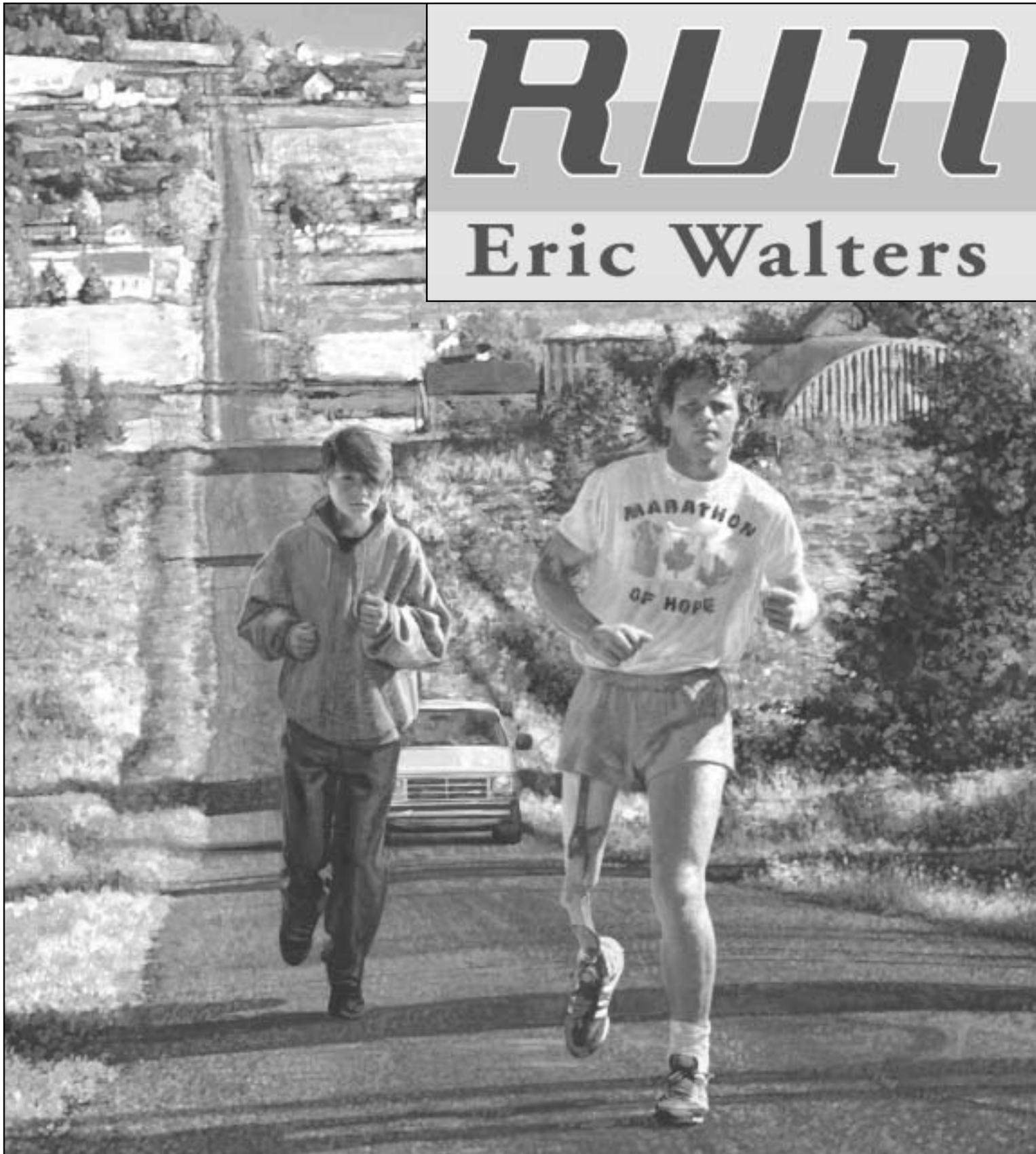


RUN

Eric Walters



Teacher's Guide

by Marion Wood



PLOT SUMMARY

Run is a fictionalized version of the story of Terry Fox and his extraordinary Marathon of Hope.

The story begins with Winston, a thirteen-year-old boy living in Toronto. The police have just found him roaming the streets in the middle of the night, and when they take him home, his mother is relieved—he'd been missing for two days—but furious. This time he's gone too far.

At her wits end, Winston's mother contacts his father, Winston Sr., and insists that he take Winston for awhile. Ever since their divorce over a year ago, she's been dealing on her own with Winston's suspensions from school and his running away. It's time Winston's father became more involved.

Initially, Winston Sr., a journalist, objects to the plan—he's about to go to Nova Scotia to cover a story about a young man trying to run across Canada on one leg. Winston's mother insists, and since Winston's already suspended from school, he finally agrees to take his son with him.

In Nova Scotia, Winston and his father meet Terry Fox and Terry's friend Doug, who drives the van behind Terry as he runs. Winston likes them immediately. They're obviously great friends, and despite cancer, the amputation of his leg, and continuous pain throughout the run, Terry is very upbeat. It doesn't take long before Winston begins to believe that Terry's really going to run from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

After Winston Sr.'s story captures the hearts of Canadians, he's asked to cover the entire race. Winston's happy to stay with his dad in Nova Scotia, riding in Doug's van or occasionally running alongside Terry, but his dad is less than thrilled. In his mind, the story's over, but he's forced to look for new, interesting angles that will sell newspapers. He finds one when he realizes that Doug and Terry don't always get along.

When Winston finds out that his dad is going to publish a story that is so obviously wrong—yes, Doug and Terry fight occasionally, but they're the best of friends, no matter what happens—he's furious. Rather than stay and deal with his anger toward his father, he runs away. This time it's Terry who finds him and encourages him to face his problems head-on, rather than run away from them. Winston agrees, and when they return to the motel, Winston learns that his father has cancelled the story.

Winston returns home where he continues to follow the Terry Fox run, eventually meeting up with Terry and Doug when they pass through Toronto. Terry's thrilled to see Winston and to hear that Winston's managed to stay in school and that his parents are getting along. When Terry eventually dies, Winston is comforted by his parents and by Terry's spirit, which will live on forever in Winston.

HISTORICAL FICTION GENRE

Teachers might want to discuss the historical fiction genre with students before reading *Run*. Having samples of historical writing and fiction for students to compare will help them to understand how these two genres are combined in *Run*. You might also want to ask the students why the author chose to write the novel this way, and examine how fictional characters help to give life to real events.

PLANNING STRATEGIES

Run is ideal for an extensive read aloud. Comprehension questions can be used to check for understanding, and daily response journal entries can help students to relate the book to their own lives.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS AND RESPONSE JOURNAL TOPICS

Comprehension questions, response journal topics and activities for this novel are formulated to develop students' ability to connect what they read to their own experiences. Personal connections allow them to create meaning as the story develops and bring them into a closer relationship with the story. This connection motivates students and creates a desire to keep reading. It also allows for a greater understanding of their own lives and the lives of others. The comprehension questions encourage them to be reflective, insightful, and analytical about what they are reading.

BEFORE THE BOOK

Heroes

- Explain that you are going to be reading a story about a Canadian hero.
- Ask the students what a hero is.
- Discuss their ideas as a class, and record ideas on the board.
- Ask the students to think about who their heroes are.
- Have each student write a journal entry about his or her hero.
- Share journal entries.

Discuss the “types” of heroes that they wrote about. If no one chose an “ordinary” person as their hero, ask the class if an ordinary person could be a hero.

PREDICTIONS AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Ask students why they think the book is called *Run*. What kind of hero might this book be about, based on the title?
- Ask students if they have ever heard of Terry Fox. If they have, ask them what they know.
- Discuss cancer. Ask students if they know anyone who has or has had cancer.
- Ask students why they think Terry's run across Canada was called the Marathon of Hope. Explain how far a marathon is (42km) and that Terry ran one every day. A visualization would be helpful for students. A marathon is the equivalent of running around a track just over 104 times a day. Unlike the roads that Terry ran, tracks do not have hills!
- Ask students if they think that they would have the courage to leave their comfortable homes to do something like Terry did.
- Ask students to write a journal entry about a time when they were faced with a major event or change in their lives, or a time when they had to deal with something that they thought was difficult (the loss of a loved one, a move to a new city, changing schools, performing in front of an audience, competing in sports, making new friends). How did it make them feel? Did they change in a positive way from the experience? Did they learn anything about themselves?

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS AND RESPONSE JOURNAL TOPICS

CHAPTER ONE:

1. Picture Winston in your head. What words (adjectives) would you use to describe him? For each adjective, tell the event in the story that made you describe him this way.
2. List the reasons you think Winston has for running away.

Response Journal Topic:

In what ways is Winston similar to or different from you?

CHAPTER TWO:

1. What do you notice about the way Winston's mom and dad speak to each other?
2. Winston's mother asks his father to take him for a few days. What is Winston's father's reaction to this?
3. What does Winston mean when he says, "It seemed like my mom was working hard to get rid of me, while my father was working just as hard not to take me. It felt special to be so wanted"?

Response Journal Topic:

Think of a situation where you felt you weren't wanted. Describe how it made you feel.

CHAPTER THREE:

1. Winston is annoyed and doesn't want to speak with his father. His father says, "Then it's probably wise to stay quiet." Why would this be good advice for Winston to follow?
2. How would you describe Winston's father? Why would you describe him this way?

Response Journal Topic:

What advice would you give to Winston about how to deal with his father?

CHAPTER FOUR:

1. Winston's father tells him that "the only people who don't make mistakes are those who are too timid to try new things. Stay bold, take chances . . . Little people make little mistakes. Big people make big mistakes." Do you agree or disagree? Give reasons for your answer.
2. When his father leaves to go for a drink, Winston says, "I'll take care of myself. I'm good at that." In your opinion, what do you think Winston means?
3. What does Winston consider doing when his father leaves to go for a drink? How does Winston think his father would react if he did it? Why would Winston want his father to feel this way?

Response Journal Topic:

Describe a time when you were upset about something and wanted to make someone else feel bad too. Why do you think you wanted to do that even though you knew it wasn't a very nice thing to do?

CHAPTER FIVE:

1. When Winston's father tells him about the story he is going to cover, Winston is surprised at what Terry Fox is attempting to do. Explain why he is surprised.

Response Journal Topics:

1. Winston's father does not think that Terry can run across Canada. Do you believe that he can? Why or why not?
2. Describe a time when you decided to try something that others thought you would not succeed at. Did their opinion make you change your mind?
3. Winston's father plays Frank Sinatra's music in the car. Winston hates it. Give an example of something that you like that your parents don't.

CHAPTER SIX:

1. Explain what Terry means when he says, "I had to convince myself [the Marathon of Hope] was possible before I talked to anybody else about it."
2. What is the difference between a victim and a survivor? Look both words up the dictionary and write their definitions in your own words. Why is Terry annoyed when Winston's father calls him a victim?
3. In what ways do you think running across Canada could help those who have cancer?
4. When Winston's father asks Terry why he is running across Canada, Terry says, "By running like this I let people know that cancer can be beaten . . . that life can go on . . . that you define people by their ability and not their disability."

Look up the word *disability* in the dictionary. Define *disability* in your own words. In your opinion, why does Terry want people to recognize his abilities and not his disability?

Response Journal Topics:

1. Running across Canada is not an easy thing to do. Terry explains that he didn't wake up from his surgery with the ability to run a marathon every day. He first had to learn how to walk with crutches, then a cane, then with an artificial leg. When he started running, it was only one lap at a time on a track, and even that was hard. Before starting the Marathon of Hope, he trained every day for fourteen months. Compare Terry's struggle with a time when you tried to do something that was hard. Did you refuse to give up like Terry?
2. Terry's best friend, Doug, immediately agreed to put his life on hold to help Terry with the Marathon of Hope. Describe a time when you did something that was more than what was expected in order to help a friend in need.
3. Imagine you are a reporter like Winston's father and you were asked to interview Terry Fox. List the questions you would have asked him.

CHAPTER SEVEN:

1. Winston asks his father if he has changed his mind about whether he thinks Terry will be able to run across Canada. His father believes that there is a chance Terry will succeed. He says, "There's something in that kid's eyes." Describe what you think Winston's father sees in Terry's eyes.
2. Winston's father speaks honestly to Winston about what kind of a father he thinks he's been. What clues does this give you about why Winston has been running?

Response Journal Topics:

1. What kind of a person do you think a hero needs to be? List six adjectives that could describe a hero.
2. Winston's father is writing another article about Terry. Imagine you are a reporter. Write a paragraph describing what you've seen and learned about Terry Fox and the Marathon of Hope.

CHAPTER EIGHT:

1. In Winston's father's article, he writes, "If you look at him—and you have to look very closely—you can see a slight twinge on his face when that artificial leg hits the ground. I know it must hurt. I also know he doesn't want people to see that in his face." In your opinion, why doesn't Terry want people to see that he is in pain?

Response Journal Topic:

Winston's father writes, "He's a hero. Terry would tell you different. He'd tell you he's no hero. I'm telling you he is." Do you think that Terry is a hero? What makes you believe that he is or is not?

CHAPTER NINE:

1. In his article, Winston's father writes that Terry is a hero, but he is not really sure that he is. Doug explains to Winston's father that at the end of every day Terry marks the spot where he stops with a plastic bag held down with a rock. One time the bag could not be found and Terry ran an extra three miles. Explain in your own way what this says about Terry's character. Do you believe this will change Winston's father's opinion of Terry?
2. Winston's father is skeptical about what Terry is doing in the Marathon of Hope. Look up the word *skeptical* in the dictionary. What does *skeptical* mean? Write the definition in your own words. List the reasons Winston's father gives for being skeptical of Terry.

Response Journal Topic:

Winston's father has a hard time believing that Terry is completely honest about what he is doing. Describe a time when someone questioned your honesty or your intentions about something you were doing.

CHAPTER TEN:

1. Terry asks Winston whether his school gives him extra work when he is away. Winston says no and hopes that Terry will drop the subject. He doesn't want to tell Terry that he was suspended. "It wasn't something that I was proud of." How does that tell you that he is beginning to change?
2. When Terry shows Winston his artificial leg, he explains that many years ago an amputee could not have done what he is doing because artificial legs were heavy and awkward. Terry says, "I think that people didn't even consider that somebody could lose a leg and still want to be athletic, want to play sports and compete." This is a preconception that is common about people who have disabilities. Look up the word *preconception* in the dictionary. What does it mean? Write the definition in your own words. Explain how Terry was changing this preconception.
3. In grade eight Terry made the basketball team. Why was this a really hard thing for him to do? Look up the word *determined* in the dictionary. What does it mean? Write the definition in your own words. How does making the basketball team show you that Terry is a very determined person?
4. What do you think Winston means when he says, "I realized what [Terry] was staring at when he was running—he was seeing the other side of the country"?

Response Journal Topic:

Describe an important goal of yours that you can see yourself accomplishing even though you are still working toward it.

CHAPTER ELEVEN:

1. Doug does a lot more than drive the van for his friend Terry. List a few of the things that he does to help Terry with the Marathon of Hope.

Response Journal Topic:

Describe a time when a friend of yours did something extra special for you.

CHAPTER TWELVE:

1. When Winston misses the net while playing basketball with Terry, he blames the ball and the net. In response to his excuses, Terry says, "A poor workman blames his tools." Explain what you think Terry means by this.

Response Journal Topic:

While playing basketball, Winston accidentally knocks Terry over. After this, Winston backs off a bit and allows Terry to score a basket because he is afraid he will do it again. Terry wants to be treated equally. He says, "You should play to win. I'm playing to win." Describe a time when you were not treated equally. How did it make you feel?

CHAPTER THIRTEEN:

1. Winston's father believes that Terry's story is becoming less interesting and that it won't become really big until he stops running. Winston defends Terry by expressing his faith in him. "They should want to read about it. What he's doing is important! He's going to do it," he tells his father. How do these statements show that Winston is changing?

Response Journal Topic:

Describe a time when you stood up for a friend and defended him or her against things that others were saying about that friend.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN:

1. Terry and Doug are fighting and this worries Winston. What does Terry tell Winston about his friendship with Doug to try to make him feel better?
2. Winston's father asks Winston to keep his eyes open for any "interesting" information about Terry and Doug that he can make into a story. Doug asks Winston to keep a secret about Terry's leg bleeding and how it hurts when he runs. Winston promises not to tell. Predict whether or not Winston will keep his promise. Defend your prediction.

Response Journal Topic:

Describe a time when you were asked by a friend to promise to keep a secret. Did you keep your promise? Did you find it difficult to keep?

CHAPTER FIFTEEN:

1. Winston shares some personal feelings with Terry. Winston says “knew that he really wanted to hear what I had to say.” What does this show about the relationship between Terry and Winston?
2. Terry explains that he is not running *away* from anything. He says, “I’m running *to* something. I’m running to my home in Port Coquitlam [British Columbia], running to help all those people, all those kids, who can’t run. I’m running to raise money to find a cure for cancer.” Compare Terry’s running with Winston’s running. Why is running the right thing for Terry to do and the wrong thing for Winston to do?
3. In your opinion, what does Terry mean when he says that being alive is something that people take for granted?

Response Journal Topic:

Terry says to Winston, “Besides, we both know that you can’t run away from your problems.” Describe a time when you ran away from a problem. Explain why you decided to run away instead of face it.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN:

1. Why do you think Winston is not glad to be going home?
2. Winston’s father writes an article about Terry and Doug fighting. Winston questions his father’s integrity. Look up the word *integrity* in the dictionary. What does it mean? Write the definition in your own words. What does Winston mean when he says, “Whether it’s true or not doesn’t change the fact that it is wrong. You just shouldn’t be writing about it.”
3. Winston is not the only one who is changing. When Winston runs away, his father sends him a message through Terry—there is going to be a hole in tomorrow’s paper. What does this message mean and how does this show that Winston’s father is changing?

Response Journal Topic:

Describe a time when you had a fight with a good friend. Explain how you worked out the problem and became friends again.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN:

1. Both Winston and his father are working toward becoming better people. What are they doing to achieve this goal?

Response Journal Topic:

Everyone can do something to make themselves better. What could you change about yourself to help make you a better person?

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN:

1. When Winston meets Terry in Toronto, he asks him to run twelve miles with him. Winston is unsure that he can do it. Doug says to him, “Don’t think of it as twelve miles. Just take it one step at a time . . . one corner at a time . . . one mile at a time. That’s the way Terry does it.” Explain how this is a good way to achieve any difficult goal.
2. In your view, explain what Winston means when he says he was happy to be a part of something bigger than anything that he could imagine, “Even bigger than the width of this whole country.”

Response Journal Topic:

Set a goal for yourself that you would like to accomplish this school year. List the steps that you will take to accomplish it.

CHAPTER NINETEEN:

1. After running 5373km in 143 days (13,432 laps around a track!), Terry is forced to quit running. Why does he have to stop?
2. Terry calls himself a dreamer. Do you believe that his dream came true? Explain.

Response Journal Topic:

What lesson(s) did you learn from Terry and his dream?

CHAPTER TWENTY:

1. Terry says to Winston, "I need you to know that I had to stop running right now, but I haven't quit. And I need you not to quit either." What does Terry not want Winston to quit doing?
2. Create a Venn diagram comparing Terry and Winston at the end of the story. How are they alike and how are they different?
3. Why do you think that the author wrote a book for kids about Terry Fox?

Response Journal Topic:

In what ways are you similar to Terry Fox? In what ways would you like to be more like him?

Resources:

Dates, times, places, and other registration information on the annual Terry Fox Run, as well as information on organizing a Terry Fox Run at your school can be found at the website www.terryfoxrun.org.

Free promotional materials, including audiotapes, videotapes and posters, are available.

Bibliography:

Scrivener, Leslie. *Terry Fox: His Story*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 2000.

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

A very important aspect of this book, which is not curriculum related, is the potential to use *Run* to examine, teach, or strengthen values and ideas such as heroism, strength, perseverance, determination, courage, potential, abilities and disabilities, prejudices, stereotypes, preconceptions, equality, empathy, dreams, faith, hope, friendship, loyalty, helping others, overcoming adversity, facing problems, goal setting and achieving goals, integrity, working towards becoming a better person, and the gift of life.

Below are specific curriculum connections.

GRADE 3

LANGUAGE

Writing:

- write materials that show a growing ability to express their points of view and to reflect on their own experiences (e.g., journal notes)
- organize information into short paragraphs that contain a main idea and related details
- use and spell correctly the vocabulary appropriate for this grade level
- use correctly the conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.) specified for this grade level
- introduce new words from their reading into their writing
- use a dictionary to expand vocabulary

Reading:

- read a variety of fiction and non-fiction materials for different purposes
- express clear responses to written materials, relating the ideas in them to their own knowledge and experience
- identify and restate the main idea in a piece of writing, and cite supporting details
- identify and describe some elements of stories (e.g., plot, central idea, characters, setting)
- distinguish between fact and fiction
- begin to make inferences while reading

Oral:

- listen to discussions and ask questions to clarify meaning
- talk about characters and situations in stories
- contribute ideas appropriate to the topic in group discussion and listen to the ideas of others

SOCIAL STUDIES

Heritage and Citizenship:

- make and read for specific purposes a wide variety of graphs, charts, diagrams, maps

Canada and World Connections:

- identify the Canadian provinces and territories on a map

GRADE 4

LANGUAGE

Writing:

- begin to write for more complex purposes (e.g., to present and discuss their opinions and viewpoints, to pose questions)
- organize and develop ideas using paragraphs
- use and spell correctly the vocabulary appropriate for this grade level
- use correctly the conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.) specified for this grade level
- identify various parts of speech (e.g., adjectives)
- use a dictionary to expand vocabulary

Reading:

- read a variety of fiction and non-fiction materials for different purposes
- state their own interpretation of a written work, using evidence from the work and from their own knowledge and experience
- identify the main idea in a piece of writing, and provide supporting details
- identify and describe some elements of stories (e.g., plot, central idea, characters, setting)
- make inferences while reading
- make judgments about what they read on the basis of evidence
- use a dictionary to expand their vocabulary

Oral:

- ask questions on a variety of topics
- express and respond to ideas and opinions concisely and clearly
- listen to others and stay on topic in group discussions

SOCIAL STUDIES

Heritage and Citizenship:

- locate relevant information from a variety of sources (e.g., maps)

Canada and World Connections:

- use number and letter grids to locate places on maps and in atlases

GRADE 5

LANGUAGE

Writing:

- communicate ideas and information for a variety of purposes (e.g., to present and support a viewpoint)
- use writing for various purposes and in a range of contexts (e.g., to summarize information from materials they have read and to reflect on their thoughts, feelings)
- organize information to convey a central idea using well-developed paragraphs that focus on a main idea and give some relevant supporting details
- use and spell correctly the vocabulary appropriate for this grade level
- use correctly the conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.) specified for this grade level
- routinely introduce new words from their reading into their writing

Reading:

- read a variety of fiction and non-fiction materials for different purposes
- explain their interpretation of a written work, supporting it with evidence from the work and from their own knowledge and experience
- describe how various elements in a story function (e.g., plot, characters, setting)
- make judgments and draw conclusions about the content in written materials using evidence from the materials
- use a dictionary to expand their vocabulary

Oral:

- ask and answer questions on a variety of topics to acquire and clarify information
- express and respond to ideas and opinions concisely, clearly, and appropriately
- listen to others and stay on topic in group discussions

SOCIAL STUDIES

Heritage and Citizenship:

- locate relevant information from a variety of sources (e.g., maps)
- construct and read for specific purposes a wide variety of graphs, charts, maps

Canada and World Connections:

- construct and read for specific purposes a wide variety of graphs, charts, maps

GRADE 6

LANGUAGE

Writing:

- communicate ideas and information for a variety of purposes (to inform, to persuade, to explain)
- use writing for various purposes and in a range of contexts (e.g., to develop and clarify ideas, to express thoughts and opinions)
- organize information to convey a central idea using well-linked paragraphs
- produce pieces of writing using a variety of forms (e.g., newspaper articles, summaries of information)
- use and spell correctly the vocabulary appropriate for this grade level
- use correctly the conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.) specified for this grade level

Reading:

- read a variety of fiction and non-fiction materials for different purposes
- explain their interpretation of a written work, supporting it with evidence from the work and from their own knowledge and experience
- identify the elements of a story and explain how they relate to each other (e.g., ways in which development of character and plot are interrelated)
- make predictions while reading a story or novel using various clues
- summarize and explain the main ideas
- make judgments and draw conclusions about ideas in written materials on the basis of evidence
- identify a writer's perspective or a character's motivation
- identify different forms of writing and describe their characteristics (e.g., historical novel)

Oral:

- ask and answer questions, obtain and clarify information
- express and respond to a range of ideas and opinions concisely, clearly, and appropriately
- follow others' ideas and recognize the validity of different points of view in group discussions or problem-solving activities

SOCIAL STUDIES

Heritage and Citizenship:

- construct and read for specific purposes a wide variety of graphs, charts, maps

Canada and World Connections:

- construct and read for specific purposes a wide variety of graphs, charts, maps
- describe the influences Canada has on other countries (e.g., through the arts, technology, sports, literature, media)

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 1: MAPPING SKILLS

On a map of Canada, name each of the provinces and territories. Then use an atlas to find the following cities that Terry Fox ran through on his Marathon of Hope. Place a dot on the map where each city is found and write its name beneath the dot, as well as the date that Terry ran through it. When you have mapped all of the cities, draw a curved line to connect them.

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. St. John's, Newfoundland (NF) | April 12 |
| 2. Dartmouth, Nova Scotia (NS) | May 20 |
| 3. Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island (PEI) | May 26 |
| 4. St. John, New Brunswick (NB) | May 31 |
| 5. Montreal, Quebec (PQ) | June 23 |
| 6. Ottawa, Ontario (ON) | July 1 |
| 7. Toronto, Ontario (ON) | July 11 |
| 8. London, Ontario (ON) | July 15 |
| 9. Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario (ON) | August 12 |
| 10. Thunder Bay, Ontario (ON) | September 1 |

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 2: BOOK ADVERTISEMENT

Design a poster advertising the book *Run* that will make people want to read it.

Steps:

1. Pretend you are writing the story for a friend who hasn't yet read it and you want him or her to enjoy it as much as you did.
2. Write a short summary (one paragraph only) of the story in your own words. Be sure not to tell everything!

Remember to:

- introduce yourself
 - name the book and the author
 - share how you feel about the book
 - mention who the main characters are
 - describe the plot (what the story is about) and the story's problem
 - encourage people to read it
3. Design a poster that includes your paragraph advertising the book and any pictures that might also inspire your audience to read it.