

UNIT 1
THE CULTURE OF YOUTH



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INTRODUCTION

The 20th century was the first time in Western history when youth could be distinguished from its elders by its culture. Today's youth has its own style of dress, its own language, its own music, its own codes of conduct and loyalty. In addition, today's youth faces stresses which were not experienced by earlier generations. Peer pressure, easy access to drugs and alcohol, the media telling youth how to act, what to wear, what to think, what to buy – all of these are constantly at work helping youth to define itself and its culture.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

We could spend an entire year exploring the many issues around youth culture. The ones we are going to study represent only a few of the more important matters relating to youth. Other issues, such as youth and the law and family relationships, are dealt with in other units in this course.

As you read and view the selections in this unit, think about the questions in the next column. You will be asked to write responses to the selections, to discuss what you think and feel about these issues, and to answer questions about them. As you respond, also think about your own

experiences as well as those of your friends. Use all the knowledge you have available about youth culture to help you write your responses.

- ✓ Have you ever been told “you’re too young”? How did you feel?
- ✓ Remember the first time you fell in love? had a drink? got grounded for being late?
- ✓ Did you ever feel pressured to go along with the gang?
- ✓ Remember when nobody understood?
- ✓ What does the media tell you to do or buy to be a successful teen?
- ✓ What responsibilities and pressures come with adolescence?
- ✓ How does school fit in the picture?
- ✓ What are the job prospects for the future?
- ✓ What are the prospects for education beyond high school?

SELECTIONS

YOUR VOICE AND MINE 1

“Careful, or You might Get Scratched”
by Joan Dash, page 46 (short story)

“On the Sidewalk Bleeding”
by Evan Hunter, page 62 (short story)

“What about Friendships?”
by Eve R. Wirth, page 72 (essay)

“What a Boy Wants”
by Richard Macaulay, page 232 (short story)

POETRY ALIVE: TRANSITIONS

“Frosted”
by Carolyn Redl-Hlus, page 177 (poem)

“Southpaw’s Paranoia”
by Bert Almon, page 177 (poem)

“Scrawney’s Surefire Acne Cure”
by Gary Hyland, page 178 (poem)

“There’s Nothing Like Instinct Fortunately”
by Ogden Nash, page 199 (poem)

ENGLISH 10 MANUAL

“The Rise of Youth Culture”
page 10 (essay)

“The Politics of the Playground”
page 17 (essay)

GETTING TO WORK

You will be required to do three different types of assignments.

Short Answers - Many of the assignments are short answer requiring from one paragraph to one page answers or responses. These assignments will have a value from 5 to 10 points. When you complete these assignments, use complete sentences and refer appropriately to the question or direction in your response or answer. Do not re-copy the question; instead, include the necessary portions of the question in your answer so that your marker knows which question you are answering.

Example: Proper Short Answer Form

Question: How important are Anne’s friends to her. Explain briefly.

Answer: Anne’s friends are more important to her than her family. She will go out of her way to see her friends and do things for them, but she won’t do the same for her family. When her mother was feeling ill and wanted her to help her with the housework, Anne wouldn’t stay home. She had made plans to go skating with her friends and wasn’t interested in helping her sick mother.

Personal Responses - This kind of writing gives you the chance to express your opinions and points of view about the ideas, themes, issues, or situations in the texts you read and view. It also allows you to ask questions about the texts, to make connections between similar texts, to make personal connections with what you are reading or viewing, and to extend your thinking beyond

what is in the text. There are no right or wrong answers to a personal response, but there are expectations that you will present your ideas and support them with references from the text. All responses must be at least 200 words. Personal responses will be valued between 5 - 10 points.

End of Unit Activities - These assignments require more thought and a longer response. For each of these assignments, the kind of writing and the length requirement will be clearly indicated. These assignments have an assigned value of 40 points. See page 24 for complete assessment information.

HOW TO COMPLETE YOUR ASSIGNMENTS

When you complete your assignments, you must:

- ✓ use looseleaf paper (if handwritten) or plain white paper (if typed)
- ✓ double-space between the lines
- ✓ use blue or black pen or type your assignments. If you type your assignments, double-space between the lines and put one space after commas, semicolons, and end punctuation.
- ✓ clearly identify each assignment with the Assignment Number and Title. In cases where you have a choice in assignments, please state clearly which choice you have selected.
- ✓ complete all the requirements in this unit and complete them in order. The selections are grouped according to issue or topic; you should, therefore, complete all the work relating to the issue or topic before moving on to the next issue.

- ✓ complete all the required assignments in this unit before you mail your work to your marker (do not mail partial assignments).

HOW TO IDENTIFY A TEENAGER 30 POINTS



Although every adult was at one time a teenager, it is amazing how many of them forget what their adolescent years were like. Teenagers form a subculture within the larger Western culture, complete with their own clothing styles, music, and so on. The American poet Ogden Nash, who is well-known for his humorous writing, takes a stab at classifying teenagers in general.

1. Read Ogden Nash's poem "There's Nothing Like Instinct Fortunately" (page 199 in *Poetry Alive*) in which he tries to classify teenagers.
 - a) According to Nash, what is the main characteristic of the teenager? Quote to support your answer.
 - b) This poem is not intended to offend anyone. How do you respond to Nash's references to a "young person" as "it"?
 - c) Explain what Nash means by the last sentence, "Meanwhile psychologists grow rich / Writing that the young are ones parents should not undermine the self-confidence of which." How does this statement tell us that Nash actually has good opinions of the young?

2. Read the poem “Frosted” (page 177 in *Poetry Alive: Transitions*).
 - a) What are the two young people doing at the bus stop? How do we know they are in fact young people?
 - b) Write a response to the statement the man waiting at the stop makes about them.

3. Read the article “The Rise of Youth Culture” which follows this question. As you read, relate what you read to your understanding of your own culture. Complete the following.
 - a) Write a personal response to this essay.
 - b) Create a chart like the one below and compare (find the similarities and differences) your youth culture with that of an earlier one, either your parents’ or your grandparents’. Find at least five points of comparison.

Cultural characteristic	My generation	My parent's generation
Music		
Comfort food		
??		
??		
??		

The Rise of Youth Culture

Up to the 20th century, children were like miniature clones of their parents. They dressed in the same clothing styles, and with the exception of childhood games, they engaged in much the same cultural pursuits as their parents. Their value systems echoed those of their parents. After World War One, all that changed.

The “Roaring Twenties” produced the first youth culture that was distinct from the rest of society. It started with the “flapper” social set which was part of the college scene. Flapper cultural behaviours and values were dramatically different from those of the older generation. Flapper dress included short skirts and raccoon coats. Women’s long upswept hair styles gave way to the short, bobbed cut, waved and permed. The lifestyle included fraternity parties, sporting events, exuberant dances like the Charleston, and more premarital sex than previous generations had experienced.

Although the wealthier college set enjoyed the raciest version of this lifestyle, those less well off practised it as their pocketbooks would permit. The media promoted the flapper lifestyle by advertising the trappings of the subculture: cigarettes, clothing styles, and social pursuits. Movies showed young men and women how to walk the walk and how to belong to the “in” group.

By the 1940s, youth culture had swelled to include teenagers, and media and business

made it their task to cater to the wants of this growing subculture. The fact that this generation of adolescents was more inclined to stay in school helped them to develop as a distinct group.

The movie and music industries began to target adolescent audiences. Frank Sinatra, the '40s heartthrob was followed by Elvis Presley in the '50s. Saddle shoes, bobby sox, and ponytails were the trademarks of young women, just as Brylcream and ducktail haircuts belonged to the men. Drive-in restaurants and juke boxes were the daily entertainment ration. The arrival of *Seventeen* magazine on newsstands in 1944 showed that youth had become a significant market to be targeted.

Since then, all generations of youth have had their distinctive dress styles, music, movies, hangouts, codes of behaviour and values, even their own slang. All this has been perpetuated by the media, which as worked hand in hand with business to create the images of youth and stimulate the demand for the products that corporations provide.

Is this likely to change? Not very. Each generation of youth gives way to a new one with its own behaviours and values. The irony of it all is the remarkable ability of adults to forget that they were once part of a youth subculture and to condemn their successors as a cultural experiment gone wrong.

THE INFLUENCE OF PEERS *30 POINTS*



Sometimes it might seem as if teenagers' friends are more important to them than their families. Hanging out with their friends is preferable to going places with the family. Yet friendships in the teen years are often precarious and do not last into adulthood.

1. Write a paragraph (75-100 words) in which you discuss what you believe are the qualities of a good friend.
2. Read the essay "What about Friendships?" (page 72 in *Your Voice and Mine 1*). Write a response comparing your ideas about friendship with those in the essay. Are there lengths to which friendship should not go?
3. Create a chart like the one below listing the advantages and disadvantages of belonging to a teenaged social club, sports team, or gang. Brainstorm at least five of each.

Membership in a Teen Social Club, Sports Team, or Gang

Advantages	Disadvantages

4. Read the story “On the Sidewalk Bleeding” (page 62 in *Your Voice and Mine 1*).
- Write a personal response to the story. Be sure to comment on Freddie and Angela’s reactions to Andy.
 - One of Andy’s realizations, as he lay dying, was that he was just a Royal, not Andy. What has happened to Andy’s identity as a result of his membership in the Royals?
 - He struggles out of his jacket before he dies. What is the significance of this act?
 - The story contains a flashback. Identify the events that are narrated as a flashback. See the definition of a flashback below.

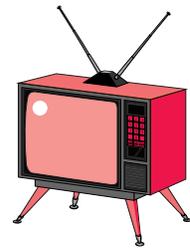
Flashback: The flashback is a literary technique writers often use to provide information without having to give a lot of details. Instead of the events of the story being told in the order, or sequence they actually happened, the author rearranges them so that events that happened at an earlier time are inserted between events that happen later. For example, in a story about a character, the author might take time out from the narrative to tell about something that had happened to the character on an earlier occasion, such as in his/her childhood, or the day or the year before the time when the events of the story are happening.

FALLING IN LOVE 30 POINTS

Teen romance, falling in love for the first time, making decisions about sex, these are all issues that are of great interest to adolescents. The media also finds them of great interest: note the number of movies and television sitcoms that focus on these themes.



- Choose two television sitcoms or dramas (not cartoons) with teenagers as main characters and view one episode of each. The shows you pick must have teen romance as a central theme.



- Complete the viewing log at the top of the next page.
 - Write a brief summary of each of the two shows.
 - Write a personal response to the shows commenting on how they dealt with the romance issue. Give your opinion of how well they represented adolescents in this situation.
- In a paragraph or two, write why you think teenagers deliberately go against their parents’ wishes and enter into relationships or friendships with people their parents consider unsuitable. Give specific reasons. (You may use personal experience in your discussion if

Name of Program	Date/Time	Channel	Producer	Actors

you wish, but do not feel that you have to) What effect can these relationships have on teens and their parents?



Then read the story “Careful, or You Might Get Scratched.” (page 46 in *Your Voice and Mine 1*).

- a) When we read, we frequently skim to find details. This involves scanning pages rapidly, looking for key words that relate to the information we are trying to find. Skim the story to find the following information. Use quotes.
 - ✓ two clues that suggest the final outcome of the story before we actually read it
 - ✓ two situations that show Bryan deliberately opposing his parents
 - ✓ two hints that Avery has romantic feelings for Crystal
- b) Write a personal response to the story. Be sure to focus on Bryan’s behaviour.

THE TEEN ATHLETE 25 POINTS



Participation in sports is one of the primary socializing avenues for children. Through sports, young people are supposed to learn sportsmanship, team playing, and how to win and lose. In adolescence, teenagers either give up on sports or become members of those elite groups that play soccer or hockey, or attain a coveted position on the school’s basketball team.

1. In a paragraph or two (about 100 words), reflect on the role sports have played in your life so far. If you have never been involved in sports, your reflection can be the reasons why you have chosen not to be involved in sports in a society that values sports activities.

Most stories focus on a problem of some sort –maybe an external problem like: will the injured mountain climber’s safety line hold until help arrives. Stories also focus on internal situations or problems, such as overcoming a fear or making a decision.

2. Read “What a Boy Wants” (page 232 in *Your Voice and Mine 1*). As you read, think about the problem Randy Johnson faces and how he overcomes it.

- a) Complete the tear-out story map on the next page as you read.
- b) Write a response to the story. Be sure to focus also on the actions of both coaches.

THE TROUBLES OF YOUTH 30 POINTS

Growing up is not a problem-free event. All teens face some kind of misery one time or another and struggle to deal with it. The dynamics of being young: learning what the limits are and how to get along with others can be difficult. Many teen problems have a tendency to be blown out of proportion. However, adolescence can be a painful experience for some.



1. Read “Scrawney’s Surefire Acne Cure” (page 178 in *Poetry Alive: Transitions*).
 - a) What does the narrator claim is the main problem with acne? Do you agree with him? Why or why not?
 - b) Why does he include Helen of Troy, Cleopatra, and Lancelot as examples of sufferers of acne? Who are they?
 - c) The poem is intended to be humorous. Do you agree that it is? Why or why not?
 - d) The poem is accompanied by a cartoon image of an Easter Island statue. In a short paragraph, relate the cartoon to the poem.
2. Years ago, children who grew up left-handed were often forced by teachers to write with their right hands. They were punished for

using their left hands. Read “Southpaw’s Paranoia” (page 177 in *Poetry Alive: Transitions*).

- a) What activities does the narrator have difficulty with because he is left-handed?
- b) Why does he always feel “wrong”?
- c) Find the definition of “southpaw.” Why is “Southpaw’s Paranoia” a suitable title for the poem?
- d) What is the tone of the poem? How do you think the narrator feels about his life as a left-hander?

Tone: a writer’s view of his/her subject and attitude toward the readers. Tone is conveyed through choice of words to give a particular effect. The tone of a piece of writing can be serious or humorous, happy or sad, pleasant or angry.

3. Write a paragraph (6 -10 sentences) about your memories of children’s behaviour on school playgrounds from your elementary school days.

STORY MAP

Name of Story:

Setting (time and place):

Charaters:

Problem:

Events (list):

Outcome:

Read the essay, given below,
“The Politics of the Playground”.



- a) Write a personal response to the essay.
- b) The essay suggests that children with “fragile status” are more likely targets for bullies. In a short paragraph, give reasons why you agree or disagree with this statement.

The Politics of the Playground

Not long ago, I received a call from my son’s elementary teacher. It seemed that he had been participating in a bit of school yard hazing. He was, his teacher informed me, one of several boys who had been giving another boy, a loner who was not an accepted member of “the gang,” a hard time – some casual shoves and verbal broadsides.

His teacher couldn’t understand why a child like my son, who seemed to have everything going for him, would feel he had to stoop to such behaviour to gain acceptance in his group. After all, she said, he is in the middle of his social group, one of the class leaders, and appreciated for his sense of humour.

I spoke to my son about the incident, and to my surprise, he started to cry. What would happen to him and his reputation if he didn’t go along with the gang? Didn’t I know that, if he didn’t seem to approve of what his friends were doing, they would

turn on him? His analysis of the situation startled me. He had always seemed quite comfortable in school. He had grown up with the children in his class and had never experienced any problems with his peers, had never been bullied or made the butt of any name-calling or malicious practical jokes. All this in spite of the fact that he was, in many ways, a prime candidate for such behaviour.

A lengthy childhood illness had left him less muscular and lighter in body weight than his peers, a bit weaker and less athletic. Moreover, he had been forced to repeat a grade because of extensive absence resulting from that illness. Children who repeat are often considered “stupid” by their classmates and become the victims of name-calling as a result. For a long time, he was the only child in his class who wore glasses. All these factors, I suddenly realized, made him feel that his social position was a precarious one; it was this that caused him to go to such lengths to protect his status within the group.

I thought, how different from our other son! We had moved when he was in grade 3. As a result, he lost the strong sense of belonging he’d enjoyed with his former peer group and became an outcast. His own aggressive nature didn’t help matters much, and he spent most of his elementary school years involved in name-calling situations and fights. It was not until high school, when he

grew into a strong and muscular youth, that his tormentors left him alone.

The school playground is a pretty rough place, a lot rougher than teachers or parents realize. How much of a child’s feeling of wellbeing and safety on the playground hinges on whether the supervisor is looking in the right direction? “Did you tell the supervisor?” gets answered with, “Yes, but she wasn’t looking my way, so she didn’t know who to believe.” How much of the children’s play time is spent trying to keep one step ahead of the bullies who know how to get their licks in without being seen by someone in authority?

The worst of it is that it doesn’t get better; children growing into adolescence don’t outgrow the process of torment but simply refine it. Not until adulthood do we see any lessening of this kind of behaviour when, presumably, such things as work and marriage take precedence.

Certainly, if we look for them, we teachers can see these kinds of situations. Sometimes we hear of them from other teachers or – when they get so out of hand that they become media events – read about them in the newspaper. Sometimes, when they result in tragedies, such as suicide, we become completely engulfed by them.

But what do we do about them? We must start by becoming aware that our students

may be involved in dynamics that we don’t usually think of in relation to children. We must remember that children often understand far more about human relations and school yard hierarchies than we expect.

We must keep a vigilant eye out for the children with fragile status and support them, without providing more reason for them to be picked on by other children. We have to contain the inflictors of pain and work with them to make them kinder human beings. We must teach children acceptable ways to interact with one another.

And what of my son? Well, he’s practising being one of those kinder human beings. Not all the time, maybe, but often enough that he is beginning to feel better about himself and his status, and often enough that he can believe that what he thinks of himself is more important than what his peers think of him.

END OF UNIT ACTIVITIES *40 POINTS*

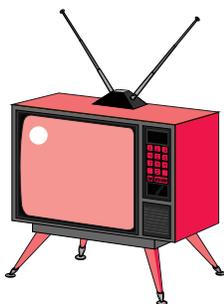


Do two of the following activities. Read each one carefully and follow the instructions exactly.

1. The essay “The Rise of Youth Culture” (page 12) suggests that youth culture is a creation of the media, in particular advertising. Research

different television advertisements to determine what kind of ads are directed toward teenagers. Think about the following questions:

- ✓ What kinds of television programs target a teenage audience?
- ✓ How do you and your friends respond to them?



Complete a viewing log of the programs you watch. Use the format below.

Name of Program	Date/Time	Channel	Producer	Actors

Using your research, write a magazine article that discusses your observations about advertising and adolescent audiences. Length: 300 words. Submit both the viewing log and the final draft of the article.

Writing a Magazine Article

Articles in magazines are intended to inform people. They are based on interviews, research and observations, and must be factual.

You should give your article the following features:

- ✓ an interesting title
- ✓ an interesting and attention-grabbing opening paragraph
- ✓ a body that deals with the details of the 5 Ws – Who, What, Where, When, and Why – of the story

2. Choose one of the poems in this unit and write a fictional personal narrative based on it. Length: 300-400 words.

Writing a Personal Narrative

A personal narrative tells about something important or meaningful that happened to you. It has the following characteristics:

- ✓ relates events clearly and truthfully (or with the appearance of truth if it is a fictional personal narrative)
- ✓ is written in the first person (the narrator refers to himself/herself as “I” throughout and tells the story)
- ✓ uses vivid details to recreate the experience
- ✓ shows or suggests the importance of the incident to the narrator
- ✓ uses dialogue if needed

Give your personal narrative an interesting introduction and conclusion. Do not confuse the personal narrative with the short story which is always fictional and has details of plot, setting, conflict, and character development that are either absent or less developed in a personal narrative.

3. Using one of the poems in the unit as a model for style, rhythm, rhyme scheme, stanza pattern, ect., write your own poem exploring an issue of adolescence that you find interesting. Length: at least 30 lines. Name the poem you are using as a model.
4. Create a split collage on which you show two views of adolescence. On one side, your images and words should show the stereotypical images of teenagers. On the other side, use images and words to show your view of teenagers and yourself (if you still are a teenager). Size must be at least ½ of a sheet of bristol board.

How to Make a Collage

A collage is a work of art that is created by pasting together different materials and items that are not normally associated with one another. The word “collage” refers to a layering process, so the pieces that are glued to the collage overlap or at least touch. **Your collage must be at least the size of half of a sheet of bristol board.** The materials used may include:

- ✓ pictures from newspaper, magazines, and photographs

- ✓ letters and words from newspapers and magazines
- ✓ your own drawings or writings
- ✓ bits of cloth
- ✓ objects that can be glued to the surface of the collage

The background usually is bristol board or other stiff surface. When you create your collage, you should think carefully about the main idea, theme, or mood you want to convey. Then:

- ✓ carefully choose the materials, words, and images that are appropriate for that theme or mood
- ✓ neatly cut out the materials
- ✓ taking into account the colours, shapes, and sizes of the materials you have chosen, carefully arrange the material on the background so that you achieve the best visual effect to get your idea or theme across.

You may give your collage a border if you wish. Be neat, and be sure to glue the pieces down firmly.

For a split collage, divide the background in half either vertically, diagonally, or horizontally. Draw or glue a line that clearly divides the two halves.

END OF UNIT**REFLECTION 10 POINTS**

Now that you have completed this unit, write several paragraphs (150-200 words) in which you reflect on:



- ✓ your feelings in general about the selections you were required to read
- ✓ the ideas presented in them about youth
- ✓ what you may have discovered about yourself while completing this unit



When you have completed Unit 1, send the following assignments to your marker:

Assignment 1: How To Identify a Teenager	Value: 30 points
Assignment 2: The Influence of Peers	Value: 30 points
Assignment 3: Falling in Love	Value: 30 points
Assignment 4: The Teen Athlete	Value: 25 points
Assignment 5: The Troubles of Youth	Value: 30 points
Assignment 6: End of Unit Activities	Value: 40 points
Assignment 7: End of Unit Reflection	<u>Value: 10 points</u>
	Total: 195 Points

Do not wait to get Unit 1 back from your marker. Go on to Unit 2.