From ***Beyond the Sky and Earth*** by Jamie Zeppa

**Context and content:** Jamie Zeppa is a Canadian writer and college professor. In 1999 she published this memoir of her experiences working as a lecturer in English in Bhutan, a Buddhist country in South Asia bordered by China and India. The title of the book is derived from an expression of thankfulness in the Bhutanese language, which means "I am thankful to you beyond the earth and sky".

**Themes:** Themes include: exploring different cultures and places, new beginnings, change.

**Structure:** This personal travel narrative begins with a description of the country’s landscape and switches between the past tense, as the journey from Canada is recalled, and the present tense as Zeppa takes the reader into the immediacy of her first night and day in Thimpu. There are pithy character sketches of two fellow Canadian teachers, a detailed description of the city and a discussion of the qualities of the Bhutanese people. The final two paragraphs move back into the past tense as we are provided with a brief history of Bhutan. The passage ends with Zeppa’s statement of “admiration” for the country.

**Language:** Key features include: there is much factual, informative language that is enlivened by lively description, full of repetition, listing, carefully-chosen adjectives and verbs that evoke a sense of place. The traditional names of Bhutan and its districts are poetic and suggestive of the beauty to be found there.