. I miss him at the times we would have spoken. I also miss the feeling of knowing he was there, existing, even at the times we wouldn't have ordinarily spoken.

And I miss him at the times I wouldn't expect, like when Vi or Alex mentions their parents. I miss him each time Delaney gets me ice cream using her Dairy Queen skills. I miss him on every occasion I look in the mirror and remember how we'd go get haircuts together.

I'm realizing that every triumph, large and small, that I have from now until the day I die will be diminished, if only a little, by my inability to share it with him.

Now that I think a lot about words, I realize how poorly they represent absence. We should have a language of loss that we keep in a black-velvet-lined box and only get out when we most need it.

Instead, we have:

*Dead*  
*Deceased*  
*Departed*  
*Disappeared*  
*Done*  
*Ended*  
*Expired*  
*Finished*  
*Gone*  
*Left*  
*Lost*  
*Passed*

Not one expresses the completeness of the idea it represents, the way apple represents the completeness of an apple, and river represents the completeness of a river. They all leave something unsaid. They all have some phantom limb that reminds you of their lack

Don't they know how much I loved him?

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**Question 1 ( /10):** This excerpt is all about how **WORDS** are sometimes not enough to express an **IDEA** or a **FEELING**. Which **IDEA** or **FEELING** do you think is not properly represented by a word? Choose an **IDEA** or **FEELING** that you think is important and **write about how the word for that idea does not adequately capture its meaning.** Your answer should demonstrate your skill in crafting writing that is creative and beautiful.

This is a free writing response. You can answer in a format of your choice from the list below. You should write about 300-400 words. Use the success criteria to guide your writing choices.

- Prose
- Poetry
- Short Script
- Vignette

Anger is a fundamental emotion for each of us. It can drive us to accomplish greater goals or bring us down to nothing. Anger can cause great calamity, and true

anger doesn't know when to cease. The general public thinks that anger is controllable, and you should try not to get angry. However, I strongly disagree. Anger that is controllable is, in my terms, fake anger.

Fake anger is not true anger, and it does not bring about the same meaning as true anger. True anger is uncontrollable and cannot be stopped. True anger will make you go into a state of instinct, and your mind will stop thinking; and will do whatever it can to satisfy the hunger of anger. You lose all control over your body and your natural instinct takes over. You are unable to make rational decisions and you can't feel any pain. You don't think rationally and only try to satisfy hunger. When you enter this state, it could last for a very long time, and could damage your mental, and physical state very much.

Anger is very rarely shown in its true form, and most people live their life without ever experiencing true anger. Anger is a result of pain, suffering, humiliation, and many more. Without anger, life would be very dull; but anger comes with the cost of losing control of the state of your body. Anger is one emotion that is a form of pain and suffering after being pushed to the brink. After effects of anger could include sadness.

People truly underestimate the power of anger, and most people think it's not quite a big deal. What they are referring to is fake anger; and unlike real anger, it's able to be controlled and dealt with easily.

**Question 2 ( /10):** Choose one part of the answer you have crafted that you think is particularly effective. Highlight that part to describe how you crafted it and why you think that is effective. Write your description of that highlighted part below:

**Success Criteria:**

**Organization (Thinking/Communication)**

Writer hooks readers from the first line. Reader can follow the narrative and understand what is happening. It is clear that the writer has made careful choices about the structure and flow of the piece. /10

**Substance (Application)**

Writer crafts a detailed response to the prompt that explores the central idea throughout in a cohesive way. /10

**Style (Application)**

Writer creates strong sense of voice through effective experimentation with diction, syntax, rhythm, use of punctuation, sensory details,

literary devices & craft moves..

**/10**

**Correctness (Knowledge/Communication)**

Overall, writing has correct spelling, grammar and punctuation.

**/5**

**Metacognition (Thinking)**

Writer shows clear understanding of how and why to use various techniques to craft effective writing

**/5**

**Total both sections:**

**/80**