The Weight of the Wait

A Language Explorers Story About Words and Much More

The Language Explorers Series – Book 10

Series Finale

APPENDICES FOR AUDIOBOOK LISTENERS

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Toad University Press

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This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are products of the author's imagination, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental. The language concepts, however, are very real.

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Appendix A

Teacher and Parent Notes

The Language Explorers Series – Book 10: *The Weight of the Wait*

These notes are designed to support guided reading, discussion, and reflection for *The Weight of the Wait*.

As in previous volumes, the goal is not to interrupt the story, but to help adults notice what the book is quietly practicing—and to support readers as those habits continue to strengthen.

Use what is helpful.
Skip what is not.
The story comes first.

Big Picture Focus of Book 10

Book 10 completes the series' long movement away from explicit instruction and toward internal judgment—the kind that operates even when no one is watching, correcting, or praising.

Rather than introducing new skills, this final volume asks readers to notice **what remains** when instruction steps back.

This book quietly reinforces three integrated ideas:

1) Readiness as internal evidence (not external approval)

Readiness in this book is never announced.
It is inferred through behavior, restraint, and timing.

Characters do not declare themselves prepared; instead, readers observe:

- decisions made without urgency,
- confidence without performance,
- and patience that does not require reassurance.

Lucia's departure is framed not as an achievement, but as a natural consequence of habits already formed.

2) Learning as portable (not location-bound)

Across the series, learning has always been tied to observation rather than place.
In Book 10, this idea matures fully.

Readers are invited to notice:

- systems that function without Lucia at the center,
- teachers who no longer need to intervene,
- and knowledge that remains available even when it is not carried along.

Learning is presented as something that **waits**, rather than something that disappears.

3) Endings as transitions (not conclusions)

The book resists spectacle.
There is no final test, no grand declaration, no summary of lessons learned.

Instead, closure is modeled through:

- calm leave-taking,
- shared language for goodbye across cultures,
- and the understanding that most meaningful growth continues beyond the page.

The final chapters emphasize that endings do not erase what came before—they reveal what holds.

Chapter-by-Chapter Learning Focus

(Chapter titles match the manuscript's Table of Contents.)
Book 10 – The Weight of the Wait

Chapter 1 — Nothing to See Here
Focus: Invisibility, perception, and selective attention
Key ideas modeled:
• What humans notice vs. what they ignore
• Observation as an active skill
• The difference between absence and being unseen
• Readiness framed as environmental, not announced
Optional discussion prompts:
• Who sees the most in this chapter—and why?
• What does it mean that nothing "important" appears to happen?

Chapter 2 — How Ready Feels Right Before It Isn't
Focus: Readiness, anticipation, and emotional timing
Key ideas modeled:
• Readiness as a feeling, not a finish line
• Time accelerating around important transitions
• The difference between preparation and arrival
• Language used to name uncertainty without panic
Optional discussion prompts:
• Why does readiness feel unstable instead of confident?
• What changes once something is scheduled?

Chapter 3 — The Chickens Introduce Themselves
Focus: Social identity, language ownership, and credibility
Key ideas modeled:
• Introductions as claims of belonging
• Confidence vs. authority
• How language signals seriousness (without explanation)
• Who gets to "arrive" and be accepted
Optional discussion prompts:
• Why are the chickens taken seriously so quickly?
• How does language affect credibility here?

Chapter 4 — When Things Continue Without You
Focus: Independence, systems, and trust
Key ideas modeled:
• Healthy systems functioning without supervision
• Letting go without loss
• Continuity as evidence of success
• Trust demonstrated through absence, not control
Optional discussion prompts:
• Why is it important that the restaurant works without Wolfgang?
• How does this chapter redefine "being needed"?

Chapter 5 — Who Is Doing the Singing
Focus: Grammar as responsibility (active vs. passive voice)
Key ideas modeled:
• Active voice as clarity and ownership
• Passive voice as useful—but risky
• Responsibility embedded in sentence structure
• How grammar changes meaning without changing facts
Optional discussion prompts:
• Why does "who did it" matter?
• When might passive voice be appropriate—and when not?

Chapter 6 — Anticipation Has Weight
Focus: Planning, restraint, and quiet preparation
Key ideas modeled:
• Anticipation as a measurable force
• Preparation without announcement
• Logistics as respect for others
• Readiness emerging through coordination
Optional discussion prompts:
• How is anticipation shown without excitement?
• Why is quiet planning treated as strength?

Chapter 7 — Weight, Properly Understood
Focus: Quantitative reasoning and structural thinking
Key ideas modeled:
• Weight as force, not just size
• Units as descriptors that require context

• Conversion as interpretation, not arithmetic performance
• Systems designed to support load
Optional discussion prompts:
• Why doesn't Andrew D'Toro break anything?
• What does this chapter teach about "support"?

Chapter 8 — The Cost of Being Seen
Focus: Attention, reputation, and responsibility
Key ideas modeled:
• Visibility as pressure
• Fame vs. substance
• Growth bringing new constraints
• Choosing what *not* to become
Optional discussion prompts:
• Why does attention feel heavy here?
• What risks come with being noticed?

Chapter 9 — To Be, and What That Means
Focus: Identity, language precision, and permanence
Key ideas modeled:
• "Being" vs. "becoming"
• Spanish **ser vs. estar** as conceptual distinction
• Temporary states vs. defining traits
• Advice examined rather than accepted
Optional discussion prompts:
• Why do some languages need two kinds of "to be"?
• How can advice be well-meant but incomplete?

Chapter 10 — The Mirror Turns
Focus: Internalization of learning; role reversal
Key ideas modeled:
• Learning revealed through action, not repetition
• Teaching as evidence of understanding
• Trust replacing instruction
• The mentor stepping back
Optional discussion prompts:
• How do we know Lucia has learned?
• What changes when advice is no longer given?

Chapter 11 — The Rule That Bent

Focus: Language evolution and rule flexibility
Key ideas modeled:
• Grammar vs. lexis (rules vs. inventory)
• Loan words and linguistic growth
• Rules serving meaning—not blocking it
• Precision without rigidity
Optional discussion prompts:
• Why is "biodegradable" allowed?
• When should rules bend—and why?

Chapter 12 — The List That Wasn't a List

Focus: Organization, categorization, and hidden structure
Key ideas modeled:
• Lists as thinking tools, not formats
• Order emerging from purpose
• The danger of false completeness
• Implicit systems guiding behavior
Optional discussion prompts:
• Why isn't this really a list?
• How does structure exist even when unstated?

Chapter 13 — Declaring

Focus: Decision-making and ownership of choice
Key ideas modeled:
• Declaration as commitment, not performance
• Saying something once, clearly
• Clarity as an ethical act
• Ending ambiguity intentionally
Optional discussion prompts:
• Why does declaring feel different from explaining?
• What responsibility comes with clarity?

Chapter 14 — The Dinner

Focus: Integration and recognition
Key ideas modeled:
• Culmination without spectacle
• Recognition as affirmation, not reward

• Community witnessing growth
• Restraint as celebration

Optional discussion prompts:

• Why is the dinner calm instead of dramatic?
• What does the Minnowlin Stars moment represent?

Chapter 15 — Goodbye

Focus: Closure, language, and continuity

Key ideas modeled:

• Goodbye as acknowledgment, not loss
• Multilingual closure (goodbye / adiós / 再见)
• Endings that preserve connection
• Leaving without erasing belonging

Optional discussion prompts:

• Why is goodbye taught as a language lesson?
• How does this ending avoid finality?

Try to say "goodbye" and "thank you" in any many languages as you can. You'll be amazed with a mixed group how many come up.

Notes and Ideas

Appendix B Glossary

abruptly (adv.) suddenly and without warning
acknowledgment (n.) showing that something is seen, understood, or recognized
affirmation (n.) a sign that something is correct or valued, without applause or reward
altitude (n.) how high something is above the ground
analyze (v.) to look closely at something to understand how it works
announce (v.) to say something loudly or publicly
anticipation (n.) the feeling of expecting something before it happens, often making time feel heavier or longer
appropriate (adj.) fitting the situation in a thoughtful way
attention (n.) careful focus on what is happening now
authority (n.) trust earned by being consistent and calm, not by being loud or in charge
behavior (n.) how someone acts, especially when it matters
bent (v.) changed shape without breaking
biodegradable (adj.) able to break down naturally over time
boundary (n.) a clear limit that shows where something begins and ends
burst (v.) to move suddenly with energy
bursar (n.) a school official who handles billing, payments, and financial accounts
calm (adj.) steady and not rushed or panicked
categorize (v.) to sort things into groups based on shared traits
ceremony (n.) a formal or special event that marks importance
clarity (n.) being easy to understand
collecting (v.) continuing to gather over time
comparison (n.) looking at two or more things to see how they are alike or different
consequence (n.) what happens because of an action
context (n.) the surrounding situation that gives meaning to words or actions
control (n.) the ability to guide something without force
credibility (n.) being trusted because of past behavior
crunch (n.) a sharp sound made by pressure, like boots on gravel
declaration (n.) a clear statement of intent
declare (v.) to say something clearly and firmly without explanation
defer (v.) to wait for someone else to decide
deliberate (adj.) done carefully and on purpose
descend (v.) to move downward in a controlled way
discernment (n.) the ability to judge wisely using thought instead of impulse
dismissive (adj.) acting as if something does not matter
distinction (n.) a meaningful difference between things
efficient (adj.) working well without wasted effort
emotional (adj.) involving strong feelings
enclosure (n.) a space surrounded by a boundary
enormous (adj.) very large

euphoric (adj.) extremely happy or excited
finality (n.) the feeling that something is completely finished
framework (n.) a structure that helps ideas make sense
function (v.) to work as intended
gesture (n.) a small movement that shows meaning
gram (n.) a metric unit used to measure mass
guidance (n.) help that points the way without forcing
hesitation (n.) a pause caused by uncertainty
ignore (v.) to choose not to notice something
inheritance (n.) something passed down, not owned but carried
inventory (n.) a complete list of what is present
interpret (v.) to explain the meaning of something
judgment (n.) a decision made after careful thought
kilogram (n.) a metric unit equal to one thousand grams
lexis (n.) the total collection of words in a language
literal (adj.) exact and not symbolic
major (n.) a main area of study chosen by a student
metaphor (n.) a comparison that explains one thing using another
movement (n.) change in position or direction
observation (n.) careful watching before reacting
optics (n.) how something appears to others, especially in public
ordinary (adj.) normal or expected
orientation (n.) an introduction to a new school, place, or program
pause (n.) a short stop to think
perspective (n.) the way something is seen based on position or experience
philosophy (n.) a way of thinking about how things should be understood
pound (n.) a unit used to measure weight
practical (adj.) focused on what works
precision (n.) careful accuracy
preen (v.) to fix yourself up proudly so others will notice
proportional (adj.) balanced and appropriate to the situation
readiness (n.) being prepared, shown by action
recognition (n.) seeing and acknowledging growth
recursive (adj.) something that refers back to itself
registrar (n.) a school official who keeps student records and course information
restraint (n.) choosing not to act right away
role (n.) the part someone plays in a group
room and board (n.) the cost of housing and meals while attending school
sequence (n.) the order in which things happen
shimmer (v.) to reflect light softly
symbolism (n.) meaning represented indirectly
system (n.) a structure that continues working on its own

transition (n.) a movement from one stage to another
trust (n.) confidence built through consistency
tuition (n.) money paid for instruction at a school or university
visibility (n.) the state of being seen
wary (adj.) careful because of possible danger
weight (n.) how heavy something is, literally or emotionally
whimper (v.) to make a small sound of worry
wince (v.) to react slightly to pain or discomfort
without ceremony (phrase) happening plainly, without special attention

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Grammar & Language
active voice (**n.**) sentence structure in which the subject performs the action.
passive voice (**n.**) sentence structure in which the subject receives the action.
loan word (**n.**) a word adopted from another language without translation.
precision (**n.**) careful word choice that preserves clear meaning.
rule (**n.**) a guideline intended to serve meaning rather than restrict it.

Math & Reasoning
constraint (**n.**) a limit that clarifies choice rather than restricting it.
conversion (**n.**) the interpretation of one unit or form into another.
unit (**n.**) what a number measures; numbers require units to have meaning.
weight (**n.**) a measure of force or importance, used both literally and metaphorically.

Multilingual Vocabulary

goodbye (**interj.**) a parting expression in English, often implying finality.
adiós (**interj., Spanish; ah-dee-OHS**) a Spanish farewell meaning "to God," implying separation without erasure.
再见 (zài jiàn) (**interj., Mandarin; say "sigh" with a t up front, like tsigh JEN)** a farewell meaning "see again," implying expectation of return.
ser (**v., Spanish; sehr**) to be in a permanent or defining sense.
estar (**v., Spanish; eh-STAR**) to be in a temporary or situational sense.

Cultural & Story-Specific
diplomacy (**n.**) the practice of managing relationships carefully across groups.
Cromania (**proper n.**) a fictional political entity used to model diplomacy.
Minnowlin Stars (**n.**) awards given quietly after excellence has already been demonstrated.
Toad University (**proper n.**) a destination representing readiness rather than achievement.
Private Event (**n.**) a gathering marked by intention rather than explanation.

Notes and Ideas

Appendix C — Optional Writing & Thinking Activities

(For Readers, Classrooms, and Families)
These activities are offered as extensions—not requirements.
They are designed to encourage reflection, discussion, and quiet practice of the habits the story models.
Use what fits.
Adapt freely.
Skip anything that doesn't serve your reader.

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1. Noticing Without Explaining

Activity:
Ask the reader to write (or say) three things they noticed in the book that were never explained directly.

Prompt starters:
• "I noticed that…"
• "Something small that mattered was…"
• "No one said this out loud, but…"

Purpose:
To practice observation without rushing to interpretation or judgment.

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2. When Waiting Is Doing Something

Activity:
Have the reader describe a time when waiting turned out to be useful, even if it didn't feel that way at first.

Optional writing prompt:
• "At first, I thought nothing was happening. Later, I realized…"

Purpose:
To reframe waiting as an active process rather than a pause or failure.

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3. Rules That Help—and Rules That Don't

Activity:
Invite the reader to name one rule they've encountered that helped, and one that caused trouble when applied too strictly.

Optional discussion questions:
• What was the rule trying to protect?
• When did it stop helping?

Purpose:
To build judgment about rules as tools, not absolutes.

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4. Choosing a Direction (Not a Destiny)
Activity:
Ask the reader to write about something they might choose *for now*, knowing it could change later.
Prompt:
• "If I had to choose a direction today, it might be…"
Purpose:
To practice commitment without fear of permanence.

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5. What Would You Carry?
Activity:
If you could take only one book, object, or idea with you into a new place, what would it be—and why?
Optional extension:
Discuss what could safely be left behind, knowing it would still be there later.
Purpose:
To explore prioritization, trust, and restraint.

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6. Saying Goodbye in More Than One Way
Activity:
Teach or research how different languages say goodbye. Compare what each one suggests about leaving.
Reflection prompt:
• Which goodbye feels most comforting to you?
• Which feels most honest?
Purpose:
To show how language carries cultural values and emotional assumptions.

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7. A Quiet Thank-You
Activity:
Have the reader write a short thank-you note that does *not* explain itself or over-justify.
Constraint:
No more than three sentences.
Purpose:
To practice clarity, restraint, and intentional language.

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8. What Remains
Activity:
After finishing the book, ask the reader to answer one question only:
• "What remains?"
They may answer with a sentence, a drawing, or silence.

Purpose:
To allow the book to end without forcing closure.

Note for Adults
These activities are not meant to test comprehension.
They are meant to **slow attention**, encourage **judgment**, and support the reader in noticing how learning often happens quietly.
If a reader chooses not to complete any of them, that is also a meaningful response.
The story has already done its work.

Notes and Ideas

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About the Author

David I Schoen, known to generations of students as Professor Dave, has spent decades helping learners of all ages discover clarity, confidence, and even a little joy in the worlds of language, math, and learning. A veteran educator, tutor, and writer—and an unapologetic lover of books—he specializes in turning complicated ideas into simple, friendly explanations that actually stick.

Dave has guided thousands of students through English, math, writing, grammar, and test preparation, as well as the always-adventurous process of becoming a stronger thinker. His teaching blends humor, precision, and storytelling—a combination that has helped learners from elementary school through adulthood feel empowered instead of intimidated.

He is also an active private pilot and has been flying for over three decades—an experience that has shaped the realism, detail, and sense of wonder behind *Tamias Learns to Fly* and *The Flying Explorers Series*. Before becoming an author and educator, he worked as an Air Traffic Controller at JFK International Airport, one of the world's busiest airports, for almost two decades. Aviation is in his blood, just as it is slowly coming to be in Tamias'.

When he isn't teaching or writing, Dave can usually be found creating new educational books, experimenting in the kitchen, playing the piano, or working on inventive projects that combine family, learning, and fun. He lives on Long Island, New York, where he is constantly surrounded by stories waiting to be told.

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Keep your head up!
