



EXPEDITIONARY
LEARNING

Grade 8: Module 1: Unit 1: Lesson 10

Building Background Knowledge: The Impending Fall of Saigon



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

- I can determine the central idea of an informational text. (RI.8.2)
 I can analyze the impact of word choice on meaning and tone in informational text. (RI.8.4)
 I can use a variety of strategies to determine the meaning of unknown words or phrases. (L.8.4)
 I can effectively engage in discussions with diverse partners about eighth-grade topics, texts, and issues. (SL.8.1)

Supporting Learning Targets

- I can determine the central idea of the section “Doc-Lap at Last” in the informational text “The Vietnam Wars.”
- I can objectively summarize informational text.
- I can use context clues to determine word meanings.
- I can participate in discussions about the text with a partner, small group, and the whole class.

Ongoing Assessment

- Students’ annotated texts
- Three Threes in a Row note-catcher

Agenda

1. Opening
 - A. Sharing Annotations of “Doc-Lap at Last” and Review Learning Targets (5 minutes)
2. Work Time
 - A. Reading for Key Details: “Three Threes in a Row” (20 minutes)
 - B. Determining the Central Ideas of “Doc-Lap at Last” (15 minutes)
3. Closing and Assessment
 - A. Debrief: Returning to Brother Quang’s Quote (5 minutes)
4. Homework
 - A. Read pages 48–60 and complete QuickWrite 5

Teaching Notes

- Students continue to work with Section 5 of “The Vietnam Wars.” Be sure students have their texts. During Work Time Part A, students carefully examine the photographs and associated captions that are part of Section 5. If you accessed the article via the internet, be sure that students’ texts include the photos. If this is not possible, search the internet for the three iconic images shown in this article (a monk in flames, North Vietnamese tanks entering Saigon, and refugees loading onto a helicopter).
- Review: Three Threes in a Row (Work Time Part A). Note that for each row, the question in the left-hand column is intentionally a review from the previous lesson. Note also that this is NOT a pass-the-paper activity. Students each write on their own note-catcher. They must listen, process, and summarize.



Lesson Vocabulary	Materials
central idea, objective summary, implications; “doc-lap,” cringe, peace accord; alienate, dissidents, condemn; operate, stealthily, under cover, pursue, elusive, alienate; columns (of soldiers), meeting little resistance, demoralized	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “The Vietnam Wars” article (from Lesson 6; one per student)• Three Threes in a Row note-catcher (one per student)• “The Vietnam Wars” Questions and Notes, Section 5: “Doc-Lap at Last” (one per student)• QuickWrite 5 (one per student; for homework)

Opening	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p>A. Sharing Annotations of “Doc-Lap at Last” and Review Learning Targets (5 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students should be seated in their small, heterogeneous “numbered heads” groups for today’s work. Ask students to get out their “The Vietnam Wars” article.• In preparation for today’s thinking, invite students to turn and talk with a partner to share the annotations they made on each paragraph of Section 5, “Doc-Lap at Last.” Reinforce with students to value of annotating text: it allows them to quickly go back to their jotted notes to remember what they already read.• Have learning targets displayed for students. Tell them that they will continue to work with this last section of the article today, which describes the same time period that Ha is writing about at this point in the novel. Read the target aloud:<ul style="list-style-type: none">* “I can determine the central idea of the section ‘Doc-Lap at Last’ in the informational text ‘The Vietnam Wars.’”• Discuss with students the concept of a <i>central idea</i>. In addition, discuss the idea of an <i>objective summary</i>; it’s a “just the facts” summary that focuses on the information the text provides rather than our personal reactions.• Remind students that this informational text is long and complicated. Section 5 is the most relevant to understanding what Ha and her family are experiencing. Hence, students are focusing on this section for two lessons.	



Work Time	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>A. Reading for Key Details: “Three Threes in a Row” (20 minutes) <i>Note: This is not a pass-the-paper activity. Students each write on their own note-catcher. They must listen, process, and summarize.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus students on the last section of the article, “Doc-Lap at Last,” that they reread for homework. Ask students to briefly reread, underlining key details that help them understand the central idea. Distribute the Three Threes in a Row Note-catcher to students. Assign each group one row (three questions). (Depending on class size, more than one group may have the same set of three questions.) Give directions: <p>Part 1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Your group answers just the three questions on your row. Take 10 minutes as a group to read your <u>three</u> questions, reread the text, and jot your answers. <p>Part 2:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Then you will walk around the room to talk with students from other groups. Bring your notes and text with you! Ask each person to explain one and only one answer. Listen to the other students’ explanation and then summarize that answer in your own box. Record the name of the student who shared the information on the line in the question box. Repeat, moving on to another student for an answer to another question. (Ask a different person for each answer so you interact with six other students total.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have students begin Part 1 in their small groups. Circulate to listen in and support as needed. Probe, pushing students to dig back into the text to find answers to each question. After 5 minutes, focus students whole group. Begin Part 2, inviting students to circulate. Give them about 7 minutes to circulate. Then ask students to return to their seats and refocus whole group. Ask them to discuss what they think the central idea of Section 5 is. Invite numbered heads #2 to share with the class. Ask students, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “What are the potential implications of this information on Ha’s story?” (briefly paraphrase to clarify the meaning of <i>implications</i>: “What might this mean for Ha and her family?”) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For students who struggle with following multiple-step directions, consider displaying these directions using a document camera or Smartboard. Another option is to type up these instructions for students to have in hand.



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>B. Determining the Central Ideas of “Doc-Lap at Last” (15 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Restate specific student comments you overheard that indicate the degree to which students are developing a fairly clear understanding of the main idea of “Doc-Lap at Last.” Remind them that this section is particularly important given the events in the novel.• Distribute “The Vietnam Wars” Questions and Notes, Section 5: “Doc-Lap at Last.” Ask students then to take 10 minutes to do the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read the questions on their Questions and Notes for their specific section.• With your partner, reread their section of the text with these questions in mind.• Work with their partner to answer the questions.• Refocus students on pages 60–67 of <i>Inside Out & Back Again</i>. Encourage them to skim these poems, looking carefully at the dates of Ha’s diary entries. Ask,<ul style="list-style-type: none">* “Where are we in Ha’s story in relation to the dates we learned about by reading the last section of “The Vietnam Wars”?”• Listen for students to note the key date, April 30, 1975: the day Saigon fell.• Collect the Three Three’s in a Row.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• For students needing additional supports, you may want to provide a partially filled-in graphic organizer. For this lesson, consider adding some sentence starters to the notes section of the “The Vietnam Wars” Questions and Notes, Section 5: “Doc-Lap at Last” document to further support some students.



Closing and Assessment	Meeting Students' Needs
<p>A. Debrief: Returning to Brother Quang's Quote (5 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remind students of the quote they read in a previous lesson, spoken by Brother Quang: "One cannot justify war unless each side <i>flaunts</i> its own <i>blind conviction</i>."• Ask students to think, then turn and talk with a partner:<ul style="list-style-type: none">* "After reading this informational text, what new thinking do you have about what Brother Quang meant?"* "What evidence does the text give for both sides of the conflict?"• Invite a few students to share out. Listen for students to recognize that in war, each side believes it is right. For example, the text says, "But the North refused to surrender" and "in the South, Communist rebels.... laid mines and booby traps."• Continue to emphasize the distinction between historical fiction and informational text: the news that "Saigon is gone" is news no one in Ha's community wanted to hear. But people on each side of the conflict had different deeply held beliefs, or <i>convictions</i>.• Preview the homework.• Return students' QuickWrite 4. Encourage them to check their own understanding: Are they clear on the decision Ha's family was facing? What did Ha's family decide?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developing self-assessment and reflection supports all learners, but research shows it supports struggling learners most.
Homework	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete a first reading of pages 48–60, through "Wet and Crying," and complete QuickWrite 5.	



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Supporting Materials



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review: In the first paragraph in this section, what does it mean that the Americans <i>cringed</i> at the thought of a Communist Vietnam? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The text says that President Diem managed to “<i>alienate</i> everyone.” Based on context clues in this sentence and the surrounding text, what do you think <i>alienate</i> means? What specifically did President Diem do to <i>alienate</i> the people in the South? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at the photograph with a car in the background and the caption next to it. What is this photograph showing? Why might the author have chosen to include this photograph? How does it help us understand important ideas in this text?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review: What is a peace <i>accord</i>? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The text says that the Viet Cong “<i>operated stealthily under cover</i> of the jungle.” In this context, the word <i>operated</i> means “acted” or “functioned.” Who were the Viet Cong? How did they fight? Using context clues, what might it mean that the Viet Cong were an <i>elusive</i> enemy? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at the photograph with a flag with the star and the caption next to it. What is this photograph showing? Why might the author have chosen to include this photograph? How does it help us understand important ideas in this text?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review: Why did the Americans <i>back</i> Ngo Dinh Diem in South Vietnam? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain this sentence in the final paragraph: “Two years later, on April 30, 1975, columns of North Vietnamese soldiers entered Saigon, <i>meeting little resistance</i> from the <i>demoralized</i> South Vietnamese army.” What happened? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at the photograph with the helicopter and the caption next to it. What is this photograph showing? Why might the author have chosen to include this photograph? How does it help us understand important ideas in this text?

What are the dates of this section?

Questions	Notes
1. What words does the author use to describe the Viet Cong? What do these words show about the author’s attitude toward the rebels?	
2. Based on what you learned about Tet from earlier in the novel, what do you believe was the impact of the Tet Offensive on the Vietnamese people?	
3. How did the Vietnamese people likely feel when the Americans left in 1973? Collect specific evidence from across the text “The Vietnam Wars” to support your answer.	

Summary: The main idea of this section of the text. (Write a complete sentence.)



Connection: This part of the article explains the following about Ha or her situation:



How is Ha's mother being affected by the war?

How is Ha's mother being impacted by the war? Use specific evidence from the text to write a paragraph to answer this question.

You may use your text and the notes you collected in your journal or note-catchers to help you write this paragraph. A complete paragraph will meet all criteria:

- Answer the prompt completely
- Provide relevant and complete evidence
- Paragraph includes the following:
 - * A focus statement
 - * At least three pieces of specific evidence from the text
 - * For each piece of evidence, an analysis or explanation: what does this evidence mean?
 - * A concluding sentence