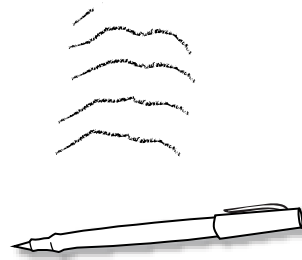


Career Choice Awareness: Biographies



Acknowledgement

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Rationale

This unit is designed to increase students' awareness of career choices through the study of biographies. During this educational journey, students make discoveries in self-awareness by reflecting on who they are, what strengths they possess, and how they can improve in the future. This step towards discovering their aptitudes will assist them in making initial decisions regarding their career choices.

Curriculum Connections

Through the various activities, language concepts for reading, writing, and oral and visual communication are addressed. While the learning expectations for *The Ontario Curriculum, Language, Grade 8* have been identified as an example, teachers can readily correlate the learning with their language curriculum.

Reading: 8e24, 8e25, 8e26, 8e27, 8e28, 8e29, 8e33, 8e35, 8e36, 8e37, 8e40, 8e43

Writing: 8e1, 8e2, 8e3, 8e4, 8e5, 8e6, 8e7, 8e8, 8e9, 8e10, 8e11, 8e12, 8e13, 8e15, 8e18, 8e19, 8e20, 8e22

Oral and Visual Communication: 8e47, 8e48, 8e49, 8e50, 8e51, 8e54, 8e56, 8e59, 8e60, 8e61, 8e67

(See Appendix I)

Skill Focus

The **writing** activities allow students to focus on the writing process and incorporate writing conventions identified in the curriculum.

The **reading** activities have students focus on comprehension of text, oral reading, vocabulary building, and research skills using the Internet.

The **oral and visual communication** activities provide opportunities for students to present in front of peers and focus on the interview process.

Context

Students reflect on their aptitudes, how they can begin to consider a choice of career, and what is necessary to achieve their goals. Students read a variety of short biographies and a teacher-approved biography of choice. They reflect on the strengths, weaknesses, and achievements of the people who are highlighted in the text and make comparisons to their own life through reflective journal writing and discussion. Using the writing process, students make entries in their reflective writing journals, create poems, and write a Phase Biography, a covering letter and résumé, and a thank-you letter.

Students access information from the Internet as they research a career of choice and create a multi-media presentation about their career research findings. They present an oral book report highlighting a famous person and interview a person in the community.

Students make connections with the secondary school guidance counsellor, parent community, and the broader community through classroom visits and student interviews. During the culminating activity, students share their Phase Biographies with classmates and write a reflective piece in their journals.

Tasks

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Preparing for the Study

- Collect short biographies (approximately 15 minutes in length) to read orally to the class.
- Access a variety of biographies or suggest some popular choices that students can access at the local/school library. Have students choose a biography of interest to read independently. Students must have their biography approved by the teacher. Students independently read this biography throughout the study and present an oral book report.
- Arrange for a secondary school guidance counsellor to visit the class to make a presentation on career choices, or arrange for people in the community (e.g., parents/guardians) to conduct short presentations about their careers.
- Determine the amount of class time and lessons to allocate to the study.
- Prebook computers for Internet use, if necessary.
- Decide which of the tasks listed above your class will do. Make any modifications necessary to suit your students' needs and your curriculum.

Grade 8 Ontario Language Expectations

Reading

8e37

Writing

8e1, 8e2, 8e3, 8e9, 8e10, 8e18

Oral and Visual

Communication

8e47, 8e50

For the Teacher

Provide an “idea file” from which students can get ideas to share with the partner.

The biography of Terry Fox could tie in with the annual Terry Fox Run

Students must have their chosen biography approved by the teacher.

Assessment

- Checklist and anecdotal comments
- Reflective Writing Rubric to assess journal entry (see Appendix B).
- Checklist for note taking

What Is a Biography?

Tasks

- Have students work in pairs to perform a talk-and-listen activity. They introduce themselves to a partner by sharing personal facts such as favourite sports/hobbies, etc. One student in the pair talks for two minutes without interruption. Then, the partners share with the class what they heard. Students reverse roles and repeat the activity. In a class discussion, identify that they shared a very brief *biography* of their partners.
- As students share names of famous people, write the names on the board. Choose one or two people from the list and with students, talk about what they know about these people. Guide the students to understand that reading biographies is one method of obtaining information about people.
- Read a short biography of a famous person to the class, e.g., Terry Fox. While listening, students individually record the “Strengths of the Person” and the “Obstacles They Overcame” in a T-chart format. Use the same headings to create a T-chart on the board and ask students to share the information they recorded. When the class chart is complete, have students add to their personal T-chart. Discuss the genre of biographies.
- Students choose a biography to read independently during this study. They present an Oral Book Report (see Appendix A). Discuss what the students are expected to learn and how they will be assessed.
- Use guided writing to model what is expected in a journal entry. Before students write an entry in their reflective journals, discuss the Reflective Writing Rubric (see Appendix B). Using the information recorded on the T-chart to answer the guiding statement/question, students write their journal entry:

Briefly describe an obstacle that the famous person overcame and a strength they possess. Describe a personal obstacle you have overcome and a strength you possess. Do your personal strengths help you overcome obstacles? Explain.

Students include the T-chart they created from taking notes when they hand in their reflective journals

Grade 8 Ontario Language Expectations

Reading

8e33

Writing

8e, 8e2, 8e7, 8e9,
8e18, 8e19, 8e20

For the Teacher

Have students complete all or some of the following activities.

During the readings, provide opportunities for the students to read orally.

Assessment

- Assess oral reading, understanding of vocabulary, and comprehension skills using sections of the readings.
- Assess oral reading skills.
- Assess journal entries using Reflective Writing Rubric (see Appendix B).
- Create comprehension test (8e27).
- Create vocabulary test (8e29).

Biography Readings/ Reflective Writing Journals

Tasks

- Guide large group discussions that focus on strengths, obstacles that were overcome, and achievements that were communicated in the biographical readings.
- During the first biography reading, use guided reading to help students achieve a comfort level with the material. Through modelling, share with the students how the characteristics of the person from the reading can be compared to their own personal strengths, obstacles they overcame, and their achievements. Individually, students record in their reflective journals personal connections they have made with the reading. For students who are experiencing difficulties making a connection, have them record the qualities they admire in the identified person from the biography reading and record whether they have similar qualities.
- Use one of the five readings to assess comprehension skills, incorporating various levels of understanding (e.g., Bloom's taxonomy) in the teacher-generated questions. Use another reading to create questions to assess understanding of vocabulary in context. For example, choose ten words from a particular reading and have students explain the meaning of the word in context without the aid of a dictionary.
- Clarify with students that after making five journal entries, they will choose their best piece of writing for assessment. The teacher also may choose a random piece of writing, e.g., Tuesday's entry. Return the journals and the rubric assessment to the students. Share with the class the strengths/areas where there can be general improvement in their journal writing in general. Review the expectations for journal writing using Appendix B.

**Grade 8 Ontario Language
Expectations**

Reading

8e33

Writing

8e, 8e2, 8e7, 8e9,
8e18, 8e19, 8e20

For the Teacher

A mind map is a visual representation of the connections between ideas or concepts.

It usually starts with a central concept and webs out visually showing the connections at various levels.

Poetry

Tasks

- Each student selects one person from the biographies the class has read to use in creating a Bio Poem and a poem of choice to highlight the person's experiences.
- Model how to create a mind map if this has not been formally taught. Students create a mind map of the person's life. Students share their map with a partner who is completing a map of the same person and add information, as needed. They use the mind map as a springboard to write the Bio Poem and a poem of their choice.
- Provide students with a structure for writing the Bio Poem. Identify the minimal amount of lines that need to be represented (10 is suggested).

Model of a Bio Poem

Title (Name of the Person)

Line 1: Insert the first name.

Line 2: Is a...

Line 3: He/She enjoys...

Line 4: Insert three adjective that describe the person.

Line 5: (students create lines 5 to 9)

Line 6:

Line 7:

Line 8:

Line 9:

Line 10: Insert the last name.

- Allocate time for peer editing and teacher input to work through the writing process (brainstorming, first draft, editing, revising, proofreading, and publishing).
- Provide examples of various poetry forms, e.g., diamante, haiku, limerick, ballad. Have students write a second poem, using a poetic form of choice. The subject of this poem may be the same person that they chose for the Bio Poem.
- Students create a collage that focuses on the person's experiences and use it as the title page for the poem.
- When both poems are complete, students evaluate their two poems and submit one poem for marking.

Assessment

- Use a rating scale to assess students' poems (see Appendix C).

**Grade 8 Ontario Language
Expectations**
Writing
8e1, 8e2, 8e3, 8e9, 8e10
Oral & Visual Communication
8e47, 8e50

Careers

Tasks

- Invite the secondary school guidance counsellor to introduce the students to a variety of careers or invite parents/guardians into the class to talk about their professions/careers. Students should record a minimum of one career of interest by the end of the presentation.
- Prior to the visit, students should think about some of the careers that interest them and prepare a minimum of three questions to ask regarding careers.
- After debriefing, students identify three strengths they possess that would assist them to achieve success in the career of their choice. Students clarify *how* these strengths will assist them in their future careers. They record this information in their reflective writing journal.

Assessment

- Create a checklist with room for anecdotal comments.
- Use Reflective Writing Rubric (Appendix B) to assess journal entries

Grade 8 Ontario Language Expectations

Reading

8e27, 8e28, 8e33, 8e35, 8e36, 8e43

Writing

8e1, 8e2, 8e5, 8e6, 8e10, 8e11, 8e15, 8e22

Oral and Visual Communication

8e47, 8e48, 8e54, 8e59, 8e67

For the Teacher

Follow school board guidelines regarding student Internet use.

Allow up to three weeks for completing this activity.

Depending on class size, allocate 4-5 days for the multi-media presentations

Assessment

- Use Career Research Rubric (Appendix E).
- Use a checklist with room for anecdotal comments to assess multi-media presentations.

Career Research

Tasks

- Teach students the skills they need to recognize valuable information on the Internet and to discard misleading material when researching.
- Students set up interviews with someone working in the career of their choice. Before students set up interview times, review acceptable phone etiquette, e.g. identify the speaker, use please and thank you. Some students may need to conduct alternative interviews if personal contact is not possible, e.g., a student who wants to be an astronaut might have to interview a pilot. Students might conduct telephone interviews or speak to someone in the human resource department of larger companies to conduct the interview. However, students may gain the most from this activity if they are able to meet interviewees face to face.
- Encourage discussion regarding career choices identified during the Career task. Group students according to similar interests and hand out the Career Research Assignment and Rubric (Appendix D and E).
- Encourage students who share a similar career of choice to share resources and their research. Using the research information, students present a multi-media presentation to the class. If presentation software is not available, have the students prepare an oral presentation and hand in a copy of their information, written in point form. If students are unfamiliar with multi-media presentations, technology lesson(s) with presentation software may be needed.
- During each presentation, classmates take notes on the Career Notes Organizer (Appendix F). Allow for a short question/answer period at the conclusion of each presentation. When all students have presented, the teacher may decide to present a short quiz in which students explain three different careers, using their notes for reference. This makes students accountable for their listening and they also gain further career information. If necessary, have students who may need support explain fewer careers.
- To prepare students to use proper writing conventions, give mini lessons on proper use of quotation marks, using pronouns correctly, and creating more complex sentence structures as needed during their research and writing. Prepare a short quiz to evaluate the students' knowledge of these writing conventions.

For the teacher

Invite the class to offer input for strengths and areas of improvement

Stopping the interviews when the first group finishes will keep to time constraints. Although some groups may not finish their interview, students can be given sufficient feedback for the section of the interview they completed.

Assessment

- Use a checklist with room for anecdotal comments.

identify interview strategies. Emphasize the need to create open-ended questions by avoiding questions that elicit simple yes or no answers. Discuss proper etiquette during the interview, e.g., students need to be polite, speak confidently, be prepared with their questions, dress appropriately, and ask permission to tape the interview.

- Using their understanding of their career choice from the Career Research task, students brainstorm in similar career groups and create 6-8 interview questions. Students exchange questions and offer each other input for refinement.
- In their career groups, students incorporate some of the interview strategies suggested and practise a mock interview where the person being interviewed improvises to answer the questions. During the improvisation exercise, observe the groups and have one group model for the class. Have the students improve their questions and prepare their mock interview for the class.
- The following day, set up interview areas in the four corners of the classroom, e.g., two chairs, table. After the students practise their mock interviews, have four groups move to the four corners of the room. Have peers observe one of the four interviews focusing on the interviewee. They make notes on a T-chart (Strengths of Interview/Areas for Improvement). Circulate among the four groups, offering feedback. Have the students switch roles and continue the interview format.

Mock Interview

Tasks

- Work with students to

Grade 8 Ontario Language Expectations

Reading

8e27, 8e29

Writing

8e1, 8e2, 8e3, 8e4, 8e8, 8e9, 8e10, 8e12, 8e13, 8e19

Oral and Visual Communication

8e47, 8e48, 8e48

For the Teacher

A **Phase Biography** focuses on a particular part of a person's life. In this case, students focus on the career of the person.

Set aside class time every few days to allow for in-class work and checking on student progress.

Set timelines for the students to insure deadlines are met.

For example:

1. All interviews are to be conducted by Monday.
2. First draft of the Phase Biography is due Thursday.
3. Second draft is due on the following Monday.

Assessment

- Create a rubric to assess the Phase Biography

Phase Biography

Tasks

- Read a Phase Biography to the class and discuss the writing style.
- Discuss the content and the writing style of the Phase Biography. Ask: What do you notice? How is this biography different from the longer biographies you are reading? How is this form of writing different from other forms? Record ideas under the title, "Writing Style of Phase Biographies" and post for student reference. Students incorporate these items in their writing.
- Have students silently read a second Phase Biography assigned by the teacher and answer written comprehension questions. Discuss the writing style of the Phase Biography. Add further information to the initial list of Writing Style of Phase Biographies.
- Hand out the Phase Biography Assignment (Appendix G) and discuss it with the class. Students work independently on the assignment.
- Students hand in the final copy of the Phase Biography for marking at the beginning of the oral book reports and then make corrections prior to the culminating activity.

**Grade 8 Ontario Language
Expectations**

Writing

8e1, 8e2, 8e5, 8e7,
8e8, 8e9, 8e10, 8e20

For the Teacher

Students interact with people
away from the school site.
Review and follow board policy
with students.

Provide examples of résumés and
covering letters

In Ontario, secondary school
students are required to complete
community service. Students in
Grade 8 should begin to think
about how they will become
involved so they can make a
more informed decision about
their secondary school
community service hours.

Assessment

- Assess the résumé and
covering letter

Résumé and Covering Letter

Tasks

- Introduce the terms *résumé* and *covering letter*. Review computer skills such as nuggets, tab, etc. that may be useful to create a personalized résumé.
- Have students complete a personal résumé and covering letter, using the model provided.
- Encourage students to think of ways they have demonstrated skills that may interest potential employers, e.g., completing chores at home demonstrates responsibility, or helping a younger sibling with homework demonstrates strong communication skills. Have students write a reflective piece to share the achievements, awards, certificates that they have received over the years.
- Introduce students to volunteer groups in the community.
- Have students to think about a potential employer to whom they might submit their résumé, e.g., for a childcare job.

**Grade 8 Ontario Language
Expectations**

Reading

8e27, 8e32

Oral and Visual

Communication

8e49, 8e51, 8e56, 8e59

For the Teacher

Making corrections to a final piece of writing (Phase Biography) allows students to fully internalize their areas of growth.

Assessment

- Summative Evaluation: Oral Book Report

Oral Book Report

Tasks

- Return Phase Biographies and offer general feedback to the class as a whole. Have the students make the necessary corrections and submit it with the thank you letter. Emphasize with the students that the Phase Biography will be sent to the person they interviewed as a clear reflection of their work.
- Provide opportunities for the students to present their oral book reports on the biography they have been reading throughout the study.

**Grade 8 Ontario Language
Expectations**
Writing
8e1, 8e4, 8e8, 8e9, 8e20

Thank You Letter

Task

- Review the proper format for a formal thank-you letter and have students write a thank you to the person they interviewed.

Assessment

- Assess the students use of conventions and form in the Thank-you letter

Culminating Activity

Tasks

- Have students share their corrected Phase Biographies with several classmates.
- In a large group discussion, elicit feedback from the students regarding the biographies. Ask guided questions such as:
What did you find interesting about this career?
Do you think you are well suited for this career?
- Using the guiding questions, students write a final reflective piece in their journals. They should include the qualities that they possess that would make them successful in their chosen career and identify the areas they will need to improve to be successful in the future. Students that no longer want to pursue their career of choice explain why they have made this choice and include a new career they found interesting from the sharing sessions. Encourage students to be introspective.
- Have students record the following information on a chart under these headings: “During this unit I enjoyed...,”
“Ways to improve the unit include...,” and “I learned....”

For the Teacher

Some students may find they no longer want to pursue their career of choice. If students come to this conclusion, they have also experienced a valuable journey in learning and self-discovery.

Use the information to adjust the unit for implementation with another class.

Assessment

- Reflective Writing Rubric (Appendix B)

Appendix A

Oral Book Report

Choose a biography that is of high interest to read throughout the study. Have it approved by your teacher.

As part of your study, you will present an Oral Book Report. The report should be a **minimum of 5 minutes and a maximum of 6 minutes** in length. A written book report is not required.

You may use notes during your presentation.

Make eye contact with the audience.

Be prepared to answer questions from your classmates at the end of your presentation.

Review the assessment criteria below as you prepare for the presentation.

Reasoning

Can explain orally the main ideas by relating them to personal knowledge and experience, e.g.,

I would have acted differently in this situation because... or I really liked their commitment to telling the truth because...

Communication

Demonstrates an ability to remain on topic. Uses specialized vocabulary appropriately.

Organization of Ideas

During the presentation and question period, expresses and responds to a range of ideas and opinions in an organized manner.

Application of Language Conventions

Uses tone of voice and body language to demonstrate understanding of the biography.

Appendix B

Name: _____

Reflective Writing Rubric

Criteria	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Reasoning	- writes limited ideas to interpret and makes few judgments	- writes using a variety of simple and related ideas to interpret and makes some judgments	- writes with a clear purpose and uses related ideas to interpret and makes relevant judgments	- writes with a clear purpose and uses complex ideas to interpret and makes thorough judgments
Communication	- communicates ideas and information from the reading with limited detail and accuracy	- communicates ideas and information from the reading with some clarity	- communicates ideas and information from the reading clearly	- communicates complex ideas and information from the reading clearly, precisely, and confidently
Organization of Ideas	- limited use of paragraph structures to organizes information	- organizes information using paragraph structures	- organizes information logically, using proper paragraph structures	- organizes information logically and in complex ways, using proper paragraph structures
Application of language conventions	- limited use of accurate spelling, punctuation, grammar, and style	- some use of accurate spelling, punctuation, grammar, and style	- uses accurate spelling, punctuation, grammar, and style most of the time	- spelling, punctuation, grammar, and style are consistently accurate

Appendix C

Name: _____

Poem (Rating Scale)

Reasoning (interpretation and understanding)

How well does the poem reflect the student's personal interpretation of the famous person and demonstrate the student's understanding of the reading material?

1

2

3

4

Communication (presentation of ideas and use of language)

How well are ideas presented, using related language and vocabulary?

1

2

3

4

Organization of Ideas (organization and correctness of poetic form)

How well are ideas organized? Is the chosen poetic form used correctly?

1

2

3

4

Application of Language Conventions

How well does the student apply language conventions in spelling and vocabulary use?

1

2

3

4

Appendix D

Career Research

Research a career of your choice and create a multi-media presentation, e.g., using presentation software.

- Use a **minimum of 2** Internet sources.
- Include a minimum of 7 slides.
- Present your written information in point form.
- Include a title for each of the following sections in your presentation.
 - General Information Describing the Career
 - Salary Range
 - Education
 - Stress Level (*This may take some interpretation of the information.*)
 - Job Availability
 - Personal Skills Needed to be Successful
 - Personal Attributes
- Explain why you would like to pursue this career and the skills that you possess that would allow you to be successful in this career.
- Add audio elements and illustrations, and use formatting (e.g., bold type, colour, font size) to make your slides interesting for the audience.

Appendix E

Name: _____

Career Research Rubric

Criteria	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Reasoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - demonstrates a limited understanding of the career - makes limited judgments and conclusions regarding the career 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - demonstrates some understanding of the career - makes some judgments and conclusions regarding the career 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - demonstrates understanding of the career - makes judgments and draws conclusions regarding the career 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - demonstrates a thorough understanding of the career - makes clear and insightful judgments and conclusions regarding the career
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - limited written information is communicated - oral information is presented with limited effectiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - some written information is communicated - oral information is presented with some effectiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - written information is communicated - oral information is presented effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - written information is communicated creatively, precisely and thoroughly - oral information is presented effectively and confidently
Organization of Ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - demonstrates limited organization of written material - minimal information is formatted logically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - demonstrates some organization of written material - some information is formatted logically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates considerable organization of written material - information is formatted logically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates thorough organization of written material - information is formatted logically and creatively
Application of Language Conventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - limited use of accurate spelling, punctuation, grammar, and style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - some use of accurate spelling, punctuation, grammar, and style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - accurate use of spelling, punctuation, grammar, and style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - consistent, accurate use of spelling, punctuation, grammar, and style

Appendix F

Name: _____

Career Notes Organizer Multi-media Presentation

Presenter:

Career of Choice:

General Facts:

Salary:

Education Required:

Stress Level:

Job Availability:

What I liked about this presentation:

Am I interested in this career? Why or why not?

Appendix G

Phase Biography Assignment

After you have conducted your interview, write a Phase Biography using the information.

Your Phase Biography is to focus on the career of the person you interviewed.

You may want to include interesting career-related aspects about the person's early life. For example, if you are interviewing an architect, you may discover that visual art was a favourite subject in school and that he/she was very good at drawing at an early age.

Make sure that all additional information is relevant to the person's career. Include direct quotations to add interest to your biography.

Your Phase Biography should be 600 words.

Remember to:

- Double-space your Phase Biography.
- Use a type size and a font that is easy to read.

Include a title page with the following information in the order given:
a title, your name, teacher's name, class, and the date.

Due Date: _____

Appendix H

Name: _____

Sample of a Student's Phase Biography

Interview Questions

- What characteristics or personal traits would make a good doctor?
- Why are you a general practitioner and not a specialist?
- Explain your daily routine as a doctor.
- In what range is your income?
- Where were you educated?
- How long did it take you to finish school and get a medical license?
- Do you plan to be a general practitioner for the rest of your life? If so, why do you want to dedicate your life to this job?
- Was there a time in your work when you felt as if you wanted to quit? If so, when was this?
- In your childhood, was there something that you liked doing that is linked to being a general practitioner? If so, what was it? If not, then what inspired you to be what you are today?

Phase Biography

Dr. X is a general practitioner and he treats patients every day to the best of his ability at a local clinic.

Doctors must have at least these three personal traits in order to become a good doctor. First of all, they must be compassionate and be able to relate to how the patient feels. Doctors must offer their patients self-esteem and also be sensitive to their emotional needs. This is important because some illnesses are not only brought on by diseases, but by stress, peer pressure, and so on. Another trait that is important for a doctor to have is the authentic feeling of caring. Once a doctor projects a caring image, the patient is more comfortable and often reveals personal things. This personal information may help the doctor find a cure. Doctors must also have a sense of self-improvement because medicine rapidly changes. There are a lot of new discoveries in medical research. Doctors, who do not keep up-to-date with the latest discoveries in medicine, are being unfair to their patients. Not being fair to patients is the worst thing a doctor could do because patients often trust the doctor with their lives.

Dr. X's greatest satisfaction is helping people, either with or without a medical problem. He enjoys meeting people from around the globe and learning about cultures that are different from his own. "It gives me a well balanced look out on life," says Dr. X.

Appendix H (Continued)

Dr. X believes that a general practitioner is more efficient than a specialist. A general practitioner looks at a diversity of medical conditions, whereas a specialist only looks at the same infections everyday. A general practitioner is the “first-line doctor” who is able to practise different types of medicine.

“Being a general practitioner allows me to understand the family unit,” elucidated Dr. X. I have a better understanding of a family’s medical health and environment. Some illnesses are caused through heredity and this can affect a child’s health, education, and social life, etcetera. This information gives general practitioners a complete understanding of their patients.

A regular day at work for Dr. X starts when he arrives at his office. He looks though blood tests and X-rays and prepares medical reports. From 9:00 – 1:00 he is occupied with patients with non-complicated medical problems. After an hour off for lunch, he is back in his office. As the patients begin to dwindle, he logs on the Internet and looks at new medical updates. He also likes to find lectures or conferences to attend during the weekends. Dr. X makes house calls to the elderly or disabled homes. He doesn’t go to hospitals to care for his patients because he believes that he is interrupting the specialists who are at work.

A general practitioner works long hours. The tough part about the job is that the patients demand your personal attention. Sometimes a general practitioner must be involved in surgery.

Doctor X was educated in Singapore. He took a 5-year course to be trained as a doctor. Also, he did one year of internship and was posted at different hospitals. Dr. X completed his Masters degree in family medicine within 3 years. He worked and studied at the same time. Dr. X didn’t study outside of Singapore because it cost a lot to send him overseas. It took Dr. X six years to get his medical license. To update himself with the latest medicine and new discoveries, he would attend lectures, talk to his friends, and look on the Internet.

Dr. X plans on being a general practitioner for the rest of his life because twelve years in this career is not enough according to him. He believes that there is still a lot of learning and updating to do as a general practitioner. He still finds his job fascinating.

“In some ways, you owe it to your patients,” he declares. He does not want the bond of loyalty to shatter between him and his patients. “The best thing to do is not to turn away from your patients.” Dr. X is incredibly happy with his job and at this point of time he will remain a general practitioner.

Dr. X has always been ‘the solver of problems’ among his friends and family. He has the aptitude to solve people’s problems ethnically. Being a doctor is the best way to help people. There was no major event that happened when he was young to make him want to become a general practitioner, other than the fact that he always enjoyed helping people and liked to see people happy.

After this interview, I have learned more about Dr. X and about a general practitioner. Dr. X is very nice to talk to and puts his patients first. He is loyal and kind to everyone. This interview made me realize that being a general practitioner is hard work. It is possible if I try my very best and study hard in school. It may take all of my strength, but I feel I can succeed and be a great doctor.

Appendix I

Learning Expectations, The Ontario Curriculum, Language, Grade 8

- 8e1** – communicate ideas and information for a variety of purposes (to evaluate information, to compare points of view) and to specific audiences, using forms appropriate for their purpose (e.g., a survey soliciting opinions on an environmental issue) and features appropriate to the form (e.g., focused questions);
- 8e2** – use writing for various purposes and in a range of contexts, including school work (e.g., to write technical instructions, to clarify personal concerns, to explore social issues, to develop imaginative abilities);
- 8e3** – organize information and ideas creatively as well as logically, using paragraph structures appropriate for their purpose (e.g., paragraphs structured to develop a comparison or establish a cause-and-effect relationship);
- 8e4** – use a wide variety of sentence types and sentence structures, with conscious attention to style;
- 8e5** – produce pieces of writing using a variety of specific forms (e.g., a script for a play), techniques and resources appropriate to the form and purpose, and materials from other media (e.g., lighting effects);
- 8e6** – produce media texts using writing and materials from other media (e.g., a video documentary on an environmental issue);
- 8e7** – revise and edit their work, focusing on content and on more complex elements of style (e.g., imagery), independently or using feedback from others;
- 8e8** – proofread and correct their final drafts, focusing on grammar, spelling, punctuation, and conventions of style;
- 8e9** – use and spell correctly the vocabulary appropriate for this grade level;
- 8e10** – use correctly the conventions (grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc.) specified for this grade level (see below);
- 8e11** – use case for pronouns correctly (e.g., There is a deep bond between him and me. /He and I went to the museum.);
- 8e12** – use more complex sentence structures correctly;
- 8e13** – use a period and comma accurately with quotation marks;
- 8e15** – use quotation marks to distinguish words being discussed (e.g. Most people spell “receive” incorrectly) and to indicate titles of songs, poems, essay, and articles;
- 8e18** – use spelling generalizations, knowledge of word formation, to spell technical and unfamiliar words;
- 8e19** – use the vocabulary expected for this grade level accurately and imaginatively in their writing;
- 8e20** – select and use their words with increasing sophistication and effectiveness;
- 8e22** – use different styles of type appropriately for specific purposes (e.g., bold type for emphasis);
- 8e25** – read aloud, showing understanding of the material and awareness of the audience;
- 8e26** – read independently, selecting appropriate reading strategies;
- 8e27** – explain their interpretation of a written work, supporting it with evidence from the work and from their own knowledge and experience;
- 8e28** – decide on a specific purpose for reading, and select the material that they need from a variety of appropriate sources;
- 8e29** – understand the vocabulary and language structures appropriate for this grade level
- 8e32** – identify main ideas in information materials, explain how details support main ideas, question, and evaluate ideas;
- 8e33** – make judgments and draw conclusions about ideas in written materials on the basis of evidence;
- 8e35** – select appropriate reading strategies;
- 8e36** – plan a research project and carry out the research;
- 8e37** – identify various forms of writing and describe key features;
- 8e40** – use knowledge of grammar, word structure, and sentences to understand reading;
- 8e43** – use special terminology in a particular area of study, as necessary;
- 8e47** – express and respond to a range of ideas and opinions concisely, clearly, and appropriately;
- 8e48** – listen to and communicate connected ideas and relate carefully-constructed narrative about real and fictional events;
- 8e49** – express and respond to a range of ideas and opinions concisely, clearly, and appropriately
- 8e50** – contribute and work constructively in groups;
- 8e51** – demonstrate ability to concentrate by identifying main points and staying on topic;
- 8e54** – create media works of some technical complexity;
- 8e56** – use specialized vocabulary appropriate to topic in oral presentations;
- 8e59** – use tone of voice and body language to clarify meaning during conversations and presentations;
- 8e67** – create media works of some technical complexity (e.g., a two-minute mystery on videotape or audiotape).