



EXPEDITIONARY
LEARNING

Grade 8: Module 1: Unit 2: Lesson 2

Rereading and Close Reading: Communism, “The Vietnam Wars,” and “Last Respects” (Pages 85 and 86)



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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 my analysis of literary text. (RL.8.1)
- I can analyze how specific dialogue or incidents in a plot propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision. (RL.8.3)
- I can analyze the development of a theme or central idea throughout the text (including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot). (RL.8.2)
- I can analyze figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. (L.8.5)

Supporting Learning Targets

- I can explain how key details in the novel reveal the challenges Ha faces and her dynamic character.
- I can infer the symbolism in the poem “Last Respects.”

Ongoing Assessment

- Structured notes for pages 83–90 (from homework)
- Who Is Ha? small group anchor chart
- Last Respects note-catcher

Agenda

1. Opening
 - A. Engaging the Reader: Establish Opening Routine (10 minutes)
 - B. Review Learning Targets (3 minutes)
2. Work Time
 - A. Rereading Section 5 of “The Vietnam Wars”: Communism (10 minutes)
 - B. Rereading and Structured Notes: Learning about Ha’s Dynamic Character from the Poem “Last Respects” (20 minutes)
3. Closing and Assessment
 - A. Debrief Learning Targets (2 minutes)
4. Homework
 - A. Complete a first read of pages 91–111. Take notes (in your journals) using the Structured Notes graphic organizer.

Teaching Notes

- This lesson introduces a new opening routine that students will follow throughout Unit 2. This routine allows 10 to 15 minutes for students to work with the portion of the novel they read for homework. Students share their structured notes homework and are encouraged to add to their notes based on this discussion. Given this routine, it is important that students do their homework and not rely on getting notes from their partners. Circulate to listen in and look at students’ notes to gauge their independent work.
- Across lessons, the opening sections involve a variety of structures and prompts. The predictability of the routine creates accountability and efficiencies; the variety promotes engagement.
- Groups continue to add to their Who Is Ha? small group anchor charts (which students created during Unit 1).
- In advance: Prepare for the Chalk Talk. Have the Who Is Ha? anchor charts posted around the room. Alongside each group’s chart, also post two fresh pieces of chart paper. At the top of each new sheet, write the focus question: “What have you learned about Ha’s dynamic character?”
- The best close-reading work involves a balance of text-dependent questions and student-initiated responses (e.g., notices and wonders, important points, clarifying or probing questions, gist notes). The previous lesson focused on the new “structured notes” routine to support students with the latter, more open-ended independent work with a text. This lesson and future lessons in this unit also include specific text-dependent questions, which are powerful scaffolds to focus students on particularly challenging or important excerpts of the text.
- During Part A of Work Time, students revisit the last section of the informational text “The Vietnam Wars,” which they read in Unit 1 (Lessons 6, 7, 9, and 10). Help students notice how their knowledge has grown from Unit 1: likely much more of this text will make sense to them at this point. Emphasize also the value of rereading to deepen one’s understanding.
- Reread Unit 1, Lesson 10, to refresh your memory about how students have already worked with this excerpt that they will reread today. Today, students revisit this text specifically to understand more about the communists and why Ha is so scared.



Agenda	Teaching Notes (continued)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This lesson informally introduces the word <i>totalitarian</i>, which is more explicitly taught in Lesson 3. Be prepared to provide a layman’s definition of this complex term: It is basically a system of government in which the state holds total authority over the society and tries to control its citizens. Through your informal discussion with students across Lessons 2 and 3, help them notice why Ha might be so afraid; even though she is a child, she has a sense that the communists are trying to control her family. • Continue to help students connect the work they are doing as readers to their Things Close Readers Do anchor chart (from Unit 1) and the Reading Closely: Guiding Questions handout (from Lesson 1). • Review: Chalk Talk, Think-Write-Pair-Share (Appendix 1).

Lesson Vocabulary	Materials
<p>infer, symbolism; communism, totalitarianism, last respects, formal, regret (85)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Inside Out & Back Again</i> (book; one per student) • Who Is Ha? small group anchor charts (begun in Unit 1, Lesson 4) • Chart paper (two per group) • Markers (one per student) • “The Vietnam Wars” text (from Unit 1, Lesson 6; one per student) • “Last Respects” note-catcher (one per student) • Document camera



Opening	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p>A. Engaging the Reader: Establish Opening Routine (10 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students should be sitting with their small groups and should have their novel Inside Out & Back Again. • Note: Have the Who Is Ha? small group anchor charts posted around the room. Alongside each group’s chart, also post two fresh pieces of chart paper with the focus question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “What have you learned about Ha’s dynamic character?” • Tell students that at the start of class each day in this unit, they will use different ways to share and discuss the portion of the novel they read for homework. They will use the structured notes they took from the reading homework for this sharing and discussion time. Reinforce the importance of taking good notes so they are prepared for discussions. Also emphasize that writing and talking about what they read are both good ways to deepen their understanding of a text. These discussions matter! • For the opening routine today, tell students that they will participate in a <u>silent</u> discussion called a Chalk Talk. Describe the basic process to students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small groups gather around their chart paper, marker in hand. • The teacher poses a question to the groups (in this case, the question is written on the chart paper). • Students write their thinking and responses to the question on the chart paper. • After this silent thinking and writing time, students read what the other group members have written and think about themes and patterns. • Focus students on their Who Is Ha? anchor charts around the room. Point out the two new pieces of chart paper. Tell students that in a moment, they will first write on these blank charts to get as much information out as possible. Tell students that there are two new pieces of paper to be sure everyone in the group has plenty of space to write all of their great details. • Point out the focus question on top of the two new charts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “What have you learned about Ha’s dynamic character?” • Distribute markers. Remind students that Chalk Talk is a silent activity. Give students about 3 minutes in their small groups to silently add their thinking to these two charts while referring to their structured notes. • After 3 minutes, refocus students. Ask them to stay at their chart and silently read the details posted by the other members of their group. Invite them to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “What do you notice?” * “What is the strongest evidence? Why?” • After about 1 minute of silently reading, invite students to talk in their small groups. Give positive feedback about how students are weighing which specific details help them best understand how Ha is changing. • Invite students to look back at their original Who Is Ha? anchor chart. Ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “Is there anything you want to add to your original Who Is Ha? anchor chart?” • Give students a minute to add to their original anchor chart: They may be noticing that even though Ha is changing, some aspects of her character remain the same (e.g., she is stubborn). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anchor charts provide a visual cue to students about what to do when you ask them to work independently. They also serve as note-catchers when the class is co-constructing ideas. • Use of protocols like Chalk talk allows for total participation of students. It encourages critical thinking, collaboration, and social construction of knowledge. It also helps students to practice their speaking and listening skills.



Opening	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p>B. Review Learning Targets (3 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct students’ attention to the posted learning targets. Point out that the first target is the same as from the previous lesson. Cold call two students to share a key detail that their group discussed during the Chalk Talk. • Focus students on the second target: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “I can infer the symbolism in the poem ‘Last Respects.’” • Explain that sometimes an author creates layers of meaning. For example, the author created layers of meaning with the symbol of the papaya. Remind students of the work they did during Unit 1, including the model QuickWrite you shared with them: The papaya is Ha’s favorite fruit, but its deeper meaning is that it is a symbol of hope. <i>Symbolism</i> is when an author uses an object to represent something else. Explain: “Usually readers will need to <i>infer</i>, or use clues from the text and their understanding, to understand the symbolism and the deeper meaning of the story.” • Invite students to turn and talk: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “How would you define <i>symbolism</i> in your own words?” • Share with students that in order to reach this target, today they will reread a short excerpt of informational text as well as one poem from the novel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posting learning targets for students allows them to reference them through out the lesson to check their understanding. They also provide a reminder to students and teachers about the intended learning behind a given lesson or activity.

Work Time	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p>A. Rereading Section 5 of “The Vietnam Wars”: Communism (10 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite students to take out their “The Vietnam Wars” text (from Unit 1) and reread the last section. • Have students turn and talk with a partner: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “Based on what you have read in the novel and what you have reread in the article, how does this part of the article relate to Ha’s situation? Why did Ha’s family flee their home?” • Listen for students to understand that Ha and her family fled their home country of South Vietnam because of the communist takeover. • Direct students to look at the photograph with a flag with the star and the caption next to it. Ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “What is this photograph showing?” Be sure students understand that this photograph is showing the conquering communists, the Viet-Cong, rolling into South Vietnam. • Help students notice the intensity of the photograph, which conveys some sense of the totalitarian nature of North Vietnamese communism. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “Why might the author have chosen to include this photograph?” The photograph shows the military might of the communists and the helpless people on the streets. * “What do you notice about the flag? What does a flag symbolize?” Draw particular attention to the high waving, colorful, proud flag in the picture. Ideally, students will understand that a flag is a symbol that represents a country or a group of people. It often symbolizes the values and beliefs of the people it represents. The prominent flag in the photograph reveals the defeat of South Vietnam. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind students that they have read this text before, in Unit 1. For ELLs and other students needing additional support, consider providing smaller chunks of text, sometimes just a few sentences, for a close read. You can also chunk the text for them on separate sheets of paper or notecards. This makes the reading of complex texts more manageable and allows them to focus on one small section at a time. • Check in on students’ thinking as they speak about their text.



Work Time	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p>B. Rereading and Structured Notes: Learning about Ha’s Dynamic Character from the Poem “Last Respects” (20 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct students to the poem “Last Respects” on pages 85 and 86. Read aloud the title and ask students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “What does the term <i>last respects</i> mean? When is this term used?” • Ideally, students will understand that this term refers to the honor and recognition given to an individual upon death. If the students do not know what this phrase means, define it for them. • Tell students that in a moment, they will reread this poem (from last night’s homework) silently on their own. Set a purpose for reading: “As you reread this poem, pay attention to words and phrases that relate to the title, ‘Last Respects.’” • Invite students to reread this poem silently. While they reread, distribute the “Last Respects” note-catcher. • Orient students to the note-catcher. Focus them on Part A. Tell them that it looks very similar to the Structured Notes graphic organizer they are using to collect notes from the novel. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In the far left column, they will be looking for key details in the poem that are related to the phrase “last respects”—specifically, details that relate to death and dying. 2. In the second column, students will record the page number and stanza to reference the images they note. 3. In the third column, they will answer the question: “How are these key details related to death and dying?” 4. The far right column should be labeled: Vocabulary. This column will focus on words and phrases that help students understand the poem. • If necessary, share these examples to get them started: “The <i>formal</i> lowering” of the flag is a ceremonial and official symbol of defeat, and the line “South Vietnam no longer exists” shows the death or defeat of Ha’s country. • Remind students of the photograph they looked at earlier in the lesson and ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “How does the image of the flag Ha describes compare with the image of the flag in the photograph?” • Remind students of the Reading Closely for Details document (from Lesson 1). Point out that one “thing” close readers do is begin to connect details. Give students a few minutes to think on their own and write: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “What details do you notice in the poem that relate to death and dying?” • Then invite students to participate in a Think-Write-Pair-Share protocol, in which they pair up, share their thinking, and add to their “Last Respects” note-catcher. • Next, focus students on Part B of the “Last Respects” note-catcher. Tell them that this part of the note-catcher involves inferring. They will need to use clues from the poem and what they know about Ha to answer the questions. Invite pairs to answer the text-dependent questions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graphic organizers and recording forms engage students more actively and provide scaffolding that is especially critical for learners with lower levels of language proficiency and/or learning. • Use of protocols like Think-Write-Pair-Share allows for total participation of students. It encourages critical thinking, collaboration, and social construction of knowledge. It also helps students practice their speaking and listening skills.



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students’ Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulate while the class is working and probe as needed with questions such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “Look at the poem ‘Sssshhhhhh’ on page 46. In the fourth stanza, what does Brother Khoi say about his chick? What do you think about his decision to throw it overboard now?” * “Look at the poem ‘Choice’ on pages 55 and 56. What is Ha’s choice?” • Be sure students realize that Ha threw the doll overboard. Ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “How does Ha describe the doll she chose to bring with her? What did Ha love most about this doll? Why was it special to her? What do you think about her decision to throw the doll overboard now?” • Debrief the details from Part A of the note-catcher using the Numbered Heads protocol. Begin by asking each group to share one image or detail from the poem that relates to death or dying; call on Numbered Head 2 to share these details. Using a document camera, display Part A of the note-catcher. Point out to students that this looks just like the Structured Notes graphic organizer that they are using to take notes for homework. Using the document camera, model taking notes and invite students to add these notes to their own notes in Part A of the note catcher. • Reinforce with students that this poem provides key details that will help them learn about the challenges Ha is facing and how her character is changing. Direct students’ attention next to Questions 1 and 2 in Part B of the note-catcher. • Call on Numbered Head 4s in each group to share why these objects were important to Ha and her brother. Record the key detail in the first column and the page number (86) in the second column. “Ha wraps her doll and Brother Khoi’s dead chick in her mother’s white handkerchief and throws it overboard.” • Focus on the next question, which asks for the best evidence to support their answer to Question 2. Ask Numbered Head 1s to share the group’s thinking. • Finally, ask students to think about this scene: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “Was this simply throwing a bundle of special objects overboard, or did it represent something else symbolically for the characters?” • Invite Numbered Head 3s to share the groups’ thinking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some students may benefit from having access to “hint cards”: small slips of paper or index cards that they turn over for hints about how/where to find the answers to text-dependent questions. For example, a hint card might say: “Check back in the first stanza.”



Closing and Assessment	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p>A. Debrief Learning Targets (2 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give students specific positive feedback based on comments you heard them making that showed evidence of close reading for details and inferring. (For example: “I heard Keisha and Jesse having a great conversation about what the doll meant to Ha; they inferred that by choosing to throw the doll overboard, she was ready to let go not just of the doll, but of her childhood.”). • Share with students that they have been learning about Ha’s character throughout Part 1 of the novel, and Ha is beginning another part of her life as a refugee. They will be learning more about her dynamic character as she faces more challenges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing specific and focused feedback helps students set concrete goals for reaching learning targets.
Homework	Meeting Students’ Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete a first read of pages 91–111. Take notes (in your journals) using the Structured Notes graphic organizer. Focus on key details that reveal the challenges Ha is facing and her dynamic character, plus vocabulary that helps you understand her challenges and responses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary can be a source of difficulty for struggling readers. Provide a brief list with explanations of challenging vocabulary words from the reading homework. This should be done only for students who need it. • Most important is to provide words that cannot easily be determined from context. There are few of these in the novel. On pages 91–111, these words might include the following: <i>composure</i> (calm state of mind) (95); <i>tangible</i> (touchable), <i>remnant</i> (fragment, small piece) (104); and <i>sponsor</i> (a person who is responsible for another person) (107).



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Supporting Materials



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Name:	
Date:	

Part A: Directions: Reread the poem “Last Respects” on pages 85 and 86 in the novel. Use the space below to record your notes.

Key Details	Page #	How are these key details related to death and dying?	Vocabulary
formal lowering of flag	Pg. # 85, 1st stanza	The formal lowering of the flag is a ceremonial and official symbol of defeat.	Last respects (85) Formal (85)
“South Vietnam no longer exists”	Pg. # 85, 2nd stanza	This shows the death or defeat of Ha’s country.	

Part B: Use the clues in the text and your knowledge of Ha to answer these questions:

1. What two objects does Ha place in the white handkerchief?

2. Why are these objects important to Ha and her brother?

- a. They are the finest the family had in South Vietnam.
- b. They important for their survival in a new country.
- c. They represent their old life in South Vietnam.
- d. They were given to them by their mother.

3. What is the strongest evidence from the text to support your answer to Question 2? Why?

4. What does the sinking bundle *symbolize*?
