



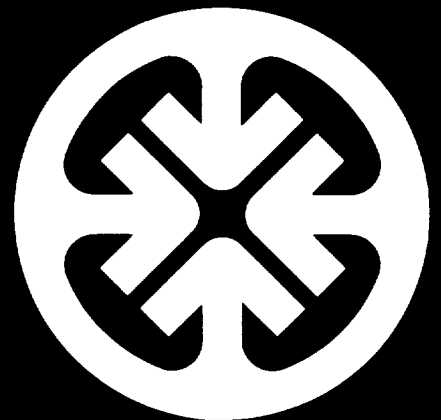
National
Film Board
of Canada

Office
national du film
du Canada

The Drylanders

Directed by Donald Holdstock

Teacher's Guide



filmenglish

F I L M G L I S H

DRYLANDERS

Teacher's Manual

The National Film Board
of Canada

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INTRODUCTION

OBJECTIVES OF THE ENGLISH DRAMA SERIES

The English Drama Series was conceived by the National Film Board not as a method for teaching English as a second language, but as a pedagogical aid in the teaching of English. The importance of the visual stimulus is now fully recognized in the field of applied linguistics, but the importance of the moving visual stimulus has just recently begun to be explored. A film provides the teacher with the opportunity to exploit a wealth of different situations that otherwise would be difficult to bring into the classroom. For the student, it provides an access to the outside world, taking him out of the traditional learning environment and presenting him with a variety of meaningful situations not usually possible within the classroom context. In addition, it provides him with an absorbing, interesting stimulus which leads to an unconscious effort on his part to grasp the meaning of what is being said, thus making the learning process a motivating and pleasant experience.

The film series is not centered around particular grammatical points, nor has it been linguistically graded according to language skills, as the content is much too vast. Instead, it has been designed as a means of promoting and extending the student's overall ability to understand and speak English. Consequently, students of all levels could profit to some extent from all of the films.

This does not mean, however, that the pedagogical aspect of the series has been neglected. The visual stimulus of the film permits a comprehension of its own: one can view a film with no sound and still derive some sort of understanding of what is happening.

The combination of the spoken word with the moving visual stimulus ensures a more complete understanding of the actions being witnessed. Slides recalling certain key scenes are included at the end of each episode of the film to further reinforce the student's understanding, and a series of questions accompany the slides to enable the teacher to check comprehension and to encourage the student to speak. We feel that there is no better means of promoting speaking skills than by encouraging students to answer questions based on sequenced events, or by stimulating them to offer opinions and comments on what they have understood.

The English Drama Series is not restricted to any one age group either. The films deal with a broad spectrum of plots, ranging from a murder thriller to a musical, so that they are of interest to students of all ages.

The final choice of the film to show to a particular class, then, is left up to the teacher, as he knows the interests and abilities of his students best. In order for students to really benefit from the wealth of learning experiences provided by the films, we can only suggest that they have studied English for a minimum of two hundred hours, or be at an intermediate level.

6.

ELEMENTS OF THE ENGLISH DRAMA SERIES

The film kit for each movie in the series includes the following items:

1. The film:

Most of the films are in full color and each is divided into four separate 15-20 minute episodes. The last three episodes of the film begin with a recapitulation of the previous episode and of the story up to that point.

2. The slides or filmstrips:

A set of picture and script slides or filmstrips is included in the film kit. They are used in the following ways:

- a) to introduce the main characters of the film,
- b) to reconstruct the sequence of events,
- c) to present the songs, where songs are a relevant part of the film.

Since the slides and the filmstrips both present the same material, the teacher may choose one or the other, according to the equipment he has available.

3. The tape:

Where songs are a relevant part of the film, they are reproduced on a tape that is included in the film kit.

4. The Teacher's Manual:

The Teacher's Manual includes:

- a) an introduction to the series with numerous suggestions on presenting and reinforcing the film material,
- b) a short résumé of the film,
- c) a complete transcript of the film, episode by episode,
- d) a list of all the important grammatical and lexical items found in each episode,
- e) a list of all the accompanying slides or filmstrips,
- f) a series of sequenced questions and suggested answers for each episode,
- g) suggestions for related activities that are stimulated by, but go beyond, the film,
- h) a transcript of all relevant songs found in the film.

8.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

Use of the résumé:

The purpose of the résumé is to help familiarize the teacher with the general theme of the film prior to showing it to his class, thus enabling him to stimulate the interest of the students who are about to see it. The résumé should not be given to the students as it would destroy the suspense and take away some of their interest. For this reason, it is meant to be used by the teacher only.

Use of the film transcripts:

The transcripts of each episode of the film are included in the Teacher's Manual to provide the complete content of the film, its character development and its plot development. They, too, are for the teacher's use only: he should use them as references in preparing the presentation of each episode to his students, not as direct teaching devices.

Use of the character slides or filmstrips:

A series of picture and script slides or filmstrips is included in the film kit to help identify the main characters of the film. They should be shown just before the first episode is presented in order to facilitate the students' overall comprehension of the film. A list of these slides/filmstrips is included in the Teacher's Manual.

Use of the film:

Each of the four episodes of the film has been presented as a separate 20-minute segment and should be viewed as such by the students.

We suggest that the episodes be presented at least a week apart in order to allow the teacher ample time to cover the pedagogical material, and to ensure sustained student interest and suspense.

The following steps for presenting each episode are suggested:

1. Show the film once for overall comprehension.
2. Proceed to the pedagogical exploitation (see "grammatical and lexical items", "questions", and "activities" below).
3. Show the accompanying slides to reconstruct the sequence of events.
4. Show the episode a second time to ensure understanding and to reinforce what the student has learned.

Of course, the film should be shown as many times as necessary to ensure full comprehension.

The teacher should preview the film if at all possible, before showing it to his class: this will give him a better understanding of the content and will help him prepare the pedagogical material.

Use of the grammatical and lexical items:

The purpose of the English Drama Series, as mentioned, is not to teach particular linguistic points but to promote overall oral comprehension and speaking skills. Therefore, most of the grammatical and lexical items to be exploited have not been presented in isolation but left in context. In addition, the items included in the list have been incorporated into the questions to ensure that the student fully understands them and uses them correctly.

10.

A list of sentences taken from the film containing these key grammatical and lexical items is included in the Teacher's Manual. The choice of the items included in this list has been made according to two important criteria: the items are used repeatedly in the film, and understanding their meaning is essential to the overall comprehension of the film.

Each sentence containing the recurring expression is followed by a second sentence, also related to the film, which uses a parallel expression to help explain the meaning of the key expression.

The following are suggested ways of exploiting this list:

1. Prepare several new sentences in which the key expression can be used.

Example

Lexical item in context: We just don't belong here.

Explanation: Liza thinks that the family does not fit into farming life.

New sentence: City people don't belong in the country.

2. Ask inverted questions based on the new sentences. By merely changing the person or the tense, each sentence lends itself to any number of questions.

Example

Questions: Do city people belong in the country?

Do farmers belong in the city?

Do you belong in the country?

Where do you belong?

Did Liza belong in the country? •

3. Have students give complete answers to these questions using the key expression in order to fully reinforce its use.

4. Ask students to produce their own sentences using the key item.
This will serve as a final check.

Care should be taken to ensure that the proper oral reinforcement (steps 1 to 3) is carried out before proceeding to step 4.

The presentation of the grammatical and lexical items should be done after the students have seen the film but before the beginning of the question period. In this way, the material will have a reference point and will not be taught in a vacuum. In order to avoid boredom, this phase should be covered quickly and directly.

Use of the slides or filmstrips, and questions:

Since the main objective of the film is to encourage students to speak, the format of sequenced questions and answers has been used. These questions are generally of an elementary nature, although an effort has been made to grade them so that they become progressively more challenging by demanding more thorough comprehension and lengthier answers from the students.

Slides (or filmstrips) are used to reproduce the various themes of the episode and to reconstruct the sequence of events. They are an integral part of the exploitation and provide the framework that allows the teacher, by means of the sequenced questions, to check the students' overall comprehension of the film. Each slide has a corresponding set of questions in the Teacher's Manual.

The questions follow a definite line of thought; therefore, even though there may be many answers to a particular question, the students should be encouraged to elicit those proposed in the manual. This can be done simply by asking inverted questions based on the answer desired until the student gives it. This will also ensure that the ensuing questions will be fully understood.

12.

The slide presentation and the question and answer period should be carried out at the end of each episode, just after the explanation of the grammatical and lexical items but before proceeding to a new episode.

Use of the activities:

The activities for this film take on the form of discussions based on the film's content and, for Episode III, reading selections which are also related to the film.

Discussion topics: Students often express a strong desire to speak in class or "have a conversation" but when pressed they find it difficult to find anything to say. More often than not this is caused by a lack of a framework within which to work. It is therefore important to provide the student with a well-defined topic of conversation and ample time for preparation.

The discussion topics suggested for Drylanders are broad enough to allow the students ample room for expansion, yet limited enough to provide a firm basis for discussion.

The following steps are suggested:

1. After the questions for the episode have been completed, inform the students of the discussion topic. (If they prefer one of their own, this is of course acceptable.)
2. To allow the students time for preparation, hold the discussion at a later class.
3. Have each student prepare something she or he wants to say. This is facilitated by having them write down a few ideas as reminders. This avoids the problem of having only a small part of the class participate in the discussion.
4. During the discussion, the teacher's role should be that of an animator, asking pertinent questions when the conversation slackens and picking up on any student contributions that could enhance the conversation.

Reading selections: There are two short reading selections for Episode III. These should be mimeographed and handed out to the students.

Since they are short selections, they can be read both aloud and silently by the class. The teacher can then ask questions on the selection and choose those items of interest to the students as a basis for a discussion.

Use of the songs:

Where songs are a relevant part of the film, they are recorded separately, accompanied by script slides (or filmstrips) on which the words are given, and included in the Teacher's Manual, with a series of questions and suggested answers. The pedagogical treatment of songs is something rather tenuous because one is often dealing with subjective interpretations rather than with concrete facts. For this reason, the questions suggested are very open-ended in nature and can lend themselves to a variety of interpretations.

The following steps are suggested for presenting the songs:

1. Play the tape of the song several times in order to allow the students to absorb and memorize as much of the content as possible.
2. Show the slides containing the words of the song and play the tape. The students should be encouraged to sing along.
3. Repeat step 2 as many times as necessary, until the students have completely mastered the song.
4. Proceed to the interpretation of the song, using the questions suggested.

DRYLANDERS

Each episode of Drylanders is accompanied by chronological questions and answers which are divided into the following sections:

- Episode I The arrival
 The beginning
- Episode II Working the land
 The change
 The Canadian winter
- Episode III Growth
 The drought
- Episode IV The end and the beginning

Each episode is also followed by some suggested discussion topics or reading selections.

RESUME OF DRYLANDERS

The movie begins in Saskatchewan in 1907. Dan and Elizabeth Greer, along with their two children, Colin and Russell are going to homestead on the Prairies. They have had no experience in farming and Elizabeth is worried about going to live out on the prairie. The family manages to live through the harsh winters, however, and soon settles into the farming life. The farm prospers. Colin marries, and life seems very good until 1929, the beginning of the drought. Neighbors leave the Prairies, and Russell goes into the city in search of a job. Finally, life becomes so difficult that the family must resort to the Relief Depot in search of supplies. Dan finally falls under the pressure and dies as a result of a stroke. The family refuses to give up, however, and after nine years the drought finally ends and the Greers once more begin work on the restoration of their farm.

DRYLANDERS

INTRODUCTION OF THE CHARACTERS

These slides are to be presented prior to showing Episode I, in order to introduce the main characters of the film.

Slide 1: Picture of Dan Greer

Slide 2: Dan Greer is a clerk from Montreal who has come to Saskatchewan to homestead.

Slide 3: Picture of Elizabeth Greer

Slide 4: Elizabeth Greer is Dan's wife.

Slide 5: Picture of Colin Greer

Slide 6: He is Colin Greer, Dan and Elizabeth's oldest son.

Slide 7: Picture of Russell Greer

Slide 8: He is Russell, the Greers' youngest son.

Slide 9: Picture of Bob MacPherson

Slide 10: Bob MacPherson is also a homesteader, who becomes the Greers' best friend.

Slide 11: Picture of Ada MacPherson

Slide 12: The woman on the left is Bob MacPherson's wife.

DRYLANDERS - EPISODE I

Saskatchewan 1907. The Prairies were still almost empty and a man who wanted a farm could get 160 acres for ten dollars.

Dan, Liza and their kids are in their wagon on the plains.

LIZA'S THOUGHT

VOICE: I was trying so hard not to show him what I felt. I tried to look cheerful when we got off the train and when he bought the wagon. Now I was really frightened. What were we doing here, a clerk and his wife in their city clothes?

.....

Another wagon approaches.

DODDS: Good morning.

DAN: Morning.

DODDS: Sure glad we ran into you people. We're clean out of water. Could you spare us some?

DAN: Yes... Yes, of course.

DODDS: Thanks. We'd appreciate that. Name's Dodds, Harvey Dodds.

DAN: I'm Dan Greer. My wife Elizabeth.

DODDS: Hello Ma'am.

LIZA: How do you do.

DODDS: Sure you can spare it?

DAN: Yes... I'll get you some. It sure is hot.

DODDS: It gets hotter... Going to homestead, eh?

DAN: Yeah, that's right.

DODDS: Where are you from?

DAN: Montreal. I just got back from overseas. I was in the Army.

DODDS: Boer War vet, eh?

DAN: I stayed in for a while afterwards. I wanted to save enough money to buy all this.

DODDS: Ever done any farming?

DAN: No...

DODDS: That's enough... Well, take my word for it mister, you're making the mistake of your life. You'd be doing yourself a favor if you turn round your wagon and go right back where you came from.

DAN: There aren't many places where a man can find free land. Land like this.

DODDS: No, the land's free all right. So are a lot of other things you didn't bargain for. Did you hear about the winter we had out here this last year?

DAN: Yeah... pretty bad, I heard.

DODDS: Bad! Don't you believe it, mister. I've never seen anything like it. Lost my whole herd of sheep. Froze... standing on their feet. Thousands of cattle froze solid against the fences. I swear to God, this is no country for a white man. When you're not freezing to death, you're praying for rain. Well, I've had enough of it. I'm going to show this whole darn prairie my backside, once and for all.

LIZA: Where will you go?

DODDS: Back to Minnesota. Try and scratch some kind of living. I guess we didn't realize how lucky we were. What's your name, son?

COLIN: Colin. That's Russell.

DODDS: Our boy's name was Theo... just passed his fourth birthday. We lost him last winter... pneumonia... Well, I guess I'd better get going. Oh... thanks for the water. Good luck to you!

DAN: We wish you the same.

LIZA: Bye.

.....

They continue on their journey.

DAN: I think I'll walk for a while. Stretch my legs.

LIZA: Help me down, Dan. I'll walk with you a little... Those poor people. Did you see their faces?

DAN: They had bad luck, that's all. Besides, he was a sheep farmer.

LIZA: Their little boy would probably be alive today if they hadn't come out here.

DAN: Now, Liza, we don't know that for sure.

LIZA: Daniel... if anything happens to our boys...

DAN: Now Liza, stop worrying.

.....

That night, around the campfire, Liza tells Dan about her fears.

DAN: I... I know how the country must seem to you now... empty, unfriendly. But we'll find friends here. You'll see.

LIZA: Dan... you're a dreamer. You saw those people this afternoon. They were farmers... and they were beaten by this country. What chance have we got?

DAN: Liza... this is a chance to be something more than a second-grade clerk.

LIZA: But what about the children? You can't just think of yourself, Dan.

DAN: I'm not... there's opportunity for the children here too. It won't be easy. I never said it would be. But at least we'll be on our own.

LIZA: Dan, I came out here with you because I love you. I didn't want to come. And now that we're out here... I hate it! We'd better get some sleep.

.....

Liza goes to bed and Dan hears her crying. A few days later they reach their boundary marker.

DAN: Whoa!

COLIN: Where are you going, daddy?

DAN: Stay there, son... Yipee! We're here! This is our farm! Yahooo!

DAN: Well, Colin... What do you think of it?

COLIN: I don't see any farm... It's all prairies.

DAN: Well, that's... that's because you don't know how to look... Come on, Russell... let's take a look at the Greer farm! The biggest and the best farm in all Saskatchewan... Come on... Right there: - that's the house... two storeys high... painted white... frame house... and ah...over here... right here's the barn... the pig pen... and ah...all around big trees... to keep the wind out... and ah...over there... come on... come on... your mother's garden, right there... Well, what do you think of it?

COLIN: I don't see any farm... do you Mummy?

LIZA: No, I don't Colin... but your father does... and I guess that's all that matters.

LIZA'S
THOUGHT
VOICE:

I wanted to share his joy, but how could I? How could this ever be home to me? We just didn't belong here. We were meant to live where there were people... where there were streets and trees and schools... Here there was nothing... just that little stake in the ground.

.....

A horse and buggy approaches.

CHILDREN: Mummy... Mummy... Mummy... Daddy!

LIZA: All right boys... all right...

BOB: Hello there!

DAN: Hello!

BOB: My name is Bob MacPherson.

DAN: I'm Daniel Greer.

BOB: How are you?

DAN: Very well, thank you. This is my wife Elizabeth.

LIZA: How do you do, Mr. MacPherson.

BOB: It's a pleasure, Mrs. Greer. We can use another pretty woman out here.

LIZA: Oh... Thank you!

BOB: I was just driving into town... saw your outfit... Anything I can do to help?

DAN: That's very kind of you...

BOB: Oh, not at all... In this country it's important to know your neighbors. We need each other.

LIZA: Is your farm near here then, Mr. MacPherson?

BOB: Well, it's near as things are measured on the Prairies. My place is about... oh... eight, ten miles north of here.

DAN: From what I've heard, that's practically next door.

BOB: Yeah, you're right. Have you done any farming before?

DAN: No, I haven't.

BOB: No, I didn't think so.

DAN: We didn't think it showed that much.

BOB: Don't worry! We'll soon make proper "drylanders" of you.

DAN: Drylanders?

BOB: That's what they call us... because that's what we farm... dry land. Well now, the first thing we've got to do is get you people a roof over your heads.

DAN: Yes... well we were thinking of putting up a sod hut.

BOB: Ah!... it's a good idea. A lot of us lived in soddies when we first came out here, and you could probably build one anywhere around here. Let's see now... Ah, good... That will hold together fine... Yes... I'll bring a few of the boys over tomorrow... we'll have that up in no time.

.....

Bob and a group of neighbors help the Greers build a sod house. That evening, in the house:

LIZA: What are you doing?

DAN: I... uh... I thought you might like the vase out...

LIZA: No! The vase stays right where it is until we have a decent home again.

DAN: If that's what you want.

LIZA: Daniel... I'm sorry... I can't help the way I feel.

DAN: I know.

22.

LIZA: It's the only beautiful thing we brought with us.

LIZA'S
THOUGHT
VOICE:

It was as though I couldn't stop hurting him, those days.
Little things I said and did that seemed to make him feel
that he'd failed. And yet he had hardly started.

EPISODE I - GRAMMATICAL AND LEXICAL ITEMS

- 1a. Going to homestead, eh?
- 1b. The Greers have bought land, very inexpensively, which they intend to farm.
- 2a. They were farmers and they were beaten by this country.
- 2b. The Dodds did not succeed in farming the land.
- 3a. We just don't belong here.
- 3b. Liza thinks that the family does not fit into farming life, and that they should return to the city.

EPISODE I - QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Slide 13: The arrival

Slide 14: Dan, Liza and the children in the wagon

Q 1: Who are the people in the wagon?

A: The Greer family: Dan, Liza, Colin and Russell.

Q 2: Where do the Greers come from?

A: Montreal.

Q 3: Where are they now?

A: On the Saskatchewan prairie.

Q 4: What are they doing there?

A: They have bought some land and are going to begin farming.

Q 5: When does this story begin?

A: It begins in 1907.

Slide 15: Dan meeting Harvey Dodds

Q 6: Who is the man with Dan?

A: His name is Harvey Dodds.

Q 7: Is he a farmer?

A: Yes, he is.

Q 8: Is he happy farming in Saskatchewan?

A: No, he's not.

Q 9: Why isn't he happy?

A: Because farming on the Prairies is very difficult.

Q 10: Where is Harvey Dodds going?

A: He is leaving the Prairies and going to farm somewhere else.

Q 11: What does Harvey Dodds suggest to Dan?

A: He tells him that he should also leave.

Slide 16: Picture of Harvey Dodd's wife

Q 12: Who is this woman?

A: She's Harvey Dodd's wife.

Q 13: Does she look happy?

A: No, she doesn't.

Q 14: Do you remember why?

A: Because she had a son who died recently of pneumonia.

Slide 17: Liza crying in the wagon

Q 15: Is Liza happy to be on the Prairies?

A: No, she isn't.

Q 16: Why did she come?

A: Because Dan wanted to come.

Q 17: Liza does not want to be there. Can you give some of the reasons?

A: She thinks that they will be all alone there, with no friends or relatives. She also feels that they are city people and that they know nothing about farming.

Q 18: What do you think Liza thought when she saw Mrs. Dodds?

A: Perhaps she began to worry about the safety of her children.

26.

Slide 18: Dan verifying the stake on his land

Q 19: The small piece of wood is called a stake. Why is Dan examining it?

A: To see if he has arrived at his piece of land.

Slide 19: Dan making plans for the farm buildings

Q 20: Is Dan excited?

A: Yes, he is.

Q 21: What is he doing now?

A: He is making plans for the farm.

Q 22: Is Liza as excited as Dan?

A: No, she isn't. She's still worried.

Slide 20: The beginning

Slide 21: Bob MacPherson arriving at the farm

Q 23: Who is this man?

A: He's Bob MacPherson, Dan's neighbor.

Q 24: Why is he there?

A: To help the Greers.

Q 25: Bob talks to Dan about the "drylanders". What does the word mean?

A: It refers to prairie farmers who farm dry land.

Q 26: Bob wants to help the Greers. What does he tell them?

A: He says he will help them build their house.

Slide 22: The farmers building the Greers' house

Q 27: Who are these people?

A: They are Dan's neighbors.

Q 28: What are they doing?

A: They are helping build Dan's house.

Q 29: They are building a sod hut for the Greer family. What does "sod hut" mean?

A: A sod hut is a house made of mud and grass.

Q 30: Do you think a sod hut would be very comfortable?

A: (Opinions of students.)

Slide 23: Dan taking out Liza's vase

Q 31: What does Dan have in his hands?

A: A very beautiful vase.

Q 32: Dan wants to place the vase in the house. Does Liza agree?

A: No, she doesn't.

Q 33: Why doesn't Liza want the vase out?

A: Because this is not a nice house. She wants to wait until they have a good home.

Slide 24: Discussion

Slide 25: Liza sitting at the campfire talking to Dan

Discussion topics: Liza's reasons for not wanting to be a farmer (isolation, comfort, etc.).

Slide 26: The farmers building Dan and Liza's house

Discussion topic: How are farmers different in character from city people?

Recap of Episode I

Narration: In 1907, the Canadian Prairies were almost uninhabited. The promise of the land attracted families like Dan and Elizabeth Greer to leave the city and make a new life for themselves. The future looked bleak to Elizabeth. Many settlers were returning to the city -- beaten and discouraged.

DODDS: "We didn't realize how lucky we were! Good luck to you!"

Narration: But Dan was so full of hope -- so sure of success... and so proud to be a landowner.

DAN: "Yipee! We're here!"

Narration: The neighbors gave the Greers a warm welcome and pitched in to build a temporary house. But none of it helped to make Elizabeth feel at home.

LIZA: "No! The vase stays right where it is, until we have a decent home again."

LIZA'S

THOUGHT VOICE: "It was as though I couldn't stop hurting him, those days. Little things I said and did, that seemed to make him feel that he'd failed. And yet he had hardly started."

.....

Dan is out plowing his first field.

DAN: Haw!... Haw!... Whoah!... Whoah!

COLIN: Sure is a crooked furrow, isn't it, Daddy?

DAN: It certainly is. Colin, would you like to help?

COLIN: Yes, Daddy.

DAN: All right. Well now, you run up ahead... keep on running till I tell you to stop. That's the boy... Now, Russell you keep back there. That's fine, Colin. Stand there and wait for us.

COLIN: All right, Daddy.

DAN: Here we go... (Calls out to oxen)

.....

Dan is exhausted and Liza tries to talk him into quitting.

DAN: Liza...

LIZA: Oh... Dan!

DAN: Now, I'm all right.

LIZA: You're not all right... you're exhausted.

DAN: I'm just a little tired, that's all.

LIZA: It isn't worth it, Dan... you're killing yourself... please...

DAN: What do you want me to do?

LIZA: I want us to go home... Please Dan... it's no disgrace to admit a mistake...

DAN: Liza, don't be foolish... we can't go home now.

LIZA: We don't belong here, Dan. This isn't our place.

DAN: I don't want to hear any more about it.

LIZA: All right, Dan. We won't mention it again.

.....

The first wheat sprouts appear.

DAN: Liza! I've got something to show you... Well, come on...

COLIN: Can I come too, Daddy?

DAN: Yes... certainly... Come on. You too, Russell... Come on, boys... come on... Look, look boys... look Russell.

COLIN: It looks like grass.

DAN: No... No, it's wheat... look!

COLIN: How long will it take to get big?

DAN: To get big? Well, I think we ought to be able to cut it in about three months. Look at it, Liza.

.....

The crop matures and that fall the MacPhersons have a large party.

1st FARMER: You should get yourself one of those water wizards, Howie. He'll find that water for you in two minutes... with a forked stick.

ADA: Hello, Mrs. Greer. You must be getting hungry... we're going to eat in a minute. Are you enjoying yourself?

LIZA: Oh yes, very much.

ADA: Good!... Would you mind if I sit down with you for a bit?

LIZA: No... not at all.

.....

Ada talks to Liza and makes her feel more at home on the Prairies.

ADA: Oh, that's... No, No, don't move... don't move... There... Ah! dear... that's better... I don't mind telling you I'm just about worn out... Still it's nice to see people, isn't it?

LIZA: Oh yes, it is...

ADA: Well... how are you enjoying the Prairies?

LIZA: Oh... well, I guess I'll get used to it in time... It's very different from the city... To tell you the truth, I find it awfully lonely.

ADA: Oh... it's lonely all right. You know, Mrs. Greer, when my husband first brought me out here, seven years ago, I was completely miserable. I cursed the poor man all my waking hours for bringing me to this God-forsaken place... Scarcely a night went by that I didn't cry myself to sleep... Well, you see... we left a nice little farm in Ontario to come here... Too little, that was the trouble... Bob always had big ideas. So we sold right out and came here to start all over again... Well... you know... it's a funny thing, but this country grows on you... It's so... Oh, I don't know, but it gets so you can't imagine living anywhere else. I'd never admit this to Bob, but I wouldn't go back now if he begged me. Oh, it's lonely enough at times, and nothing's sure. But somehow it's worth it... you'll see... Ooh... here I am babbling away and my guests are going hungry... Well... I'll see you later.

.....

Colin, Russell and a few of the other kids try to catch a gopher.

LIZA: Colin... Colin... What are you doing, dear?

COLIN: Shhh... I'm just showing us how to catch us a gopher...
Go away... Come on, Billy... Come on, Billy...

KID: That's not a gopher it's a porcupine... Watch out for
its quills.

BOB: ... gives a better yield... makes better bread.

DAN: Better yield, eh? I'd like to try some.

BOB: Ooh... let you have some seed, Daniel... try it next year...
Ah, Mrs. Greer, I was just showing your husband what a good
crop looks like.

LIZA: Is it always like this, Mr. MacPherson?

BOB: If you give the land a chance, it can be even better. They
say a really bumper crop can hold up your hat... Let's try
this.

DAN: Well... maybe next year.

.....

The Greers go home after the party.

LIZA'S
THOUGHT VOICE: That night, for the first time in all those weeks, I
understood why he was happy out here, what he hoped for...
and I knew I was starting to share it with him. For the
first time I felt at home... almost at home.

DAN: We got home just in time... it's starting to rain.

LIZA: I hope no one was caught out in it.

DAN: They should be all right... we were the last to leave.

.....

Liza takes the vase out and places it on a table.

LIZA: The children were worn out. Colin could hardly keep his
eyes open when I was undressing him. Mrs. MacPherson's a
nice woman, isn't she?

DAN: Yes, they're very good neighbors.

.....

A hailstorm destroys the crops.

LIZA'S

THOUGHT VOICE: It was so sudden, and so brutal. The hail had cut down the tender young wheat. As I walked with him, I could only think of how his back had ached, and how his hands had blistered on the plow. All in vain. Dan's first crop was lost. Now there was nothing he could do but wait for spring, for planting time once again. And first, the winter had to pass. In all that snow, our little hut seemed lonelier than ever. What would we do if anything happened? And something did happen. One cold bitter day, we ran out of food. Dan had to go to the MacPherson's.

.....

The Greers run out of food. Dan is at the MacPherson's to pick up food for his family.

BOB: The next time you run short, don't wait till you're near starving.

ADA: No...

DAN: Don't worry, I won't. And I'll get these things back to you as soon as I get into town.

ADA: There's no hurry... We have plenty.

BOB: You'd better stay here tonight, Daniel. You'll not get back before dark now.

DAN: I'll be all right, Bob. Besides, I expect Elizabeth is worried about me already.

BOB: Just as you wish. Give our best to Elizabeth and the boys.

ADA: Aye... Well, goodbye Daniel.

DAN: Goodbye. And thank you.

.....

Liza plays with the kids while she awaits Dan's return.

LIZA: All right, now it's your turn.

COLIN: I spy with my little eye something that begins with "T".

LIZA: Is it made of wood?

COLIN: No.

LIZA: Oh, I know. Is it made of cloth?

COLIN: No.

LIZA: No?

RUSSELL: Has it got glass and tin?

COLIN: No.

LIZA: Oh dear... I give up.

COLIN: Tea kettle..

LIZA: Oh... tea kettle... of course. Now, let's see... uh...
I spy with my little eye something that begins with "C"...
and it's medium large and has a lot of freckles.

RUSSELL: Colin!

LIZA: All right, now it's your turn again.

.....

Dan is caught in a blizzard on his way home.

COLIN: (reading) At last he had just enough leather to make
one pair of shoes. In the evening he cut out the leather
to make the shoes the next day... Mummy, when's Daddy coming
home?

LIZA: Soon, dear, soon. Go on with your reading.

COLIN: He rose early and went to his bench. But what did he see?
There stood the shoes.

.....

34.

Dan sees the light in the window and makes it home. He arrives snow-covered and frozen.

LIZA: Dan!

LIZA'S

THOUGHT VOICE: How much could a man stand? This country was
killing him. How could it ever be our home?
All the old thoughts came back to me that night
in my panic.

EPISODE II -- GRAMMATICAL AND LEXICAL ITEMS

- 1a. Sure is a crooked furrow isn't it?
- 1b. Before planting the seed, Dan must make a trench in the earth with the plow.
- 2a. This country grows on you.
- 2b. At first Ada MacPherson didn't like the Prairies, but she began to like the country after a while.
- 3a. I was just showing your husband what a good crop looks like.
- 3b. Bob MacPherson shows what a good product the earth will give.
- 4a. I knew I was starting to share it with him.
- 4b. Liza begins to like the farm and enjoys being there with Dan.

EPISODE II - QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Slide 27: Working the land

Slide 28: Dan and his son trying to plow the land

Q 34: Is Dan an experienced farmer?

A: No, he isn't.

Q 35: What is Dan trying to do?

A: He's trying to make furrows in the land.

Q 36: Is he doing a good job?

A: No, he isn't. The furrows are very crooked.

Q 37: How does he solve the problem?

A: He asks Colin to run ahead and stand in one place. Dan then can guide the plow straight to where Colin is standing.

Slide 29: Liza working on the farm

Q 38: Is Liza working very hard?

A: Yes, she is.

Q 39: What are some of the things she has to do?

A: She must wash clothes, take care of the house and help Dan with the farming.

Slide 30: Dan sowing the land

Q 40: What are some of the things that Dan must do around the farm?

A: He must plow and sow the fields, chop the wood for the winter, repair his equipment, etc.

Slide 31: Dan, exhausted, sleeping in front of the house

Q 41: How is Dan?

A: He is very, very tired.

Q 42: Why is he so tired?

A: Because he has been working hard. He is not an experienced farmer, so the work is even more difficult.

Q 43: Is Dan discouraged?

A: No, he isn't.

Q 44: Is Liza discouraged?

A: Yes, she is. She thinks they should give up and go home.

Slide 32: The family looking at the first sprout of wheat

Q 45: The family is looking at the first sprout of wheat. Please describe this scene.

A: Dan rushed into the house and asked Liza to come out with him to see something important. He was very excited. The children also went along. They saw a plant that Colin thought was grass. It was the first sprouting of the wheat.

Q 46: What is the significance of the first wheat sprout?

A: It means that the family will have a crop of wheat in a few months. It is also the first reward that the Greers receive for all their work.

Slide 33: The change

Slide 34: Party scene at the MacPherson's

Q 47: Where are the Greers?

A: They are at the MacPherson's for a party.

Q 48: Who is at the party?

A: All of the neighbors.

Q 49: What are the men talking about?

A: Different ways of farming.

Slide 35: Liza talking to Mrs. MacPherson

Q 50: Who is the lady talking to Liza?

A: She is Ada MacPherson.

Q 51: What are they talking about?

A: Life on the Prairies.

Q 52: Ada asks Liza how she likes farming. What does Liza say?

A: She says that she is very lonely.

Q 53: Ada tells Liza her personal story. Do you remember what she said?

A: When Ada first arrived on the Prairies she did not like it at all. She cried a lot and wanted to return to Ontario, where she came from. She also felt very lonely. Things changed though, and she is now very, very happy in Saskatchewan and would not like to leave.

Q 54: Does Ada's story help Liza?

A: Yes, it does. She sees that she is not alone and that maybe she can change too.

Slide 36: The Greers looking at the dancers

Q 55: Does Liza look happier?

A: Yes, she does.

Slide 37: The vase in the window

Q 56: Can you describe the scene with the vase in the last episode?

A: Dan wanted to take it out and place it in the house, but Liza did not, because she did not like her house and was not happy on the farm. The vase was too pretty for that rough life.

Q 57: Where did Liza place the vase?

A: She placed the vase in the window.

Q 58: What does this mean?

A: It means that Liza has accepted her life on the Prairies, away from the city, and that she is much happier.

Slide 38: The Canadian winter

Slide 39: Liza and Dan listening to the falling hail

Q 59: What are Liza and Dan listening to?

A: They are listening to the hail falling on the roof.

Q 60: What are the consequences of the hailstorm?

A: It destroys the Greers' first crop.

Q 61: What must Dan do now?

A: He must wait until next spring to plant some more wheat.

40.

Slide 40: Dan at the MacPherson's

Q 62: Did Dan have enough food for the winter?

A: No, he didn't.

Q 63: What does he have to do?

A: He has to ask the MacPhersons for food.

Q 64: Did Dan go to the MacPherson's by horse?

A: No, he didn't, he walked.

The following five slides deal with Dan's misadventure in the snow. Show the five slides one after the other and have students narrate the sequence. (This could be a good opportunity for practising different tenses.)

Slide 41: Liza playing with the children distractedly

Slide 42: Liza putting a light in the window to guide Dan

Slide 43: Liza falling asleep

Slide 44: Dan struggling in the snow

Slide 45: Liza turning up the lamp that was almost out

Slide 46: Dan seeing the light

Slide 47: Dan in the house, nearly frozen

SUGGESTION: Liza is playing with the children and reading to them, but she is very worried about Dan. He has been gone a long time and there is a snowstorm going on. She puts a light in the window so that Dan can see the house. Liza goes to sleep, however, and the kerosene lamp goes out. Dan meanwhile does not have snowshoes and is having a difficult time seeing. Liza wakes up and lights the candle once more. Finally, Dan can see the light and goes towards the house. He arrives very tired and very, very cold.

Slide 48: Discussion

Slide 49: Dan and Liza looking at the crushed wheat after the hail-storm

Discussion topic: What are some of the problems farmers have? Why is farming so difficult?

Slide 50: Picture of the bare plains

Discussion topic: Would you rather live in the city or the country? Explain.

DRYLANDERS -- EPISODE III

Recap of Episode II

Narration: Around 1907, families like Dan and Elizabeth Greer headed for the Canadian Prairies to make a new life for themselves. Elizabeth was full of misgivings, and found it hard to share her husband's enthusiasm.

DAN: "Yipee! We're here!"

Narration: The neighbors welcomed them warmly and helped to build a temporary house. They worked hard that year, lovingly preparing the soil for the crop. It took them all their strength and courage.

DAN: "Look, look, boys! Look Russell!"

RUSSELL: "It looks like grass!"

DAN: "No, it's wheat! Look! I think we ought to be able to cut it in about three months."

Narration: Their dreams came true with that first crop -- but only long enough to turn into a nightmare. A hailstorm wiped out all their first year's work.

Then came the hard relentless winter, which threatened their very survival.

LIZA: "Dan!"

LIZA'S
THOUGHT VOICE: "How much could a man stand? This country was killing him. How could it ever be our home? All the old thoughts came back to me that night in my panic."

.....

They begin again that spring and as the years go by they become prosperous.

LIZA'S
THOUGHT VOICE: And yet, soon, they were gone again. Spring had come, and a new life began for us. It was the turning point. Dan was really becoming a farmer; the plow was becoming part of him. And late that summer he could see the fruits of his work. I was as proud of it as he was -- this good, tall wheat. It was our first harvest. For Dan it meant more hard work, but as the years passed, with machines to help him, it became a bit easier.

Dan had been right. Within seven years we had become prosperous. Even a car. So much better than being a clerk in the city. But then... The war years went slowly for us. Colin was away, fighting in France, and we kept thinking about him all the time. Then, one day, it was all over, and Colin came back. He was fine.

The land continued to be kind to us, with a good crop almost every year. But one year was very special. In 1922, right after the harvest, Colin married Thora Anderson.

Our two boys had grown up to be fine young men. Colin was tall and strong and had become a first-rate farmer. We were proud of Russell too, just turned 20. He was the mechanical wizard. He knew everything there was to know about the machines that we were using more and more on the farm.

There seemed to be no end to God's bounty. In 1924, Daniel Junior was born to Colin and Thora. Their first child and our first grandchild. There was a bright future for him, for our farm was getting bigger; we were buying more land.

.....

The harvest of 1928.

Then came the year none of us would ever forget -- 1928. The biggest harvest ever. It was like mining gold.

DAN: Hey everybody! Come on down. Dinner!... Dinner!... Dinner!

LIZA: I'll go and see how they're doing in the kitchen.

OTHER WOMAN: Yes, Mrs. Greer.

LIZA: Connie... when you've finished that, could you start the coffee for me... Here they are!

VOICE I: Do you want a bathtub?

2ND VOICE: I don't need a bath. Who needs a bath? She's all yours, boys!

COLIN: Let's see what your Mom's got for dinner. Oh boy, look at this!

THORA: Colin, I just threw him out of here.

COLIN: But we're big hungry men, aren't we Dan? Give your Mom a hug... Here's my big girl... Hello honey... Do you think we can make a wheat farmer out of her, Dan?

THORA: Did you finish the wheat?

COLIN: Yes, we're all finished now. We're going into the oats this afternoon. Gee, I'm starved. Can we give you a hand, Mom?

LIZA: You can give me a hand! Get out of the kitchen...

COLIN: Looks like nobody wants us, Dan...

.....

All the farm hands gather for lunch.

LIZA: When do you think you'll be finished?

DAN: I think by tomorrow night.

LIZA: What's the yield?

DAN: Maybe... oh... what do you think, son?

RUSSELL: Forty...

LIZA: It's better than we expected, isn't it?

RUSSELL: I'm going over to MacPherson's tonight, right after supper. Is there anything I can do for you, Mom?

LIZA: You can take these preserves over to Ada if you wish.

DAN: Hey... don't give those things away...

RUSSELL: That's all right, Dad... I'll go and eat them right now.

LIZA: You see they get to Ada.

.....

The drought years begin.

LIZA'S
THOUGHT VOICE: It was such a fine, proud moment for Dan. His dream of 21 years before had come true. And yet all this would soon be over. During the drought of '29, we kept saying, "Never mind, wait till next year". But again we were disappointed. 1930 brought nothing but more clouds of bitter dust.

There had been dry spells before, but nothing like this. It just went on and on. There was some rain, but never enough and never at the right time. The whole land seemed to be blowing away, and with it the good life we had struggled for.

.....

The Greers and MacPhersons at church.

MINISTER: Let us pray...

BOB: Well, goodbye Reverend. It was a nice sermon.

MINISTER: I hope I didn't keep you awake, Bob.

BOB: Well, not so much that you'd notice. Don't forget to remind them in Head Office that we need some rain around here.

MINISTER: I'll do my best.

BOB: Maybe the wires are down, eh?

MINISTER: I hope and pray not, Bob. Goodbye Mrs. MacPherson.

ADA: Goodbye Reverend, and thank you.
Bob, wait a minute, I want to speak to Elizabeth.

LIZA: Thank you Reverend.

MINISTER: Mrs. Greer... It's nice to see you and your family, Dan. You haven't been to many services lately.

DAN: Doesn't seem to make much difference... does it?

MINISTER: I can understand how he feels, Mrs. Greer. Still, you mustn't give up hope.

LIZA: Trouble with hope, Reverend, is that it has to be fed.

MINISTER: The drought can't go on forever.

LIZA: Neither can people, Reverend, neither can people.

ADA: Now don't forget you're coming over for dinner with us on Wednesday.

LIZA: No, no, we won't forget.

ADA: It won't be much, I'm warning you... still it's nice to have company.

BOB: Better come early, Daniel. I want some work out of you before you eat. I need a hand to fix the roof on my barn.

DAN: Yes... we'll be there.

BOB: Don't like the look of him lately, Elizabeth... is anything wrong?

LIZA: Nothing more than is wrong with all of us, Bob.

.....

At dinner time one day, Russell breaks the news to the family that he is leaving to find work in the city.

LIZA: There, I'll have dinner ready in just a minute.

THORA: I'll help you, Mother.

RUSSELL: While you're all here there's something I want to say to you... I'm going to leave the farm... There's no use my staying here anymore... Just another mouth to share what little there is.

COLIN: What do you have in mind, Russ?

RUSSELL: I don't know... I'll get a job I guess. I haven't made any plans yet.

THORA: Things are worse in the cities... the papers say so.

RUSSELL: Well, whatever chance I've got... it's better than I've got here.

COLIN: But you're a farmer, Russ.

RUSSELL: I'm sorry, Mom... You know I wouldn't leave if there was any other way... But it's no use... this country won't grow another crop till kingdom come... And there aren't any farms anymore, any farmers either... all this land can raise now is dust...

LIZA: When were you thinking of leaving, Russ?

RUSSELL: Soon as possible.

LIZA'S
THOUGHT VOICE: It was pitiful to see them looking up into the sky, day after day, looking for some small sign of hope. But the sun's answer was always "no". It burned on and on, parching the land. And it drove us to humiliation at the Relief Depot.

.....

Dan and Colin waiting in the food line for supplies.

COLIN: Look Pa, you don't have to wait in line. I can pick up the supplies.

DAN: I'm all right.

RELIEF OFFICIAL: All right... Next... Hey you! Wake up... What's the matter with you?

COLIN: Are you talking to me?

OFFICIAL: Who do you think I'm talking to? You want your supplies, don't you?

COLIN: Yes... I'm sorry.

OFFICIAL: Name?

COLIN: Colin Greer.

OFFICIAL: Where do you farm?

COLIN: About fifteen miles east.

OFFICIAL: How many in your family?

COLIN: Six.

OFFICIAL: How many cows?

COLIN: One.

OFFICIAL: Did you take off any crop this year?

COLIN: No.

COLIN:

COLIN: Mom... where are you?

LIZA: I'm in here, dear.

COLIN: Got a letter for you... from Russell.

.....

Russell is not having any luck finding a job, and travels from city to city.

LIZA'S

VOICE OVER:

It says "Dear Mother... I arrived in Regina about two weeks ago, but there wasn't much doing there. I hung around for a few days and then decided to move on to Winnipeg. But things are just as bad here, and I haven't been able to find a job. I think the time has now come to move East again."

"Dear Mother... As yet, I have been unable to find a job, but I'm not discouraged. The thing to do is to keep moving and keep looking. I must say I've been doing a lot of that and I've been seeing the country and learning a lot about life in the cities."

"Dear Mother... Still no luck. Sometimes it seems that the whole country is closing down. I'm still trying, but I'm beginning to think that nobody has a job for a farm boy... I do hope things will soon get better on the farm, Mother. Please give my love to Dad and to Colin and Thora and the children. Meanwhile, don't worry about me. I'll be all right. Your loving son, Russell".

EPISODE III - GRAMMATICAL AND LEXICAL ITEMS

- 1a. It was the turning point.
- 1b. When spring came, life for the Greers changed and became better.
- 2a. It was our first harvest.
- 2b. In the summer Dan cuts the mature crop of wheat to sell it.
- 3a. Within seven years we had become prosperous.
- 3b. Within seven years the Greers had made a lot of money.
- 4a. I can pick up the supplies.
- 4b. At the Relief Depot the farmers received food, clothing, money, etc.

EPISODE III - QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Slide 51: Growth

Slide 52: New machinery on the farm

Q 65: Does life become easier for the Greers?

A: Yes, it does.

Q 66: Farming becomes easier for Dan. Does he have any help?

A: Yes, he has his two sons, other helpers and new machines to help him.

Q 67: Do the Greers live comfortably?

A: Yes, they do. They now have a house and a car.

Slide 53: Colin and Thora's wedding

Q 68: In 1922 Colin gets married. What is the name of his wife?

A: Her name is Thora.

Q 69: Do they have any children?

A: Yes, they do. They have a boy and then a girl.

Slide 54: All of the farm hands sitting around the table having lunch

Q 70: Who are all the people sitting around the table?

A: They are the men working for Dan.

Q 71: Do you remember in what year this happens?

A: 1928.

Q 72: Was 1928 a good year for the farm?

A: Yes, it was the Greers' best year.

Slide 55: The drought

- Slide 56: The plains filled with dust
- Q 73: What does the word "drought" mean?
- A: A period of time where there is not enough rain to grow the crops.
- Q 74: When did the drought begin?
- A: In 1929.
- Slide 57: Dan looking depressed and discouraged
- Q 75: How does the drought affect Dan and the other farmers?
- A: They become discouraged and depressed.
- Q 76: If the farmers cannot grow food, what are they living on?
- A: They are using all the food and money they have saved up in the past years.
- Slide 58: Dan and Colin at the Relief Depot
- Q 77: Where are Dan and Colin?
- A: At the Relief Depot.
- Q 78: Why are they there?
- A: Because they have no more food or money.
- Q 79: Do you think this is a humiliating experience for Dan?
- A: Yes, it is.
- Slide 59: Russell announcing his departure
- Q 80: Is Russell happy on the farm now?
- A: No, he isn't.
- Q 81: What does he decide to do?
- A: He decides to leave the farm and go to the city and look for a job.
- Q 82: Is the family happy that Russell is leaving?
- A: No, it is not, but it respects Russell's decision.

52.

Slide 60: Russell looking for a job in the city

Q 83: Does Russell find a job?

A: No, he doesn't.

Q 84: Why is it hard to find work?

A: Because Russell does not have any experience other than farming and because there were no jobs available during the Depression.

Discussion topics: Students can read and discuss the following two reading selections on the Depression and the Drought.

THE DEPRESSION

The Canadian economy in the 1920's was closely linked to that of the United States. It rested greatly on the exportation of wheat, pulp, paper and mineral resources. Forty per cent of these materials were sold to the United States. Therefore, when the U.S. stock market crashed in October of 1929, initiating the Depression, the effects were felt strongly by all Canadians, for the States could no longer afford to buy the Canadian products.

For thirty years before the Depression, the Canadian provinces had been prospering greatly: population had increased in the Prairies and wheat production was at an all-time high. The Depression brought this "wheat boom" abruptly to an end. It also meant that thousands of people were left jobless. By the end of 1932, Canada had 600,000 people unemployed, and by 1935 10 per cent of the population was receiving public relief. Relief camps were established for unmarried, unemployed men. Some 20,000 men were paid 20 cents a day, a small amount even for Depression days. In addition they received a tobacco allowance, which had to be earned. The work these men had to do was of little importance, for the main objective of the relief camps was to keep the unemployed off the streets and to provide them with housing and food.

Those who did not receive assistance from the relief camps were forced to leave their homes and search for jobs, but the only thing they found were "no help wanted" signs. This meant that a large part of the population was forced to travel from place to place, leaving families and friends behind. The men travelled on freight trains, all of their personal belongings in a packsack on their back. They became "hobos", living from day to day "panhandling" or begging for money in the streets. When the men did manage to get jobs they were underpaid and often at the mercy of the employers who took advantage of the men's need for work to cut their wages and

use them as a source of cheap labor. Often the wives of these men would work in factories for the small sum of four dollars a month to help supplement the family income.

Socially, the Depression had great impact on the Canadian family structure. The father, the traditional head of the family and its provider, lost his role -- he could no longer earn a living for his family, he was humiliated at the Relief Depot or the relief camps. He had to see his children starving and his family divided as each member went his own way to try to find work.

THE DROUGHT

The drought of the 1930's coincided tragically with the Depression. The price of wheat fell to an all-time low, forcing many farmers into bankruptcy. Areas in southern Ontario and Quebec and certain parts of the Maritimes suffered greatly but at least they always provided enough food to feed the farmers and their families. The Prairies did not have this luck. This area, under the best of circumstances, is a dry one and it contains what is commonly called the "Dry Belt". Therefore, the drought caused even greater damage there than in other parts of Canada. The drought was so severe that the cattle died and the crops were ruined, one year after the other. This period in history is now called the "dirty Thirties" because of the disastrous effect it had on the lives of the people.

The farmers, however, always had great hope that the situation would improve. They felt that the drought could not go on forever. They lived on faith and continued sowing the land, only to have the crops wither and die every year. The young people, however, did not have the same stamina as their parents, and they often left the poverty of the farm to seek a better life in the city. But as we have already seen, they did not have better luck there.

Many farmers who stayed had so many debts (to the banks or the finance companies) that they were unable to make the mortgage payments on their farms and they therefore lost them. Those who kept their farms made use of everything available: Flour and sugar bags, boiled in bleach, were used to make towels, sheets, pillowcases, tablecloths and clothing. Their houses went unpainted, their machinery wore out. Some who could not afford gasoline, hitched horses to their cars, and called them "Bennett Buggies", after the Prime Minister of the Depression period, R.B. Bennett. And surrounding the farmers from morning until night was the dust,

the dust that covered everything, including the interior of the houses. Yet, many farmers stayed on, for they had no place else to go and they could not give up hope that the situation would improve.

.....

The film you have seen is not fiction -- not at all. There are many people around us now who went through the same misery and unhappiness, both in the country and in the cities.

SUGGESTIONS TO THE TEACHER:

If this film is being shown to adolescents, an assignment could be given to ask their parents about their Depression experiences. If it is directed to adults, they themselves could relate some of their personal experiences during this time.

DRYLANDERS -- EPISODE IV

Recap of Episode III

Narration: In the early nineteen hundreds, Dan and Elizabeth Greer were one of the families who headed for the Canadian Prairies to work the land and make a new and better life for themselves. Elizabeth was uncertain of the future in this vast unknown land. Even the warmth and help of their neighbors didn't make her share her husband's hopes and enthusiasm. They worked long and hard that first year, preparing the soil for the crop. Often they were exhausted and discouraged.

DAN: "Look... look boys! Look Russell!"

RUSSELL: "It looks like grass!"

DAN: "No! No! It's wheat! Look! I think we ought to be able to cut it in about three months!"

Narration: Their dreams came true with that first crop, until a hailstorm wiped out all their first year's work. And then came that first relentless winter.

At long last their hard work and perseverance were rewarded. Good crops, modern equipment, followed by happy and prosperous years. Their eldest son got married, and the West continued to prosper and produce. The Greers acquired more land, and the year 1928 brought a bumper crop such as the West had never seen.

It was too good to last. Drought and depression followed, and the land had lost its promise.

RUSSELL: "I'm gonna leave the farm!"

Narration: Many left the farms to return to the cities, in a desperate search for non-existent work... while the West waited, and prayed for rain.

LIZA:
(reading) "... give my love to Dad and to Colin and to Thora. Meanwhile, don't worry about me. I'll be all right. Your loving son, Russell."

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Bob and Ada leave their farm to go to the Peace River district.

BOB: Well, we're off...

LIZA: Do you have to go, Bob?

BOB: I know when I'm licked, Elizabeth.

DAN: What happened to... everything, Bob? We had it here.

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BOB: I don't know, Daniel... I wish I did.

ADA: We'll write you soon as we get to Peace River.

LIZA: Well, you'd better.

BOB: Wish you folks were coming with us... I hate to think of you trying to manage without us... a couple of helpless city slickers like yourselves!

LIZA: It won't be the same.

ADA: Won't you change your minds and come with us?

LIZA: Oh... everything we have is right here.

COLIN: You're really leaving... it's hard to believe.

BOB: Hardly believe it myself, Colin.

THORA: Good luck...

ADA: Well... say goodbye to the kids for us.

BOB: Goodbye Colin... Thora.

THORA: Goodbye.

BOB: Well, old timer, look after yourself.

LIZA: Goodbye, Bob.

BOB: You look after him, you hear?

LIZA: Huh-huh...

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The drought continues. Dan walks over his dried-up fields.

LIZA'S

THOUGHT VOICE: Goodbye to dear Bob and Ada. We'd never have better friends and we knew we'd probably never see them again. Part of our life was leaving with them.

They weren't the only ones to leave. One by one, other families pulled out -- the Sawchucks, the Campbells, Tim and Sally Calhoun. After a few years it was as though we were living alone in a haunted desert.

By 1938, Dan was a beaten man. It broke my heart to see what these nine years had done to him. He had retreated into himself and for days he wouldn't talk. He just wandered around, trying to understand why the prairie had betrayed him, the prairie that once was so good to us.

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Colin, Thora and the kids sit down for dinner.

THORA: Dinner's ready, Mother.

LIZA: I'll wait and have something later with Dad, dear...

DAN Jr.: Aw, Ma... Beans again!

THORA: Come on Dan, eat up.

DAN Jr.: Gee whiz...

THORA: Eat your dinner, Dan... put some syrup on it.

SIGRID: Can I have some more milk, Mummy?

THORA: What dear?

SIGRID: Can I have some more milk?

THORA: I'm sorry dear, but there isn't any more.

THORA: Colin, pour Sigrid some water.

DAN Jr.: I can't eat this old stuff...

THORA: Dan!...

DAN Jr.: I hate it...

COLIN: That's enough, Dan...

DAN Jr.: Well, it makes me sick.

COLIN: Shut up!

THORA: Colin!

COLIN: I'm sick of his complaining... All right... say it...

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Colin and Thora have an argument about leaving the farm.

THORA: You shouldn't have hit him, Colin... He doesn't even know what good food tastes like...

COLIN: I know... I'm sorry...

THORA: How long are we going to go on like this, Colin? Colin... look at me... Remember how I looked when we were married?

COLIN: Oh Thora...

THORA: Do you still find me pretty?... Do you?... I know what I look like... A dried-out old woman...

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Their voices carry outside to where Elizabeth and Dan are.

COLIN: I don't know what you expect me to do...

THORA: Let's leave... we're still young... we can start in again somewhere. I want to go somewhere where it's clean. I don't care where we go or what we do, if I could feel clean again.

COLIN: Leave...

THORA: If you'd only admit it, Colin... it's what you've been thinking yourself.

COLIN: We can't leave the farm, it's all we've got.

THORA: Got? What have we got? A farm that wouldn't even belong to us if we had to pay our back taxes.

COLIN: I don't want to talk about it anymore...

THORA: Colin, if you won't do it for me, do it for Danny and Sigrid. Don't they deserve something better than this?

You're not answering because you know I'm right. You don't want to stay here any more than I do. It's only pride that keeps you here. The great Greer farm has to go on, doesn't it? Well, look at it... look at your wonderful farm! Why don't you admit that you're beaten? You're beaten, Colin! Admit it! (sobbing)

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Dan collapses of a stroke.

LIZA: Colin! Come quickly! Help me get him into the house, Colin.

COLIN: Thora, get the doctor... Is there anything?...

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Colin talks to his mother about leaving while the doctor is with Dan.

LIZA: No... no, the doctor's with him now.

THORA: Tea, Colin?

COLIN: No... no thanks.
Mom, I want us to go away from here, all of us... I want us to go somewhere and get a fresh start, somewhere where they've never even heard of the word drought.

THORA: Colin!...

COLIN: Well, what are we trying to prove anyway?... Sitting on fields we can't even work... living on hand-outs... We've given it nine years... Let's get out now while there's still time.

LIZA: Colin, it isn't a question of trying to prove something... it's a question of where you belong... thirty years is a long time... Well, you'll have to do what you think is best, son. But if you go you'll have to go without your father and me.

DOCTOR: Mrs. Greer, would you come up please... He's failing fast.

DAN: (Very wearily) Liza... Farm... We...

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Dan dies.

LIZA: Doctor!

LIZA'S
THOUGHT VOICE: Now the land seemed completely dead for Colin... He wandered over it the way Dan had done... He felt the way I had felt thirty-one years before... This country was too hard... I watched him and I knew his despair... but I also knew something I had learned from Dan... that you couldn't stop hoping.

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The drought breaks and the rains come.

LIZA'S
THOUGHT VOICE: "Dan, why can't you be here now? We're starting again!"

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EPISODE IV - GRAMMATICAL AND LEXICAL ITEMS

1a. Dan was trying to understand why the prairie had betrayed him.

1b. The prairie had been good to Dan but now it was treating him badly.

2a. We are living on hand-outs.

2b. The farmers were living on the charity of the government.

EPISODE IV - QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

- Slide 61: The end and the beginning
- Slide 62: The MacPhersons saying goodbye to the Greers
- Q 85: Why are the MacPhersons at the Greers' house?
- A: They have come to say goodbye.
- Q 86: Why are they leaving the Prairies?
- A: Because of the drought. They can't live there any more.
- Q 87: Are the MacPhersons the only people that leave?
- A: No. Many neighbors leave also.
- Slide 63: Thora and Colin arguing
- Q 88: What are Colin and Thora arguing about?
- A: Thora wants them to leave the farm. They cannot work the land any more.
- Q 89: Does Colin want to leave?
- A: No, he doesn't.
- Q 90: Why does Colin want to stay?
- A: Because he keeps hoping things will change, and because he wants to help his parents.
- Slide 64: Dan has a stroke
- Q 91: What has happened to Dan?
- A: He has had a stroke.
- Q 92: What contributed to the stroke?
- A: The long drought, the tension and suffering of the past.

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Slide 65: Dan and Liza in the bedroom

Q 93: Does Dan get better?

A: No, he dies.

Q 94: What is his last thought?

A: He thinks about the farm.

Slide 66: Liza reminiscing

Q 95: How does Colin react to Dan's death?

A: He becomes even more depressed and discouraged.

Q 96: Liza sees Colin's despair, but she remembers something she learnt from Dan. Do you remember what this was?

A: Dan always said that you should not stop hoping.

Slide 67: Colin and Thora in the rain

Q 97: What finally happens?

A: It begins to rain.

Q 98: How long did the drought last?

A: It lasted nine years.

Q 99: Liza's last words are "We're starting again". What does this mean?

A: It means that Colin is going to begin farming the land the way Dan did. They are beginning a new life.

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Pedagogical Consultants:

Dr. André Douesnard

Judy Brooks