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| **Reading: Description**  Descriptive writing spends a lot of time painting a picture of what the writer sees around them. While there is some action, the focus of the writing is on the things and people the writer sees, what they do and how they feel about it all. Descriptive writing makes use of a lot of adjectives! Descriptive pieces can use the present tense, to include the reader in the immediate experience or they can use the past tense. |

**Going Home to Prince Edward Island[[1]](#footnote-1)**

I am standing on a sandbar in Prince Edward Island letting the lazy waves wash over my feet and listening to the seagulls squawking as they fly overhead. If you stand in one place long enough the sand falls away around the sides of your feet and you sink down, a bit at a time, until your feet are completely buried in the bright red mud. When the tide is out, you can walk for miles collecting seashells or digging clams.

I grew up on the Island. I am back home for the first time in six years. For better or worse, I have my husband with me. Being a man of the mountains, Brian was at first reluctant to travel to a place that is so flat. If there is nothing to climb, he doesn’t think a place is worth visiting. The thought of spending a warm summer’s evening strolling along the beach, watching the sun set, didn’t hold much attraction for him. Now that we are here, I am determined to change his perception.

We start with a full-day coastal drive along what is known as the Blue Heron Drive. Prince Edward Island is divided into three sections, each with a different name. The Blue Heron section encircles the centre of the island. We head out early from my hometown Summerside. Even though most people believe that Prince Edward Island is small enough to walk around, you actually need an entire day in a car just to see a third of it.

The first site of the morning is the new Confederation Bridge. This spectacular piece of engineering stretches twenty-two kilometres across the Northumberland Strait from Prince Edward Island to New Brunswick. When I was a child, we used to have to take the ferry to get to the rest of Canada. Now we can drive.

As we continue driving, Brian marvels at the brilliant red cliffs, the red potato fields and the red dirt roads. Everything we see is red. The rocks, the sand, the soil. “Not the place to wear white clothes”, he remarks. We take a detour onto a dirt road to find a private beach on which to have our lunch. Brian spots a fox running down the road and wants to follow it and get a digital photo. The little fox, oblivious to our pursuit, trots down the road. We get our photo but the fox is hard to see since it is also red!

After driving through Charlottetown we are now on the north side of the island. The red beaches have been replaced by white beaches and miles of sand dunes. We stop for a swim at Brackley Beach. As children, we had always begged to go to this beach because of its huge waves. We would scream and jump over the waves again and again until our parents dragged us away for a barbequed dinner at our campsite. Years later, Brian and I spend most of the afternoon there, playing like the kids we once were. I have to drag him away before we miss dinner.

We eat a dinner at Fisherman’s Wharf. A giant tank at the entrance is full of the lobster, still alive, that will make our dinner. The large red creatures move in a leisurely fashion, not suspecting that they will soon adorn dinner plates. We start eating from the salad bar as soon as we sit down. The dinner rolls and the clam chowder soup are so good we are at risk of eating too much and not leaving any room for our lobster. “Are you bored?” I ask. Brian can only rub his full stomach and smile. I smile back. I’ve definitely won some points in favour of the Island.

The next day we visit Charlottetown. I have booked tickets for the musical *Anne of Green Gables.* We can’t go to the Island and not celebrate the life of its most well-known, if fictitious, citizen. When I had booked the tickets I had been told to come an hour early so we could catch a free performance in the courtyard. And we do. A family of five children plays fiddle tunes and step dances. After the play, as we leave the theatre, we come across a brass quartet playing beside a water fountain. Another free concert! We sit listening for an hour in the hot summer sun. During lunchtime at an outdoor café we get even more music from a guitarist busking on the street corner.

The rest of the holiday is a blur of beaches, sunsets and more evidence of Prince Edward Island’s vibrant musical culture----fiddlers, step dancers and jazz musicians. Seven evenings and as many different musical events. There is a ceilidh in church with fiddlers and singers giving us their best. There is a feast of strawberry shortcake during an afternoon concert of the Irish/Scottish songs that every islander learns when growing up. As we sing along I feel that I have discovered my home again. On our last evening on the Island, at yet another concert, Brian finally concedes that, even though it is flat, Prince Edward Island is not so boring after all. Mission accomplished!

*A. Complete the activities below based on the reading on the previous pages.*

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| Where is the writer? Why is she there? |

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| What are some of the things that the writer sees? |

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| What are some of the things that the writer does? |

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| What impression do the events and scenery leave on the author and her husband? |

1. Adapted from a descriptive piece by Shawna Wyville [↑](#footnote-ref-1)