



EXPEDITIONARY  
LEARNING

# Grade 8: Module 1: Unit 1: Lesson 1

## Making Inferences: The Fall of Saigon



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**Long-Term Targets Addressed (Based on NYSP12 ELA CCLS)**

I can cite text-based evidence that provides the strongest support for an analysis of literary text. (RI.8.1)  
I can effectively engage in discussions with diverse partners about eighth-grade topics, texts, and issues. (SL.8.1)

**Supporting Learning Targets**

- I can support my inferences with evidence from text.
- I can participate in discussions about the text with a partner, small group, and the whole class.

**Ongoing Assessment**

- Careful listening to students' inferences
- Observation of student participation

**Agenda**

**Teaching Notes**

1. Opening
  - A. Review Learning Targets (5 minutes)
2. Work Time
  - A. Gallery Walk/Inferences (10 minutes)
  - B. "Mix and Mingle" and Thinking about Details (15 minutes)
  - C. Connecting Details and Inferences to Guiding Questions (10 minutes)
3. Closing and Assessment
  - A. Exit Ticket (5 minutes)
4. Homework: N/A

- This first lesson is designed as an inquiry-based approach to "hook" students into the first unit of Module 1 through pictures, a text-based activity, and a read-aloud. Do not use this lesson to "give away" the first unit (i.e., do not tell them they are going to read a novel that starts with this particular historical event). Instead focus on the skill of inferring, helping students to understand how their background knowledge helps them make sense of things not directly stated in the text. It is fine at this point if the details are not "adding up" for students; in coming lessons, and throughout the module, they will circle back to many of the ideas that they are initially exposed to in this lesson.
- Preview the slide show of pictures from The New York Times of the fall of Saigon (see link in supporting materials), and prepare specific images from this slide show for the Gallery Walk protocol. Be sure to remove the captions: the purpose of this opening activity is simply to pique students' interest and get them to "notice" and "wonder" about the images themselves.
- This lesson intentionally includes just short excerpts from the full article "Panic Rises in Saigon but the Exits Are Few." Students do not read the whole text in this lesson. They will read this entire article several weeks from now, during Unit 2. For teacher reference only, read the full text for more background information (see Unit 2, Lesson 3, supporting materials).
- Remember that it is fine, during this engagement lesson, if students have lots of questions: that is part of the goal! If students ask for more details, it's a perfect time to say, "Those are great questions!"
- Prepare "sentence strips" (see directions in supporting materials).
- This lesson involves two activities in which students are moving around the room to think and talk with peers. Reinforce expectations throughout, and provide specific positive feedback as students begin these informal collaborative routines.
- Review: Gallery Walk protocol (Appendix 1).
- Note that time is spent deconstructing the learning targets with students at the beginning of this lesson. This gives students a clear vision for what learning will focus on for each lesson. This research-based strategy supports struggling learners the most. Using learning targets is also an effective way to teach academic vocabulary.
- This lesson introduces simple routines, or "protocols," that will be used throughout the modules to promote student engagement, collaboration, and self-assessment. Review: cold call and Turn and Talk (Appendix 1).



Lesson Vocabulary	Materials
<p>inference (n), infer (v), determine, panic, desperately, quantities, clashes, hasty, poignant, affidavits, consulate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I Notice/I Wonder Note-catcher (one per student)</li> <li>• Photographs (without captions) mounted and posted for Gallery Walk. From the <i>New York Times</i> slide show: <a href="http://www.nytimes.com/learning/general/specials/saigon/110599saigon-pix.1.html">http://www.nytimes.com/learning/general/specials/saigon/110599saigon-pix.1.html</a></li> <li>• Sentence strips from “Panic Rises in Saigon but the Exits Are Few” (two strips per student; see directions in supporting materials)</li> <li>• Module Guiding Questions (one to display or post on chart or SmartBoard)</li> <li>• Lined paper for exit ticket (one per student)</li> <li>• Examples of Nonlinguistic Representations of Learning Target Vocabulary (for Teacher Reference)</li> </ul>

Opening	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p><b>A. Review Learning Targets (5 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This might be the first time students have heard of learning targets. Explain that targets help them understand the specific learning and thinking that a lesson is designed to help them develop. Tell students that you will be sharing targets with them regularly, assessing whether they have met the targets and asking them to self-assess their progress toward targets.</li> <li>• Read the day’s targets aloud to students. Pay particular attention to the word <i>inference</i>.</li> <li>• Explain that an inference is a thought process a reader makes to understand the meaning of text, or even an image. When you <i>infer</i>, you pay attention to the details in front of you, and you use other information (from the text, or your background knowledge) to mentally fill in the gaps between the details that are actually said or shown, and what the author expects the reader to understand.</li> <li>• Tell students that today’s work will require them to make inferences based on both images and text.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning targets are a research-based strategy that helps all students, but helps challenged learners the most. Post the learning targets where all students can see them.</li> <li>• Careful attention to learning targets engages students in learning, supports their learning, and helps hold students accountable for learning.</li> <li>• Discussing and clarifying the language of learning targets helps build academic vocabulary.</li> <li>• ELLs in making connections with vocabulary. These symbols can be used throughout the year. Specifically, these can be used in directions and learning targets. (See supporting materials for examples of possible nonlinguistic symbols for common learning targets, including a few used in this specific lesson.)</li> </ul>



Work Time	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>A. Gallery Walk/Inferences (10 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Display and distribute the <b>Notice/Wonder note-catcher</b> and explain the process for the Gallery Walk protocol:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. In a moment, they will get to examine several <b>photographs</b> that are posted throughout the room (or along the hallway outside the classroom).</li><li>2. At each photograph, they should pause and capture specific details that they notice (i.e., “Woman is crying,” “They are holding on to back of helicopter”), and the things that they wonder about (“I wonder why they are sad?” “What are they getting away from?” “When was this?”).</li><li>3. They will have just a minute at each picture, and that they might not get to all of the pictures.</li></ol></li><li>• You might need to coach your students about your expectations for safe movement, and for quiet voices during this work period. (Ex: “As you move from photograph to photograph, there is no need to engage in side conversations. I expect ‘zero’ voice levels during this time. Also, please move carefully, taking care not to bump into one another.”)</li><li>• Ask them to begin. Use a timer set to 5 minutes to keep students focused on the gallery. As students complete this activity, circulate to observe and support as needed. You might notice that they are making inferences (i.e., “it’s a war” or “the people are escaping”). This is ideal as it provides the basis for the follow-up conversation.</li><li>• Once students have observed the gallery for 5 minutes, ask them to return to their seats.</li><li>• Cold call on several students to share what they “noticed” and “wondered.” Once an inference comes up, probe the students about why they said what they said (i.e., “You said you saw a war. What specifically did you see that made you think there is a war?” “You used your background knowledge to make an inference that there was a war. No picture has the word ‘war’ in it, does it?”).</li><li>• Clarify for students that when they use their background knowledge to add meaning to a picture or text, they are making inferences.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Some students may benefit from a more structured Notice/Wonder graphic organizer. You might add sentence stems matched to specific pictures.</li><li>• The use of a visible timer will keep students focused on the work at hand.</li></ul>



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>B. “Mix and Mingle” and Thinking about Details (15 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell students that the next activity will give them additional information. It may lead them to confirm some of their inferences, revise them, or simply add more details to help them keep making sense of what they saw.</li> <li>• Give each student <b>two sentence strips from “Panic Rises in Saigon but the Exits Are Few.”</b> Ask students to read their own sentence strips silently to themselves. Give them 2 minutes or so to do this.</li> <li>• Ask them to turn and talk to someone close by and say what their strips are about.</li> <li>• Ask the class,             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “Do you feel like you have the whole story of what is happening in the pictures from these sentence strips?” Students likely will say no.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Tell them that their classmates have different strips from them, and that by mingling and comparing strips, they might be able to collect more information about what is happening in the pictures.</li> <li>• If needed, reinforce your expectations for movement and noise while they work on the next activity. Give directions:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Quietly wander for 5 minutes, reading one another’s strips. Look for peers who have strips with different pieces of information from yours.</li> <li>2. Gather together in groups of 3–4, so as a group you have 8–10 different pieces of information that might fit together to tell more of the story about what is happening in the pictures in the Gallery Walk.</li> </ol> </li> <li>• Begin the mingle. Set a visible timer for 5 minutes, so students know how long they have for this activity.</li> <li>• Circulate to observe and support as needed. Be sure students are finding peers with different sentence strips from their own.</li> <li>• Then refocus students whole group. Ask them to quickly select an area of the classroom in which to sit with the 3–4 other people they found who had additional information. Ask students to “huddle up” around a desk so that they can talk quietly to one another.</li> <li>• Ask the groups to take 5 minutes to arrange their strips in an order they think make sense. Tell them that there is no “right answer.” They are simply thinking about how all these details might fit together. They should end up with a series of strips that they could explain to someone else: Why did you put the strips in the order you did? Emphasize to students that it is fine if they have more questions than answers at this point.</li> <li>• After 5 minutes, refocus students whole group. Ask them to stay in their same groups, and now discuss the following question:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “Based on the pictures and sentence strips, what can you <i>infer</i> has happened?”</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some students may benefit from having only one strip to read and/or being guided to a specific place in the room to meet up with their group rather than mingling. If this is the case, add “Meet your group at XXX” to the strips of those students.</li> <li>• Some students might benefit from having a “master copy” of the strips in the right order of the article rather than rearranging while they listen. These students can be told to listen to the read-aloud and to “check” each strip as it is read.</li> </ul>



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cold call on a few students to offer their group's inferences. Follow up by asking,               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* "What specific evidence do you have to back up that inference?"</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Encourage students to use specific details from the sentence strips to support their answers.</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: It is fine, even good, if students are somewhat unclear at this point and have many questions about what they have read. Tell students that they will have many opportunities to get their questions answered over the coming weeks.</i></p>	
<p><b>C. Connecting Details and Inferences to Guiding Questions (10 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build on students' inferences to begin to frame the first two Guiding Questions for this module.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* For example, many students likely inferred that there was a war going on, and that people had to flee. Point out that often during wars, people have to leave their home. One question they will be thinking about throughout this module is, "What is home?"</li> <li>* For example, many students likely noticed the emotional intensity described in many of the sentence strips ("panic," "suicide," etc.) and may have commented that this must have been very intense for the people involved. Connect this to the second Guiding Question: "How do critical incidents reveal character?" Tell students that throughout the module, they will keep thinking about how the events around us affect who we are.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Share the <b>Module Guiding Questions</b> on a chart or your SmartBoard. Tell students that they will keep coming back to these questions as they read more.</li> <li>• Give students 2 minutes to reread their quotes in their group and identify any that they can connect to the idea of home or showing or revealing character.</li> <li>• Cold call on students to respond. Students may suggest ideas like, "Home is a place you hate to leave. Home is where your family is."</li> <li>• Potentially students may also say, "When things get really hard, you show your character" or "Character is who you are even in a terrible time."</li> <li>• Remind students that they will keep coming back to these big questions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some students may benefit from being explicitly told which strips to look at when discussing questions.</li> </ul>



Closing and Assessment	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>A. Exit Ticket (5 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ask students to use a piece of <b>lined paper</b> and write:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>One inference you made today.</li><li>A question that you hope to have answered in the coming weeks.</li></ol></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Students will benefit from you carefully reading these exit tickets and making reference to their questions as you move through the unit. You might even consider making a chart of the questions, either on chart paper or on your SmartBoard that you can refer to regularly. This validates and reinforces students' thinking/learning.</li></ul>
Homework	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>N/A</li></ul> <p><i>Notes: Review students' exit tickets to gauge their initial understanding of the topic, and to identify patterns in students' questions that you can informally weave in to upcoming lessons.</i></p>	



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# Module 1: Unit 1: Lesson 1

## Supporting Materials



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<b>I notice ...</b>	<b>I wonder ...</b>

Teacher Directions: Make copies of these sentence strips for your class. Cut the sentences into strips; make enough strips so each student has two different sentences.

Panic [an outbreak of fear] is clearly visible in Saigon now as thousands of Vietnamese try desperately to find ways to flee their country.



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There are few exits left, and most involve knowing or working for Americans.



-----

Still others, trying to get a seat aboard one of the planes, offered everything they had.



-----

Others, not so lucky, rushed to drug stores to buy quantities [large amounts] of sleeping pills and tranquilizers, with which they could commit suicide if the worst came to pass.



-----

“Please take care of my son,” he wrote. “Quan is the last drop of blood in our family. If you have time, pray for us.”



-----

...reports of military clashes [armed fights] on the edge of the city and...new rumors about what the Communists will do when they take control.



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Some Vietnamese stopped Americans they had never seen before and pleaded for the affidavits [written pledge] of support required for visas



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from the United States Consulate [office of someone who is in another country protecting the interests of citizens living in a foreign land].



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The hasty [quick] departures of so many after three decades of war were accompanied by poignant [emotional] scenes.



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When he found out that she and other members of his family had indeed left, he began to weep.



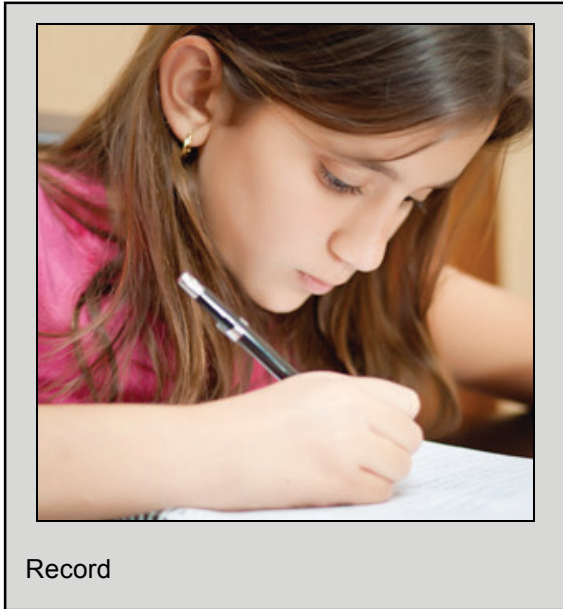
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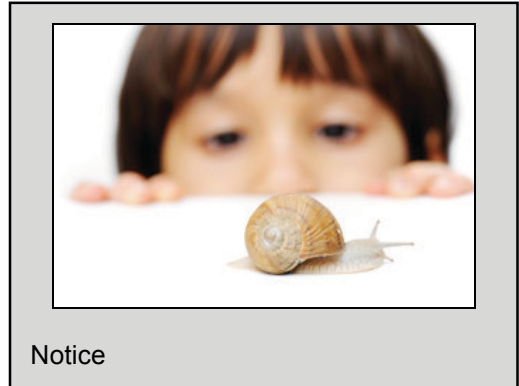
- What is home?
- How do critical incidents reveal character?
- What common themes unify the refugee experience?
- How can we tell powerful stories about people's experiences?



**GRADE 8: MODULE 1: UNIT 1: LESSON 1**  
Examples of Nonlinguistic Representations of  
Learning Target Vocabulary  
(For Teacher Reference)



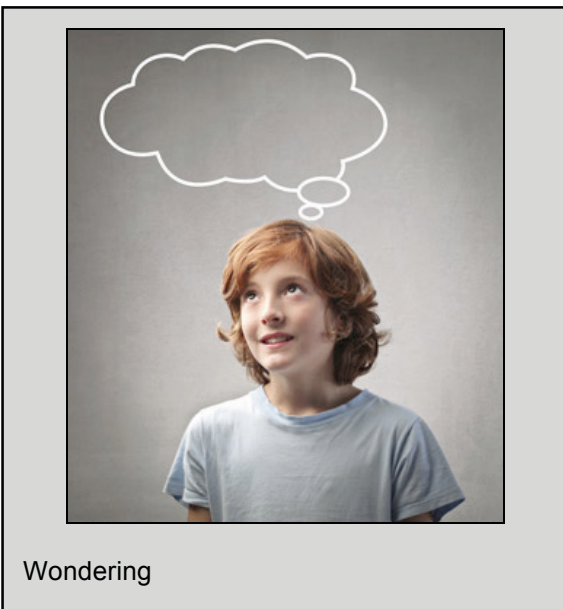
Record



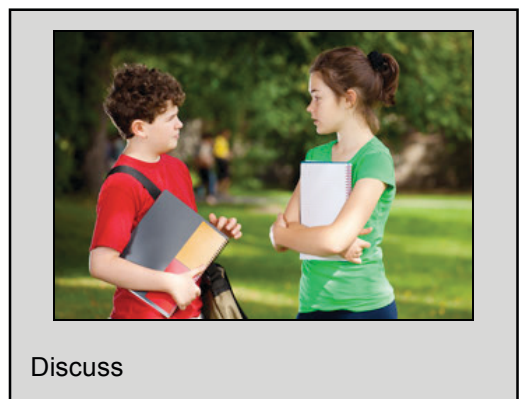
Notice



Explain



Wondering



Discuss

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