Geographical Environment

Definition: This environment type relates to where in the world (location) a character is. The geography might vary from desert in Pakistan to city in Israel depending on the novel. Weather/climate is also a factor in this category.

How it might vary in a selection: The easiest way to identify how location affects the character(s) is to see if the landform/weather plays a part in the plot. Is there a drought/flood/sandstorm that causes problems for the characters? Would the plot (rising action due to conflict) be different if the location were different? Note that the social/political/moral portions are not a part of this category...those aspects of culture that are related to WHERE a person lives will be explored in different categories. This one is specific to the type of landform/weather the character is experiencing.

Moral Environment

Definition: This environment type relates to basic morality...which is defined as a set of codes or behaviors that define personal/cultural values and ethics. Sometimes this relates to religious mores or rules (Golden Rule, Five Pillars of Islam, 10 Commandments, etc.).

How it might vary in a selection: A positive moral environment would be one where the actions and/or conditions in the selection are in balance with the character’s basic sense of right and wrong. Things would feel ultimately fair and harmonious with the character’s basic beliefs and morals.

A negative moral environment would be one where the character/protagonist feels that her sense of basic right and wrong is being threatened. Remember this is subjective. An American girl would not feel threatened by having a man see her face in public. In some of the novels, the moral environment is different (for example in Afghanistan) because the standards are different, and having an uncovered face in public would be in conflict with the basic morals of a girl in that society.

Physical Environment

Definition: This environment type relates to what type of room/space/facility the character is in during the scene. As opposed to geographical environment, this is more specific. If you were to build a set for a scene in the play version of this story, what would it look and feel like? What backdrops/props would you use to set the physical environment for the characters to act out the action?

How it might vary in a selection: In some cases the physical environment can be very positive...a warm cozy room in a house would be a positive physical environment where a character would feel safe. A classroom setting might be either positive or negative...some classrooms feel like sanctuaries and places of learning, while others can feel restrictive, cold and threatening. A jail cell would be very cold and threatening. Being out in the open air can feel free...or a character might feel exposed and threatened and unsafe being out in the open. As Climate Characterizer, this will be your job to determine the effect of the immediate surroundings on the character(s).
Economic Environment

Definition: This environment has everything to do with money and material goods, from wealth at one extreme to poverty at the other.

How it might vary in a selection: Some characters might have all that they need to be comfortable; some might be very poor and suffer because of that. Some plots involve character(s) who lose much of what they had at the beginning of the novel. In some novels, the economic environment does not have a significant effect on the character(s), and in others it has a profound effect.

Political Environment

Definition: The political environment is defined by the rules and laws that govern society. Laws are often enforced by trained groups of people (like police for example) and are sometimes interpreted by a legal/justice system with courts that mete out justice and punishment for crimes.

How it might vary in a selection: Some political regimes have elected political leaders where the characters have a say in who leads them. Other political environments have imposed laws and rules—rules that the character(s) have forced upon them with no choice in the matter. Some people are led by dictators or religious factions that have taken over the government and are imposing their own rules on society. In some cases the characters might be caught in the middle of a political conflict, causing them to be afraid or defensive.

Social Environment

Definition: A social environment involves how people interact with one another when together. Within a family there is one set of social standards, and within a community, there might be another one. Sometimes there is a group of people with one set of social standards who come into contact with a group or groups with differing standards. These groups might be family, classmates, neighbors or tribes. Certain traditional practices sometimes accompany a social system, like shaking hands or bowing. What is socially acceptable for one group may not be the same as what is acceptable for another group.

How it might vary in a selection: If a group of people who have a distinct culture and set of social standards must change those standards to fit in with a social group that is different, that sometimes causes conflict for that group. Look for situations where a character does not fit in, due to language barriers or cultural/gender issues.

Technological Environment

Definition: This environment relates to the degree of technology the characters experience, ranging from simple agrarianism (farming with simple tools) to modern-day technology with phones and computers.

How it might vary in a selection: The degree of technology may change from one part of the book to another, causing characters to have to adapt to doing things in the absence of technology. It might be interesting to note how having a higher degree of technology available to some of the characters might have changed the outcome.
What is an “environment?”

The **environment** means the surroundings, or the conditions that surround and affect a character.

Different types include geographical, physical, social, political, technological, economic and moral.

Select one of the types and define it (list on website):

Describe this environment/climate as it appears in the reading:

How does this environment/climate affect the characters in the story?

If this climate does not affect the characters, describe a scene the author might add to have the climate impact the behavior of a character:
Environmental Effects.... Timed Reflection

Assessment for “Exploring Environments”

Which environment type did you choose to discuss? Was there a reason you picked this environment type? (Fill out in advance)

How difficult was this environment type for making inferences about the effect it had on the character(s)? Explain. (Fill out in advance)

During the discussion, using the top ¼ of the back of this page, record the group responses using initials in parentheses. (KP)

After discussion, note if the group felt there was an environment type in the pages you read for this session that would have been easier to discuss. In your reflection on the back of the page, you may refer to this as a part of your reflection.

An environment that would have been easier to discuss would have been ______________________ because ______________________

______________________________

On the back of this page, reflect on the group discussion. You will need to include a strong thesis statement that states which environment was the topic of discussion and how this environment affected a character, and how the group reacted to this topic. Be sure to include cited examples from the novel (page number in parentheses) and the student contributions to the discussion, citing using first and last initials. React in your reflection to what the group members said. Think about whether or not the comments from the group surprised you in any way. Relate any new insights your group might have had as a result of the discussion. A good reflection would include ways that the discussion might have been improved, and should also include ways that the job of Climate Characterizer might be made to be more effective. You may use an additional piece of paper for the reflection, but the total amount of time for the reflection will be fifteen minutes, so be sure to conclude your thoughts in that time.
Exploring Environments Reflection

How does where we are affect who we are?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Organization/Citation</th>
<th>Project Expectation</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The student does not meet any of the requirements given below.</td>
<td>The student does not reach a standard described by any descriptors given below.</td>
<td>Paper is not turned in and does not meet any requirements below.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student demonstrates <strong>little or no awareness</strong> of author’s purpose and <strong>lacks</strong> support in his/her writing. Student does <strong>not express</strong> an informed response to literary text.</td>
<td>The student’s work is <strong>generally disorganized</strong> and is not presented in a logical manner. Paragraph structure is <strong>very weak</strong>. No attention is paid to citations, and appropriate critical apparatus is <strong>not employed</strong>.</td>
<td>Student does not reflect on the impact that an environment has on the character. The paragraph structure follows no logical progression of ideas. Novel passages and group comments are not presented in the reflection.</td>
<td>70-74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student <strong>displays insufficient</strong> understanding of author’s purpose and <strong>displays insufficient</strong> support in their writing. Student expresses a response to literary and non-literary text that is <strong>minimally insightful and reflective.</strong></td>
<td>The student’s work shows the <strong>beginnings of organization</strong>, but lacks order. Paragraph structures are weak. Citations are minimally utilized, are plopped, and/or are undeveloped. Critical apparatus is rarely employed.</td>
<td>The reflection feels random and disorganized. The statement about the impact of environment on the character is unclear, and the examples from novel and discussion are minimal and/or unexplained. The entire reflection is one paragraph, or the paragraphs have fewer than five sentences each. Citations are missing, or are rarely used.</td>
<td>75-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student demonstrates an awareness of author’s purpose and <strong>displays adequate</strong> support in his/her writing. Student expresses an informed and independent response to literary and non-literary text that is <strong>somewhat insightful and reflective.</strong></td>
<td>The student’s work is basically organized, with ideas presented in a manner that has limited coherence, clarity and logical progression. Paragraph structures are apparent. Citations are plopped, or explanations and development of ideas are either sometimes missing or incomplete. Critical apparatus is sometimes employed.</td>
<td>The reflection shows some understanding of how the environment impacts the character. Although a few novel passages and/or group comments are presented, the explanation does not connect the ideas well, and the examples feel dropped in without apparent reason. Although paragraphs are present, the sentences are somewhat choppy, and some citations are missing.</td>
<td>80-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student <strong>demonstrates a good appreciation</strong> of author’s purpose and <strong>displays substantial</strong> support in his/her writing. Student expresses an informed and independent response to literary and non-literary text that is <strong>mostly insightful and reflective.</strong></td>
<td>The student’s work is usually well-organized, with ideas presented in a mostly clear, coherent, and logical manner. Paragraph structures help to develop the ideas. Citations are used as support, but the explanations and development of the ideas are sometimes incomplete. Appropriate critical apparatus is employed with minor lapses.</td>
<td>The reflection demonstrates sufficient understanding of the environmental effect and the purpose of inclusion in the selection. The reflection touches on the discussion but does not indicate insight. Examples from text and discussion are used but not always clearly explained. Mostly fluid sentence formation is present, and proper citation is mostly employed.</td>
<td>87-93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student <strong>demonstrates a sophisticated analysis</strong> (recognizing and understanding) of author’s purpose and <strong>consistently displays illustrative</strong> support in his/her writing. Student expresses an informed and independent response to literary and non-literary (i.e. group discussion) text that is <strong>extremely insightful and reflective.</strong></td>
<td>The student’s work is consistently well-organized, with ideas presented in a sustained, coherent and logical manner. Paragraph structures effectively develop and substantiate the ideas being expressed. Citations from the novel and group discussion references are regularly utilized as support and clearly explained, employing appropriate critical apparatus consistently and accurately.</td>
<td>The student shows a well-developed understanding of the effect that an environment has on a character and why an author would choose to include that environment in the selection. The reflection uses both examples from the text and from the group discussion to evaluate the issues and the nature of the literature discussion. Ideas flow smoothly from one section of the reflection to the other. All pieces of evidence are cited properly and are fully elaborated upon in the reflection.</td>
<td>94-100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>