



EXPEDITIONARY
LEARNING

Grade 8: Module 1

Overview



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In this module, students will develop their ability to read and understand complex text as they consider the challenges of fictional and real refugees. In the first unit, students will begin *Inside Out & Back Again*, by Thanhha Lai, analyzing how critical incidents reveal the dynamic nature of the main character, Ha, a 10-year-old Vietnamese girl whose family is deciding whether to flee during the fall of Saigon. The novel, poignantly told in free verse, will challenge students to consider the impact of specific word choice on tone and meaning. Students will build their ability to infer and analyze text, both in discussion and through writing. They then will read informational text to learn more about the history of war in Vietnam, and the specific historical context of Ha's family's struggle during the fall of Saigon. In Unit 2, students will build knowledge about refugees' search for a place to call home. They will read informational texts that convey universal themes of refugees'

experiences across various times and cultures as they flee and find home. As they continue to move through the novel, they will focus on how particular incidents move the story forward and reveal aspects of Ha's character. Unit 2 culminates in which students examine how the universal refugee experience causes the refugee's life to be turned inside out and eventually return back again. In Unit 3, having finished the novel, students will reread critical incidents, while also working in research groups to study the experiences of refugees from one of several cultures. Students will use this knowledge to write two, free verse narrative poems that capture the universal refugee experience. Students will reread poems from the novel as mentor texts. **These free-verse narrative poems performance task centers on NYSP12 ELA Standards RI.8.1, RI.8.2, W.8.3, W.8.4, W.8.5, W.8.7, W.8.9, L.8.1, and L.8.2.**

Guiding Questions And Big Ideas

- **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?**
- *Critical incidents reveal a character's dynamic nature.*
- *Characters change over time in response to challenges.*
- *Authors select a genre of writing to fully engage the reader.*



Performance Task

Free-Verse Narrative Poems: “Inside Out” and “Back Again”

For the final performance task of Module 1, students will draw upon their study of the universal refugee experience to write two research-based poems that reflect the “inside out” and “back again” aspect of a refugee experience. Students will collaborate in Research Teams to research the experiences of refugees of a specific culture. They then will draw upon the research, and their study of the novel and the informational texts to write two poems. Of the two poems, the first, an Inside Out Poem, is based on the research conducted and the second poem, a more creative Back Again Poem, is aligned with the students individual interpretation of informational text, and their own background knowledge and experiences. For the final performance task, the students will have the opportunity to revise, edit, and share their two poems within the classroom, and with other Research Teams. This task centers on NYSP12 CCSS RI.8.1, RI.8.2, W.8.3, W.8.4, W.8.5, W.8.7, W.8.9, W.11b, L.8.1, L.8.2, and L.8.6.

Content Connections

- This module is designed to address English Language Arts standards. However, the module intentionally incorporates Social Studies content. These intentional connections are described below.

NYS Social Studies Core Curriculum

- Social Studies Themes in Context
- Individual Development and Cultural Identity
- Role of social, political, and cultural interactions in the development of identity
- Personal identity is a function of an individual’s culture, time, place, geography, interaction with groups, influences from institutions, and lived experiences
- Development, Movement, and Interaction of Cultures
- Role of diversity within and among cultures



NYSP12 CCLS Assessed in This Module: Reading—Literature	Long-Term Learning Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RL.8.1. Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can cite text-based evidence that provides the strongest support for my analysis of literary text.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RL.8.3. Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can analyze how specific dialogue or incidents in a plot propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RL.8.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can determine the meaning of words and phrases in literary text (figurative, connotative, and technical meanings) • I can analyze the impact of word choice on meaning and tone (analogies or allusions).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RL.8.5. Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can compare and contrast the structure of multiple texts. • I can analyze how different structures impact meaning and style of a text.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RL.8.6a. Analyze full-length novels, short stories, poems, and other genres by authors who represent diverse world cultures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can analyze full-length novels, short stories, poems, and other genres by authors who represent diverse world cultures.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RL.8.11. Interpret, analyze, and evaluate narratives, poetry, and drama, artistically and ethically by making connections to: other texts, ideas, cultural perspectives, eras, personal events, and situations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can interpret, analyze, and evaluate narratives, poetry, and drama, artistically and ethically by making connections to: other texts, ideas, cultural perspectives, eras, personal events, and situations.



NYSP12 CCLS Assessed in This Module: Reading—Informational Text	Long-Term Learning Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• RI.8.1. Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can cite text-based evidence that provides the strongest support for an analysis of informational text.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• RI.8.2. Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can determine a theme or the central ideas of an informational text.• I can analyze the development of a theme or central idea throughout the text (including its relationship to supporting ideas).• I can objectively summarize informational text.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• RI.8.3. Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can analyze the connections and distinctions between individuals, ideas or events in a text.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• RI.8.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can determine the meaning of words and phrases in text (figurative, connotative, and technical meanings).• I can analyze the impact of word choice on meaning and tone (analogies or allusions).



NYSP12 CCLS Assessed in This Module: Writing	Long-Term Learning Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• W.8.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.b. Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.c. Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.e. Establish and maintain a formal style.f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can write informative/explanatory texts that convey ideas and concepts using relevant information that is carefully selected and organized.



NYSP12 CCLS Assessed in This Module: Writing	Long-Term Learning Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• W.8.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can write narrative texts about real or imagined experiences using relevant details and event sequences that make sense.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• W.8.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can produce clear and coherent writing that is appropriate to task, purpose and audience.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• W.8.4a. Produce text (print or nonprint) that explores a variety of cultures and perspectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can produce text (print or nonprint) that explores a variety of cultures and perspectives.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• W.8.5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• With support from peers and adults, I can use the writing process to ensure that purpose and audience have been addressed.



NYSP12 CCLS Assessed in This Module: Writing	Long-Term Learning Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none">W.8.7. Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">I can conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question).I can use several sources in my research.I can generate additional research questions for further exploration.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">W.8.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Apply <i>grade 8 Reading standards</i> to literature (e.g., “Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new”).b. Apply <i>grade 8 Reading standards</i> to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced”).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">I can use evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">W.8.11b. Create poetry, stories, plays, and other literary forms (eg. videos, art work).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">I can write stories, plays, and other works in response to what I have read in literature.



NYSP12 CCLS Assessed in This Module: Speaking & Listening	Long-Term Learning Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SL.8.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on eighth-grade topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.b. Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.c. Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers, and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.d. Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can effectively engage in discussions with diverse partners about eighth-grade topics, texts, and issues.• I can express my own ideas clearly during discussions.• I can build on others' ideas during discussions.



NYSP12 CCLS Assessed in This Module: Language	Long-Term Learning Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• L.8.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice.b. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can use correct grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• L.8.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break.b. Spell correctly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can use correct capitalization, punctuation, and spelling to send a clear message to my reader.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• L.8.4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on <i>grade 8 reading and content</i>, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can use a variety of strategies to determine the meaning of unknown words or phrases.



NYSP12 CCLS Assessed in This Module: Language	Long-Term Learning Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• L.8.5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., verbal irony, puns) in context.b. Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.c. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., <i>bullheaded</i>, <i>willful</i>, <i>firm</i>, <i>persistent</i>, <i>resolute</i>).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can analyze figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• L.8.6. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can accurately use eighth-grade academic vocabulary to express my ideas.• I can use resources to build my vocabulary.



Central Texts

1. Thanhha Lai, *Inside Out & Back Again* (New York: HarperCollins, 2011), ISBN: 978-0-061-96278-3.
2. Tod Olson, "The Vietnam Wars," *Scholastic*, February 24, 1995, 16–20.
3. Joseph Shapiro and Sandra Bartlett, "Forgotten Ship: A Daring Rescue as Saigon Fell," transcript, National Public Radio, August 31, 2010.
4. Fox Butterfield, "Panic Rises in Saigon, but the Exits Are Few," *New York Times*, April 1975.
5. Catherine Gevert, "Refugees: Who, Where, and Why," *Faces*. 19.1 (2002): 6-8.
6. Arthur Brice, "Children of War," *Scholastic*, March 1994.
7. Til Gurung, speech at Refugee Transitions' World of Difference Benefit Luncheon, San Francisco, November 3, 2010.
8. Ana Marie Fantino and Alice Colak, "Refugee Children In Canada: Searching For Identity." *Child Welfare* 80.5 (2001): 587-596.
9. See specifically Unit 2, Lesson 18 for a complete list of texts students use in their short research project.



Week	Instructional Focus	Long-Term Targets	Assessments
Unit 1: War Coming Close to Home			
Weeks 1-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch novel study of <i>Inside Out & Back Again</i> Character analysis of the main character Building background knowledge about the history and culture of Vietnam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 determine the meaning of words and phrases in literary text (figurative, connotative, and technical meanings) (RL.8.4) I can analyze the impact of word choice on meaning and tone (analogies or allusions). (RL.8.4) I can use evidence from literary texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. (W.8.9) I can use a variety of strategies to determine the meaning of unknown words or phrases. (L.8.4a) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mid-Unit 1: Getting to Know a Character: What Details in the Text Help Us Understand Ha? (RL.8.1, RL.8.3, RL.8.4, W.8.9, and L.8.4a)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue with Part 1 of novel Historical fiction compared to informational text: purpose and perspective Building background knowledge about the fall of Saigon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can cite text-based evidence that provides the strongest support for my analysis of literary text. (RL.8.1) I can cite text-based evidence that provides the strongest support for an analysis of informational text. (RI.8.1) 	



Week	Instructional Focus	Long-Term Targets	Assessments
Weeks 1-3, continued	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue with Part 1 of novel• The fall of Saigon: audio text and transcript• Analyzing word choice, meaning, and tone	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can cite text-based evidence that provides the strongest support for my analysis of literary text. (RL.8.1)• I can cite text-based evidence that provides the strongest support for an analysis of informational text. (RI.8.1)• I can analyze the impact of word choice on meaning and tone. (RL.8.4) (RI.8.4)• I can use evidence from literature and informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. (W.8.9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• End of Unit 1: How Word Choice Contributes to Meaning and Tone (RL.8.1, RI.8.1, RL.8.4, RI.8.4, and W.8.9)



Week	Instructional Focus	Long-Term Targets	Assessments
Unit 2: Why do people flee home?			
Weeks 4-7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unifying themes of refugees' experiences Close reading and comparison of texts: continue with novel, paired with informational text regarding the universal refugee experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 cite text-based evidence that provides the strongest support for my analysis of informational text. (RI.8.1) I can determine a theme or the central ideas of an informational text. (RI.8.2) I can analyze the development of a theme or central idea throughout the text (including its relationship to supporting ideas). (RI.8.2) I can analyze the connections and distinctions between individuals, ideas or events in a text. (RI.8.3) I can determine the meaning of words and phrases in text (figurative, connotative, and technical meanings). (RI.8.4) I can use a variety of strategies to determine the meaning of unknown words or phrases. (L.8.4) 	



Week	Instructional Focus	Long-Term Targets	Assessments
Weeks 4-7, continued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close reading of a complex informational text to deepen students understanding of the universal refugee experience • Analyzing the Significance of the Novel's Title: Connecting the Universal Refugee Experience to <i>Inside Out & Back Again</i> • Preparing to write an analysis essay by examining a model essay and the essay rubric 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 write informative/explanatory texts that convey ideas and concepts using relevant information that is carefully selected and organized. (W.8.2) • I can cite text-based evidence that provides the strongest support for an analysis of literary text. (RI.8.1) • I can determine a theme or the central ideas of literary text. (RI.8.2) • I can analyze the development of a theme or central idea throughout the text (including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot). (RI.8.2) • I can analyze the connections and distinctions between individuals, ideas or events in a text. (RI.8.3) • I can analyze the structure of a specific paragraph in a text (including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept). • I can read above-grade informational texts with scaffolding and support (RI.8.10) • I can use a variety of strategies to determine the meaning of unknown words or phrases. (L.8.4) • I can use evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection and research. (W.8.9) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-Unit 2: Analyzing an Informational Text about a Refugee Experience (RI.8.1, RI.8.2, RI.8.3, RI.8.4, L.8.4, and W.8.9)



Week	Instructional Focus	Long-Term Targets	Assessments
Weeks 4-7, continued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drafting, revising, and editing literary essay Introduction to the Final Performance task and initial research guidelines Close reading of critical incidents in novel related to aspects of the research-based narrative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 impact of word choice on meaning and tone (RL.8.4) I can cite text-based evidence that provides the strongest support for my analysis of literary text. (RI.8.1) I can write informative/explanatory texts that convey ideas and concepts using relevant information that is carefully selected and organized. (W.8.2) I can produce clear and coherent writing that is appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (W.8.4) With support from peers and adults, I can use the writing process to ensure that purpose and audience have been addressed. (W.8.5) I can conduct short research projects to answer a question. (W.8.7) I can use evidence from literary texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. (W.8.9) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End of Unit 2 Assessment: Analysis Essay: Explain the Significance of the Novel's Title and Its Relationship to Universal Refugee Experiences and Ha's Character (RL.8.1, RL.8.3, RL.8.4, RI.8.1, W.8.2, W.8.4, W.8.5, and W.8.9)



Week	Instructional Focus	Long-Term Targets	Assessments
Unit 3: Free Verse Inside Out and Back Again poems			
Week 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structured research and planning for research-based free-verse narrative poems Mentor text writing: select a snapshot of the planned story to write two free-verse, narrative poems using the novel as a mentor text Drafting, revising, and editing of research-based narrative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can cite text-based evidence that provides the strongest support for my analysis of informational text. (RI.8.1) I can conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question). (W.8.7) I can use several sources in my research. (W.8.7) I can generate additional research questions for further exploration. (W.8.7) I can cite text-based evidence that provides the strongest support for an analysis of informational text. (RI.8.1) I can write narrative texts about real or imagined experiences using relevant details and event sequences that make sense. (W.8.3) I can produce clear and coherent writing that is appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (W.8.4) I can produce text (print or nonprint) that explores a variety of cultures and perspectives. (W.8.4a) With support from peers and adults, I can use the writing process to ensure that purpose and audience have been addressed. (W.8.5) I can conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question). (W.8.7) I can use several sources in my research. (W.8.7) I can use evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. (W.8.9) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mid-Unit 3: Best First Draft of “Inside Out” Poem (RI.8.1, W.8.3a, b, d, W.8.7, W.8.9, and W.11b) End of Unit 3 Assessment: Best First Draft of “Back Again” Poem (RI.8.1, W.8.3, W.8.4a, W.8.7, W.8.9, W.11b) Final Performance Task: Free Verse Inside Out and Back Again Poems (RI.8.1, RI.8.2, W.8.3, W.8.4, W.8.4a, W.8.5, W.8.7, W.8.9, W.11b, L.8.1, L.8.2, and L.8.6.)



Week	Instructional Focus	Long-Term Targets (continued)	Assessments
Week 8, continued		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can write stories, poems, and other works in response to literature I have read. (W.8.11b)• I can use correct grammar and usage when writing or speaking. (L.8.1)• I can use correct capitalization, punctuation, and spelling to send a clear message to my reader. (L.8.2)• I can use correct capitalization, punctuation and spelling to send a clear message to my reader. (L.8.2)• I can accurately use 8th grade academic vocabulary to express my ideas. (L.8.6)	