



EXPEDITIONARY
LEARNING

Grade 8: Module 1: Unit 2: Lesson 8

Analyzing the Content of a Model Essay:

“How Ha’s Mother Is Turned ‘Inside Out’”



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

I can cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. (RI.8.1)
I can evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text (assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims). (RI.8.8)
I can effectively engage in discussions with diverse partners about eighth-grade topics, texts, and issues. (SL.8.1)

Supporting Learning Targets

- I can make connections between the universal refugee experiences of fleeing/finding home and the title of the novel *Inside Out & Back Again*.
- I can find the gist of a model essay.
- I can choose the strongest evidence to support my answers to questions about a model essay.
- I can evaluate the quality of evidence used to support the claims made in the model essay “How Ha’s Mother Is Turned ‘Inside Out’”

Ongoing Assessment

- Structured notes (pages 196–212 from homework)
- Answers to questions about model essay

Agenda

1. Opening
 - A. Introducing the Assessment Prompt (7 minutes)
2. Work Time
 - A. Transitioning from the Physical Fleeing and Finding Home to the Emotional “Inside Out” and “Back Again” (8 minutes)
 - B. Reading the Model Essay for Gist: “How Ha’s Mother is Turned ‘Inside Out’” (10 minutes)
 - C. Analyzing the Content of the Model Essay: Answering Text-Dependent Questions (15 minutes)
3. Closing and Assessment
 - A. Whole Group Sharing Answers to Two of the Text-Dependent Questions (5 minutes)
4. Homework
 - A. Complete a first read of pages 213–234. Take notes (in your journal) using the Structured Notes graphic organizer. Focus on the strongest evidence that reveals how Ha is a dynamic character who is growing/changing over time.

Teaching Notes

- In this lesson, students are introduced to the end of unit assessment prompt. From the assessment prompt they then begin to transition from the idea of how refugees flee and find a new home to a focus on the more psychological and emotional aspects of being turned “inside out.”
- To reflect the transition in thinking from physical to emotional aspects of the universal experience of refugees, students work as a class to transfer the details collected on the Fleeing Home and Finding Home anchor charts onto two new anchor charts: Inside Out and Back Again. This helps students begin to focus on the figurative language in the title of the novel.
- Students spend much of this lesson reading and analyzing a model essay: “How Ha’s Mother Is Turned ‘Inside Out.’” This essay is similar in structure to part of the essay students will write about Ha (though the model focuses only on the “inside out” aspect of the novel’s title, since students have not yet finished the book). Because the model is about Ha’s mother, it gives students an opportunity to consider her character more closely while they also learn about the structure of the essay they eventually will write about Ha. Students “read like readers,” for gist and then dig deeper into the content of the essay by answering text-dependent questions. Their analysis of the model essay aligns with RI.8.8.
- In advance: Review the model essay with a focus on the content of the essay.
- Post: Learning targets, anchor charts (see below).



Lesson Vocabulary	Materials
universal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Inside Out & Back Again</i> (book; one per student) • End of unit 2 assessment prompt (one per student and one for display) • Prefixes note-catcher (from Lesson 3) • Inside Out anchor chart and Back Again anchor chart (both new; teacher-created; see example in supporting materials) • Fleeing Home and Finding Home anchor charts (created in Lesson 5; post around the room where students can see the charts) • Model Essay: “How Ha’s Mother Is Turned ‘Inside Out’” (one per student and one for display) • Questions about the Model Essay (one per student and one for display) • Questions about the Model Essay (Answers for Teacher Reference)

Opening	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p>A. Introducing the Assessment Prompt (7 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display and distribute the end of unit 2 assessment prompt, and invite students to read it aloud with you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “Consider the meaning of the novel’s title, <i>Inside Out & Back Again</i>. How does this title relate to the universal refugee experience of fleeing and finding home, and in what ways is Ha’s experience an example of this universal experience?” • Tell students that their end of unit assessment will be an essay in which they respond to this question by finding the strongest evidence to connect the experiences of the character Ha in the novel <i>Inside Out & Back Again</i> with the experiences of real-life refugees in informational texts. • Explain to the class that any time one writes in response to a prompt, it is important to take time to fully understand what the prompt is asking. This is just like what students have been doing with learning targets almost every day. • Circle the word <i>universal</i>, which has been a focus throughout the unit. Underline the word part <i>univers</i>. Ask students to Think-Pair-Share: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “How does the word <i>universal</i> relate to the word <i>universe</i>?” * “What does the prefix ‘uni-’ mean?” • Students should remember this type of thinking from Lesson 6. Reinforce that <i>universal</i> means common to all people in a particular group, so “the universal refugee experience” means experiences common to all refugees around the world, of which Ha is one. • Be sure that students have the prefix “uni-” on their Prefixes note-catcher. • Underline the phrases “Inside Out” and “Back Again.” Ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “What do you think it means to turn ‘inside out,’ as the title of the novel suggests?” • Listen for: “Turning inside out is everything changing and things becoming challenging—feeling very confused and uncertain.” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “What does it mean to turn ‘back again,’ as the title of the novel suggests?” • Listen for: “Everything settling down and going back to normal. Feeling more comfortable and less confused.” These are concepts students have worked with informally in previous lessons. At this point, be sure all students understand the figurative language in the novel’s title, as this will be crucial for their success on the end of unit assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posting learning targets for students allows them to reference the learning targets throughout 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. • Discussing and clarifying the language of learning targets helps build academic vocabulary.



Work Time	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p>A. Transitioning from the Physical Fleeing and Finding Home to the Emotional “Inside Out” and “Back Again” (8 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be sure students have their texts Inside Out & Back Again. Invite students to read the first learning target with you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “I can make connections between the universal refugee experiences of fleeing/finding home and the title of the novel <i>Inside Out & Back Again</i>.” • Tell students that they are going to connect refugees’ universal experience of fleeing and finding home (leaving a country and going somewhere new) to the universal emotional experience of being turned “inside out” and then coming “back again” just as Ha does in the novel. • Clarify with a concrete example to show how physically fleeing home is related to but not the same as being turned inside out, and how physically finding a new home is related to but not the same as coming “back again.” “When Ha is in Alabama, she is no longer fleeing home—she is beginning to find home; however, she is still turning inside out because she doesn’t understand anything and the other children are mean to her when she first starts school. She only really turns ‘back again’ when she begins to settle in by making friends and understanding the language.” • Display the two new Inside Out and Back Again anchor charts (see supporting materials for a model). Tell students that they are going to start thinking about how the strongest evidence they have recorded on the Fleeing Home and Finding Home anchor charts connects with the title of the novel <i>Inside Out and Back Again</i>. Point out that on the new Inside Out and Back Again anchor charts, the top half of each one is for details from the novel. The bottom half is for evidence from informational texts. • Emphasize that not all of the evidence they gathered before (about refugees fleeing and finding home) will be relevant to the emotional aspect. That is fine. As a class, review some of the key details on the Fleeing Home and Finding Home anchor charts and consider whether and how these relate to the more emotional experience of turning “inside out” or “back again”: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “Is this evidence about turning inside out? Or turning back again? Why do you think that?” • Listen for students to explain that things involving emotional turmoil are about turning “inside out” and things related to settling in and becoming more comfortable are about turning “back again.” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “Is it evidence from the novel? Or from an informational text? So should it go on the top or bottom of the anchor chart?” • Move the most relevant evidence onto either the Inside Out anchor chart or onto the Back Again anchor chart. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning targets are a research-based strategy that helps all students but helps challenged learners the most. • Posting learning targets for students allows them to reference them throughout 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. • Anchor charts serve as note-catchers when the class is co-constructing ideas.



Work Time	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p>B. Reading the Model Essay for Gist: “How Ha’s Mother Is Turned ‘Inside Out’” (10 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell students that to prepare them to write their end of unit assessment literary analysis essay, they are going to study a model essay. They will first read it “like a reader”: to think about the content: what is the author trying to communicate? In a future lesson, they will reread it “like a writer”: to think about how the author actually wrote it. • Invite the class to read the second learning target with you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “I can find the gist of a model essay.” • Invite students to get into numbered heads groups. Pair up numbers 1 and 2 and numbers 3 and 4. • Display and distribute the Model Essay: “How Ha’s Mother Is Turned ‘Inside Out.’” Tell students that this model essay responds to a prompt that is <u>similar</u> to (but not exactly the same as) the prompt they have as their end of unit assessment. But it focuses only on the “Inside Out” part, since students are still reading the novel. And this model essay is about a member of Ha’s family: Ha’s mother. • Read the prompt and the model essay aloud and invite students to follow along silently. • Ask students to Think-Pair-Share: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “What do you notice?” * “What do you wonder?” • Invite students to consider the gist of the first paragraph. Ask them to Think-Pair-Share: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “So what is this first paragraph mostly about?” • Listen for: “It introduces the idea of refugees turning inside out and back again as they flee and find home, and it introduces the idea that Ha’s mother turned inside out when she had to flee Vietnam with her family. • Model annotating the gist in the margin. Invite students to do the same with their essays. • Invite pairs to read the rest of the essay, annotating the gist of each paragraph. Circulate to support students in rereading the essay for the gist. Ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “So what is this paragraph mostly about?” • Invite students to get back into numbered heads groups to share their gist ideas for each paragraph. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing academic vocabulary words benefits all students developing academic language. Consider allowing students to grapple with a complex text before explicit teaching of vocabulary. After students have read for gist, they can identify challenging vocabulary for themselves. Teachers can address student-selected vocabulary as well as predetermined vocabulary upon subsequent encounters with the text. However, in some cases and with some students, pre-teaching selected vocabulary may be necessary.



Work Time	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p>C. Analyzing the Content of the Model Essay: Answering Text-Dependent Questions (15 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Invite students to read the third learning target with you:<ul style="list-style-type: none">* “I can choose the strongest evidence to support my answers to questions about a model essay.”• Pair up students in their numbered heads groups—odd numbers together and even numbers together.• Display Questions about the Model Essay. Draw the students’ attention to the questions that say they must provide evidence to answer the question. Remind students that this means they must find details in the essay to support their answers.• Ask students to begin. Circulate to support students in rereading the text to answer the questions.• Remind students that they will return to this model essay several more times in future lessons. Be sure they file it away.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Text-dependent questions can be answered only by referring explicitly to the text being read. This encourages students to reread the text for further analysis and allows for a deeper understanding.• 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 third paragraph.”• For ELLs, consider providing extended time for tasks and answering questions in class discussions. ELLs receive extended time as an accommodation on NY State assessments.



Closing and Assessment	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p>A. Whole Group Sharing Answers to Two of the Text-Dependent Questions (5 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call on pairs to share answers to the first two questions with the class. (Refer to the Questions about the Model Essay: Answer Key to guide students toward the appropriate answers.) • Invite the class to read the fourth and final learning target with you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “I can evaluate the quality of evidence used to support the claims made in the model essay “How Ha’s Mother Is Turned ‘Inside Out.’” • Invite students to Think-Pair-Share: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “Look at Question 2. Does the writer support his or her claim with relevant and complete evidence?” • Listen for students to cite specific evidence to justify their analysis of the model essay. 	
Homework	Meeting Students’ Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete a first read of pages 196–212. Take notes (in your journal) using the Structured Notes graphic organizer. Focus on the strongest evidence that reveals how Ha is being turned “inside out” (the challenges Ha faces 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 readers who struggle. Provide a brief list with explanations of the 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 a few of these in the novel. On pages 213–234, these words might include the following: <i>shoulder the world</i> (carry a lot of worries) (214), <i>superstitious</i> (believes that things happen caused by the supernatural) (215), <i>writhes</i> (squirming, twisting, and turning) (225), <i>compromise</i> (reach an agreement by adjusting) (233), and <i>incense</i> (a spice that is burned because it releases a perfume smell) (233).



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Supporting Materials



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Consider the meaning of the novel's title, *Inside Out & Back Again*. How does this title relate to the universal refugee experience of fleeing and finding home, and in what ways is Ha's experience a specific example of this universal experience?



Inside Out
(Strongest Evidence from the Novel)

Inside Out
(Strongest Evidence from Information Texts)



Back Again
(Strongest Evidence from the Novel)

Back Again
(Strongest Evidence from Information Texts)



Prompt:

The novel is titled *Inside Out & Back Again*. Think about just the first phrase in that title: “inside out.” How does phrase “inside out” relate to the universal refugee experience of fleeing and finding home? In what ways is Ha’s mother’s experience a specific example of this universal experience?

Refugees are everyday people who are forced to flee their homes because they are afraid to stay in their home country. When they flee, they may leave behind family members, friends, a home, a job, and special possessions. Fleeing home and trying to find a new home can make them feel like their lives are being turned inside out. In the novel *Inside Out & Back Again* by Thanhha Lai, Ha’s family lives in a country at war. Ha’s mother is raising four children alone in this dangerous country, and it is more and more difficult for her to provide for their needs. When the war brings fear and hardship to the family, Mother decides to take her family and flee their home of South Vietnam. She is afraid of the dangers communism may bring to her family. Once Mother decides to flee, she and her children become refugees who try to find a new place to call home. Mother’s life feels like it is being turned “inside out” in the same way other refugees all over the world feel.

Many refugees feel scared and worried when war comes to their home country, just like Ha’s mother. In “Children of War” (Brice 25), all four of the refugee children talk about being separated from one of their parents because of war. Amela’s father went to work one day but never returned home. Later, she learned he had been killed (Brice 26). She says, “Before the war, I really enjoyed life, but after I found out about my father’s death everything seemed so useless. I couldn’t see any future for myself” (Brice 26). In Part One of *Inside Out & Back Again*, Mother is separated from Father because of the war. In “Missing in Action,” Ha writes, “Father left home on a navy mission on this day nine years ago when I was almost one. He was captured on Route 1 an hour south of the city by moped. That’s all we know” (Lai 12). Mother misses father terribly. In “Birthday Wishes,” Ha writes about how she is hopeful her father will return home soon because Mother is so sad: “Mostly I wish Father would appear in our doorway and make Mother’s lips curl upward, lifting them from a permanent frown of worries” (Lai 31). All around the world and throughout time, wartime has separated families, and brought sadness and worry to parents and children.

When refugees make the decision to flee, they often have to take risks in order to get their families to a safer place, which can turn them emotionally “inside out.” In the novel, Mother decides to take her family and make a risky escape to flee their home of South Vietnam. She knows they may never return home. In the article “Refugees: Who, Where, Why,” the author writes, “Most refugees hope to return to their homes.” She also writes that “some refugees cannot return home” (Gevert 1–2). This decision twists Mother inside out. In “Should We,” Ha writes that her mother gathers the family together and asks them if they should leave. Ha can see the conversation is upsetting for Mother. She writes, “Mother twists her brows.... Her brows twist so much we hush” (Lai 45). Mother knows this decision will twist their lives inside out. Once the family has escaped and is on the ship, Mother realizes that everything in her life has changed now. To try to comfort herself and her family, she says, “At least the moon remains unchanged” (Lai 89). By this, she means that their lives are all changed, sort of like inside out, but at least there are some things in life that are still the way they should be. This feeling of having life be turned inside out because they may not be able to return to their home is something that many refugees experience.



Refugees around the world have faced challenges when they flee their homes in search of finding a new home. In the article “Refugees: Who, Where, and Why,” the author writes, “Since early times, large groups of people have been forced to leave their homelands because of persecution and the devastation of their lands” (Gevert 2). Life is not easy living in a country at war, but fleeing home and finding a new home brings its own challenges that can make a refugee feel like his or her life is being turned inside out. In *Inside Out & Back Again*, Mother made the decision to flee South Vietnam to find a safer home for her family. This difficult decision would turn her life and her children’s lives inside out, just like the first half of the title says.

Works Cited

Arthur Brice, “Children of War,” *Scholastic Update*, March 25, 1994. 25–26.

Catherine Gevert, “Refugees: Who, Where, and Why,” *Faces*, 19.1 (2002). 6–8.

Thanhha Lai, *Inside Out & Back Again* (New York: Harper, 2011).



- In the introductory paragraph, what is the essay writer’s claim to connect the universal refugee experience with the novel of the title? Underline this claim in the essay.

- How does the writer support the claim? What evidence is used to support the claim?

- In the first body paragraph, how does the writer support his or her claim that “Many refugees feel scared and worried when war comes to their home country, just like Ha’s mother”?

- In the second body paragraph, what claim does the writer make about Ha’s mother in relation to the title of the novel? Underline this claim in the model essay.

- What evidence does the writer use to support this claim?

- How does the writer conclude the essay?



- In the introductory paragraph, what is the essay writer’s claim to connect the universal refugee experience with the novel of the title? Underline this claim in the essay.

Once Mother decides to flee, she and her children become refugees who try to find a new place to call home. Mother’s life feels like it is being turned “inside out” in the same way other refugees all over the world feel.

- In the first body paragraph, how does the writer support his or her claim that “Many refugees feel scared and worried when war comes to their home country, just like Ha’s mother”?

With evidence (quotes from “Children of War”).

- In the second body paragraph, what claim does the writer make about Ha’s mother in relation to the title of the novel? Underline this claim in the model essay.

In the novel, Mother decides to take her family and make a risky escape to flee their home of South Vietnam. She knows they may never return home. This decision twists Mother inside out.

- What evidence does the writer use to support this claim?

Evidence from the article “Refugees: Who, Where, Why,” and also evidence from the novel.

- How does the writer conclude the essay?

By summarizing the essay in terms of the universal refugee experience and referencing Ha’s mother as an example.