



THE WRITING ACADEMY, LLC®



Module 1

TREES and Shaping the Prompt



Grade 3 • Cluster 2

Growing an ECR — Informational Writing



★ Meet Our Week!

Module Slide 1 • Module 1

★ Daily Deck

I Will...

- Mark the topic of a prompt with a red circle.
- Mark the charge of a prompt with a yellow box.
- Mark the clue word of a prompt with a green triangle.
- Decide whether a prompt asks for WHY thinking or HOW thinking.

I Can...

- Find the noun of importance in a prompt.
- Find the verb of importance in a prompt.
- Find the clue word that tells me why or how.
- **Explain to a partner** what a prompt is asking me to do.



Would You Rather? Seed or Sunlight

Day 1 • Gather

Would you rather...

Hold up **one finger** for a
SEED, or **two fingers** for a
bag of **SUNLIGHT**?

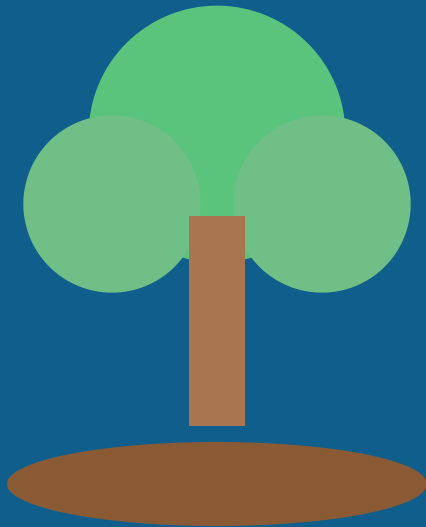
Here's the trick...

Sunlight is wonderful, but it
cannot grow anything by itself.
Today we grow something
powerful — without soil, seeds,
or water. We are going to grow
ideas.

Why can't sunlight grow anything by itself? Because nothing is planted yet!

★ Our Growing Tree

Day 1 • Reveal



Ground → **Passage and Prompt**

Trunk → **Thesis (Central Idea)**

Branches → **Reason / Evidence / Explanation**

Nothing grows until the ground is ready.

★ Statement or Question?

Day 1 • Reveal (cont.)

SCR

usually a **question**

ECR

usually a **statement**

ECR prompts usually contain the word **why** or the word **how**.



Watch Me Shape It!

Day 1 • Modeling

★ Daily Deck

Explain why **Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories** **help**
readers understand history.

○ Topic: Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories □ Charge: help △ Clue: why → WHY

First the noun of importance, then the verb of importance, then the clue word.



Listen and Fill In!

Day 1 • Auditory Engagement

★ Daily Deck

An SCR is usually a _____.

An ECR is usually a _____.

The topic of a prompt is the _____ of importance.

The charge of a prompt is the _____ of importance.

The clue word tells me whether the prompt wants _____ or _____ thinking.

Say it out loud, then write it in your Interactive Notebook.

★ BOOM BOOM GRAB!

Day 2 • Attempt

Thesis (Central Idea)

The trunk. Answers the prompt.

Evidence

A branch. Comes straight from the passage.

Explanation

A branch. Tells what the evidence shows.

Listen to the sentence. Don't touch a card until you hear **BOOM BOOM GRAB** — then grab the tree card that matches!



Grab the Right Card!

Day 2 • Attempt (cont.) • Answer Key

Laura wrote stories about her childhood on the frontier.

Evidence

This shows Laura wanted people to understand life long ago.

Explanation

Laura helped readers learn about history through storytelling.

Thesis

Garza's paintings show families cooking and celebrating holidays.

Evidence

This helps people understand Mexican-American traditions.

Explanation

★ Your Turn With a Partner!

Day 2 • Partner Prompt Marking

Mark it yourself, then check the teacher's copy!

Explain how Carmen Lomas Garza's artwork tells stories about family life.

Mark the red circle with the class. You mark the yellow box and green triangle on your own!

Let's Talk About It!

Day 3 • Discuss

What helped you know a sentence was evidence?

How did you know when something was explanation?

What does a thesis (central idea) do?

Why do prompts use words like *why* and *how*?

≡ Prompt Shaping Practice

Day 3 • Use Again (Independent) — Interactive Notebook, p. 85

1 Explain why Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories help readers understand history.

2 Explain how Carmen Lomas Garza's artwork tells stories about family life.

3 Explain why Laura Ingalls Wilder became an important author.

4 Explain how Carmen Lomas Garza preserves cultural traditions through art.

Circle the topic in red, box the charge in yellow, triangle the clue word in green — then write WHY or HOW.

© Strong Roots & Next Steps!

Day 4 • Award & Target

AWARD — Draw Your Tree

Roots: I understood the prompt. **Trunk:** I wrote my thesis (central idea).
Branches: Evidence and Explanation. Add a star to the trunk!

TARGET — My Goal

Next time I will _____.

★ Turn and Teach!

Day 5 • Explain to Others

Teach your partner...

The noun of importance is _____ because _____.

The verb of importance is _____ because _____.

This is a WHY/HOW prompt because the clue word is _____.

The ECR Writing Process Poem

Read with prosody, leave some tracks.

Shape the prompt and answer back.

Write the thesis (central idea), then convince —

Show them proof called evidence.

Relate it to all who read. Let my writing meet a need!

Exit Ticket

Day 5 • Explain to Others & Assessment

**Explain why Carmen Lomas Garza painted
everyday family moments.**

Circle the topic in red, box the charge in yellow, triangle the clue word in green, write WHY or HOW — then write one sentence telling a friend what this prompt is asking.

★ Prompt Detective

Intervention • Small Group

Every prompt hides three clues, found **one at a time**: underline the noun of importance, say it aloud. Underline the verb of importance, say it aloud. Underline the clue word, say WHY or HOW aloud. Only then add the red circle, yellow box, and green triangle.

**Explain why Garza paints family celebrations. → Topic: Garza | Charge: paints |
Clue: why | Type: WHY**

② Tree Builder Challenge

Enrichment • Grow the whole tree from one prompt

**Explain how Laura Ingalls Wilder's storytelling helps readers
imagine life on the prairie.**

Trunk — write the thesis (central idea). Branch 1 — a reason or way. Branch 2 — evidence from the passage. Branch 3 — the explanation. Leaves — the significance: why this matters to a reader today.

Present your tree to the class in one minute or less!

Let's Look at an Answer!

Prompt: Explain why Laura Ingalls Wilder became an important author.

LOW

"I circled Laura and boxed Explain. This prompt is about Laura Ingalls Wilder."

What's working: The student found the person the prompt is about and made two marks.

What's missing: The charge is wrong — Explain is the direction, not the verb of importance. There is no green triangle, and the sentence restates the topic instead of naming the job.

Let's Look at Another Answer!

Prompt: Explain why Laura Ingalls Wilder became an important author.

MEDIUM

"Topic: Laura Ingalls Wilder. Charge: became. Clue: why. This prompt wants me to write about why she is important."

What's working: All three marks are correct and the student names the clue word.

What's missing: The final sentence does not name the job as giving a reason — push toward the word *because*.

Our Strongest Answer!

Prompt: Explain why Laura Ingalls Wilder became an important author.

HIGH

"Topic: Laura Ingalls Wilder. Charge: became. Clue: why. This is a WHY prompt, so my answer has to give a reason. I will need a word like because in my sentence."

What's working: The student names the prompt type, states the job, and predicts the sentence structure the answer will require. This student is ready for the Tree Builder Challenge!