



Grade 8 **English Language Arts**

A Course for Independent Study



GRADE 8
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

A Course for Independent Study

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome

Welcome to *Grade 8 English Language Arts: A Course for Independent Study*.

This course will help you develop new skills and strategies, as well as to gain new insight into yourself and others.

The course provides a variety of opportunities for you to achieve the general and specific learning outcomes of the Grade 8 English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum. General learning outcomes are groups of skills that all English language arts students are expected to demonstrate in a more and more competent way as they progress through Kindergarten to Grade 12. The five general learning outcomes for English language arts are as follows:

- General Learning Outcome 1: Students will listen, speak, read, write, view, and represent to explore thoughts, ideas, feelings, and experiences.
- General Learning Outcome 2: Students will speak, read, write, view, and represent to comprehend and respond personally and critically to oral, literary, and media texts.
- General Learning Outcome 3: Students will speak, read, write, view, and represent to manage ideas and information.
- General Learning Outcome 4: Students will speak, read, write, view, and represent to enhance the clarity and artistry of communication.
- General Learning Outcome 5: Students will speak, read, write, view, and represent to celebrate and build community.

Each particular ELA course outlines a group of specific learning outcomes for each general learning outcome. These specific learning outcomes address skills and strategies to be learned in the course. Specific learning outcomes are targeted for each of the assignments and tasks in the course, and customized or reworded versions of the targeted outcomes are listed at the beginning of each part of a lesson.

Overview

Grade 8 English Language Arts: A Course for Independent Study is divided into eight units of study or sequences. Each sequence focuses on a particular topic or theme.

- **Sequence 1: In Transition—How I Am Changing** will allow you to explore your ideas and feelings about your learning and your life. You will prepare for the rest of the course by examining how you learn, what your strengths are, and what goals you should work toward. You will write or record a journal entry explaining your ideas and goals for your final or summative assignment.

- **Sequence 2: Moving Beyond Self – Novel Study of *The Outsiders*** will give you the chance to empathize with others as you read and respond to the novel *The Outsiders* by S. E. Hinton. Your summative assignment will be your response journal, which will include questions, short entries, chapter titles, and responses to five quotations that you select from the novel.
- **Sequence 3: My Role as a Consumer – The Challenge of the Marketplace** introduces the idea that you, as a young consumer, are being targeted by youth magazines, the music industry, and the world of fashion, and so you need to learn to make informed decisions in the marketplace. You will write a magazine article for youth that communicates your ideas about how to make informed decisions in today’s consumer market.
- **Sequence 4: The Role of Mass Media in My Life – The Challenge of Evaluating Information** will give you the opportunity to examine information from a variety of forms of media (print, photojournalism, and television) and to learn a variety of strategies to process that information. Your summative assignment will be a detailed mind map.
- **Sequence 5: Heroes** will encourage you to look at a variety of heroes around you. You will conduct research on and write a biography of a hero of your choice for your summative assignment.
- **Sequence 6: Heroes – Novel Study** will give you the chance to study heroes in the world of fiction, as you read a novel and respond to it by creating a graphic design project (a book cover, a CD cover, or a DVD cover) for your summative assignment.
- **Sequence 7: Historical Heroes** will take you back in the past as you study a hero of the early twentieth century and heroes from myths of ancient Greece. You will create a picture book based on a Greek myth as your summative assignment.
- **Sequence 8: Portfolio Reflections** will give you the chance to look back on all of the work you have collected for your portfolio throughout the course, revise it, reflect upon it, and celebrate your accomplishments. Your final assignment will be your finished portfolio.

Resource Binder

Your Resource Binder is the place where you will be storing **all** the work that you complete in this course. **All work must be dated in the top right-hand corner.** There are two different types of items.

- Items that you send to your tutor/marker for assessment. These include your summative assignments, which are submitted and assessed each sequence, and your portfolio pieces that will be assessed at the end of the course as part of your portfolio (see below), which is the summative assignment for Sequence 8.
- Items that you do **not** send to your tutor/marker for assessment. The purpose of these is to give you the necessary background or “scaffolding” to help you develop the items that you do send in for assessment. For example, you may be asked to complete a certain chart to show what you have learned. In order to complete that chart really well, you may need to first write a reflective journal entry. In this case, you will be asked to hand in the chart only, since the purpose of writing the reflective journal entry is to help you complete the chart. At the end of each sequence, you should place these materials that you are not required to submit in a separate folder that you keep for reference.

Portfolio

As a part of this course you will compile some of your work to create a portfolio. As you complete the course, there will be lessons and assignments that are required for your portfolio. **All work including portfolio work/pieces must be dated in the top right-hand corner.** The purpose of this portfolio is to reflect upon your learning in the course and to celebrate your accomplishments.

Your portfolio is a chance for you to show your learning and growth over time. It is also a tool for self-assessment and reflection. By choosing specific works and reflecting on the evidence of learning they show, you focus on your own thinking as a learner. This process is known as metacognition. Metacognition helps you identify the thought processes that work effectively for you and the ones you could improve. This helps you set goals and develop a plan of action for future language arts learning.

You will compile the following work samples/pieces throughout the course:

- Your Action Plan and your two versions of both the Reading Continuum and Writing Continuum (Sequences 1 and 8)
- Two of the four assignments (character poem, compare and contrast chart, comparison of film and novel, or discussion audio recording) on *The Outsiders* (Sequence 2)
- SQ3R and Cornell Method of Notemaking forms (Sequence 3)
- Interview Questions (musical tastes) and Audio Interviews (Sequence 3)
- Fact-Based Article Analysis and Issue-Based Article Analysis (Sequence 3)

- First draft and final copy of magazine article about teen consumers (Sequence 3)
- Photograph, W-5 Organizer, first and final draft of news magazine story accompanying the photograph (Sequence 4)
- Idea webs and journal entry about one hero (Sequence 5)
- Walk Around a Poem (Sequence 5)
- Found poem (Sequence 5)
- Venn Diagram (Sequence 5)
- Y-Chart (Sequence 5)
- Letter to Nelson Mandela (Sequence 5)
- Biography research project (Sequence 5)
- Thinking About My Reading (*During* and *After* Reading): Five forms from the novel chosen (Sequence 6)
- Beryl Markham script and radio play recording (Sequence 7)
- My Strategies Toolbox (developed throughout the course)

You will put together your portfolio in the last sequence of the course, Sequence 8. As part of Sequence 8, you will be presenting your portfolio to two people including your **learning partner**.

People to Help

Your **learning partner** may be anyone but should be someone that you trust and that can give you feedback on your work and help you with the course. Sharing your work and accomplishments will help you to reflect upon your learning throughout the course and to set learning goals for the future.

You will have a **tutor/marker** available to help you at any time. Your tutor/marker's contact information is on the letter that you received with this course. Phone or email your tutor/marker with any questions or concerns as you work through the course. It is recommended that you contact your tutor/marker frequently for feedback and help.

Materials that You Will Need

Audio-Recording Equipment

In this course, you will have to record yourself and send recordings to your tutor/marker. Here are some ways of doing this:

- Record yourself on a **tape recorder** and mail your audiotape to your tutor/marker.
- Record yourself on a **video recorder** and mail your VHS tape or DVD to your tutor/marker.
- Record yourself on a microphone hooked up to a **computer**. If your computer did not come with a microphone, you can purchase one; it is usually inexpensive and generally comes with the necessary software. Save the file (often as a .wav file) and either email the file to your tutor/marker as an attachment or burn the file onto a CD-ROM or DVD and mail it to your tutor/marker.

Supplies

You will need looseleaf paper, a three-ring binder to use as your Resource Binder, some kind of binder or container to use for your portfolio, and file folders to keep your work organized. You will also need a dictionary to complete the course.

You will also find the following items useful: glue, tape, highlighters, pens with different colour ink (e.g., blue, black, green), sticky notes, and a thesaurus.

Texts

Your course package should include a colour print of a mind map example as part of your course materials.

The following required DVD is available for purchase from the Independent Study Option office at 1-800-465-9915:

- *Grade 8 English Language Arts Independent Study DVD* (ask for DV-0031) for Sequences 1, 2, and 7.

The following required texts are available from the Manitoba Text Book Bureau (MTBB) and can be ordered online at <www.mtbb.mb.ca> or by toll-free telephone at 1-866-771-6822.

- *Resource Lines 7/8* (MTBB order number 7698) is needed throughout the course
- *The Outsiders* by S. E. Hinton (MTBB order number 22861) for Sequence 2
- One of the following novels for Sequence 6 (or a novel of your choice approved by your tutor/marker):
 - *I Am David* by Anne Holm (MTBB order number 17991)
 - *Lisa* by Carol Matas (MTBB order number 21188)
 - *Cue For Treason* by Geoffrey Trease (MTBB order number 17961)
 - *The Hobbit* by J. R. R. Tolkien (MTBB order number 17987)

- *Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak (MTBB order number 8979) for Sequence 7

Contact your tutor/marker if you are unable to gain access to any of the required materials listed above.

Icons

The following icons are used to indicate specific tasks that you need to complete or to remind you about equipment required.



This icon indicates the specific learning outcomes targeted for part of a lesson.



This icon indicates a suggested period of time that the lesson or part of lesson should take to complete. This time allotment is a suggestion only – different students work at different rates and you might take more time for some of the lessons that the suggested time indicates. Do not feel like you should always spend exactly the amount of time indicated on the clock.



This icon indicates items that you will mail to your tutor/marker when you have finished the sequence.



This icon indicates the items that you will choose from when you compile your portfolio in Sequence 8. You need to put these items in a safe place as you complete them so that you will have them easily available when you complete Sequence 8.



This icon indicates particular strategies that you use during the course that you can add to the list on your My Strategies Toolbox form, which you begin in Sequence 1.



This icon indicates that you need to view a video clip from the Grade 8 ELA DVD.



This icon indicates that you need to make an audio or video recording.



This icon indicates an important reminder about something you need to do or send in to your tutor/marker.

It is very important that you contact your tutor/marker before starting the course.

Good luck in Grade 8 English Language Arts!

GRADE 8 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Sequence 1 Cover Sheet

Please place on top of your assignments to assist in proper recording of your work.

Send to:
ISO Tutor/Marker
555 Main Street
Winkler, MB R6W 1C4

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____ Postal Code: _____

Attending School: No Yes Email: _____

School Name: _____

For Office Use Only

Sequence 1: Hand-in Assignment(s)

Date Received: _____ Date Returned: _____

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interest Inventory and reflection | <input type="checkbox"/> Interview questions with the surviving brother in "The Sniper" |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Research notes on the Transitions in My Life | <input type="checkbox"/> Audio recording |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Idea web | <input type="checkbox"/> My Strengths: Parts 1 and 2 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Journal entry: My First Reflections | <input type="checkbox"/> Three options from Grade 8 ELA DVD |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Y-Chart | <input type="checkbox"/> Think-Pair-Share |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Paragraph: How I Learn | <input type="checkbox"/> Your Multiple Intelligences |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Responses to questions: "A Secret Lost on Water" | <input type="checkbox"/> Reading Continuum |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Journal entry: "A Secret Lost on Water" | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing Continuum |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ideas in "Change Yourself" | <input type="checkbox"/> Action Plan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Venn Diagram | <input type="checkbox"/> Action plan from the Grade 8 ELA DVD |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Story Planner | <input type="checkbox"/> Sequence 1 Summative Assignment—Journal Entry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Journal entry: Story Elements | <input type="checkbox"/> Photocopy of My Strategies Toolbox |

Remarks:

GRADE 8 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Sequence 2 Cover Sheet

Please place on top of your assignments to assist in proper recording of your work.

Send to:
ISO Tutor/Marker
555 Main Street
Winkler, MB R6W 1C4

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____ Postal Code: _____

Attending School: No Yes Email: _____

School Name: _____

For Office Use Only

Sequence 2: Hand-in Assignment(s)

Date Received: _____ Date Returned: _____

Making Predictions

Two of:

Compare and Contrast Chart

Character Poem

Audio recording of a discussion with your learning partner

Comparison of film and novel (optional)

Sequence 2 Summative Assignment—Response to *The Outsiders*

Response journal entries for every two chapters in the novel

Responses to the questions from the Before Reading Activities

Titles for eight of the chapters in the book

List of questions about the novel

Five quotations and explanations

Remarks:

GRADE 8 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Sequence 3 Cover Sheet

Please place on top of your assignments to assist in proper recording of your work.

Send to:
ISO Tutor/Marker
555 Main Street
Winkler, MB R6W 1C4

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____ Postal Code: _____

Attending School: No Yes Email: _____

School Name: _____

For Office Use Only

Sequence 3: Hand-in Assignment(s)

Date Received: _____ Date Returned: _____

- KWL Plus form (musician)
- Paragraph on musical preferences
- Page on conversations on fashion
- Journal entry about fashion and the fashion industry
- Sequence 3 Summative Assignment—Magazine Article
 - First draft of magazine article
 - Final copy of magazine article

Remarks:

GRADE 8 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Sequence 4 Cover Sheet

Please place on top of your assignments to assist in proper recording of your work.

Send to:
ISO Tutor/Marker
555 Main Street
Winkler, MB R6W 1C4

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____ Postal Code: _____

Attending School: No Yes Email: _____

School Name: _____

For Office Use Only

Sequence 4: Hand-in Assignment(s)

Date Received: _____ Date Returned: _____

- W-5 Organizer
- Venn Diagram
- Responses to two newspaper articles
- Viewing a Photograph for two photographs
- Journal entry reflection about photographs
- Reflections on the three generalizations that you selected
- Opinions about Television idea web, T-chart, or paragraphs
- Sequence 4 Summative Assignment—Mind Map
- A photocopy of My Strategies Toolbox

Remarks:

GRADE 8 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Sequence 5 Cover Sheet

Please place on top of your assignments to assist in proper recording of your work.

Send to:
ISO Tutor/Marker
555 Main Street
Winkler, MB R6W 1C4

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____ Postal Code: _____

Attending School: No Yes Email: _____

School Name: _____

For Office Use Only

Sequence 5: Hand-in Assignment(s)

Date Received: _____ Date Returned: _____

- Qualities of a hero list
- Paragraph on whether or not Manon Rheaume is a hero
- KWL Plus form
- List of reading goals
- Quotation from "The First Day of the War" describing who Maia's hero is
- Sentences that suggest that the author will perform heroic deeds
- Summary of what you have learned about Nelson Mandela and Apartheid
- Final revised list of heroic qualities from Lessons 1–8
- Reflection on why the editor included the three visuals
- Sequence 5 Summative Assignment—Research and Biography
 - Criteria for Writing a Quality Biography (Form A)
 - Criteria for Writing a Quality Biography (Form B)
 - Research notes (the KWL or idea web, jot notes, Cornell Method of Notemaking, SQ3R, or any other organizational tools)
 - Sources of information (including highlighted printouts, photocopies, and/or audio recordings)
 - Plan to organize your information
 - All dated draft copies of biography
 - Final biography

Remarks:

GRADE 8 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Sequence 6 Cover Sheet

Please place on top of your assignments to assist in proper recording of your work.

Send to:
ISO Tutor/Marker
555 Main Street
Winkler, MB R6W 1C4

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____ Postal Code: _____

Attending School: No Yes Email: _____

School Name: _____

For Office Use Only

Sequence 6: Hand-in Assignment(s)

Date Received: _____ Date Returned: _____

- Journal entry explaining your choice of novel
- Thinking About My Reading (five forms)
- Journal entry discussing the hero in the novel
- Sequence 6 Summative Assignment—Graphic Design Project:
 - Criteria in creating cover of book, CD, or DVD
 - Book cover, CD cover, or DVD cover
 - Journal entry discussing process

Remarks:

GRADE 8 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Sequence 7 Cover Sheet

Please place on top of your assignments to assist in proper recording of your work.

Send to:
ISO Tutor/Marker
555 Main Street
Winkler, MB R6W 1C4

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____ Postal Code: _____

Attending School: No Yes Email: _____

School Name: _____

For Office Use Only

Sequence 7: Hand-in Assignment(s)

Date Received: _____ Date Returned: _____

- List of English words from Greek word parts
- Journal entry describing your all-time favourite book
- Sequence 7 Summative Assignment—Picture Book
 - Audio recording of you reading your picture book to your audience
 - Picture book—final copy
 - Reflections on your picture book presentation

Remarks:

GRADE 8 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Sequence 8 Cover Sheet

Please place on top of your assignments to assist in proper recording of your work.

Send to:
ISO Tutor/Marker
555 Main Street
Winkler, MB R6W 1C4

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____ Postal Code: _____

Attending School: No Yes Email: _____

School Name: _____

For Office Use Only

Sequence 8: Hand-in Assignment(s)

Date Received: _____ Date Returned: _____

- Sequence 8 Summative Assignment—Portfolio
 - Five work samples with reflections
 - Comment on favourite work in the course
 - New Reading Continuum
 - New Writing Continuum
 - Continua comparison
 - Updated Action Plan and reflection
 - Three new goals
 - Cover page
 - Table of contents
 - Two Celebrating _____'s Learning: Reflecting on and Responding to the Learner's English Language Arts Portfolio forms
 - Final reflection

Remarks:



SEQUENCE 1

In Transition—How I Am Changing

INTRODUCTION

Transitions are changes such as making new friends, moving to a different place, or taking on new responsibilities. As a learner at the beginning of your Grade 8 English Language Arts course, you will discover that transitions and growth are a major part of your life. Your world is becoming larger and more exciting with each new challenge you encounter.

In this sequence, you will explore the transitions in your life and how those changing circumstances help you to grow and develop. You will then focus on developing as a learner, looking at your strengths and setting goals for future growth.

There are six lessons in this sequence:

- Lesson 1 Transitions – Who Am I?
- Lesson 2 Transitions in My Role as Learner
- Lesson 3 Challenging Circumstances
- Lesson 4 Understanding My Strengths
- Lesson 5 Setting Goals for My Learning
- Lesson 6 Summative Assignment – Journal Entry

Materials

- *ResourceLines 7/8*
- *Grade 8 English Language Arts Independent Study DVD (DV-0031)*. This DVD is available from the Independent Study Option office at 1-800-465-9915.

LESSON 1: TRANSITIONS—WHO AM I?

Growing and changing is a part of life and a part of developing your sense of self or identity. In this lesson, you will look at past transitions in your life and how they made you who you are today.

Part 1: Reflect

Before you look too closely at past transitions, in this part of the lesson, you will look at your interests and what they show about who you are today.



Suggested Time Allotment: 10–15 minutes

As you complete an Interest Inventory form and reflect on your responses, you will have the chance to demonstrate the following specific learning outcomes:



- 1.1.1 You will state your predictions, opinions, and conclusions about your life and learning as you complete the Interest Inventory form and reflect on your responses.
 - 1.1.2 Completing your Interest Inventory and reflecting on your responses will help you to put together your previous viewpoints with a new understanding of yourself.
 - 1.2.2 You will articulate and explain clearly your viewpoints about yourself as you complete the Interest Inventory form and reflect on your responses.
-

1. Think about the title of this lesson, “Transitions – Who Am I?”
2. Complete the Interest Inventory to learn more about yourself. It is found on page 7.
3. After completing the Interest Inventory, write responses to the following questions on the reverse side or on an attached sheet of paper:
 - How have your interests changed throughout your life – how would you have responded to this Interest Inventory five years ago?
 - What do your responses on the Interest Inventory say about how you like to learn? How have these learning preferences changed over time?
 - Do you expect your interests and learning preferences to change as you get older? In what ways?
4. Once you have completed your Interest Inventory and reflected on your responses, place it and your reflections in your Resource Binder. Remember to date all work and number all pages!

Interest Inventory

1. I collect _____
2. My two favourite books are _____
and _____
3. Books are _____
4. My favourite character in a book is _____
5. When I read, I _____

6. I like to read about _____
7. Libraries are _____
8. In my free time, I _____
9. School is _____
10. My favourite activity in school is _____

11. My favourite TV program is _____
12. My favourite movie is _____
13. My favourite song is _____
14. My favourite singer is _____
15. I like to listen to _____
16. I like to play _____
17. My hobbies are _____
18. I like to write about _____
19. The most interesting person whom I have met is _____

20. My friends are _____

Part 2: Research

At your age, you have gone through several major transitional periods in your life. In this lesson, you will talk with people about the earliest transitions in your life, the ones you are not able to remember yourself.



Suggested Time Allotment: 45–60 minutes

In this part of the lesson, as you interview people about the transitions in your life, you will have the chance to demonstrate the following specific learning outcomes:



- 1.2.3 In your notes from your interviews/discussions about transitions in your life, you will show your ideas in different ways that make sense to you.
- 3.1.4 You will make a plan to collect and organize information about transitions in your life in your interviews/discussions.
- 3.3.2 You will make notes about transitions in your life for your interviews and during your discussions.
- 4.1.1 During your interviews/discussions, you will generate ideas about transitions in your life.

-
1. Plan some questions to ask your parents, grandparents, siblings, and other people in your community to find out what they remember about the transitions in your life. Ask questions (of yourself and others) such as the following:
 - What was the weather like on the day I was born?
 - How did I react to the world during the first few months of my life?
 - What were the first words that I spoke? How old was I when I began to use words?
 - Who were my first visitors?
 - Tell me about the funny things I did when I was a baby.
 - What games did I play as a child?
 - What were my favourite stories? (If possible, ask your parents or grandparents to tell you your favourite stories again.)
 - When did I first learn to ride a bicycle or to skate? How did I feel about that?
 - What words and phrases do I use to describe myself now?

2. Set up a time to speak with whoever you plan to talk to about your life.
3. During your interview/discussion, jot down key words and phrases as you listen to and speak with others. Include drawings, events, dates, and whatever other information helps you to clarify and determine the transitions in your life.
4. Place your research notes in your Resource Binder. Title it “Research Notes on the Transitions in My Life.” You will be using these notes to complete Part 3 of this lesson.

Part 3: Represent: Idea Web

In this part of the lesson, you will create an idea web to visually represent the ideas you have formulated about transitions in your past and who you are today.



Suggested Time Allotment: 40–45 minutes

As you create an idea web, you will have the chance to demonstrate the following specific learning outcomes:



- 1.2.3 You will organize information about transitions in your life in a way that makes sense to you in your idea web.
- 3.3.1 You will organize and represent information about transitions in your life according to the requirements for an idea web.
- 3.3.4 In your idea web, you will combine everything that you have discovered about transitions in your life.

-
1. Using the notes that you wrote in Part 2, create a visual representation of the transitions in your life by using key words and phrases about yourself to make your idea web. Create a web on a piece of white paper by gluing a picture of yourself on the middle of the page, and then drawing several small lines out from the picture. The web should look something like a spider web. Refer to pages 71 to 72 of *ResourceLines 7/8*. Place all of the key words and phrases about yourself in circles at the end of the lines from the middle of the web.
 2. Draw lines out from these circles, and in smaller circles place brief phrases that connect the key words and phrases to you. Your web should give your audience an idea of the transitions in your life to this point.
 3. Place your completed idea web in your Resource Binder.

4. The idea web has been recorded on your My Strategies Toolbox form, which is found on page 13. Your “toolbox” is a place to keep track of the strategies that you will be using to make meaning as a language learner throughout this course. For example, an idea web and a Y-chart are tools for thinking and learning. You will be recording these strategies, along with all of the others that you will use in the course, in your toolbox. You will be sending a photocopy of your My Strategies Toolbox to your tutor/marker at the end of Sequence 1, at the end of Sequence 4, and at the end of the course.

To remind you to add a strategy to your My Strategies Toolbox, the following icon appears in the sidebar whenever you use a strategy in your lesson work:



My Strategies Toolbox

Strategy	How it helps me make meaning	Where I can find information about it
<i>Example: Idea Web</i>	<i>I can explore, remember, and organize important ideas/information.</i>	Sequence 1, Lesson 1 ResourceLines 7/8 71–72

My Strategies Toolbox

Strategy	How it helps me make meaning	Where I can find information about it

Part 4: Journal Entry—Transitions

One way to help you to firm up and build on your learning is to reflect on it in a journal entry or on a Y-chart. In this part of the lesson, you will reflect on what you've learned about the transitions in your life.



Suggested Time Allotment: 20–30 minutes

As you complete this part of the lesson, you will have the chance to demonstrate the following specific learning outcomes:



- 1.1.1 You will write a journal entry to explore transitions in your life.
- 1.1.2 Your journal entry and Y-chart will help you think about combining your previous knowledge about transitions in your life and what you discovered during this lesson.
- 1.1.3 You will experiment with effective and powerful language in your journal entry to show your own feelings, experiences, thoughts, and ideas.
- 1.2.1 Your journal entry and Y-chart will demonstrate the connections that you have made between what you knew and what you have learned about transitions in your life.
- 1.2.2 Your journal entry will clearly state your opinions about transitions in your life.

You will be writing or recording **journal entries** throughout this course. Journal entries are pieces of informal writing which can explore ideas and/or reflect on learning. Journal entries are thinking on paper. They are useful to show what you are learning.

A thoughtful learning journal entry will demonstrate the following criteria:

- Identify appropriate goals for learning.
- Plan how to reach the goals.
- Say what high quality work looks and sounds like.
- Show your thoughts about revising your goals or setting new goals.

1. View the first video clip of the *Grade 8 English Language Arts Independent Study DVD*. You will watch students identify various goals that they have set for their reading. Notice the variety of ideas discussed.



2. Your reflective journal entry will be titled “Journal Entry: My First Reflections.” Make sure that you write the date on each of your journal entries. Here are some steps to follow to complete your journal entry.
 - a. Think about the work you have completed in this lesson, especially the information you gathered about yourself through the Interest Inventory and your idea web.
 - b. Choose one particular piece of information you used in your web and in your research that shows something about your learning. Think about what you learned and how you learned.
 - c. Using the four criteria above, begin writing your reflection. You may want to choose some of the following sentence starters that best suit your thinking. (Do not use every sentence starter, though.)
 - I noticed . . .
 - I heard/read . . .
 - I learned . . . by . . .
 - I learned . . . because . . .
 - I learned . . . when . . .
 - I tried . . .
 - I wonder . . .
 - I question whether . . .
 - I was surprised that . . .
 - I wish . . .
 - I decided to . . .
 - If only . . .
 - I hope . . .

In order to help you write your journal entry, sample entries that a student completed are included on page 18 and are called Excerpts from a Student’s Reflective Journal.



3. Place your completed journal entry in your Resource Binder. Be sure to note journal entry as a strategy on your My Strategies Toolbox form.

Once you have written your journal entry, you will use it to complete your Y-chart. A **Y-chart** is a useful graphic organizer to help you think about your goal(s) and your learning. It helps you think about your thinking, too. You should also add Y-chart to your My Strategies Toolbox form.

4. Refer to the completed Y-chart on page 19. This Grade 8 English Language Arts student is learning to use the Y-chart to reflect on her learning goal “to focus on characters when reading the novel.”

Stating clear attainable goals is a challenging task for Grade 8 language learners. Her teacher was guiding her to be clearer with her goal statement. Originally, she has written “to understand the novel while I read it,” which is not as clear and specific a goal as the one she ended up with. You may want to talk about setting clear, attainable goals with your tutor/marker and learning partner to learn this important skill.

5. Here are some steps to follow to complete your Y-chart (found on page 20):
 - a. Think about a goal that you are currently working towards. What can you **see** that is evidence that you are working on this goal? Jot this down in the “See/Notice” section of your Y-chart.
 - b. Next, what have you **heard** or **read** that supports your learning journey? Jot this down in the “Hear/Read” section of your Y-chart.
 - c. Now, think more deeply – how does this make you **feel**, what does this make you **think**, what do you **wonder** about? This is reflecting on your learning. Write about this in the “Feel/Think/Wonder” section of your Y-chart. (This is also a good way to structure your journal writing. Start with your goal, and then write about what you see/hear, and of course, what you feel/think/wonder.)

You have now completed Lesson 1. Review the Sequence 1 Checklist to ensure you have completed all the work in this lesson before beginning the next lesson. The Sequence 1 Checklist is found on page 69.

Excerpts from a Student's Reflective Journal:

November 10 to January 15

Nov. 10/07 Reflections

I can see that I am a writer when I look at the Expository Writing Continuum for Students. I can use new information and organize my ideas. My West Nile report is evidence of this. I still need to improve on writing different kinds of sentences. I think I need to go to the conference table during drafting to get help on writing different kinds of interesting sentences.

Nov. 30/07 Goal Setting Reflections

I have checked my Reflection and Goal Setting I did on Sept 26/07. I am learning a lot about writing. The criteria for quality writing on the writing continuum is challenging. I will need to change my writing goal. Now I want to pay closer attention to the continuum to help me set good goals. My new goal is to use a Met/Not Yet Met strategy to help me plan for writing.

Dec. 1/07 Reflections

Scott told me I had a connection between my introduction and my conclusion in my newspaper report on West Nile disease. My opening sentence, "Is West Nile disease a threat to Manitobans?", and my closing sentence, "This is evidence that we in Manitoba must avoid being bitten by mosquitoes that may be carriers of the West Nile virus," are connected. I also have different kinds of sentences, which is evidence that I am working on my writing goal.

Dec. 4/07 Reading Reflections

Today I chose a picture book for silent reading. I picked Stanley's Party because the cover looked humorous and my reading goal is to read a wide variety of genres. I notice I have been reading a lot of magazines lately. I am also interested in improving my writing skills and like the way Linda Bailey uses a dog's point of view. Some of my friends have been reading picture books at Silent Reading. Dale said that Emily Carr: At the Edge of the World was a challenging biography. I plan to read a lot more picture books this year.

Dec. 7/07 Poetry Writing Reflections

Pretending to be a drop of water and writing a poem about how I went through the water cycle was fun. I read Water Dance again to help me write my poem. I could use my imagination but I had to have my facts right. This helped me tell my own thinking or opinion, and feelings, too. I used my science textbook to check the scientific words in my poem such as evaporation, precipitation, and saturation.

Dec. 19/07 Roman Civilization Poster Reflections

My cooperative group told me that I have organized my information in logical order, like a timeline. They also had some ideas on how to use labels to show my ideas. Next I will add labels and specialized vocabulary. I think that this will make my poster more effective when I share it at our school's History Symposium.

Jan. 13/08 Reflections

Ms. Smith helped me with verb tenses in my biography. At the conference table Dale and Jaime read their biographies to help me hear the proper verb tenses. I think I still need to work on this. I'll plan a conference with Scott, too. When I read my writing out loud, it helps me hear if the verbs sound right.

Student Example of Y-Chart

Reflection ⇨ Metacognition

Name	<i>Student 5</i>	Date	<i>January 10, 2008</i>
Goal	<i>to focus on characters when reading the novel</i>		

See / Notice

I noticed that this novel has a lot of dialogue—dialogue is a good way to learn about the characters. One character doesn't talk very much though. I also see a lot of description of the clothes that the people in the book are wearing—another way to learn about personality.

Hear / Read

I read two chapters that were almost all dialogue. I heard Kevin asking questions all the time, and Rick was doing most of the answering. Jay wasn't saying much of anything.

Feel / Think / Wonder

I wonder what Jay is thinking while the two boys are talking so much. He seems to be paying a lot of attention to them, but yet he never says anything.

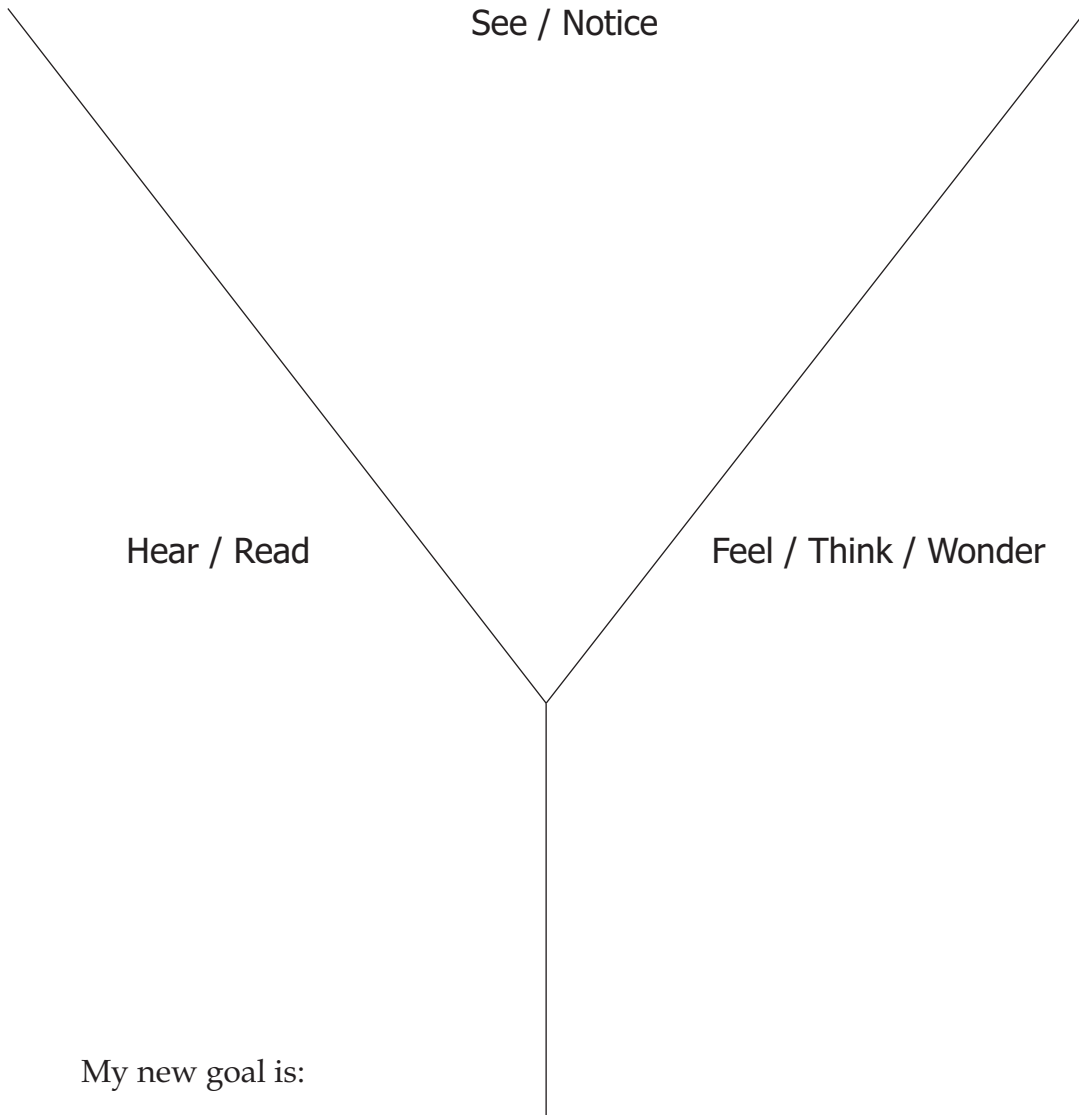
My new goal is:

- What do you notice about your thinking?
- What did you remember to do? How did that help you?
- What do you plan to do next?

Y-Chart

Reflection ⇨ Metacognition

Name		Date	
Goal			



- What do you notice about your thinking?
- What did you remember to do? How did that help you?
- What do you plan to do next?