

THE WRITING ACADEMY®

A SUBSIDIARY OF TEACH BIG®

GRADE



Cluster 6

Extended Constructed Response - Argumentative

TEACHER LESSON PLAN GUIDE

Grade 4 • Cluster 6

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Statement of Purpose

Cluster 6 teaches students that a decision prompt - should or should not, whether or not - is really a WHY prompt. Students choose a side and declare the why in a clear, supportable claim.

Across four modules students learn to recognize the decision prompt, magnify one claim into three strong reasons, and finish a complete argumentative paper with a strong beginning and ending. Stamina grows from Low to Very High.

Abstract

Module 1 teaches students to spot decision words and declare a claim. Module 2, Magnify One Claim into Three Strong Reasons, builds the body of the argument.

Module 3, Finishing the Argumentative Paper, completes the draft, and Module 4 focuses on the beginning and ending of an argument. Every day follows the Teach BIG GRADUATE routine, moving students from gathering and revealing the skill, through attempting, discussing, and using it, to awarding growth, targeting the next step, and explaining their thinking to others.

Standards at a Glance

The TEKS below are taught and practiced across Cluster 6. The **exact, verbatim Student Expectation wording** for each — quoted from the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills — appears on the **TEKS Correlations** page inside each module, along with where in the week it is taught.

TEKS	STRAND	MODULES
4.11B	Writing Process	M1, M2, M3, M4
4.11C	Revising	M1, M2, M3, M4
4.11D	Editing	M1, M2, M3, M4
4.12C	Writing Genre	M1, M2, M3, M4
4.12D	Writing Genre	M1, M2, M3, M4

TEKS 4.7(C) — “use text evidence to support an appropriate response” — applies wherever students use text evidence in this cluster.

ELPS (English Language Proficiency Standards) are correlated on each module’s daily “TEKS and ELPS for Today” pages.

MODULE

1

**If You Have to Decide, Declare
the Why**

Week 1 • Low Stamina

Module 1: If You Have to Decide, Declare the Why

Week 1 - Low Stamina - Cluster 6 (ECR Argumentative Correspondence)

Writing an Argumentative Claim and Deciding a Side

Teacher Script

"When students learn to support a side with clarity, evidence, and heart, they are not just becoming better writers - they are becoming stronger thinkers."

Overarching Question

How does choosing a side and declaring the why help a writer build a convincing argument from a text?

Today We Will Look For

- decision words in a prompt: should / should not, whether or not, choose a side
- how a decision prompt is really a WHY prompt
- a claim written as a complex sentence (because, since)
- how theme connects an argument to a bigger idea

Student reminder: If you have to decide, declare the why.

Why This Module Matters

This first module in Cluster 6 introduces argumentative correspondence writing. Students learn that when a prompt asks them to choose between two possibilities, it is really asking why they believe one side is stronger: they must decide, then declare the why. Using two Cluster 6 passages, students review prompt analysis, deciding a side, writing a claim/thesis (central idea), building three reasons, selecting evidence, explaining it, and closing with a reflective, big-picture ending.

Module Passage Set — Low Stamina

Two selections anchor Cluster 6 and return across all four modules at rising stamina: "A Day That Changed" (fiction) and "Understanding the Texas Regions" (nonfiction).

Module Independent Product

Analyze sentence-statement decision prompts: underline what must be decided, name both sides, choose a side, and write a claim as a complex sentence using a subordinating conjunction such as because or since.

Module 1 — Family Communication

Purpose: Families are partners in this work. This page gives every family a clear picture of what their child is learning this week, a question to ask at home, and one simple way to help.

This Week at a Glance

- The big skill: recognizing a decision prompt (should/should not, whether or not) as a WHY prompt, choosing a side, and declaring the why in a clear claim.
- The catch phrase: If you have to decide, declare the why.
- The two reading passages: "A Day That Changed" (about Jayden learning that weather can change quickly while climate is the long-term pattern) and "Understanding the Texas Regions" (about the landforms, climate, resources, and jobs of the four Texas regions).

One Question to Ask at Home



Teacher Script

"You picked a side - now what is your why? Give me a reason."

One Way to Help

When your child states an opinion, ask "why?" and help them answer with a full sentence using "because" or "since." Turning a choice into a supported claim is exactly this week's work.

Family Letter

Dear Families,

This week your child is beginning Cluster 6 of our 4th-grade writing curriculum, "ECR Argumentative Correspondence." Your child will learn that when a prompt asks them to choose a side - using words like should, should not, or whether or not - it is really asking WHY they believe one side is stronger. Our catch phrase says it best: If you have to decide, declare the why.

We are reading two texts: "A Day That Changed," about a student named Jayden who learns that weather can change quickly while climate is the usual pattern over a long time, and "Understanding the Texas Regions," about the landforms, climate, vegetation, resources, and jobs of the four regions of Texas. Your child will practice choosing a side and writing a clear claim that gives the reasons behind it.

Please try this at home: When your child shares an opinion, ask "Why do you think that?" and encourage a full answer using "because" or "since." A supported opinion - not just a choice - is the habit we build this week.

With appreciation, Your child's teacher - The Writing Academy LLC

Carta para las Familias

Estimadas familias:

Esta semana su hijo o hija comienza el Grupo 6 de nuestro currículo de escritura de cuarto grado, "ECR Argumentative Correspondence." Su hijo o hija aprenderá que cuando una indicación le pide elegir un lado - usando palabras como debería, no debería, o si conviene o no - en realidad le está preguntando POR QUÉ cree que un lado es más fuerte. Nuestra frase lo dice mejor: Si tienes que decidir, declara el porqué.

Leemos dos textos: "A Day That Changed," sobre un estudiante llamado Jayden que aprende que el estado del tiempo puede cambiar rápidamente mientras que el clima es el patrón usual durante un largo período de tiempo, y "Understanding the Texas Regions," sobre las formaciones del terreno, el clima, la vegetación, los recursos y los trabajos de las cuatro regiones de Texas. Su hijo o hija practicará elegir un lado y escribir una afirmación clara que dé las razones detrás de ella.

Por favor, intente esto en casa: Cuando su hijo o hija comparta una opinión, pregúntele "¿Por qué piensas eso?" y anímelo a responder con una oración completa usando "porque" o "ya que." Una opinión apoyada, no solo una elección, es el hábito que construimos esta semana.

Con aprecio, El maestro o la maestra de su hijo o hija - The Writing Academy LLC

Module 1 — Family Conversation Starters

Send these home with the letter, or post them in the class stream. None of them can be answered with only yes or no.

- What is the difference between an opinion and a supported claim?
- Why is a decision prompt really a "why" prompt?
- What words in a question tell you that you must choose a side?
- Which of our two texts would you use to argue that observing carefully helps people understand the world, and why?

Simple Family Activities

Both activities need little or no materials and both end in a conversation rather than a worksheet.

Family Activity - Pick a Side, Declare the Why

Name a friendly family debate (best meal, best season). Each person picks a side and gives two reasons using "because." Notice that both sides can be reasonable.

Family Activity - Turn It Into a Claim

Start with a plain opinion ("Reading is fun."). Then upgrade it into a claim with a reason ("Reading is worth the time because it takes you to new places."). Talk about how the reason makes it stronger.

Module 1 — Lesson Overview and Standards

Lesson Overview

Module 1 opens Cluster 6. Students learn that decision prompts are WHY prompts: they choose a side and declare the why in a supportable claim. Using "A Day That Changed" and "Understanding the Texas Regions," students review prompt analysis, the argumentative correspondence structure, and claim writing as a complex sentence, then practice deciding a side and revising a claim for precision.

BIG Goal: Students will build a supportable argumentative claim by choosing a side and declaring the why.

Writing TEKS for This Module

The Student Expectation column below is the exact, full wording of each Grade 4 TEKS breakout — quoted verbatim from the Cluster 6 scope and sequence, not paraphrased or abbreviated.

TEKS	Student Expectation (verbatim TEKS breakout)
(11)(A)(i)	plan a first draft by selecting a genre for a particular topic, purpose, and audience using a range of strategies
(11)(B)(iv)	develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by developing an engaging idea with relevant details
(11)(C)(i)	revise drafts to improve sentence structure
(11)(C)(ii)	revise drafts to improve word choice
(12)(C)(i)	compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using genre characteristics
(12)(C)(ii)	compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using craft

Where the Standards Are Visible in This Module

- Students analyze sentence-statement decision prompts, take a side, and compose supportable claims.
- Students justify choices orally and in writing using reasons and passage evidence.
- Students revise sentence structure and word choice to make claims precise and clear.

Module 1 — TEKS and ELPS (Cluster 6 · from the Scope & Sequence)

These are the standards listed for Cluster 6 in the Teach BIG Scope and Sequence, in the same form the chart uses.

TEKS — Cluster 6 (from the Scope & Sequence)

Writing Process

- (11)(B)(i) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction
- (11)(B)(ii) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including transitions
- (11)(B)(iii) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including a conclusion
- (11)(B)(iv) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by developing an engaging idea with relevant details

Writing Genre

- (12)(C)(i) compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using genre characteristics
- (12)(C)(ii) compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using craft
- (12)(D)(i) compose correspondence that requests information

Revising

- (11)(C)(i–viii) revise drafts to improve sentence structure and word choice; improve coherence by adding, deleting, combining, and rearranging ideas; and improve clarity by adding and deleting ideas

Editing

- (11)(D)(i)–(xxix), (xxx), (xxxiii)–(xxxv) edit drafts using standard English conventions — complete simple and compound sentences with subject-verb agreement and avoidance of splices, run-ons, and fragments; irregular verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, pronouns, and coordinating conjunctions; capitalization; commas in compound sentences; and grade-appropriate spelling

ELPS — Cluster 6 (from the Scope & Sequence)

Writing Process

- 4(D)(iii) write content-area texts using a variety of transition words
- 4(F)(i)–(ii), (v)–(vi) write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting details using appropriate content and style for purpose and audience

Writing Genre

- 4(C)(i) write using a combination of both high-frequency words and content-area vocabulary
- 4(D)(i)–(iii) write content-area texts using a variety of sentence lengths, sentence types, and transition words
- 4(E)(i)–(ii) write content-area-specific text using conventions and grammatical structures
- 4(F)(i)–(xvi) write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting details or supporting evidence using appropriate content, style, register, and conventions for purpose and audience

Revising

- 4(C)(i) write using a combination of both high-frequency words and content-area vocabulary
- 4(D)(i)–(iii) write content-area texts using a variety of sentence lengths, sentence types, and transition words
- 4(E)(ii) write content-area-specific text using grammatical structures
- 4(F)(i)–(ii), (v)–(vi) write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting details using appropriate content and style for purpose and audience

Editing

- 4(A)(i) apply relationships between sounds and letters of the English language to represent sounds when writing [Teacher only]
- 4(B)(i)–(ii) write text following conventional spelling patterns and rules
- 4(C)(i) write using a combination of both high-frequency words and content-area vocabulary
- 4(D)(i)–(iii) write content-area texts using a variety of sentence lengths, sentence types, and transition words
- 4(E)(i)–(ii) write content-area-specific text using conventions and grammatical structures

Language Domains

This module builds all four language domains as students listen, decide, discuss, and write. Every task below is open to English learners at any proficiency level; the supports are built in, not bolted on.

Domain	How this module builds it
Listening	In Listen, Decide, and Defend, students hear two claims and choose the stronger one.
Speaking	Students defend a side with "because" and teach a partner how to spot a decision prompt.
Reading	Students read two passages and mark details that could support more than one reasonable side.
Writing	Students write argumentative claims as complex sentences and revise them for precision.

Module 1 — Learning Destination

I Can Statements

- I can build a supportable argumentative claim by choosing a side and declaring the why.
- I can recognize a decision prompt (should/should not, whether or not) as a WHY prompt.
- I can write a claim as a complex sentence using a subordinating conjunction.
- I can name both reasonable sides of an argument before I choose one.

I Will Statements

- I will read closely, listen actively, and discuss my reasoning.
- I will use text evidence, write independently, reflect on my growth, and explain my thinking to others.
- I will decide a side and then declare the why.
- I will connect my argument to a bigger idea or theme.

Success Criteria

- I can find the decision words in a prompt and name both sides.
- I can choose a side and write a claim that answers the why.
- I can support my claim with a reason and passage evidence.
- I can revise my claim so it is precise and clear.

Evidence That Will Demonstrate Mastery

- The Declare the Why Dash responses (decide, name both sides, write the claim, say the why).
- The independent "Decide It, Then Declare It" practice page.
- The Turn-and-Teach explanation of how to recognize a decision prompt.

Module 1 — Rigor and Misconceptions

Rigor Safeguard

You may read both passages aloud, reread them, and let students use the Declare-the-Why chart, the Argumentative Correspondence Structure chart, the Claim Reminder chart, and sentence frames. You may provide oral rehearsal. You may not choose a student's side, write their claim, or supply their reasons. The student must still decide the side, declare the why, and support it with a reason and evidence.

Rigor and Cognitive Demand

Level of Thinking	What Students Must Do	Expected Degree of Independence	Evidence of the Thinking
Literal	Find the decision words in a prompt and name both sides.	Supported. The teacher may reread the prompt.	The student highlights decision words and states two sides.
Inferential	Choose a side and write a claim as a complex sentence.	Guided early, independent by Use.	The student writes a claim that answers the why.
Evaluative	Judge which of two claims is stronger and defend it with evidence.	Independent by the game and the auditory task.	The student explains why a claim is supportable.

Educator Insight

Students often think argumentative writing is just sharing an opinion, but this module requires a supported claim with reasons and textual evidence. Another misconception is that "should" prompts can be answered with a short yes or no. Watch for responses that choose a side but do not explain why. Some students forget that decision prompts are really WHY prompts, so they may leave out clear reasons. Others may write a claim that is too simple instead of a complex sentence with a subordinating conjunction. Help them by repeatedly asking, "What are you deciding, and what is your why?" Strong argumentative writing sounds clear, supported, and thoughtful.

Module 1 — Thinking Levels

These charts support building rigor. Use them in every module to name the level of thinking a task and a student response require.

The Five Thinking Levels

Level	Color	Thinking Stage	Description
Level 1	Red	Foundational	Student follows directions or repeats information exactly as taught with little independent thinking.
Level 2	Orange	Emergent	Student begins trying ideas independently but may be uncertain or inconsistent.
Level 3	Yellow	Visible	Student connects ideas directly to textual evidence.
Level 4	Green	Independent	Student combines evidence with personal reasoning, applying understanding to a claim.
Level 5	Blue	Reflective	Student connects evidence to the world, morals, lessons, or broader understanding.

Building a Strong Argumentative Claim

Level	What the Claim Does
Level 1	States a side with no reason (just an opinion).
Level 2	States a side with a general reason.
Level 3	States a side as a complex sentence with a clear why.
Level 4	Answers the why and previews reasons that the text can support.
Level 5	Connects the claim to a theme or big-picture idea.

Challenge: Move a claim up a level by adding a "because" reason or a theme connection - not just more words.

 Teacher Script

"A claim is stronger when it clearly chooses a side and declares a why that evidence can support."

Oral-Rehearsal Frame: Decide and Declare **Teacher Script**

"I have to decide _____. I choose _____. My claim is: _____ because _____. A clear claim that declares the why will make your argument convincing all year."

Module 1 — Vocabulary

Vocabulary — Teacher Script

Teacher Script

“Before we begin, let's preview the words we will use to talk about argument, claims, and deciding a side - everyday words, academic words, and words from our two texts.”

Tier 1 Vocabulary — Everyday Words

Word	Student-Friendly Definition	Oral Rehearsal Frame
choose	to pick one thing over another	I choose the side that ____.
side	one position in an argument	My side is ____.
why	the reason behind a choice	My why is ____.
prove	to show something is true	I prove my side by ____.
matter	to be important	This matters because ____.
learn	to gain new knowledge	I learned that ____.
share	to give part of what you have	I share my reason when I ____.
strong	powerful and clear	A strong claim ____.
support	to back up an idea	I support my claim with ____.
idea	a thought about something	One idea I can argue is ____.

Tier 2 Vocabulary — Academic Words

Word	Student-Friendly Definition	Oral Rehearsal Frame
argumentative	writing that takes a position and supports it	This argumentative claim shows ____.
correspondence	writing created for a specific recipient or audience	This correspondence is written for ____.
claim	the writer's clear position or thesis (central idea)	My claim is ____.
decision	a choice between possible positions	My decision is ____.
reason	a broad idea that explains why the claim makes sense	One reason is ____.
evidence	specific proof from a text	My evidence is ____.
explanation	thinking that shows how evidence supports the reason	My explanation shows ____.
audience	the person or group who will read the writing	My audience is ____.
thesis (central idea)	the main position a piece of writing proves	My thesis (central idea) (claim) is ____.
position	the side a writer takes	I take the position that ____.

Tier 3 Vocabulary — Passage-Specific Words

Word	Pronunciation	Student-Friendly Definition	Oral Rehearsal Frame
weather	WETH-ur	the condition of the air at a certain time and place	The weather today is ____.
climate	KLY-mit	the usual weather patterns of a place over a long time	Our climate is usually ____.
atmosphere	AT-muh-sfeer	the layer of air that surrounds the Earth	The atmosphere changes when ____.
conditions	kun-DISH-unz	the state of the weather or surroundings at a certain time	The conditions began to change because ____.
observe	uhb-ZURV	to watch carefully and notice details	I observe the sky to ____.
region	REE-jun	an area of land that has certain features in common	One Texas region is ____.
landform	LAND-form	a natural feature of the Earth's surface, such as a mountain or plain	A landform in this region is ____.
vegetation	vej-uh-TAY-shun	the plants that grow in an area	The vegetation of a region depends on ____.
resources	REE-sor-siz	useful materials such as oil, water, or soil	The resources of a region help people ____.
economic	ek-uh-NOM-ik	having to do with money, jobs, and how people make a living	An economic activity in this region is ____.



Teacher Resource

For more practice with academic words, see the Teach BIG Academic Vocabulary Companion App.

Module 1 — Background Knowledge and Teacher Context

This module uses two Cluster 6 passages that also support argumentative thinking. In "A Day That Changed," students can argue about careful observation, quick assumptions, weather evidence, weather journals, and the difference between short-term weather and long-term climate. In "Understanding the Texas Regions," students can argue about the importance of all four regions, the role of land and climate in shaping jobs, and the connection among resources, settlement, and ways of life. Both passages support theme-based thinking about evidence, patterns, adaptation, geography, planning, and informed decisions.

More Background for the Teacher

Both passages stay the same across the four Cluster 6 modules; each grows in length, detail, evidence density, and conceptual demand from module to module. In Module 1 (Low Stamina), students focus on recognizing that a sentence-statement prompt with "whether or not" or "should/should not" requires a decision. Once students decide, they must support that side with reasons and evidence. Repeat the phrase "If you have to decide, declare the why" throughout the module.

Module 1 — Materials and Teacher Preparation

This first module in Cluster 6 introduces argumentative correspondence writing. It reviews prompt analysis, deciding a side, writing a claim/thesis (central idea), writing three reasons, selecting evidence, explaining evidence, adding significant inferencing where natural, and writing an introduction and reflective conclusion. The major focus is helping students recognize that decision prompts are WHY prompts.

Anchor Charts to Create

- If You Have to Decide, Declare the Why: if the prompt says should or should not, whether or not, or asks you to choose between ideas, then it is a WHY prompt, and a WHY prompt needs reasons.
- Argumentative Correspondence Structure: Introduction (S = Statement of Purpose / Big General Truth; E = Collective Evidence Statement; C = Claim / Thesis (Central Idea)); Body Paragraphs (Reason, Evidence, Explanation, Significant Inference when natural); Conclusion (R1, R2, R3, Reflective Statement / Big Picture / Lesson Learned).
- Claim Reminder: a claim is the thesis (central idea) in argumentative writing; a strong claim answers the prompt and includes a subordinating conjunction because it is a WHY response.
- Prompt Analysis Questions: What am I being asked to decide? What side will I take? Why do I believe that side? What three reasons can support my side? Which evidence from the text best proves each reason?
- Theme in Argumentative Writing: theme helps writers connect their side to a bigger idea; a strong argument is not only correct, it is meaningful; the ending should leave the audience with a lesson learned or a big-picture thought.

Post for Students

- Subordinating Conjunctions: because, since, although, even though, while, when, after, before, if, unless
- Common Prepositions: in, on, at, by, with, from, near, across, under, over, between, through

Materials

- Copies of both passages, interactive notebooks, chart paper or whiteboard, highlighters, scissors, glue
- Prompt cards, envelope cards or folder pockets, "Decision Divider" gameboards, a spinner, dice, argument sorting mats
- Pencil Guy markers, sticky notes, teacher answer keys, sentence strips

Quick Teacher Reference for the Whole Cluster

This module focuses on recognizing that a sentence-statement prompt with "whether or not" or "should/should not" requires a decision. Once students decide, they must support that side with reasons and evidence. Repeat the phrase "If you have to decide, declare the why" throughout the module.

Module 1 — The DOT Reading Habit

The DOT Reading Habit

The DOT reading habit has three steps: Dot, Discover, Drop.



Teacher Script

"As strong readers, we use the DOT habit while we read the passages in our Interactive Notebooks. DOT stands for three steps: Dot, Discover, Drop."

Step	What It Means
D — Dot	Place a small dot above any word that seems unfamiliar as you are reading.
O — Discover	Discover the meaning of the word as we learn together through our lessons.
T — Drop	Go back and erase the dot above the word once you know its meaning.

Board text: Dot the word. Discover the meaning. Drop the dot.

Encouragement: "This habit helps your brain keep track of the words you are still learning. Good readers notice new words, find out what they mean, and celebrate when they own them."

Module 1 — Argumentative Correspondence: Decide, Then Declare the Why

Teacher Script

"Today we step into a new kind of writing - argumentative correspondence. That means we decide a side, support it, and prove it. When a prompt asks you to choose, it is not asking you to guess. It is asking you to think. Here is our catch phrase: If you have to decide, declare the why."

Decision Prompts Are WHY Prompts

If a prompt says should or should not, says whether or not, or asks you to choose between ideas, then it is a WHY prompt - and a WHY prompt needs reasons. Decision = Why. Choose a side = Give reasons.

The Argumentative Correspondence Structure

Part	What Goes Here
Introduction — S	Statement of Purpose / Big General Truth (hook the audience).
Introduction — E	Collective Evidence Statement (preview the passage evidence).
Introduction — C	Claim / Thesis (Central Idea) (state your position).
Body	Reason -> Evidence -> Explanation -> Significant Inference when natural.
Conclusion	R1, R2, R3 (remind the reader of the reasons), then a Reflective Statement / Big Picture / Lesson Learned.

The Claim

A claim is the thesis (central idea) in argumentative writing. A strong claim answers the prompt and includes a subordinating conjunction because it is a WHY response.

- Example: "Students should observe the weather carefully before making plans because weather can change quickly, even within a few hours."
- Example: "All four Texas regions should be valued because each one has different landforms, climate, vegetation, resources, and economic activities."

Prompt Analysis Questions

What am I being asked to decide? What side will I take? Why do I believe that side? What three reasons can support my side? Which evidence from the text best proves each reason?

Teacher Models

Teacher Model 1 — Prompt: "Explain whether or not students should observe the weather carefully before making plans."

- "First, I ask what I must decide. I must decide whether students should observe the weather carefully or should not. I choose that they should. Now I must declare the why."
- Sample Claim: "Students should observe the weather carefully before making plans because weather can change quickly, even within a few hours."
- Three Possible Reasons: Weather can change within a few hours, the way it did on field day. Careful observation of the sky, wind, and temperature gives useful details. Guessing that a sunny morning will last all day can lead to poor plans.

Teacher Model 2 — Prompt: "Explain whether or not all four Texas regions should be valued as important parts of the state."

- "I need to decide whether all four Texas regions should be valued. I choose yes. If I have to decide, I must declare the why."
- Sample Claim: "All four Texas regions should be valued because each one has different landforms, climate, vegetation, resources, and economic activities that help the state."
- Three Possible Reasons: Each region has different natural features. Each region supports different resources and jobs. Each region helps explain different settlement patterns and ways of life.

Teacher Script

"Theme matters here too. A strong argument is not only correct; it is meaningful. The ending should leave the audience with a lesson learned or a big-picture thought."

Module 1 — TRACKS: Reading Both Passages for Argument Evidence

Before students decide a side, they read "A Day That Changed" and "Understanding the Texas Regions" and TAP the TRACKS to find the six kinds of measurable evidence. Reading for TRACKS helps students find details that could support more than one reasonable side.

The Six Types of Measurable Evidence: TRACKS

As students read each passage, they TAP the TRACKS — they hunt for the six kinds of evidence and highlight each with the TRACKS color below. Use the same six categories, the same wording, and the same colors in every module.

Letter	Category	What to Look For	Highlight Color
T	Time	Age, era, dates, cultural details, or historical details. Often associated with adjectives.	Pastel Green
R	Reactions	Reactions, solutions, resolutions, or effects. Often associated with verbs and adverbs.	Pastel Purple
A	Actions	Actions, problems, conflicts, or causes. Often associated with verbs and adverbs.	Pastel Yellow
C	Character, Concept, Creature	Characters' or people's names, animals or animals' names, or major concepts used as the central idea. Often nouns or proper nouns.	Pastel Yellow
K	Key Knowledge	All other important information necessary to the meaning of the passage that is not accounted for by another TRACKS category.	Pastel Orange
S	Scenery / Setting	Setting characteristics that are acknowledged or measured through the five senses.	Pastel Green

How to Use TRACKS

Teacher Script

“As we read BOTH passages, we hunt for all six kinds of evidence and highlight each one in its TRACKS color. Time is green, Reactions are purple, Actions are yellow, Character/Concept/Creature is yellow, Key Knowledge is orange, and Scenery/Setting is green. The exact words we highlight become the evidence we use to support the side we choose.”

Before Students Read

Preview the two passages with students before reading. Each passage appears twice: first a plain copy to read, then a color-coded copy. As you read, students TAP the TRACKS — they hunt for the six kinds of evidence and highlight each with the TRACKS color below. TRACKS marks the evidence in the passage; the shapes are used only to analyze the prompt.

The Six Types of Measurable Evidence: TRACKS

Students look for six kinds of measurable evidence in every passage. Use the same six categories, the same wording, and the same colors in every module.

T Time — Age, era, dates, cultural details, or historical details. Often associated with adjectives. (Highlight color: Pastel Green.)

R Reactions — Reactions, solutions, resolutions, or effects. Often associated with verbs and adverbs. (Highlight color: Pastel Purple.)

A Actions — Actions, problems, conflicts, or causes. Often associated with verbs and adverbs. (Highlight color: Pastel Yellow.)

C Character, Concept, Creature — Characters' or people's names, animals or animals' names, or major concepts used as the central idea. Often nouns or proper nouns. (Highlight color: Pastel Yellow.)

K Key Knowledge — All other important information necessary to the meaning of the passage that is not accounted for by another TRACKS category (background knowledge). (Highlight color: Pastel Orange.)

S Scenery / Setting — Setting characteristics that are acknowledged or measured through the five senses. (Highlight color: Pastel Green.)

PASSAGE 11 — A Day That Changed

[1] Jayden woke up early, excited for field day. When he looked outside, the sky was bright and clear. The sun was already warming the air, and the morning felt calm and peaceful. “It’s going to be a great day,” he said as he grabbed his backpack and headed to school.

[2] By mid-morning, students were outside running races and playing games. The weather felt just right. It was warm, with a light breeze, and the sky stayed clear. Jayden misjudged the weather and assumed the day would continue like this.

[3] But just before lunch, the conditions began to change. The wind grew stronger, and Jayden noticed the movement of gray clouds across the sky. The temperature dropped, and the air felt cooler against his skin. Jayden looked up, confused. “What happened to the sunshine?” he asked.

[4] Soon, light rain began to fall, and teachers quickly moved everyone inside. Some students were disappointed, but Ms. Rios saw it as a chance to explain.

[5] “This is weather,” she said. “Weather describes the condition of the atmosphere at a certain time and place. It can change quickly, even within a few hours.”

[6] Jayden thought about how different the morning had been.

[7] “Climate,” Ms. Rios continued, “describes the usual weather patterns of a place over a long period of time. Even though today became rainy and cool, our area is still known for having mostly hot summers.”

[8] After school, the clouds cleared, and the sun returned. Jayden realized that while the weather had changed throughout the day, the climate where he lived stayed consistent over time.

Student Annotation Guide — A Day That Changed

T — Time

over a long period of time

R — Reactions

The temperature dropped

A — Actions

the conditions began to change

C — Character/Concept/Creature

Jayden

K — Key Knowledge

the condition of the atmosphere

S — Scenery/Setting

the sky was bright and clear

TRACKS EVIDENCE HIGHLIGHTING — A Day That Changed

[1] Jayden woke up early, excited for field day. When he looked outside, the sky was bright and clear. The sun was already warming the air, and the morning felt calm and peaceful. “It’s going to be a great day,” he said as he grabbed his backpack and headed to school.

[2] By mid-morning, students were outside running races and playing games. The weather felt just right. It was warm, with a light breeze, and the sky stayed clear. Jayden misjudged the weather and assumed the day would continue like this.

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[8] After school, the clouds cleared, and the sun returned. Jayden realized that while the weather had changed throughout the day, the climate where he lived stayed consistent over time.

PASSAGE 12 — Understanding the Texas Regions

[1] Texas is a very large state, and its land varies from one area to another. Some parts have forests and rivers, while others have dry deserts or wide, open plains. These areas are called regions. Each region has its own landforms, climate, vegetation, and economic activities. These differences help explain how people live and work across Texas.

[2] The Coastal Plains is the largest region and stretches along the Gulf of Mexico. It includes flat land, many rivers, and thick forests. The climate has warmth and humidity, with frequent rainfall. This makes the region well suited for farming crops like cotton and corn. Fishing, shipping, and jobs in large cities are also important to the economy.

[3] The North Central Plains has rolling hills, grasslands, and more trees than western Texas. The climate is milder, with moderate rainfall. Because of these conditions, many people raise cattle and grow crops. Small towns, farms, and settlements are common throughout this region.

[4] The Great Plains is located farther west and is known for its wide, open spaces. The land is drier, and strong winds are common. Fewer trees grow here, but ranching and farming are still major activities. Some areas also produce wind energy.

[5] The Mountains and Basins region is in far West Texas. It has tall mountains, dry deserts, and very little rainfall. Although fewer people live there, it is important for oil, gas, and mining. Each region has unique features, but all of them play an important role in Texas.

Student Annotation Guide — Understanding the Texas Regions

T — Time

the largest region

R — Reactions

how people live and work

A — Actions

Fishing, shipping, and jobs

C — Character/Concept/Creature

The Coastal Plains

K — Key Knowledge

landforms, climate, vegetation

S — Scenery/Setting

dry deserts or wide, open plains

TRACKS EVIDENCE HIGHLIGHTING — Understanding the Texas Regions

[1] Texas is a very large state, and its land varies from one area to another. Some parts have forests and rivers, while others have dry deserts or wide, open plains. These areas are called regions. Each region has its own landforms, climate, vegetation, and economic activities. These differences help explain how people live and work across Texas.

[2] The Coastal Plains is the largest region and stretches along the Gulf of Mexico. It includes flat land, many rivers, and thick forests. The climate has warmth and humidity, with frequent rainfall. This makes the region well suited for farming crops like cotton and corn. Fishing, shipping, and jobs in large cities are also important to the economy.

[3] The North Central Plains has rolling hills, grasslands, and more trees than western Texas. The climate is milder, with moderate rainfall. Because of these conditions, many people raise cattle and grow crops. Small towns, farms, and settlements are common throughout this region.

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[5] The Mountains and Basins region is in far West Texas. It has tall mountains, dry deserts, and very little rainfall. Although fewer people live there, it is important for oil, gas, and mining. Each region has unique features, but all of them play an important role in Texas.

Day 1 - Gather and Reveal



TEKS and ELPS for Today

Standard	Student Expectation (verbatim breakout)
TEKS (12)(C)(i)	compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using genre characteristics
TEKS (11)(A)(i)	plan a first draft by selecting a genre for a particular topic, purpose, and audience using a range of strategies
ELPS 1(E)(i)	demonstrate listening comprehension from information presented orally during formal classroom interactions by restating, responding, paraphrasing, summarizing, or asking for clarification or additional details
ELPS 4(F)(ix)	write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting evidence using appropriate content for [a] specific purpose

Day 1 Purpose

Students gather the catch phrase "If you have to decide, declare the why," then reveal that decision prompts are WHY prompts and learn the argumentative correspondence structure.

G — Gather: Auditory Engagement — Listen, Decide, and Defend

Hear both choices before you respond. 1) Choose A or B. 2) State the decision. 3) Defend your choice with because. 4) Name one passage detail that could support it. Teacher Script: "I will read two possible argumentative statements. Do not answer after the first one. Hear both. Then choose the stronger statement and defend your decision."

- Round 1: A. The weather changed on field day. B. Students should observe the weather carefully before making plans because weather can change quickly, even within a few hours. Answer: B is stronger - it takes a clear side, includes the why, and is supported by how the weather changed on Jayden's field day.

- Round 2: A. Texas has four regions. B. All four Texas regions should be valued because each one has different landforms, climate, resources, and jobs. Answer: B is stronger - it makes a supportable claim about the importance of every region.

Fresh Recall: Cover notes. Finish aloud: "A strong argumentative claim must choose ___ and declare ___." (Expected: a side; the why.)

★ Daily Deck Slide (The Great Divider Line)

Write on the board: One side of the line says YES / SHOULD / MATTERS; the other says NO / SHOULD NOT / DOES NOT MATTER. Move to the side you agree with for each statement, then be ready to declare your why.

- Students should observe the weather carefully before making plans.
- All four Texas regions should be valued as important parts of the state.
- Keeping a weather journal should be part of learning about weather and climate.

Board text: Decision = Why. Choose a side = Give reasons.

R — Reveal: Decision Prompts Are WHY Prompts

Display the Declare-the-Why chart, the Argumentative Correspondence Structure chart, the Claim Reminder chart, and the Prompt Analysis chart (see the Argumentative Correspondence page). Glue the charts into interactive notebooks.

- Prompt Analysis Steps: read the prompt; find what you must decide; choose your side; write the claim as a complex sentence; develop three reasons; find the best evidence; explain the evidence; add significant inferencing where natural; write a strong introduction; end with a reflective big-picture statement.
- The intro follows S (statement of purpose / big general truth), E (collective evidence statement), and C (claim). Board example (prompt: "Explain whether or not students should observe the weather carefully before making plans"): S - "The world around us can change quickly, so careful observation matters." E - "The passage shows that Jayden misjudged the weather on field day, and the conditions changed from warm and clear to windy and rainy within a few hours." C - "Students should observe the weather carefully before making plans because weather can change quickly, even within a few hours."

★ Daily Deck Slide (Decision Prompts Are WHY Prompts)

Write on the board: If the statement asks whether, should, or asks you to choose a side, decide first and then declare the why. Claim = position + why.

Day 1 Closing

Partner completion: "If you have to decide, declare the why means ____."

Day 2 - Attempt



TEKS and ELPS for Today

Standard	Student Expectation (verbatim breakout)
TEKS (12)(C)(ii)	compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using craft
TEKS (11)(B)(iv)	develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by developing an engaging idea with relevant details
ELPS 2(E)(i)	narrate, describe, explain, justify, discuss, elaborate, or evaluate orally with increasing specificity in academic context or discourse

Day 2 Purpose

Students attempt prompt analysis through Declare the Why Dash: draw a decision prompt, spin, and decide the side, name both sides, write the claim, say the why, find a reason, or give a big-picture bonus.

★ Daily Deck Slide (Declare the Why Dash — Directions)

Write on the board: Draw a sentence-statement prompt. Spin. Decide the side, name both sides, write the claim, say the why, find a reason, or give a big-picture bonus. Move the Pencil Guy after a correct response.

Declare the Why Dash — Setup and Play

Materials per group: a gameboard, a spinner, a Pencil Guy marker, a prompt-card deck, a "Decision Divider" mat, and a response recording page. Spinner categories: Decide It, Name Both Sides, Write the Claim, Say the Why, Find a Reason, Big Picture Bonus. How to Play: draw a prompt card and read it aloud; spin; complete the task from the spinner; if the group answers correctly, move the Pencil Guy forward one space; record the best answer.

Sample Prompt Cards (all begin as sentence statements and require a choice)

- Explain whether or not students should observe the weather carefully before making plans.
- Explain whether or not a sunny morning is a good reason to expect a sunny afternoon.
- Explain whether or not keeping a weather journal helps people understand the difference between weather and climate.
- Explain whether or not people should use careful details instead of the word "nice" when describing the weather.
- Explain whether or not all four Texas regions should be valued as important parts of the state.
- Explain whether or not the land and climate of a region should be considered when explaining the jobs people do there.
- Explain whether or not learning about the Texas regions helps people understand why communities are different across the state.
- Explain whether or not the resources of a region should shape how people live and work.
- Explain whether or not observing carefully is more helpful than guessing when the weather might change.
- Explain whether or not people should understand climate before deciding what is usual for their area.

**Teacher Model (one prompt through the spinner)**

Prompt: "Explain whether or not all four Texas regions should be valued as important parts of the state."

- Name Both Sides: (1) All four regions should be valued as important parts of the state. (2) The most populated region should be considered the most important.
- Write the Claim: "All four Texas regions should be valued as important parts of the state because each one has different landforms, climate, resources, and economic activities."
- Find a Reason: "Each region supports different resources and jobs, such as farming, ranching, shipping, or mining."
- Big Picture Bonus: "People understand Texas more fully when they see how every region contributes something different."

Answer Key Samples for the Game

- Prompt 1: "Explain whether or not students should observe the weather carefully before making plans." Decision: should / should not observe carefully. Sample claim: "Students should observe the weather carefully before making plans because weather can change quickly, even within a few hours." Possible reason: on field day the conditions changed from warm and clear to windy and rainy.
- Prompt 5: "Explain whether or not all four Texas regions should be valued as important parts of the state." Decision: should / should not be valued equally. Sample claim: "All four Texas regions should be valued because each one has different landforms, climate, resources, and economic activities." Possible reasons: each region has different natural features; each region supports different jobs and resources; each region helps explain different settlement patterns and ways of life.
- Prompt 3: "Explain whether or not keeping a weather journal helps people understand the difference between weather and climate." Decision: does / does not help. Sample claim: "Keeping a weather journal helps people understand the difference because writing down the temperature, wind, clouds, and rain each day shows how weather changes over time." Possible evidence: the passage explains that a week of notes helps describe recent weather, but climate needs information from many years.

Day 2 Closing

Teacher Reminder: "If you have to decide, declare the why." Record your best claim on your recording page.

Day 3 - Discuss and Use Again



TEKS and ELPS for Today

Standard	Student Expectation (verbatim breakout)
TEKS (11)(C)(i)	revise drafts to improve sentence structure
TEKS (11)(C)(ii)	revise drafts to improve word choice
TEKS (12)(C)(i)	compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using genre characteristics
ELPS 4(D)(ii)	write content-area texts using a variety of sentence types

Day 3 Purpose

Students discuss what makes a claim strong, then independently analyze decision prompts and write claims, revising them for precision.

D — Discuss What Makes a Claim Strong

Use the prompt language. Name the position. Explain the why. Identify what evidence could support the claim.

- "What words tell us we must decide a side?" Student: "Words like whether or not and should."
- "Why is a decision prompt really a WHY prompt?" Student: "Because once we choose, we have to explain why."
- "What happens if you choose a side but do not give reasons?" Student: "Then it sounds like just an opinion."
- "Why should a claim be a complex sentence?" Student: "It helps us answer clearly and completely."

Teacher Script

"Connect to the Overarching Question: How does choosing a side and declaring the why build a convincing argument?"

U — Use Again: Decide It, Then Declare It (Independent)

Directions: Title your notebook page "Cluster 6 Module 1 - If You Have to Decide, Declare the Why." For each prompt: underline what must be decided, write the two sides, choose your side, and write a claim using a subordinating conjunction.

Student Practice Prompts and Answer-Key Examples:

- Prompt 1: "Explain whether or not students should observe the weather carefully before making plans." Decided: whether students should observe carefully. Side 1: they should observe carefully. Side 2: they do not need to observe carefully. Sample claim: "Students should observe the weather carefully before making plans because weather can change quickly, even within a few hours."
- Prompt 2: "Explain whether or not all four Texas regions should be valued equally." Decided: whether all four regions should be valued. Side 1: they should all be valued. Side 2: some regions should receive more attention. Sample claim: "All four Texas regions should be valued equally because each one contributes different landforms, climate, resources, and economic activities to the state."
- Prompt 3: "Explain whether or not people should understand climate before deciding what is usual for their area." Decided: whether people should understand climate first. Side 1: people should understand climate. Side 2: one day of weather is enough. Sample claim: "People should understand climate before deciding what is usual for their area because climate describes weather patterns over a long period of time, not a single day."
- Prompt 4: "Explain whether or not keeping a weather journal should be part of learning about weather." Decided: whether a weather journal should be used. Side 1: it should be used. Side 2: it is not needed. Sample claim: "Keeping a weather journal should be part of learning about weather because recording the temperature, wind, clouds, and rain shows how conditions change from day to day."

Standards Application Check — Module 1 (Revise the Claim for Precision)

Choose one claim you wrote. Revise it to improve sentence structure and word choice so the position and the why are precise and clear.

- Teacher Model / Answer Key: Weak - "Watching the weather is good." Revised - "Students should observe the weather carefully before making plans because weather can change quickly, even within a few hours." Check that the claim is a complete complex sentence, the subordinating conjunction is used correctly, and proper nouns (Texas, Jayden) are capitalized.

Teacher Script

"A strong claim clearly chooses a side and declares a why that evidence can support."

Day 3 Closing

Students star the part of their claim that makes the position clear.

Day 4 - Award and Target



TEKS and ELPS for Today

Standard	Student Expectation (verbatim breakout)
TEKS (11)(C)(ii)	revise drafts to improve word choice
TEKS (12)(C)(ii)	compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using craft
ELPS 2(B)(i)	speak using content-area vocabulary during formal classroom interactions to demonstrate acquisition of new words

Day 4 Purpose

Students recognize that they chose a side and proved a why, then set a precise next goal.

A — Award

Give yourself credit for making a supported decision today.

- I found the decision words in the prompt.
- I named both reasonable sides.
- I chose a side and declared the why.
- I wrote my claim as a complex sentence.

Recognition Ideas: draw a "Declare the Why" ribbon and write "I chose a side and proved my why"; wear a paper Claim Crown for an especially strong claim; place your Pencil Guy on the Strong Thinkers Spot.

★ Daily Deck Slide (Award Yourself)

Write on the board: Complete - "I chose a side and proved my why by ____." Star the part of your claim that makes your position clear.

T — Target

Choose one goal: clearer decision, stronger why, better conjunction, more supportable claim, or stronger text connection. Reflection Questions: "Did I correctly identify what the prompt asked me to decide?" "Did my claim answer the why?" "Could I build three strong reasons from my claim?" Curiosity Questions: "How can theme make an argument stronger?" "Why do readers trust arguments that include evidence?" "Why is it important to understand both sides before choosing one?"

★ Daily Deck Slide (Target Your Next Claim)

Write on the board: Choose one goal - clearer decision, stronger why, better conjunction, more supportable claim, or stronger text connection.

Day 4 Closing

Complete the sentence: "My next goal is to strengthen my argumentative writing by ____."

Day 5 - Explain to Others

E

TEKS and ELPS for Today

Standard	Student Expectation (verbatim breakout)
TEKS (12)(C)(ii)	compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using craft
ELPS 2(E)(i)	narrate, describe, explain, justify, discuss, elaborate, or evaluate orally with increasing specificity in academic context or discourse

Day 5 Purpose

Students teach a partner how to recognize a decision prompt and what to do next, proving they understand the "decide, then declare the why" habit.

E — Turn and Teach

Teach a partner how to tell when a prompt is argumentative, then teach them what to do next. Student Turn-and-Teach Frames: "I know it is argumentative when ____." "If you have to decide, declare the why means ____." "The first thing I do when I see a prompt is ____." "A strong claim should ____." "One way theme helps an argument is ____." Teacher Listen-Fors: should / should not; whether or not; choose a side; claim; because / since; reasons; evidence; big picture.

✓ Module Overarching Question — Answer

How does choosing a side and declaring the why help a writer build a convincing argument from a text?

Choosing a side gives the argument direction, and declaring the why turns that choice into a claim that can be supported with distinct reasons and relevant evidence. Strong argumentative writing is more than an opinion; it clearly states a position and shows why the evidence supports it.

✓ Daily Deck Slide (Answer the Overarching Question)

Write on the board: Choosing a side gives the argument direction; declaring the why turns that choice into a supportable claim. Strong argumentative writing is more than an opinion. Finish: "If you have to decide, declare the why means ____."

Teacher Closing Encouragement

Teacher Script

"Today, you practiced one of the strongest writing HABITS you can build - you made a decision and supported it with clear reasons. Every time you choose a side and explain your why, you are growing stronger as a writer. Keep going, one thoughtful claim at a time."

Module 1 — Low, Medium, and High Exemplars

Prompt: Explain whether or not students should observe the weather carefully before making plans. Write a claim that chooses a side and declares the why.

Low Exemplar

- Student Response: "Students should watch the weather. It is good." (Level 1)
- What Is Working: The student chooses a side.
- Teacher Notes: The claim is a simple sentence with no why and no reason the text can support.
- What Needs Improvement: Turn it into a complex sentence with "because" and a reason the passage supports.

Medium Exemplar

- Student Response: "Students should observe the weather carefully because the weather is important." (Level 2-3)
- What Is Working: A complex sentence with a side and a why.
- Teacher Notes: The why is general ("the weather is important") rather than tied to what the passage shows.
- What Needs Improvement: Sharpen the why to name what the passage shows about how quickly weather can change.

High Exemplar

- Student Response: "Students should observe the weather carefully before making plans because weather can change quickly, even within a few hours, the way it did on Jayden's field day." (Level 4)
- What Is Working: A complex claim that clearly chooses a side and declares a specific why the passage can support, with a connection to how careful observation helps people plan.
- Teacher Notes: The claim is supportable, precise, and ready for three reasons and evidence.

Module 1 — Assessment Opportunities

Field	Detail
Purpose	Determine whether students can recognize a decision prompt, choose a side, and write a supportable claim.
Who Administers It	The classroom teacher during the lesson.
Materials Needed	Both passages, the Declare-the-Why/Structure/Claim/Prompt-Analysis charts, Declare the Why Dash cards, and student notebooks.
Related TEKS Breakout	(12)(C)(i) compose argumentative texts using genre characteristics; (11)(C)(i) revise drafts to improve sentence structure
Task	Students play Declare the Why Dash and complete the independent "Decide It, Then Declare It" page.
Expected Response	Students identify what must be decided, name both sides, choose a side, and write a claim as a complex sentence.

Informal Assessment

During the lesson, observe Listen, Decide, and Defend and Declare the Why Dash. Note whether students find the decision words, name both sides, and declare a why.

Formative Assessment

The Day 3 "Decide It, Then Declare It" page serves as the formative check.

Formative Check Rubric/Scaffolding

Component	Student Requirement
Decision	Must underline what the prompt asks them to decide.
Both Sides	Must name two reasonable sides.
Claim	Must choose a side and write it as a complex sentence.
Why	Must include a subordinating conjunction and a reason the text can support.

Answer Key — Sample Claim

"Students should observe the weather carefully before making plans because weather can change quickly, even within a few hours."

Check the Learning

✓ Check the Learning

Informal, low-stakes ways to SEE what students understand in this module — no worksheet required. Use all three so you gather verbal, visual, and written evidence:

- Verbal — Gather/Reveal — Listen and Defend: Students choose A or B and defend the stronger claim with "because."
- Visual/Physical — Attempt — The Great Divider Line: Students move to a side of the line and name their why.
- Written — Discuss/Use — Decide and Declare: Students underline the decision words in a prompt and write a claim with because or since.

Assessment Option

Beside any activity, choose how to check without slowing the lesson:

- Listen — assess through Listen, Decide, and Defend and discussion.
- Look — observe a Great Divider Line choice or a written claim.
- Collect — have students produce a "Decide It, Then Declare It" page you can examine.

Intervention — Module 1

Decide and Declare (Teacher Table Lesson)

For students who need more support recognizing what a prompt is asking them to decide. Slow it down and make the thinking visible.

Steps:

- Read one prompt aloud.
- Highlight the decision words.
- Ask students to name the two sides.
- Have students place a sticky note on the side they choose.
- Orally generate one reason.
- Turn the reason into a claim sentence using because or since.

Sample Prompt: "Explain whether or not students should observe the weather carefully before making plans." Teacher Think-Aloud: "What do I have to decide? Whether students should observe carefully or should not. I choose that they should. Now I must declare the why." Sample Claim: "Students should observe the weather carefully before making plans because weather can change quickly, even within a few hours."

Sentence Frames: "___ should ___ because ___." / "I believe ___ because ___." / "___ matters because ___." / "People should ___ because ___." Extra Support: have students rehearse orally before writing, then glue their prompt and claim into the interactive notebook.

Module 1 — Embedded Checks and Student Support

Embedded Checks for Understanding

Teacher Move	Expected Response	Common Misconception	Teacher Response
Ask what the prompt asks them to decide.	Students name the decision and both sides.	Students think "should" prompts need only yes/no.	Point out: a decision prompt is a WHY prompt; it needs reasons.
Ask students to write a claim.	Students write a complex sentence with a why.	Students write a simple opinion.	Ask, "What is your because? Add it."
Ask why they chose a side.	Students give a reason the text supports.	Students choose a side with no reason.	Ask, "What are you deciding, and what is your why?"

Student Support Quick Reference

If a student...	Support to Provide
Answers a decision prompt with yes/no	Use the "Decide and Declare" table lesson.
Writes a claim with no why	Use a because/since sentence frame.
Cannot name both sides	Use the Great Divider Line to feel the two sides.
Masters quickly	Route to Module 1 enrichment (Prompt Architect Challenge).

Enrichment — Module 1

Prompt Architect Challenge

Students who master the concept create their own argumentative sentence-statement prompts based on the passages.

Their prompts must:

- begin with Explain,
- require the writer to choose a side,
- include either should/should not or whether or not,
- connect to theme or big-picture thinking.

Then they answer one of their own prompts with a claim, three reasons, one piece of evidence for each reason, and a reflective ending statement.

Extension: students swap prompts with a partner and evaluate - Does this prompt require a decision? Is it truly a WHY prompt? Could someone write reasons for this side? Challenge level: connect the prompt to observation, evidence, patterns, geography, resources, or theme.

Teacher Script

"You are moving from prompt solver to prompt architect. Your job is to create a real argumentative prompt that forces the writer to decide a side."

Module 1 — Additional Writing Opportunity: Decide It, Then Declare It

Sample Argumentative Sentence-Statement Prompt Bank

These are written in sentence-statement form and each requires the writer to choose a side:

- Explain whether or not students should observe the weather carefully before making plans.
- Explain whether or not all four Texas regions should be valued as important parts of the state.
- Explain whether or not keeping a weather journal helps people understand the difference between weather and climate.
- Explain whether or not the land and climate of a region should be considered when explaining the jobs people do there.
- Explain whether or not people should use careful details instead of the word "nice" when describing the weather.
- Explain whether or not learning about the Texas regions helps people understand why communities are different across the state.
- Explain whether or not a sunny morning is a good reason to expect a sunny afternoon.
- Explain whether or not the resources of a region should shape how people live and work.

Writing Prompt

Choose one sentence-statement prompt from the bank above, decide a side, and write a claim.

Connection to This Module

This week you learned that decision prompts are WHY prompts. Now analyze the prompt, choose a side, and declare the why in a claim.

Planning Support

1. Underline what must be decided.
2. Write both reasonable sides.
3. Choose your side.
4. Write a claim as a complex sentence using because or since.
5. List three reasons the passage could support.

Step	Planning Guide
Step 1: Decide	Underline the decision; name both sides.
Step 2: Claim	Choose a side; write a complex-sentence claim.
Step 3: Reasons	List three reasons the text can support.

Drafting Space

Success Criteria

- My claim clearly chooses a side.
- My claim is a complex sentence that declares the why.
- I can name three reasons the passage supports.

Additional Writing Opportunity: Revise and Edit

Revise

Read your claim aloud. Improve sentence structure and word choice so the position and the why are precise.

Edit

Run the Conventions Sweep: complete complex sentence, subordinating conjunction used correctly, subject-verb agreement, proper nouns capitalized, and correct spelling.

Module 1 — Auditory Engagement (Active Participation)

Approach: Listen, Decide, and Defend.

Purpose: Students hear two possible claims or reasons, choose the stronger one, and defend the choice with evidence from the passage. Listening becomes a decision-making task instead of passive note taking.

Listening Target: Listen for the option that clearly takes a side, declares the why, and can be supported with the text.

Student Materials: interactive notebook; A/B choice card or two hand signals.



Teacher Script

"I will read two possible argumentative statements. Do not answer after the first one. Hear both. Then choose the stronger statement and defend your decision with because, and name one passage detail that could support it."

Round	Statement A	Statement B	Answer
1	The weather changed on field day.	Students should observe the weather carefully before making plans because weather can change quickly, even within a few hours.	B — it takes a clear side, includes the why, and is supported by how the weather changed on Jayden's field day.
2	Texas has four regions.	All four Texas regions should be valued because each one has different landforms, climate, resources, and jobs.	B — it makes a supportable claim about the importance of every region.

Fresh Recall: Cover notes. Finish aloud: "A strong argumentative claim must choose ____ and declare ____." (Expected: a side; the why.)

Pause Points

Pause the lesson at these moments and give students a few quiet seconds to think before they answer. Each pause names exactly what to think about.

|| Pause Point — Find the Decision Words

Stop and think: Does this prompt say should/should not or whether or not? Then it is a WHY prompt.

|| Pause Point — Name Both Sides

Stop and think: What are the TWO reasonable sides before I choose one?

|| Pause Point — Declare the Why

Stop and think: Once I choose, what is my because? A claim is a position PLUS a why.

|| Pause Point — Connect to Theme

Stop and think: What bigger idea or lesson does my side connect to?

Module 1 — My Progress Tracker

Teacher Script

"This is your very own progress tracker. As we learn this week, you get to color in how you feel about each skill by yourself. Be honest with yourself, because this shows you how much you are growing. You are the one in charge of your own learning, and I am so proud of the thinking you are doing."

Directions: This tracker is for YOU! As you read and write this week, look at each skill below. If you can do it all by yourself without help, color in or check the box that matches how you feel. Be honest with yourself — this helps you see how much you are growing!

I Can...	Not yet	Getting set	I can do it
Find the decision words in a prompt.			
Name both reasonable sides.			
Choose a side and declare the why.			
Write my claim as a complex sentence.			
Revise my claim to make it precise.			

One thing I am proud of:

One thing I want to get better at:

Module 1 — Teacher Closure and Reflection

Teacher Closure Script

Teacher Script

“At the beginning of this module, we asked how choosing a side and declaring the why help a writer build a convincing argument. Now we can answer it: choosing a side gives the argument direction, and declaring the why turns that choice into a claim that can be supported with distinct reasons and relevant evidence.”

✓ Module Overarching Question — Answered

How does choosing a side and declaring the why help a writer build a convincing argument from a text? Choosing a side gives the argument direction, and declaring the why turns that choice into a claim that can be supported with distinct reasons and relevant evidence. Strong argumentative writing is more than an opinion; it clearly states a position and shows why the evidence supports it.

Teacher Reflection - Module 1

Which students recognize decision prompts as WHY prompts?

Which students write claims as complex sentences with a clear why?

Which students still answer a decision prompt with only a side and no reason?

Who is ready for Module 2, building the full argumentative correspondence with reasons and evidence?

Teacher Notes

Module 1 — Remote Learning



Virtual Classroom Adjustment for Remote Learners

Use these adjustments to run Module 1 fully online without losing rigor or participation. For Listen, Decide, and Defend, read both statements aloud with cameras on and have students type A or B in the chat, then call on one student to defend the choice with "because." Recreate The Great Divider Line with an all-participant poll (agree / disagree) for each statement, then ask a few students to declare their why. Post the Declare-the-Why chart, the Argumentative Correspondence Structure chart, the Claim Reminder chart, and the Prompt Analysis chart in the class stream so students can glue printed copies or keep a digital version. Run Declare the Why Dash on a shared slide with a decision prompt and a set of tasks (decide, name both sides, write the claim, say the why, find a reason, big-picture bonus). For "Decide It, Then Declare It," students draft in a shared or private doc; use private comments to ask "What are you deciding, and what is your why?" rather than writing the claim for them. Collect the claim-revision check as a one-photo or typed submission of the single revised claim.

MODULE

2

**Magnify One Claim into Three
Strong Reasons**

Week 2 • Medium Stamina

Module 2: Magnify One Claim into Three Strong Reasons

Week 2 - Medium Stamina - Cluster 6 (ECR Argumentative Correspondence)

Developing Strong Reasons That Support a Claim

Teacher Script

"When students learn how to grow one idea into several meaningful reasons, they begin to sound less like guessers and more like thinkers."

Overarching Question

How does magnifying our thinking help us turn one claim into three strong, distinct, supportable reasons?

★ Daily Deck Slide (M2-01)

Write on the board: Cluster 6 | ECR Argumentative Correspondence | Module 2 | Medium Stamina passages. Overarching Question: How does magnifying our thinking help us turn one claim into three strong, distinct, supportable reasons? I can: magnify one claim into three distinct reasons that can be supported with evidence. I will: read closely, listen actively, discuss my reasoning, use text evidence, write independently, reflect on my growth, and explain my thinking to others.

Module Focus

Students move from writing a claim to supporting it with three strong reasons. They brainstorm widely, group similar ideas, narrow each group, and choose the strongest three distinct reasons that can be supported with evidence.

Module 2 — Family Communication

This Week at a Glance

- The big skill: developing three strong, distinct, supportable reasons for one claim.
- The thinking process: brainstorm widely, group similar ideas, narrow each group, and choose the final three reasons.
- The passages: “A Day That Changed” and “Understanding the Texas Regions.”

One Question to Ask at Home



Teacher Script

“How are your three reasons different from one another, and how can the text prove each one?”

One Way to Help

Ask your child to state one claim, brainstorm more than three possible reasons, group similar ideas, and explain why the final three are the strongest choices.

Family Letter

Dear Families,

This week your child is learning to develop strong reasons that support an argumentative claim. Students will use a magnifying process: brainstorm many possible reasons, group similar reasons, narrow each group to its strongest central idea, and select three distinct reasons that can be supported with evidence. They will practice with “A Day That Changed” and “Understanding the Texas Regions.”

At home, invite your child to make a claim about one of the passages and explain three different reasons for that claim. Ask, “Can each reason support its own paragraph?” and “What passage detail could prove it?”

With appreciation, Your child's teacher — The Writing Academy LLC

Carta para las Familias

Estimadas familias:

Esta semana su hijo o hija aprenderá a desarrollar razones sólidas que apoyen una afirmación argumentativa. Los estudiantes usarán un proceso de ampliación: pensar en muchas razones posibles, agrupar las razones semejantes, reducir cada grupo a su idea central más sólida y seleccionar tres razones distintas que puedan apoyarse con evidencia. Practicarán con “A Day That Changed” y “Understanding the Texas Regions.”

En casa, invite a su hijo o hija a formular una afirmación sobre uno de los pasajes y explicar tres razones diferentes. Pregunte: “¿Puede cada razón sostener su propio párrafo?” y “¿Qué detalle del pasaje podría comprobarla?”

Con aprecio, El maestro o la maestra de su hijo o hija — The Writing Academy LLC

Module 2 — Family Conversation Starters

- Why is it useful to brainstorm more reasons than a writer needs?
- How does grouping similar reasons reduce repetition?
- How can a writer tell whether a reason truly supports the claim?
- Which reason connects most strongly to the theme or big picture?

Family Activity — Magnify the Why

Choose a claim, brainstorm eight possible reasons, group similar ideas, narrow each group, and select the strongest three. Explain why each final reason is different and supportable.

Module 2 — Lesson Overview and Standards

Lesson Overview

Students use the magnifying process to grow one claim into three strong, distinct, supportable reasons. They organize multiple possible reasons, revise for coherence, and connect each final reason to relevant passage evidence.

BIG Goal

Students will magnify one claim into three distinct reasons that can be supported with evidence.

★ Daily Deck Slide (M2-02)

Write on the board: Read for clusters of support. In “A Day That Changed,” collect details that show how observation, repeated records, and the passage of time help distinguish weather from climate. In “Understanding the Texas Regions,” collect details showing how landforms, climate, resources, jobs, and settlement differ among the four regions. Group related details so you can see the larger reasons they support.

Module 2 — TEKS and ELPS (Cluster 6 · from the Scope & Sequence)

These are the standards listed for Cluster 6 in the Teach BIG Scope and Sequence, in the same form the chart uses.

TEKS — Cluster 6 (from the Scope & Sequence)

Writing Process

- (11)(B)(i) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction
- (11)(B)(ii) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including transitions
- (11)(B)(iii) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including a conclusion
- (11)(B)(iv) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by developing an engaging idea with relevant details

Writing Genre

- (12)(C)(i) compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using genre characteristics
- (12)(C)(ii) compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using craft
- (12)(D)(i) compose correspondence that requests information

Revising

- (11)(C)(i–viii) revise drafts to improve sentence structure and word choice; improve coherence by adding, deleting, combining, and rearranging ideas; and improve clarity by adding and deleting ideas

Editing

- (11)(D)(i)–(xxix), (xxx), (xxxiii)–(xxxv) edit drafts using standard English conventions — complete simple and compound sentences with subject-verb agreement and avoidance of splices, run-ons, and fragments; irregular verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, pronouns, and coordinating conjunctions; capitalization; commas in compound sentences; and grade-appropriate spelling

ELPS — Cluster 6 (from the Scope & Sequence)

Writing Process

- 4(D)(iii) write content-area texts using a variety of transition words
- 4(F)(i)–(ii), (v)–(vi) write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting details using appropriate content and style for purpose and audience

Writing Genre

- 4(C)(i) write using a combination of both high-frequency words and content-area vocabulary
- 4(D)(i)–(iii) write content-area texts using a variety of sentence lengths, sentence types, and transition words
- 4(E)(i)–(ii) write content-area-specific text using conventions and grammatical structures
- 4(F)(i)–(xvi) write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting details or supporting evidence using appropriate content, style, register, and conventions for purpose and audience

Revising

- 4(C)(i) write using a combination of both high-frequency words and content-area vocabulary
- 4(D)(i)–(iii) write content-area texts using a variety of sentence lengths, sentence types, and transition words
- 4(E)(ii) write content-area-specific text using grammatical structures
- 4(F)(i)–(ii), (v)–(vi) write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting details using appropriate content and style for purpose and audience

Editing

- 4(A)(i) apply relationships between sounds and letters of the English language to represent sounds when writing [Teacher only]
- 4(B)(i)–(ii) write text following conventional spelling patterns and rules
- 4(C)(i) write using a combination of both high-frequency words and content-area vocabulary
- 4(D)(i)–(iii) write content-area texts using a variety of sentence lengths, sentence types, and transition words
- 4(E)(i)–(ii) write content-area-specific text using conventions and grammatical structures

Language Domains

Domain	How This Module Builds It
Listening	Students listen for three distinct reasons and number them in a clear order.
Speaking	Students justify groups, reason choices, and evidence matches.
Reading	Students collect and group passage details into clusters of support.
Writing	Students write a claim, three final reasons, and matched evidence.

Module 2 — Learning Destination

I Can Statements

- I can magnify one claim into three distinct reasons that can be supported with evidence.
- I can brainstorm widely and group similar reasons together.
- I can narrow each group to one strong central idea.
- I can choose reasons that match the claim, differ from one another, and connect to theme.

I Will Statements

- I will read closely, listen actively, and discuss my reasoning.
- I will use text evidence, write independently, reflect on my growth, and explain my thinking to others.
- I will brainstorm more reasons than I need before choosing.
- I will match one strong passage detail to each final reason.

Success Criteria

- My reasons directly support my claim.
- My three reasons are distinct rather than repeated.
- Each reason is broad enough for a paragraph and specific enough to stay focused.
- Each reason can be proven with relevant text evidence.

Module 2 — Rigor and Misconceptions

Rigor Safeguard

Teachers may reread passages, model the four magnifying layers, supply sorting materials, and provide oral rehearsal. Students must still generate, group, narrow, select, and justify their own three reasons and match each reason to evidence.

Educator Insight

Students often confuse reasons with evidence, repeat the same idea in different words, or choose an appealing reason that does not support the claim. Ask: “How does this reason prove your side?” Model the magnifying layers slowly and visibly. Strong reasoning grows when students see that good writing is built, not guessed.

Thinking Demand	Student Action	Evidence of Thinking
Foundational	Identify a claim, reason, and evidence.	Correct sorting and labels.
Visible	Group related ideas and explain the group label.	Organized clusters with justification.
Independent	Narrow groups into three distinct reasons.	Three supportable reason statements.
Reflective	Connect reasons to theme or the big picture.	Meaningful oral or written explanation.

Module 2 — Thinking Levels

Level	Color	Thinking Stage	Description
Level 1	Red	Foundational	Names a reason but may confuse it with evidence.
Level 2	Orange	Emergent	Generates several ideas but repeats or loosely connects them.
Level 3	Yellow	Visible	Groups similar ideas and chooses relevant reasons.
Level 4	Green	Independent	Produces three distinct, supportable reasons and matches evidence.
Level 5	Blue	Reflective	Explains how the final reasons connect to theme or the big picture.

Challenge: Move a reason up a level by making it broader than one fact, different from the other reasons, and clearly connected to the claim.

Module 2 — Vocabulary

Tier 1 Vocabulary — Everyday Words

Word	Student-Friendly Definition	Oral Rehearsal Frame
idea	a thought that can be developed	One idea is ____.
choose	to select from options	I choose this reason because ____.
group	ideas placed together because they are alike	This group is about ____.
match	to connect things that belong together	This evidence matches because ____.
same	alike in an important way	These reasons are the same because ____.
different	not alike	This reason is different because ____.
strong	clear and able to do its job	This reason is strong because ____.
weak	not clear or not well supported	This reason is weak because ____.
prove	to show with evidence	The detail proves ____.
order	an arrangement that is easy to follow	I chose this order because ____.

Tier 2 Vocabulary — Academic Words

Word	Student-Friendly Definition	Oral Rehearsal Frame
claim	the position the writer will support	My claim is ____.
support	ideas and proof that strengthen a claim	I support my claim with ____.
reason	a broad explanation for why the claim makes sense	One reason is ____.
brainstorm	to generate many ideas before choosing	I brainstormed ____.
categorize	to group ideas that belong together	I categorize these ideas as ____.
narrow	to reduce a group to its strongest central idea	I narrow this group to ____.
magnify	to examine thinking closely and develop it in layers	I magnify my thinking by ____.
relevant	directly connected to the claim or reason	This detail is relevant because ____.
evidence	specific text proof for a reason	My evidence is ____.
theme	a larger lesson or big-picture idea	This connects to theme because ____.

Tier 3 Vocabulary — Passage and Skill-Specific Words

Word	Pronunciation	Student-Friendly Definition	Oral Rehearsal Frame
weather	WETH-ur	the condition of the air at a certain time and place	The weather can change when ____.
climate	KLY-mit	the usual weather patterns of a place over a long time	Our climate is usually ____.
observation	ob-zur-VAY-shun	something noticed by watching carefully	One observation from the passage is ____.
pattern	PAT-urn	something that happens in a regular, repeated way	A weather pattern shows ____.
region	REE-jun	an area of land that has certain features in common	One region has ____ while another has ____.
landform	LAND-form	a natural feature of the Earth's surface	A landform in this region is ____.
resources	REE-sor-siz	useful materials such as oil, water, or soil	The resources of a region help people ____.
settlement	SET-ul-munt	a place where people come to live and work	A settlement grew here because ____.
economic	ek-uh-NOM-ik	having to do with money, jobs, and making a living	An economic activity here is ____.
distinguish	dih-STING-gwish	to tell the difference between two things	I distinguish weather from climate by ____.

Module 2 — Background Knowledge and Teacher Context

Students already know how to identify a decision prompt, choose a side, and write a claim. Module 2 adds the support system: three reasons that match the claim, differ from one another, can be proven with evidence, and connect to the big picture or theme. In “A Day That Changed,” clusters of support include careful observation, repeated weather records, changing conditions, and the difference between weather and climate. In “Understanding the Texas Regions,” clusters include physical features, climate, resources, economic activities, and settlement patterns.

Module 2 — Materials and Teacher Preparation

Materials

- Copies of both passages and Interactive Notebooks
- Scissors, glue, highlighters, sticky notes, pencils, chart paper, or whiteboard
- Magnifying Process sorting cards, station direction cards, matching cards, task cards, and teacher answer keys



Prepare These Anchor Charts

- If You Have to Decide, Declare the Why
- The Magnifying Process: brainstorm, group, narrow, final three
- Strong Reasons: match the claim, differ from one another, can be proven, connect to theme
- From Claim to Reasons
- Theme Reminder

Module 2 — The DOT Reading HABIT

The DOT Reading HABIT



Teacher Script

“As strong readers, we use the DOT HABIT while reading both Medium Stamina passages.”

Step	What It Means
D — Dot	Place a small dot above an unfamiliar word.
O — Discover	Discover its meaning through the text and lesson.
T — Drop	Erase the dot once the meaning is known.

Board text: Dot the word. Discover the meaning. Drop the dot.

Module 2 — Mentor Lesson: The Magnifying Process

Four Layers

1. Brainstorm many possible reasons.
2. Group similar reasons together.
3. Narrow each group to one best idea.
4. Choose the final three reasons.

Strong Reasons

- match the claim,
- are different from one another,
- can be proven with evidence, and
- connect to the big picture or theme.



Teacher Script

"A reason should not be a tiny fact. A reason is a bigger idea that evidence can prove."

Module 2 — TRACKS: Reading for Clusters of Support

Students TAP the TRACKS in both passages and group related details into the larger reasons they support.

Letter	Category	What to Look For	Highlight Color
T	Time	Age, era, dates, cultural details, or historical details.	Pastel Green
R	Reactions	Reactions, solutions, resolutions, or effects.	Pastel Purple
A	Actions	Actions, problems, conflicts, or causes.	Pastel Yellow
C	Character, Concept, Creature	Names or major concepts central to meaning.	Pastel Yellow
K	Key Knowledge	Other important information necessary to meaning.	Pastel Orange
S	Scenery / Setting	Setting details measured through the senses.	Pastel Green



Teacher Script

“Read for clusters of support. Ask which larger reason each highlighted detail could prove.”

Before Students Read

Preview the two passages with students before reading. Each passage appears twice: first a plain copy to read, then a color-coded copy. As you read, students TAP the TRACKS — they hunt for the six kinds of evidence and highlight each with the TRACKS color below. TRACKS marks the evidence in the passage; the shapes are used only to analyze the prompt.

The Six Types of Measurable Evidence: TRACKS

Students look for six kinds of measurable evidence in every passage. Use the same six categories, the same wording, and the same colors in every module.

T Time — Age, era, dates, cultural details, or historical details. Often associated with adjectives. (Highlight color: Pastel Green.)

R Reactions — Reactions, solutions, resolutions, or effects. Often associated with verbs and adverbs. (Highlight color: Pastel Purple.)

A Actions — Actions, problems, conflicts, or causes. Often associated with verbs and adverbs. (Highlight color: Pastel Yellow.)

C Character, Concept, Creature — Characters' or people's names, animals or animals' names, or major concepts used as the central idea. Often nouns or proper nouns. (Highlight color: Pastel Yellow.)

K Key Knowledge — All other important information necessary to the meaning of the passage that is not accounted for by another TRACKS category (background knowledge). (Highlight color: Pastel Orange.)

S Scenery / Setting — Setting characteristics that are acknowledged or measured through the five senses. (Highlight color: Pastel Green.)

PASSAGE 11 — A Day That Changed

[1] Jayden woke up early, excited for field day. When he looked outside, the sky was bright and clear. The sun was already warming the air, and the morning felt calm and peaceful. “It’s going to be a great day,” he said as he grabbed his backpack and headed to school.

[2] By mid-morning, students were outside running races and playing games. The weather felt just right. It was warm, with a light breeze, and the sky stayed clear. Jayden misjudged the weather and assumed the day would continue like this.

[3] But just before lunch, the conditions began to change. The wind grew stronger, and Jayden noticed the movement of gray clouds across the sky. The temperature dropped, and the air felt cooler against his skin. Jayden looked up, confused. “What happened to the sunshine?” he asked.

[4] Soon, light rain began to fall, and teachers quickly moved everyone inside. Some students were disappointed, but Ms. Rios saw it as a chance to explain.

[5] “This is weather,” she said. “Weather describes the condition of the atmosphere at a certain time and place. It can change quickly, even within a few hours.”

[6] Jayden thought about how different the morning had been.

[7] “Climate,” Ms. Rios continued, “describes the usual weather patterns of a place over a long period of time. Even though today became rainy and cool, our area is still known for having mostly hot summers.”

[8] After school, the clouds cleared, and the sun returned. Jayden realized that while the weather had changed throughout the day, the climate where he lived stayed consistent over time.

[9] The next morning, Ms. Rios asked the class to think back to field day. She drew a chart on the board with two headings: Weather and Climate. Under weather, students listed words such as sunny, windy, rainy, warm, and cool. Under climate, they wrote long-term patterns, such as hot summers and mild winters.

[10] Jayden raised his hand. “So weather is what happens today, but climate is what usually happens over many years?” he asked.

[11] “That’s right,” Ms. Rios said. “A single rainy day does not mean the climate has changed. Scientists study weather information for many years before describing a place’s climate.”

[12] The class talked about other examples. One student said that a snowy day in a usually warm place would be weather. Another student said that a desert having little rain year after year would describe climate. Jayden began to understand that both ideas were connected, but they were not the same.

[13] At recess, Jayden looked up at the sky again. This time, he noticed the clouds, the wind, and the temperature. He knew those things described the weather at that moment. He also knew that one cloudy afternoon would not change what his area was usually like.

[14] Jayden smiled as he joined his friends outside. Field day had not gone as planned, but it helped him learn something important about Earth’s changing patterns. He would

remember to observe carefully before making guesses about the sky each day.

Student Annotation Guide — A Day That Changed

T — Time

over a long period of time

R — Reactions

The temperature dropped

A — Actions

the conditions began to change

C — Character/Concept/Creature

Jayden

K — Key Knowledge

the condition of the atmosphere

S — Scenery/Setting

the sky was bright and clear

TRACKS EVIDENCE HIGHLIGHTING — A Day That Changed

[1] Jayden woke up early, excited for field day. When he looked outside, the sky was bright and clear. The sun was already warming the air, and the morning felt calm and peaceful. “It’s going to be a great day,” he said as he grabbed his backpack and headed to school.

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remember to observe carefully before making guesses about the sky each day.

PASSAGE 12 — Understanding the Texas Regions

[1] Texas is a very large state, and its land varies from one area to another. Some parts have forests and rivers, while others have dry deserts or wide, open plains. These areas are called regions. Each region has its own landforms, climate, vegetation, and economic activities. These differences help explain how people live and work across Texas.

[2] The Coastal Plains is the largest region and stretches along the Gulf of Mexico. It includes flat land, many rivers, and thick forests. The climate has warmth and humidity, with frequent rainfall. This makes the region well suited for farming crops like cotton and corn. Fishing, shipping, and jobs in large cities are also important to the economy. Many people live in this region because the land and water support different kinds of work. Cities such as Houston and Corpus Christi are located in the Coastal Plains. These cities help connect Texas to other places through trade, transportation, and business.

[3] The North Central Plains has rolling hills, grasslands, and more trees than western Texas. The climate is milder, with moderate rainfall. Because of these conditions, many people raise cattle and grow crops. Small towns, farms, and settlements are common throughout this region. The land is not as flat as the Coastal Plains, but it is still useful for farming and ranching. People in this region often depend on the land to make a living. The grasslands provide places for cattle to graze, while the soil can be used to grow crops. Communities in the North Central Plains are often connected to agriculture and local businesses.

[4] The Great Plains is located farther west and is known for its wide, open spaces. The land is drier, and strong winds are common. Fewer trees grow here, but ranching and farming are still major activities. Some areas also produce wind energy. Farmers in this region may grow crops such as wheat and cotton. Because there is less rainfall, people must carefully use water for crops, animals, and homes. The open land is also helpful for raising cattle. In some places, wind turbines can be seen across the plains. These turbines use wind to create electricity, which is another way the region supports the Texas economy.

[5] The Mountains and Basins region is in far West Texas. It has tall mountains, dry deserts, and very little rainfall. Although fewer people live there, it is important for oil, gas, and mining. The land can be rocky and dry, so farming is more difficult than in other regions. Plants such as cacti and desert shrubs are common because they can survive with little water. Some people visit this region to see its mountains, parks, and desert views. Big Bend National Park is one place where visitors can observe the natural beauty of far West Texas.

[6] Each region has unique features, but all of them play an important role in Texas. The landforms, climate, vegetation, and economic activities of each region affect how people live. By studying the regions of Texas, people can better understand why communities, jobs, and ways of life are different across the state.

Student Annotation Guide — Understanding the Texas Regions

T — Time

the largest region

R — Reactions

how people live and work

A — Actions

Fishing, shipping, and jobs

C — Character/Concept/Creature

The Coastal Plains

K — Key Knowledge

landforms, climate, vegetation

S — Scenery/Setting

dry deserts or wide, open plains

TRACKS EVIDENCE HIGHLIGHTING — Understanding the Texas Regions

[1] Texas is a very large state, and its land varies from one area to another. Some parts have forests and rivers, while others have dry deserts or wide, open plains. These areas are called regions. Each region has its own landforms, climate, vegetation, and economic activities. These differences help explain how people live and work across Texas.

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[3] The North Central Plains has rolling hills, grasslands, and more trees than western Texas. The climate is milder, with moderate rainfall. Because of these conditions, many people raise cattle and grow crops. Small towns, farms, and settlements are common throughout this region. The land is not as flat as the Coastal Plains, but it is still useful for farming and ranching. People in this region often depend on the land to make a living. The grasslands provide places for cattle to graze, while the soil can be used to grow crops. Communities in the North Central Plains are often connected to agriculture and local businesses.

[4] The Great Plains is located farther west and is known for its wide, open spaces. The land is drier, and strong winds are common. Fewer trees grow here, but ranching and farming are still major activities. Some areas also produce wind energy. Farmers in this region may grow crops such as wheat and cotton. Because there is less rainfall, people must carefully use water for crops, animals, and homes. The open land is also helpful for raising cattle. In some places, wind turbines can be seen across the plains. These turbines use wind to create electricity, which is another way the region supports the Texas economy.

[5] The Mountains and Basins region is in far West Texas. It has tall mountains, dry deserts, and very little rainfall. Although fewer people live there, it is important for oil, gas, and mining. The land can be rocky and dry, so farming is more difficult than in other regions. Plants such as cacti and desert shrubs are common because they can survive with little water. Some people visit this region to see its mountains, parks, and desert views. Big Bend National Park is one place where visitors can observe the natural beauty of far West Texas.

[6] Each region has unique features, but all of them play an important role in Texas. The landforms, climate, vegetation, and economic activities of each region affect how people live. By studying the regions of Texas, people can better understand why communities, jobs, and ways of life are different across the state.

Day 1 — Gather and Reveal



AUDITORY ENGAGEMENT - ACTIVE PARTICIPATION Approach: Listen and Number Purpose: Students listen to three reasons and number them in a clear order. They must distinguish overlapping ideas from distinct reasons and explain why the order works. Listening Target: Listen for three different reasons that support the same claim and decide an order that makes the argument easy to follow.

★ Daily Deck Slide (M2-03)

Write on the board: Hear all three reasons. Number them 1–3 in the order that would make the argument easiest to follow. Then explain why your order works. Teacher Script: “Listen to all three reasons before numbering them. Your job is to hear how the reasons are different and decide a clear order for a reader.” Round 1: Claim: Students should study all four Texas regions. Reasons: the regions have different landforms and climates; the regions support different jobs and economic activities; the regions show different settlement patterns and ways of life. Answer Key / Look-For: Possible order: 1 natural features and climate; 2 jobs and economic activities; 3 settlement patterns and ways of life. Other orders may be defensible if students explain the progression. Round 2: Claim: Students should keep a weather journal. Reasons: daily records show current conditions; repeated observations make changes easier to compare; a record over time helps students distinguish recent weather from climate. Answer Key / Look-For: Possible order: 1 record current conditions; 2 compare changes over several days; 3 use time and evidence to distinguish weather from climate. Other orders may be defensible if students explain the progression. Fresh Recall: Cover notes. State your three reasons from memory and explain how you know they are distinct. G — Gather Their Attention Attention Activity: “Zoom In! Zoom Out!” Bring a paper magnifying glass cutout or display one on a slide. On the board, write a claim and then surround it with many messy sticky notes of random ideas. Teacher Script “Writers, today we are going to do something powerful. We are going to zoom in on our thinking.” “Sometimes students write a claim and then get stuck. They know what side they believe, but they do not know how to grow that side into strong reasons. That is where magnifying comes in.” Hold up the magnifying glass. “This is our thinking tool for today. We are going to magnify our ideas layer by layer until we uncover three strong reasons.” Point to the messy notes. “Right now, this thinking is a little wild and crowded. By the end of today, we will turn this mess into a clear plan.” Write on the board: Claims need support. Support needs reasons. Reasons grow through magnifying. Then say: “Our HABIT today is this: strong writers do not grab the first idea—they magnify their thinking until the best ideas rise to the top.”

★ Daily Deck Slide (M2-04)

Write on the board: 1 Brainstorm widely. 2 Group similar reasons. 3 Narrow each group. 4 Choose the strongest three distinct reasons. R — Reveal the Background Knowledge Teacher Script “Let’s review what we already know. In argumentative correspondence, we begin with a prompt that asks us to decide. If you have to decide, declare the why. Last time, we practiced writing a claim.” “Today, we are moving to the next step. A strong claim must be supported with reasons. Not one weak reason. Not three repeated reasons. Three clear, different, supportable reasons.” Claim: Students should study all four Texas regions because each region helps explain a different relationship among land, climate, resources, jobs, and settlement. Magnify into natural features, economic activities, and settlement/ways of life. Claim = what I believe Reasons = why I believe it Teacher Script “We are going to use the magnifying process.” Write on the board and say each layer aloud: Layer 1: Brainstorm a lot of reasons Layer 2: Group similar reasons Layer 3: Narrow each group to one best idea Layer 4: Choose your final three groups as your final reasons

★ Daily Deck Slide (M2-05)

Write on the board: Claim: Students should study all four Texas regions because each region helps explain a different relationship among land, climate, resources, jobs, and settlement. Magnify into natural features, economic activities, and settlement/ways of life. Teacher Model Use this prompt: Explain whether or not all four Texas regions should be valued as important parts of the state. Teacher Script “First, I choose my side.” Write: All four Texas regions should be valued as important because each region contributes distinct natural features, resources, economic activities, and communities to the state. “Now I need reasons. In layer 1, I brainstorm a lot.” Write: different landforms different climate conditions different vegetation different natural resources different jobs different economic activities different settlement patterns different ways people use the land each region contributes to Texas as a whole “Now I group similar ideas.” Group Example Group 1: landforms, climate, vegetation, and natural features Group 2: resources, jobs, and economic activities Group 3: settlement patterns, communities, and ways people use the land “Now I narrow each group to one best idea.” Write: different regions have distinct natural features and climate conditions different regions support distinct resources, jobs, and economic activities different regions help explain settlement patterns and ways of life across Texas “Now I choose my final three reasons.” Teacher Script “These three reasons are strong because they are different from one another, they match the claim, and I can prove them with the passage.”

Day 2 — Attempt



Daily Deck Slide (M2-06)

Write on the board: Rotate through Brainstorm Burst, Group It Together, Narrow the Group, and Final Three Reasons. Record each layer in the notebook. A — Attempt the Activity Directions Station Rotation Activity: “Magnify the Why Lab” This activity uses four stations. Students rotate in pairs or small groups. Each station represents one layer of the magnifying process. Teacher Script “Today you will move through the Magnify the Why Lab. At each station, you will complete one layer of the magnifying process. By the end, your group will have grown one claim into three strong reasons.” “Everything you do today should also be added to your Interactive Notebook. Please remember to use the games and activities in your Interactive Notebook to continually review all of the ECR concepts whenever you have free time in the classroom.” Station 1: Brainstorm Burst Students receive one prompt card and one claim. Their job is to brainstorm as many possible reasons as they can. Sample Prompt Card Explain whether or not students should keep a weather journal to understand changing conditions and the difference between weather and climate. Sample Claim Students should keep a weather journal because repeated observations help them describe current conditions, compare changes, and avoid confusing a few days with climate. Teacher Directions Card “Write at least 8 possible reasons that could support this claim. Do not stop at the first few ideas. Stretch your thinking.” Possible Answers records temperature, wind, clouds, and rain shows weather can change during one day makes day-to-day comparison possible helps students notice unusual conditions prevents guessing from one sunny morning creates a record that can be checked later shows that one week describes recent weather helps distinguish recent weather from long-term climate encourages careful observation instead of assumptions Station 2: Group It Together Students cut out their brainstormed reasons and sort them into groups of similar ideas. Teacher Directions Card “Cut apart your brainstormed reasons. Group reasons that seem to belong together. Give each group a label.” Possible Group Labels current conditions and careful observation comparison across several days weather versus climate and the role of time Station 3: Narrow the Group Students choose only one best idea from each group. Teacher Directions Card “Look at each group and choose the strongest idea in that group. Circle it. This idea should be broad enough to support a paragraph but clear enough to stay focused.” Possible Narrowed Ideas current conditions and careful observation comparison across several days weather versus climate and the role of time Station 4: Final Three Reasons Match-Up Students write their final three reasons as topic sentences or reason stems in their Interactive Notebook. Teacher Directions Card “Write your final three reasons in your Interactive Notebook. Number them 1, 2, and 3. Then write one sentence explaining how each reason supports the claim.” Interactive Notebook Title Magnify the Why – My Three Final Reasons - Students should keep weather journals because they create accurate records of current conditions. - Students should keep weather journals because repeated records make changes and patterns easier to compare. - Students should keep weather journals because the record helps distinguish recent weather from long-term climate. Teacher Answer Key Samples Prompt: Explain whether or not all four Texas regions should be valued as important parts of the state. Possible Brainstormed Reasons each region has distinct landforms and climate each region supports different jobs and economic activities different regions use water and resources in different ways each region contributes to the Texas economy

settlement patterns differ across regions people adapt to regional conditions all four regions help explain Texas geography the regions show how land and work are connected Possible Final Three Reasons - different regions have distinct natural features and climate conditions - different regions support distinct resources, jobs, and economic activities - all four regions help explain settlement patterns and ways of life across Texas Prompt: Explain whether or not students should keep a weather journal to understand changing conditions and the difference between weather and climate. Possible Brainstormed Reasons records current weather conditions makes changes across days easier to compare helps separate short-term weather from long-term climate encourages careful observation instead of guessing creates a record that can be checked later shows that one unusual day does not define climate Possible Final Three Reasons - weather journals create accurate records of current conditions - repeated records make changes and patterns easier to compare - a weather journal helps distinguish recent weather from long-term climate

Day 3 — Discuss and Use Again



★ Daily Deck Slide (M2-07)

Write on the board: Which ideas repeated? Which group was strongest? Could each final reason support its own paragraph? Which reason connects most strongly to theme? D — Discuss and Ask Questions Teacher Script “Let’s pause and talk about what we noticed while magnifying our thinking. Good writers do not just collect reasons. They organize them, compare them, and choose the strongest ones.” Discussion Questions “Why is it helpful to brainstorm more reasons than we actually need?” “What did you notice when you grouped similar ideas together?” “How did you decide which idea in a group was the strongest?” “Why do our final three reasons need to be different from one another?” “How can theme help us choose stronger reasons?” “What makes a reason weak?” Possible Student Responses “Brainstorming more helps us have better choices.” “Some ideas were really almost the same.” “The strongest idea was broader and easier to prove.” “If the reasons are too similar, the writing sounds repeated.” “Theme helps us think about the big picture.” “A weak reason does not really support the claim.” Possible Student Questions and Teacher Responses Student: “What if I have four good groups?” Teacher: “That can happen. Then you compare them and choose the three that are strongest, clearest, and easiest to support.” Student: “Can a reason have evidence inside it?” Teacher: “A reason should not be a tiny fact. A reason is a bigger idea that evidence can prove.” Student: “What if my reasons all sound alike?” Teacher: “That means you need to go back and magnify again. Ask yourself if each reason adds something new.” Student: “How do I know if a reason is strong?” Teacher: “Ask: does it match my claim, sound different from the other reasons, and can I prove it with the text?”

Daily Deck Slide (M2-08)

Write on the board: Rewrite the claim. List three final reasons. Under each reason, record one text detail that truly proves it. U — Use the Knowledge Again Independent Interactive Notebook Activity: “Evidence Hunt for My Three Reasons” This is where students use the three reasons they developed and now select textual evidence for each one. Teacher Script “Open your Interactive Notebook to a clean page and title it: My Three Reasons and My Evidence” “Now that you have your three reasons, your job is to go back into the text and find the best evidence for each one. Today, you are matching proof to purpose.” “Remember, evidence should support the reason clearly. Choose details that truly prove your thinking.” Student Directions Rewrite your claim at the top of the page. List your three final reasons. Under each reason, write one strong piece of evidence from the passage. Underline the words in the evidence that best connect to the reason. Interactive Notebook Layout Claim: _____ Reason 1:

_____	Evidence: _____	Reason 2:
_____	Evidence: _____	Reason 3:
_____	Evidence: _____	Sample Student

Practice 1 Claim: Students should keep a weather journal because repeated observations create an accurate record of changing conditions and help distinguish weather from climate. Reason 1: It records current weather conditions. Evidence: Jayden’s class recorded temperature, wind, clouds, and rain in a weather journal. Reason 2: It makes changes easier to compare. Evidence: The class compared several days that included sunny, cloudy, rainy, warm, and cool conditions. Reason 3: It helps distinguish weather from climate. Evidence: Ms. Rios explains that one week shows recent weather, while climate requires information from many years. Sample Student Practice 2 Claim: All four Texas regions should be valued because each region contributes distinct landforms, climate conditions, resources, economic activities, and communities to the state. Reason 1: The regions have different natural features and climates. Evidence: The Coastal Plains has rivers and frequent rainfall, while the Mountains and Basins is dry and mountainous. Reason 2: The regions support different economic activities. Evidence: The Great Plains supports farming, ranching, and wind energy, while the Mountains and Basins supports oil, gas, mining, and tourism. Reason 3: The regions help explain different settlement patterns and ways of life. Evidence: The passage explains that landforms, climate, vegetation, and economic activities affect how people live across Texas. Teacher Answer Key Answers will vary, but strong responses should: match evidence to the reason clearly use actual details from the passage avoid choosing evidence that is too weak or unrelated Teacher Checklist A strong evidence choice: clearly proves the reason comes directly from the text is specific, not vague supports the claim overall Notebook Reminder “Please keep this page in your Interactive Notebook. Use the games and activities in your Interactive Notebook to continually review all of the ECR concepts whenever you have free time in the classroom.”

Day 4 — Award and Target



★ Daily Deck Slide (M2-09)

Write on the board: Circle your strongest reason and finish: “This reason is strong because ____.” A — Award Yourself for a Job Well Done Creative Recognition Ideas Magnifying Glass Badge Students draw a magnifying glass in their notebook and write: “I magnified my thinking into three strong reasons.” Reason Ribbon Students choose their strongest reason and place a star beside it labeled: “My strongest support.” Theme Glow Students highlight the reason that best connects to the theme or big picture. Notebook Pride Moment Invite students to hold up their Interactive Notebook page during a quick class celebration. Teacher Script “Today you did real writer work. You took one idea and carefully built support around it. That is how thoughtful writing grows.”

★ Daily Deck Slide (M2-10)

Write on the board: Choose one goal: brainstorm wider, group more accurately, reduce repetition, strengthen relevance, or match evidence more precisely. T — Target Their Goals Teacher Script “Writers, now it is time to think about what you want to improve next. Strong writers always look ahead.” Reflection Questions Did I brainstorm enough ideas before choosing my reasons? Did I group similar ideas correctly? Are my three final reasons different from one another? Can each of my reasons be supported with evidence? Do my reasons connect to the big picture or theme? Curiosity Questions Why does good argumentative writing need more than one reason? How can theme help a reason sound more meaningful? Why do some reasons sound stronger than others? How does organizing our thinking improve our writing? What happens to an argument when the reasons are repeated? Goal Stem “My next goal is to strengthen my argument by _____.”

Day 5 — Explain to Others



Daily Deck Slide (M2-11)

Write on the board: Teach brainstorm -> group -> narrow -> final three. Explain why strong writers do not simply grab the first three ideas. E — Explain to Others Turn and Teach Teacher Script “Turn to a partner and teach them how the magnifying process works. Explain the four layers in order and tell why each one matters.” Student Turn-and-Teach Frames “Layer 1 is important because ...” “When I grouped my ideas, I noticed ...” “I narrowed my group by choosing ...” “My final three reasons support my claim because ...” “One way theme helped me today was ...” Teacher Listen-Fors Listen for students using these ideas: brainstorm group narrow final three reasons support evidence theme claim Teacher Closing for This Section “When you can explain your thinking process, you are becoming a stronger writer on purpose.” Teacher Modeling Section Model Prompt 1 Explain whether or not careful weather observations should matter more than quick assumptions when people make decisions about current conditions. Teacher Script “First, I choose my side. I believe careful weather observations matter more than quick assumptions. Now I write my claim.” Claim: Careful weather observations should matter more than quick assumptions because current conditions can change quickly and accurate decisions depend on evidence. “Now I magnify my reasons.” Layer 1 Brainstorm current conditions can change observations show actual conditions first impressions can become inaccurate weather journals create records allow comparison one unusual day does not define climate time matters when describing climate evidence supports better decisions Layer 2 Group current conditions / careful observation / changing weather records / comparisons / evidence short-term weather / long-term climate / role of time Layer 3 Narrow current observations describe what is happening now repeated records make changes easier to compare time and repeated evidence help distinguish weather from climate Layer 4 Final Three Reasons current observations describe what is happening now repeated records make changes easier to compare time and repeated evidence help distinguish weather from climate Model Prompt 2 Explain whether or not all four Texas regions should be valued as important parts of the state. Teacher Script “I choose yes. Now I will build my support.” Claim: All four Texas regions should be valued because each one contributes distinct natural features, resources, economic activities, and communities to the state. Layer 1 Brainstorm landforms climate vegetation water and resources farming and ranching shipping and trade energy, mining, and tourism settlement patterns and communities Layer 2 Group natural features / climate / vegetation / water resources / jobs / economic activities settlement patterns / communities / ways of life Layer 3 Narrow different regions have distinct natural features and climates different regions support distinct resources and economic activities different regions help explain settlement patterns and ways of life Layer 4 Final Three Reasons different regions have distinct natural features and climates different regions support distinct resources and economic activities different regions help explain settlement patterns and ways of life Teacher Closing Words of Encouragement “Today, you did something that strong writers learn to do well—you grew your thinking before you ever started drafting. That matters. You showed that good writing does not happen by accident. It is built by magnifying your ideas, organizing your thoughts, and choosing your strongest reasons carefully. Every step you took today made your writing stronger. Keep going, one claim, one reason, and one thoughtful choice at a time. You are

becoming a more confident writer every day.” DETAILED VIRTUAL ADAPTATION

★ Daily Deck Slide (M2-15)

Write on the board: Display the Medium Stamina passages and a four-layer digital magnifying board. Use breakout-room sorting, drag-and-drop reason groups, Listen and Number, and a shared evidence tracker. Set Up Before Class Post the Medium Stamina passages and create a four-column digital board: Brainstorm / Group / Narrow / Final Three. Prepare reason cards as movable text boxes and an evidence tracker with one row per final reason. Passage Access and Annotation Students highlight clusters of related details rather than isolated facts. Use one annotation code for weather/climate observations and another for Texas-region land/climate/resource/job connections. Auditory Engagement Online For Listen and Number, read all three reasons while students keep pencils/keyboards still. Students privately number 1–3, then compare orders in breakout pairs and explain why their sequence helps a reader follow the argument. Collaborative Attempt Convert Magnify the Why Lab into four timed breakout rounds. Students brainstorm on sticky-note text boxes, drag related ideas into groups, rename each group with one broad reason, and select the strongest three. Require one speaker to explain why a discarded idea was weaker or repetitive. Independent Use Students complete My Three Reasons and My Evidence digitally. Each reason must have one passage detail and a one-sentence explanation of why the detail belongs under that reason. ELPS and Accessibility Supports Provide oral/visual models of broad reason versus specific evidence, allow speech-to-text, keep transition and academic-vocabulary banks visible, and pair multilingual learners for oral rehearsal before independent writing. Formative Check and Feedback Use a quick three-column check: Distinct? Supportable? Relevant? Students self-rate each reason and revise any reason that fails one column. Closure Students cover notes and state their three reasons from memory, then add one sentence answering the overarching question to the tracker. OVERARCHING QUESTION - ANSWER Question: How does magnifying our thinking help us turn one claim into three strong, distinct, supportable reasons? Answer: Magnifying helps writers brainstorm widely, group similar ideas, narrow each group, and select the strongest three reasons. The result is an argument with reasons that are different from one another, directly connected to the claim, and strong enough to support with text evidence.

★ Daily Deck Slide (M2-14)

Write on the board: How does magnifying our thinking help us turn one claim into three strong, distinct, supportable reasons? Answer: Magnifying helps writers brainstorm widely, group similar ideas, narrow each group, and select the strongest three reasons. The result is an argument with reasons that are different from one another, directly connected to the claim, and strong enough to support with text evidence.

Module 2 — Low, Medium, and High Exemplars

Prompt: Explain whether or not all four Texas regions should be valued as important parts of the state. Develop three reasons for the claim.

Low Exemplar

- Student Response: "Every region is important. All regions matter. The regions are all important parts of Texas."
- What Is Working: The student names ideas connected to the claim.
- What Needs Improvement: The reasons repeat rather than add three distinct kinds of support, and each needs to be broad enough for its own paragraph.

Medium Exemplar

- Student Response: "Each region has different landforms and climate. Each region has different land. The regions all look different."
- What Is Working: The reasons match the claim and can be supported with passage details.
- What Needs Improvement: The reasons overlap. Regroup and narrow so each final reason adds something new.

High Exemplar

- Student Response: "Each region has different landforms and climate. Each region supports different resources and economic activities. Each region helps explain different settlement patterns and ways of life."
- What Is Working: All three reasons match the claim, are distinct enough to develop, and can be supported with passage evidence.

Module 2 — Assessment Opportunities

Formative Task

Students rewrite a claim, list three final reasons, and record one passage detail that truly proves each reason.

Component	Look-For
Claim match	Every reason directly supports the chosen side.
Distinction	The three reasons add different support rather than repeating.
Scope	Each reason is broad enough for a paragraph and clear enough to stay focused.
Evidence	Each selected detail directly proves its reason.

Answer Key / Look-For

Answers will vary, but strong responses should match evidence to the reason clearly, use actual details from the passage, and avoid evidence that is weak or unrelated.

Check the Learning

- Verbal: listen for students explaining why three reasons are distinct.
- Visual: inspect grouped brainstorm cards and the labels students assign.
- Written: collect the “My Three Reasons and My Evidence” notebook page.

Ask: Does each reason match the claim? Does it add something new? Can the passage prove it?

Intervention — Module 2

★ Daily Deck Slide (M2-12)

Write on the board: Sort cards under Claim, Reason, and Evidence. Explain why each card belongs. Revise one weak reason into a stronger, broader reason. Intervention Activity “Reason Rescue” Small-Group Support This intervention is for students who need extra help understanding the difference between a claim, a reason, and evidence. Materials claim cards reason cards evidence cards three-column sorting mat labeled: Claim Reason Evidence Teacher Script “Today we are going to rescue mixed-up thinking. Sometimes writers confuse a reason with a piece of evidence, so we are going to sort them and talk through why each one belongs where it does.” Steps Place one claim card at the top. Read three to six cards aloud. Students sort each card under Claim, Reason, or Evidence. Students explain their thinking out loud. Teacher helps revise weak reasons into strong reasons. Sample Claim Card Students should study all four Texas regions because each region shows a different relationship among land, climate, resources, jobs, and settlement. Sample Mixed Cards each region supports different economic activities The Coastal Plains has rivers, frequent rainfall, farming, fishing, shipping, and large cities all four Texas regions contribute to the state The Great Plains uses strong winds to produce wind energy each region helps people understand Texas in a different way The Mountains and Basins has very little rainfall and supports oil, gas, mining, and tourism Teacher Thinking Aloud “‘Each region supports different economic activities’ sounds like a reason because it is a broad idea that evidence can prove. ‘The Great Plains uses strong winds to produce wind energy’ is evidence because it is a specific detail from the text.” Intervention Notebook Work Have students create a page in their Interactive Notebook titled: Claim / Reason / Evidence Rescue Students glue three corrected examples into their notebook and label each one. Teacher Reminder “Please keep these examples in your Interactive Notebook and use the games and activities in your Interactive Notebook to continually review all of the ECR concepts whenever you have free time in the classroom.”

Module 2 — Embedded Checks and Student Support

If a Student...	Support to Provide
Confuses a reason with evidence	Use Reason Rescue and sort examples under Claim, Reason, and Evidence.
Repeats the same reason	Regroup brainstormed ideas and require a new label for each group.
Chooses an unrelated reason	Ask, “How does this reason prove your side?”
Cannot narrow a group	Choose the idea broad enough for a paragraph and clear enough to stay focused.
Masters quickly	Use the Reason Architect Challenge.

Enrichment — Module 2

★ Daily Deck Slide (M2-13)

Write on the board: Develop 8–10 possible reasons, group them, narrow to four, reject one group with justification, and keep the strongest three. Enrichment Activity “Reason Architect Challenge” Students who master the concept will take one claim and develop: 8–10 brainstormed reasons 4 grouped categories 4 narrowed group ideas 3 final reasons Then they must explain why they rejected the extra group. This pushes them to think about relevance, strength, and precision. Teacher Script “You are not just finding reasons. You are becoming a reason architect. Your job is to build the strongest support system possible for your claim.” Challenge Extension After choosing their final three reasons, students write one sentence explaining how each reason connects to theme or the big picture. Example Extension Prompt Explain whether or not students should keep a weather journal to understand changing conditions and the difference between weather and climate. Students must show how their reasons connect to ideas such as: careful observation weather changes across days short-term conditions versus long-term patterns evidence-based conclusions

Module 2 — Additional Writing Opportunity: Magnify the Why

Prompt

Explain whether or not keeping a weather journal helps people understand the difference between weather and climate.

Planning Process

1. Write the claim.
2. Brainstorm eight to ten possible reasons.
3. Group similar reasons and label each group.
4. Narrow each group to one central idea.
5. Select the strongest three distinct reasons.
6. Match one strong passage detail to each reason.

Drafting Space

Success Criteria

- All three reasons support the claim.
- Each reason adds something new.
- Each reason can support its own paragraph.
- Each evidence choice directly proves its reason.

Module 2 — Auditory Engagement (Active Participation)

AUDITORY ENGAGEMENT - ACTIVE PARTICIPATION Approach: Listen and Number Purpose: Students listen to three reasons and number them in a clear order. They must distinguish overlapping ideas from distinct reasons and explain why the order works. Listening Target: Listen for three different reasons that support the same claim and decide an order that makes the argument easy to follow.

★ Daily Deck Slide (M2-03)

Write on the board: Hear all three reasons. Number them 1-3 in the order that would make the argument easiest to follow. Then explain why your order works. Teacher Script: "Listen to all three reasons before numbering them. Your job is to hear how the reasons are different and decide a clear order for a reader." Round 1: Claim: Students should study all four Texas regions. Reasons: the regions have different landforms and climates; the regions support different jobs and economic activities; the regions show different settlement patterns and ways of life. Answer Key / Look-For: Possible order: 1 natural features and climate; 2 jobs and economic activities; 3 settlement patterns and ways of life. Other orders may be defensible if students explain the progression. Round 2: Claim: Students should keep a weather journal. Reasons: daily records show current conditions; repeated observations make changes easier to compare; a record over time helps students distinguish recent weather from climate. Answer Key / Look-For: Possible order: 1 record current conditions; 2 compare changes over several days; 3 use time and evidence to distinguish weather from climate. Other orders may be defensible if students explain the progression. Fresh Recall: Cover notes. State your three reasons from memory and explain how you know they are distinct.

Pause Points

|| Pause Point — Brainstorm Widely

Stop and think: Have I generated enough choices before selecting reasons?

|| Pause Point — Group Similar Ideas

Stop and think: Which ideas repeat or belong under one larger label?

|| Pause Point — Narrow the Group

Stop and think: Which idea is broad enough for a paragraph but clear enough to stay focused?

|| Pause Point — Prove Each Reason

Stop and think: What exact passage detail truly proves this reason?

Module 2 — My Progress Tracker

Directions: Mark the box that honestly shows where you are now.

I Can...	Not yet	Getting set	I can do it
Brainstorm many possible reasons.			
Group similar ideas and label each group.			
Narrow a group to one strong idea.			
Choose three distinct reasons.			
Match relevant evidence to each reason.			

One thing I am proud of: _____

My next goal: _____

Module 2 — Teacher Closure and Reflection

✓ Module Overarching Question — Answered

How does magnifying our thinking help us turn one claim into three strong, distinct, supportable reasons?

Magnifying helps writers brainstorm widely, group similar ideas, narrow each group, and select the strongest three reasons. The result is an argument with reasons that are different from one another, directly connected to the claim, and strong enough to support with text evidence.

Teacher Reflection

Which students distinguish reasons from evidence?

Which students group and narrow ideas independently?

Which students still repeat reasons or choose weak support?

Teacher Notes

Module 2 — Remote Learning



Virtual Classroom Adjustment for Remote Learners

Run Listen and Number with all three reasons read aloud before students post 1–3 in chat, then invite students to justify the order. Use a shared digital board for the four Magnify the Why Lab stations: students add brainstorm notes, drag similar ideas into groups, bold the strongest central idea in each group, and copy their final three reasons into a private notebook or document. Post both Medium Stamina passages for the evidence hunt and ask students to highlight the exact words that connect to each reason. For Reason Rescue, use three shared columns labeled Claim, Reason, and Evidence; for Reason Architect, have students submit the rejected fourth group with a written justification. Preserve independent thinking by asking questions about relevance, distinction, and proof instead of supplying a reason or evidence choice.

MODULE

3

**Finishing the Argumentative
Paper with CREATURES**

Week 3 • High Stamina

Module 3: Finishing the Argumentative Paper with CREATURES

Week 3 - High Stamina - Cluster 6 (ECR Argumentative Correspondence)

Finishing the Argumentative Paper

Reading and Theme Focus: Building a Strong Argument That Ends With Meaning

Teacher Inspiration:



Teacher Script

"When students learn how the parts of a paper work together, writing stops feeling like a mystery and starts feeling like a masterpiece in progress."

Overarching Question

How do the parts of CREATURES work together to make an argumentative response clear, supported, logical, and meaningful?

Learning Launch

I can: build a complete argumentative response by connecting the parts of CREATURES.

I will: read closely, listen actively, discuss my reasoning, use text evidence, write independently, reflect on my growth, and explain my thinking to others.



Daily Deck Slide (M3-01)

Write on the board: Cluster 6 | ECR Argumentative Correspondence | Module 3 | High Stamina passages. Overarching Question: How do the parts of CREATURES work together to make an argumentative response clear, supported, logical, and meaningful? I can: build a complete argumentative response by connecting the parts of CREATURES. I will: read closely, listen actively, discuss my reasoning, use text evidence, write independently, reflect on my growth, and explain my thinking to others.

Module 3 — Family Communication

This Week at a Glance

- The big skill: finishing a complete argumentative paper by making every CREATURES part do its job.
- The framework: Claim, Reasons, Evidence, Argument in logical order, Thinking, Understanding Others, Rebuttal, Ending, and Significance.
- The two readings: “A Day That Changed” and “Understanding the Texas Regions.”

One Question to Ask at Home



Teacher Script

“How does this piece support your reason and help the whole argument fit together?”

One Way to Help

Invite your child to explain the nine CREATURES jobs in order. Ask which part is strongest and which part needs a clearer connection.

Family Letter

Dear Families,

This week your child is finishing the argumentative paper by connecting every part of CREATURES: Claim, Reasons, Evidence, Argument in logical order, Thinking, Understanding Others, Rebuttal, Ending, and Significance. Students will use “A Day That Changed” and “Understanding the Texas Regions” to practice matching evidence to reasons, explaining what evidence proves, acknowledging another reasonable viewpoint, rebutting it respectfully, and ending with a meaningful big-picture idea.

At home, ask your child to teach you the CREATURES jobs in order. Then ask, “Does every piece belong?” This conversation reinforces the HABIT that strong writers build papers piece by piece and make every piece work together.

With appreciation,

Your child’s teacher — The Writing Academy LLC

Carta para las Familias

Estimadas familias:

Esta semana su hijo o hija terminará el ensayo argumentativo conectando cada parte de CREATURES: afirmación, razones, evidencia, argumento en orden lógico, pensamiento, comprensión de otros puntos de vista, refutación, cierre y significado. Los estudiantes usarán “A Day That Changed” y “Understanding the Texas Regions” para practicar cómo relacionar la evidencia con las razones, explicar lo que demuestra la evidencia, reconocer otro punto de vista razonable, refutarlo con respeto y terminar con una idea significativa de panorama general.

En casa, pídale a su hijo o hija que le enseñe las partes de CREATURES en orden. Después pregunte: “¿Cada pieza pertenece aquí?” Esta conversación refuerza el HÁBITO de que los buenos escritores construyen sus textos pieza por pieza y hacen que todas las piezas funcionen juntas.

Con aprecio,

El maestro o la maestra de su hijo o hija — The Writing Academy LLC

Module 3 — Family Conversation Starters

- How is explanation different from evidence?
- Why should a writer acknowledge another reasonable viewpoint?
- How can a rebuttal return the argument to the writer's chosen side?
- What makes an ending meaningful instead of repetitive?
- Which CREATURES job helps the reader see the big picture?

Family Activity — Build the Chain

Name a friendly decision. Take turns giving a claim, a reason, proof, an explanation, another viewpoint, a respectful rebuttal, and a meaningful ending. Listen for whether every piece belongs.

Family Activity — Find the Missing Job

One person says a short argument but leaves out one job. The listener names what is missing and explains what that missing piece would do for the reader.

Module 3 — Lesson Overview and Standards

Lesson Overview

Module 3 focuses on finishing the argumentative paper. Students connect the full CREATURES sequence so a response is clear, supported, logical, and meaningful. They organize reasons, match evidence, explain the proof, acknowledge another viewpoint, rebut it respectfully, reinforce the claim, and show why the decision matters.

BIG Goal

Students will build a complete argumentative response by connecting the parts of CREATURES.

Where the Standards Are Visible

- Students organize a complete argumentative structure with introduction, body, and conclusion thinking and relevant details.
- Students match reasons and evidence, explain what the evidence proves, acknowledge another viewpoint, develop a rebuttal, and revise for clarity and coherence.
- Students orally evaluate completeness and explain missing or mismatched argument parts.

Module 3 — TEKS and ELPS (Cluster 6 · from the Scope & Sequence)

These are the standards listed for Cluster 6 in the Teach BIG Scope and Sequence, in the same form the chart uses.

TEKS — Cluster 6 (from the Scope & Sequence)

Writing Process

- (11)(B)(i) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction
- (11)(B)(ii) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including transitions
- (11)(B)(iii) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including a conclusion
- (11)(B)(iv) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by developing an engaging idea with relevant details

Writing Genre

- (12)(C)(i) compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using genre characteristics
- (12)(C)(ii) compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using craft
- (12)(D)(i) compose correspondence that requests information

Revising

- (11)(C)(i–viii) revise drafts to improve sentence structure and word choice; improve coherence by adding, deleting, combining, and rearranging ideas; and improve clarity by adding and deleting ideas

Editing

- (11)(D)(i)–(xxix), (xxx), (xxxiii)–(xxxv) edit drafts using standard English conventions — complete simple and compound sentences with subject-verb agreement and avoidance of splices, run-ons, and fragments; irregular verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, pronouns, and coordinating conjunctions; capitalization; commas in compound sentences; and grade-appropriate spelling

ELPS — Cluster 6 (from the Scope & Sequence)

Writing Process

- 4(D)(iii) write content-area texts using a variety of transition words
- 4(F)(i)–(ii), (v)–(vi) write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting details using appropriate content and style for purpose and audience

Writing Genre

- 4(C)(i) write using a combination of both high-frequency words and content-area vocabulary
- 4(D)(i)–(iii) write content-area texts using a variety of sentence lengths, sentence types, and transition words
- 4(E)(i)–(ii) write content-area-specific text using conventions and grammatical structures
- 4(F)(i)–(xvi) write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting details or supporting evidence using appropriate content, style, register, and conventions for purpose and audience

Revising

- 4(C)(i) write using a combination of both high-frequency words and content-area vocabulary
- 4(D)(i)–(iii) write content-area texts using a variety of sentence lengths, sentence types, and transition words
- 4(E)(ii) write content-area-specific text using grammatical structures
- 4(F)(i)–(ii), (v)–(vi) write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting details using appropriate content and style for purpose and audience

Editing

- 4(A)(i) apply relationships between sounds and letters of the English language to represent sounds when writing [Teacher only]
- 4(B)(i)–(ii) write text following conventional spelling patterns and rules
- 4(C)(i) write using a combination of both high-frequency words and content-area vocabulary
- 4(D)(i)–(iii) write content-area texts using a variety of sentence lengths, sentence types, and transition words
- 4(E)(i)–(ii) write content-area-specific text using conventions and grammatical structures

Language Domains

Domain	How This Module Builds It
Listening	Students listen to incomplete argumentative responses and identify the missing CREATURES job.
Speaking	Students justify card matches, discuss connections, and teach the CREATURES framework to a partner.
Reading	Students collect claim-worthy ideas, exact details, counterarguments, rebuttals, and significance from two high-stamina passages.
Writing	Students independently construct, revise, and explain a complete CREATURES argument.

Module 3 — Learning Destination

I Can Statements

- I can build a complete argumentative response by connecting the parts of CREATURES.
- I can match reasons, evidence, and Thinking so every piece supports the claim.
- I can acknowledge another reasonable viewpoint and rebut it respectfully with text-based reasoning.
- I can write an Ending and Significance that reinforce the claim and show why the decision matters.

I Will Statements

- I will read closely, listen actively, and discuss my reasoning.
- I will use text evidence, write independently, reflect on my growth, and explain my thinking to others.
- I will organize three reasons in a logical order and explain how the evidence supports them.
- I will check that every CREATURES part belongs and contributes to a clear, supported, logical, and meaningful response.

Success Criteria

- My claim clearly answers the prompt.
- My reasons and evidence build support in a logical order.
- My Thinking explains rather than repeats the evidence.
- My counterargument is reasonable and my rebuttal is respectful and text-based.
- My Ending reinforces the claim and my Significance provides the big picture.

Module 3 — Rigor and Misconceptions

Rigor Safeguard

Teachers may read passages aloud, provide color-coded CREATURES labels, offer oral rehearsal, and reduce the number of choices during sorting. Teachers may not choose the student's claim, match the evidence, write the explanation, invent the counterargument, or supply the rebuttal. Students must make and justify those connections.

Cognitive Demand

Level	Student Work	Evidence of Thinking
Foundational	Name the nine CREATURES jobs in order.	Labels and oral recall are accurate.
Inferential	Match evidence and explanation to a claim and reason.	The student explains why each piece belongs.
Evaluative	Compare combinations, remove mismatched pieces, and defend the strongest arrangement.	The student uses text-based reasoning and coherence.
Reflective	Connect Ending and Significance to theme or a larger lesson.	The final thought shows why the decision matters.

Educator Insight — Source Language

Educator Insight

Students often think that once they have a claim, they can attach any evidence to it, but strong writing requires all parts to match. Another common misconception is that explanation simply repeats the evidence. Watch for students who copy details from the text without explaining how those details prove the reason. Some students may also confuse significant inferencing with a random opinion not supported by the text. Others may choose a strong claim but weak evidence that does not clearly connect. Help them spot this by asking, "Does this piece really belong in this paragraph?" Theme can also get lost if the writing becomes too mechanical, so encourage students to end with meaning. Strong papers sound connected from beginning to end.

Module 3 — Thinking Levels

The Five Thinking Levels

Level	Color	Thinking Stage	CREATURES Application
Level 1	Red	Foundational	Names or repeats a paper part.
Level 2	Orange	Emergent	Chooses a part but gives an incomplete connection.
Level 3	Yellow	Visible	Matches evidence to a reason and explains the link.
Level 4	Green	Independent	Organizes, acknowledges another viewpoint, and rebuts it with text-based reasoning.
Level 5	Blue	Reflective	Ends with significance that connects the argument to theme or the big picture.

Challenge: Compare two possible card combinations and explain which creates a stronger paper and why.



Teacher Script

“Evidence, explanation, and significant inferencing must all match the claim and reason.”

Module 3 — Vocabulary

Tier 1 Vocabulary — Everyday Words

Word	Student-Friendly Definition	Oral Rehearsal Frame
fit	to belong with something	This piece fits because ____.
part	one piece of a whole	This part does the job of ____.
side	a position in an argument	My chosen side is ____.
proof	information that shows an idea is true	This proof supports ____.
order	the arrangement of ideas	I put these ideas in this order because ____.
clear	easy to understand	My argument is clear when ____.
strong	convincing and well supported	This sentence is strong because ____.
end	to bring something to a close	I end by ____.
matter	to be important	This decision matters because ____.
connect	to show how ideas relate	I connect these ideas by ____.

Tier 2 Vocabulary — Academic Words (Source List)

Word	Student-Friendly Definition	Oral Rehearsal Frame
claim	the position or thesis (central idea) of an argument	My claim is ____.
reason	a broad idea that supports the claim	One reason is ____.
evidence	specific proof from the passage	The evidence states ____.
explanation	thinking that connects evidence to the reason	My explanation shows ____.
inference	a conclusion formed from evidence and thinking	I infer that ____.
significance	why an idea matters beyond one detail	The significance is ____.
structure	the purposeful organization of a response	The structure helps by ____.
justify	to support a position with reasons and evidence	I justify my position with ____.
coherence	the quality of ideas fitting together clearly	My response has coherence because ____.
connection	the relationship between ideas in the argument	The connection between these ideas is ____.

Tier 3 Vocabulary — Argumentative Writing Terms

Word	Pronunciation	Student-Friendly Definition	Oral Rehearsal Frame
CREATURES	KREE-churz	the framework for the nine jobs in a complete argument	CREATURES helps me remember ____.
argument	AR-gyuh-muhnt	ideas arranged to support a position	My argument is logical because ____.
counterargument	kown-ter-AR-gyuh-muhn t	a reasonable opposing viewpoint	One counterargument is ____.
rebuttal	rih-BUHT-uhl	a respectful response that returns to the chosen side	My rebuttal explains ____.
thesis (central idea)	THEE-sis	the central claim of an argument	The thesis (central idea) takes the position that ____.
transition	tran-ZISH-uhn	a word or phrase that connects ideas	This transition connects ____.
introduction	in-truh-DUHK-shuhn	the opening that introduces the argument	The introduction prepares the reader by ____.
conclusion	kuhn-KLOO-zhuhn	the closing section of a response	The conclusion reinforces ____.
logical order	LOJ-ih-kuhl OR-der	an arrangement that makes reasoning easy to follow	The reasons are in logical order because ____.
significant inferencing	sig-NIF-ih-kuhnt IN-fer-uhn-sing	thinking that connects proof to a lesson or big picture	My significant inference shows ____.

Module 3 — Background Knowledge and Teacher Context

Teacher Preparation

Purpose of This Module

In Module 3, students finish building the argumentative papers that began in Module 1 and Module 2. In this lesson, students pull the pieces together through CREATURES: Claim, Reasons, Evidence, Argument in logical order, Thinking that explains the evidence, Understanding Others through a counterargument, Rebuttal, Ending, and Significance. The familiar claim-reason-evidence-explanation work remains the core, while students now see how acknowledging another viewpoint and bringing the thinking back to their side strengthens a complete argument.

CREATURES Argumentative Framework

Write this on an anchor chart:

C – Claim
R – Reasons
E – Evidence
A – Argument in logical order
T – Thinking / explanation
U – Understanding Others / counterargument
R – Rebuttal
E – Ending
S – Significance

Teacher Script

“Today we are building strong argumentative writing with CREATURES. Each letter gives us a job. We still need a clear claim, reasons, evidence, and explanation, but strong arguments also organize ideas logically, recognize another viewpoint, rebut that viewpoint, end with purpose, and show why the issue matters.”

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-02)

Write on the board: Read for matched argument parts. As you read, collect claim-worthy ideas, possible reasons, exact supporting details, explanations, possible counterarguments, rebuttals, and big-picture significance. Check that every selected detail can be connected to a reason rather than merely mentioning the same topic.

Module 3 — Materials and Teacher Preparation

Anchor Charts / Slides to Prepare

Anchor Chart 1: CREATURES

★ Daily Deck Slide

C = Claim

R = Reasons

E = Evidence

A = Argument in logical order

T = Thinking / Explanation

U = Understanding Others / Counterargument

R = Rebuttal

E = Ending

S = Significance / So What?

Anchor Chart 2: If You Have to Decide, Declare the Why

★ Daily Deck Slide

If you have to decide, declare the why.

Decision prompts are WHY prompts.

WHY prompts need claims, reasons, and proof.

Anchor Chart 3: Strong Body Paragraph Structure

★ Daily Deck Slide

Reason / Topic Sentence

Evidence

Explanation

Significant Inference

Anchor Chart 4: Theme in Argumentative Writing

★ Daily Deck Slide

A strong argument proves a side.

A strong argument also teaches a lesson.

Theme helps the audience see the big picture.

Anchor Chart 5: Paper Pieces That Must Work Together

★ Daily Deck Slide

prompt

claim

evidence

explanation

significant inference

Anchor Chart 6: Whiteboard Model

Leave space to build one full sample paragraph from a card set.

Materials List

Copies of both passages

Interactive Notebooks

scissors

glue

chart paper or whiteboard

card game sets

envelopes or baggies for cards

task mats

pencils

sticky notes

teacher answer key

highlighters

optional sentence strips

Vocabulary - 10 Words

1. claim — the position the writer will prove

- 1. reason — a broad idea that explains why the claim makes sense
- 1. evidence — specific proof from a passage
- 1. explanation — thinking that connects evidence to a reason
- 1. counterargument — a reasonable viewpoint from the other side
- 1. rebuttal — the writer’s response that brings the argument back to the chosen side
- 1. significance — why the argument matters beyond the immediate response
- 1. coherence — the clear, logical connection among ideas in writing
- 1. atmosphere — the air surrounding Earth where weather conditions occur
- 1. geography — the study of places and relationships among land, resources, environment, and people

Quick Teacher Reference

Cluster 6 now brings the argument together through CREATURES. “A Day That Changed” offers evidence about observation, changing weather, time, and the difference between weather and climate. “Understanding the Texas Regions” offers evidence about landforms, climate, vegetation, resources, economic activities, and settlement across the four Texas regions. Students should use these details to build claims, reasons, evidence, thinking, counterarguments, rebuttals, endings, and significance statements that remain faithful to the text.

Module 3 — The DOT Reading HABIT

D — Details

Collect exact supporting details that could serve as evidence for a reason.

O — Organization

Sort details under the claim and reason they truly support. Notice when a detail only mentions the same topic but does not prove the idea.

T — Theme

Connect the evidence and Thinking to a lesson, big picture, or why the decision matters.



Teacher Script

“Read for matched argument parts. Collect exact details, decide where they belong, and connect them to the big picture.”

Module 3 — CREATURES Argumentative Framework

The Framework

CREATURES Argumentative Framework

Write this on an anchor chart:

C – Claim
R – Reasons
E – Evidence
A – Argument in logical order
T – Thinking / explanation
U – Understanding Others / counterargument
R – Rebuttal
E – Ending
S – Significance

Teacher Script

“Today we are building strong argumentative writing with CREATURES. Each letter gives us a job. We still need a clear claim, reasons, evidence, and explanation, but strong arguments also organize ideas logically, recognize another viewpoint, rebut that viewpoint, end with purpose, and show why the issue matters.”

Strong Body Paragraph Structure

Reason / Topic Sentence

Evidence

Explanation

Significant Inference

Paper Pieces That Must Work Together

prompt

claim

evidence

explanation

significant inference

Module 3 — TRACKS: Read for Complete Argument Parts

Use TRACKS on both high-stamina passages before building a CREATURES response.

Letter	Reading Job
T	Track time and sequence.
R	Notice important realizations or results.
A	Mark actions, choices, and changes.
C	Identify central characters or contributors.
K	Collect key knowledge that can become evidence.
S	Locate the setting or situation.

After tagging, ask: Which detail supports a reason? What does it prove? What reasonable opposing view could a reader hold? How can the rebuttal return to the chosen side? What larger lesson gives the argument significance?

Before Students Read

Preview the two passages with students before reading. Each passage appears twice: first a plain copy to read, then a color-coded copy. As you read, students TAP the TRACKS — they hunt for the six kinds of evidence and highlight each with the TRACKS color below. TRACKS marks the evidence in the passage; the shapes are used only to analyze the prompt.

The Six Types of Measurable Evidence: TRACKS

Students look for six kinds of measurable evidence in every passage. Use the same six categories, the same wording, and the same colors in every module.

T Time — Age, era, dates, cultural details, or historical details. Often associated with adjectives. (Highlight color: Pastel Green.)

R Reactions — Reactions, solutions, resolutions, or effects. Often associated with verbs and adverbs. (Highlight color: Pastel Purple.)

A Actions — Actions, problems, conflicts, or causes. Often associated with verbs and adverbs. (Highlight color: Pastel Yellow.)

C Character, Concept, Creature — Characters' or people's names, animals or animals' names, or major concepts used as the central idea. Often nouns or proper nouns. (Highlight color: Pastel Yellow.)

K Key Knowledge — All other important information necessary to the meaning of the passage that is not accounted for by another TRACKS category (background knowledge). (Highlight color: Pastel Orange.)

S Scenery / Setting — Setting characteristics that are acknowledged or measured through the five senses. (Highlight color: Pastel Green.)

PASSAGE 11 — A Day That Changed

[1] Jayden woke up early, excited for field day. When he looked outside, the sky was bright and clear. The sun was already warming the air, and the morning felt calm and peaceful. “It’s going to be a great day,” he said as he grabbed his backpack and headed to school.

[2] By mid-morning, students were outside running races and playing games. The weather felt just right. It was warm, with a light breeze, and the sky stayed clear. Jayden misjudged the weather and assumed the day would continue like this.

[3] But just before lunch, the conditions began to change. The wind grew stronger, and Jayden noticed the movement of gray clouds across the sky. The temperature dropped, and the air felt cooler against his skin. Jayden looked up, confused. “What happened to the sunshine?” he asked.

[4] Soon, light rain began to fall, and teachers quickly moved everyone inside. Some students were disappointed, but Ms. Rios saw it as a chance to explain.

[5] “This is weather,” she said. “Weather describes the condition of the atmosphere at a certain time and place. It can change quickly, even within a few hours.”

[6] Jayden thought about how different the morning had been.

[7] “Climate,” Ms. Rios continued, “describes the usual weather patterns of a place over a long period of time. Even though today became rainy and cool, our area is still known for having mostly hot summers.”

[8] After school, the clouds cleared, and the sun returned. Jayden realized that while the weather had changed throughout the day, the climate where he lived stayed consistent over time.

[9] The next morning, Ms. Rios asked the class to think back to field day. She drew a chart on the board with two headings: Weather and Climate. Under weather, students listed words such as sunny, windy, rainy, warm, and cool. Under climate, they wrote long-term patterns, such as hot summers and mild winters.

[10] Jayden raised his hand. “So weather is what happens today, but climate is what usually happens over many years?” he asked.

[11] “That’s right,” Ms. Rios said. “A single rainy day does not mean the climate has changed. Scientists study weather information for many years before describing a place’s climate.”

[12] The class talked about other examples. One student said that a snowy day in a usually warm place would be weather. Another student said that a desert having little rain year after year would describe climate. Jayden began to understand that both ideas were connected, but they were not the same.

[13] Ms. Rios gave each group a weather journal. She told the students they would observe the sky each afternoon for one week. They would write down the temperature, wind, clouds, and any rain. Then they would compare their notes.

[14] At recess, Jayden looked up at the sky again. This time, he noticed more than whether it was sunny or cloudy. He watched the direction the clouds moved. He felt the air on his

face. He saw that the leaves on the trees moved a little, which meant the wind was light.

[15] “Today is warm and calm,” Jayden wrote in his journal.

[16] The next day was different. The morning started cool, and the sky looked cloudy. By lunch, the sun peeked through the clouds, and the playground felt warmer. Jayden smiled when he noticed the change.

[17] “The weather changed again,” he said to his friend Maya.

[18] Maya nodded. “But that still does not change the climate,” she said. “Ms. Rios said climate takes a long time to describe.”

[19] On Wednesday, the class looked at a map of the United States. Ms. Rios pointed to different places. Some places were usually cold in winter. Some places were usually hot and dry. Some places had rain during the year.

[20] “People use climate information to make choices,” Ms. Rios explained. “Farmers think about climate when they decide which crops to grow. Families think about climate when they pack for trips.”

[21] On Thursday, the students studied a picture of a desert. The land looked dry, and only a few plants grew there. Then they studied a picture of a forest with tall green trees.

[22] “Both places can have weather that changes from day to day,” Ms. Rios said. “A desert can have a cloudy day. A forest can have a sunny day. But the climate of each place is based on what usually happens over a long time.”

[23] Jayden wrote that idea carefully in his notebook.

[24] By Friday, the class had collected several days of weather notes. Some days were sunny. One day was cloudy. One day had light rain. The temperature changed a little each day too. Ms. Rios asked the students what their notes showed.

[25] “They show the weather for this week,” Jayden said.

[26] “Exactly,” Ms. Rios answered. “One week of notes helps us describe recent weather. To describe climate, we would need information from many years.”

[27] Jayden looked back at his field day notes. At first, he had felt disappointed when the rain came. Now he understood why the change had happened. The atmosphere was always moving, and weather could shift quickly.

[28] That afternoon, the class went outside for science. The grass was still damp, but the sky was blue again. Ms. Rios asked everyone to stand quietly and observe.

[29] Jayden felt warm sunlight on his arms. He saw a few white clouds drifting across the sky. He knew he was describing weather because these were the conditions at that time and place.

[30] When he got home, Jayden told his family what he had learned. “Weather can change in a few hours,” he said, “but climate is the usual pattern over a long time.”

[31] His dad smiled. “That explains why we can have a cool rainy day even though we live in a place with hot summers.”

[32] Jayden nodded. He no longer guessed that a sunny morning meant the whole day

would stay sunny. Instead, he knew to observe, compare, and think about time. Field day had changed, but it had helped him understand an important science idea.

Student Annotation Guide — A Day That Changed

T — Time

over a long period of time

R — Reactions

The temperature dropped

A — Actions

the conditions began to change

C — Character/Concept/Creature

Jayden

K — Key Knowledge

the condition of the atmosphere

S — Scenery/Setting

the sky was bright and clear

TRACKS EVIDENCE HIGHLIGHTING — A Day That Changed

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[31] His dad smiled. “That explains why we can have a cool rainy day even though we live in a place with hot summers.”

[32] Jayden nodded. He no longer guessed that a sunny morning meant the whole day

would stay sunny. Instead, he knew to observe, compare, and think about time. Field day had changed, but it had helped him understand an important science idea.

PASSAGE 12 — Understanding the Texas Regions

[1] Texas is a very large state, and its land varies from one area to another. Some parts have forests and rivers, while others have dry deserts or wide, open plains. These areas are called regions. Each region has its own landforms, climate, vegetation, and economic activities. These differences help explain how people live and work across Texas.

[2] A region is an area that has certain features in common. In Texas, the four main physical regions are the Coastal Plains, the North Central Plains, the Great Plains, and the Mountains and Basins. Each region has land that looks different. Each region also has different weather patterns, plants, and ways people use the land. Some areas are better for farming because they get more rain. Other areas are better for ranching because they have wide grasslands. Some places have rivers and ports that help with trade, while other places have oil, gas, or minerals underground.

[3] The Coastal Plains is the largest region and stretches along the Gulf of Mexico. It includes flat land, many rivers, and thick forests. The climate has warmth and humidity, with frequent rainfall. This makes the region well suited for farming crops like cotton and corn. Fishing, shipping, and jobs in large cities are also important to the economy.

[4] Many people live in the Coastal Plains because the land and water support many different kinds of work. The rivers provide water for people, animals, farms, and businesses. The Gulf of Mexico is important because it supports fishing and shipping. Ships can carry goods to and from Texas through ports along the coast. A port is a place where ships load and unload goods. This helps Texas trade with other states and countries.

[5] Large cities are also found in the Coastal Plains. Houston, Corpus Christi, and Galveston are examples of cities in this region. Houston is an important city for business, energy, medicine, and transportation. Corpus Christi and Galveston are close to the Gulf, so they are connected to fishing, tourism, and shipping. Because the Coastal Plains has more rainfall than other regions, forests and farms are common. People grow crops, raise animals, and work in many different industries.

[6] The North Central Plains has rolling hills, grasslands, and more trees than western Texas. The climate is milder, with moderate rainfall. Because of these conditions, many people raise cattle and grow crops. Small towns, farms, and settlements are common throughout this region.

[7] The land in the North Central Plains is not as flat as the Coastal Plains. It has hills, prairies, and open grasslands. A prairie is a large area of grassland. These grasslands are useful for cattle because the animals can graze. To graze means to eat grass in a field. Ranching became important in this region because there was enough open land for cattle. Farming is also important because the region receives some rainfall, but not as much as the Coastal Plains.

[8] Many communities in the North Central Plains are smaller than the large cities in the Coastal Plains. Some towns grew near farms, ranches, rivers, and railroads. People settled in places where they could find water, grow food, or move goods. The region's land and climate helped shape where people lived. Families often worked on farms or ranches, and towns provided stores, schools, churches, and other services.

[9] The North Central Plains also helped Texas grow because of its cattle industry. Cattle ranching became a major part of Texas history and culture. Cowboys, cattle drives, and ranches are often connected to this part of Texas. Even today, ranching and farming remain important to many communities in the region.

[10] The Great Plains is located farther west and is known for its wide, open spaces. The land is drier, and strong winds are common. Fewer trees grow here, but ranching and farming are still major activities. Some areas also produce wind energy.

[11] The Great Plains has flat land, high plains, and some canyons. The region does not receive as much rainfall as the eastern parts of Texas. Because the climate is drier, plants must be able to survive with less water. Grasses are common because they can grow in dry areas. Trees are less common because they need more water to survive.

[12] Farming in the Great Plains can be challenging because of the dry climate. Farmers must use water carefully. Some farmers use irrigation, which is a way to bring water to crops. Crops such as wheat, cotton, and corn may be grown in this region. Ranching is also important because cattle can graze on the open grasslands. The wide land gives ranchers space to raise animals.

[13] Strong winds are common in the Great Plains. These winds can make life difficult at times, but they can also be useful. Wind turbines are built in some areas to create electricity. A wind turbine is a tall machine with blades that turn when the wind blows. The movement of the blades helps produce energy. Wind energy is important because it uses a natural resource that does not run out quickly.

[14] The Great Plains also includes important landforms such as the Caprock Escarpment and Palo Duro Canyon. Palo Duro Canyon is one of the largest canyons in the United States. These landforms show how the surface of Texas changes from one region to another. Even though the Great Plains may look open and simple at first, it has many important natural features.

[15] The Mountains and Basins region is in far West Texas. It has tall mountains, dry deserts, and very little rainfall. Although fewer people live there, it is important for oil, gas, and mining.

[16] This region has the driest climate in Texas. Because it receives very little rain, there are fewer plants and fewer large cities. Many plants in this region are desert plants. Cacti, shrubs, and short grasses can survive with little water. Animals that live in this region must also be able to survive hot days, cool nights, and dry conditions.

[17] The land in the Mountains and Basins region is very different from the other regions of Texas. It has mountains, valleys, deserts, and basins. A basin is a low area of land that is often surrounded by higher land. The mountains make the region beautiful, but they also make travel and farming more difficult. Since the land is rocky and dry, fewer people live there compared to other regions.

[18] Even though fewer people live in the Mountains and Basins, the region is still important. Oil, gas, and minerals can be found underground. Mining is an economic activity in this region because people remove useful materials from the earth. Tourism is also important. Many people visit far West Texas to see mountains, desert land, and national parks. Big Bend National Park is located in this region. Visitors go there to hike,

camp, and observe the natural beauty of Texas.

[19] Each region has unique features, but all of them play an important role in Texas. The landforms, climate, vegetation, and economic activities of each region affect how people live. By studying the regions of Texas, people can better understand why communities, jobs, and ways of life are different across the state.

[20] The Coastal Plains has more rain, more rivers, and more large cities. The North Central Plains has rolling hills, grasslands, farms, and ranches. The Great Plains has wide open spaces, dry land, strong winds, farming, ranching, and wind energy. The Mountains and Basins region has mountains, deserts, oil, gas, mining, and tourism.

[21] All four regions help make Texas a diverse state. Diverse means having many different parts or features. Texas is not the same from east to west or north to south. The land changes, the climate changes, and the ways people work change. These differences help explain why people settle in certain places and why different jobs are important in different areas.

[22] Understanding Texas regions helps students see how geography affects daily life. Geography is not only about maps. It is also about how land, water, climate, plants, animals, and people are connected. When people learn about the regions of Texas, they learn how the state's natural features shape its history, economy, and communities.

Student Annotation Guide — Understanding the Texas Regions

T — Time

the largest region

R — Reactions

how people live and work

A — Actions

Fishing, shipping, and jobs

C — Character/Concept/Creature

The Coastal Plains

K — Key Knowledge

landforms, climate, vegetation

S — Scenery/Setting

dry deserts or wide, open plains

TRACKS EVIDENCE HIGHLIGHTING — Understanding the Texas Regions

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Day 1 — Gather and Reveal

GRADUATE Focus

G — Gather Their Attention

R — Reveal the Background Knowledge

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-04)

Write on the board: CREATURES gives every part a job: Claim takes the side; Reasons and Evidence build support; Argument puts ideas in logical order; Thinking explains the proof; Understanding Others acknowledges another view; Rebuttal brings the reasoning back to the chosen side; Ending reinforces the claim; Significance shows why the decision matters.

G — Gather Their Attention

Attention Activity: “The Writing Relay Tray”

Place several mixed paper strips or cards on a tray at the front of the room. Include random parts such as a prompt, claim, evidence, explanation, and significant inferencing sentence. Some should belong together and some should not.

🔊 Teacher Script

“Writers, today I brought a tray full of paper pieces. Some of these pieces belong together, and some do not. Your job today is to become a writing detective and figure out what belongs in a strong argumentative paper.”

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-04) (cont.)

Hold up two mismatched cards.

🔊 Teacher Script

“Would this evidence belong with this claim? Maybe. Maybe not. That is what strong writers must decide.”

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-04) (cont.)

Write on the board:

CREATURES

Claim

Reasons

Evidence

Argument in logical order

Thinking / Explanation

Understanding Others / Counterargument

Rebuttal

Ending

Significance

🔊 Teacher Script

"Today, we are finishing the argumentative papers we began in the last modules. We are going to make sure each part matches and works together."

🔊 Teacher Script

"Our HABIT today is this: strong writers build papers piece by piece and make every piece belong."

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-04) (cont.)

SLIDE M3-04 - MAKE EVERY PAPER PIECE BELONG

CREATURES gives every part a job: Claim takes the side; Reasons and Evidence build support; Argument puts ideas in logical order; Thinking explains the proof; Understanding Others acknowledges another view; Rebuttal brings the reasoning back to the chosen side; Ending reinforces the claim; Significance shows why the decision matters.

R — Reveal the Background Knowledge

🔊 Teacher Script

"Let's review what we have already built. In Module 1, we learned that if you have to decide, declare the why. In Module 2, we learned to magnify our thinking until we had three strong reasons. Today, we finish the work by connecting the parts."

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-04) (cont.)

Write on the board:

Prompt -> Claim -> Reasons -> Evidence -> Argument -> Thinking -> Understanding
Others -> Rebuttal -> Ending -> Significance

** Teacher Script**

"Your evidence must support your reason. Your thinking must explain how the evidence proves the reason. Then strong argumentative writers can acknowledge another reasonable viewpoint, rebut it respectfully, reinforce the claim in the ending, and show why the decision matters beyond the immediate topic."

Day 2 — Attempt the Activity

GRADUATE Focus

A — Attempt the Activity

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-05)

Write on the board: Claim: Students should observe the weather carefully because weather can change quickly. Evidence: on field day the conditions changed from warm and clear to windy and rainy within a few hours. Explanation: careful observation of the sky, wind, and temperature gives useful details. Significant inference: people make better plans when they observe carefully before guessing.

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-06)

Write on the board: Draw a prompt. Match the best claim, evidence, explanation, and significant inference. Read the full set aloud and justify why every piece belongs.

Teacher Modeling on the Board

Use a sample from A Day That Changed.

Prompt: Explain whether or not careful observation should matter more than quick assumptions when people make decisions about weather. Claim: Careful observation should matter more than quick assumptions because weather can change quickly and current evidence is more reliable than a first impression. Evidence: The passage shows Jayden assuming the sunny morning would continue, but later the wind strengthened, gray clouds moved in, the temperature dropped, and rain began. Explanation: This evidence shows that one early observation cannot guarantee what conditions will be later in the day. Significant Inference: Ultimately, people make stronger decisions when they update their thinking as new evidence appears.

Teacher Script

"Notice how every piece works together. That is what we are building today."

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-06) (cont.)

SLIDE M3-06 - BUILD-A-PAPER CHALLENGE - DIRECTIONS

Draw a prompt. Match the best claim, evidence, explanation, and significant inference. Read the full set aloud and justify why every piece belongs.

A — Attempt the Activity Directions

Card Game: “CREATURES Build-a-Paper Challenge”

This is the main game for the module. Students use prompt cards, claim cards, reason ideas from Module 2, evidence cards, explanation cards, and significance cards to build a strong argumentative plan. They then add Understanding Others, Rebuttal, and Ending language so the full CREATURES structure is visible.

Set-Up

Students work in pairs or groups of 3. Each group gets:

1 deck of prompt cards

1 deck of claim cards

1 set of reason strips carried forward from Module 21 deck of evidence cards

1 deck of explanation cards

1 deck of significance / big-picture cards 1 set of Understanding Others and Rebuttal sentence stems

1 game mat with spaces for:

Prompt

Claim

Reasons

Evidence

Argument / logical order

Thinking / explanation

Understanding Others / counterargument

Rebuttal

Ending

Significance

🔊 Teacher Script

“Today you are playing CREATURES Build-a-Paper Challenge. You will build each CREATURES job in order so the argument moves from a clear claim to reasons and evidence, through logical thinking and another viewpoint, and finally back to your side with an ending and significance.”

🔊 Teacher Script

“You must choose the pieces that fit together best. Then you must read the finished paragraph aloud and decide whether it sounds clear, supported, and meaningful.”

Teacher Script

"If a piece does not belong, do not force it. Strong writers choose carefully."

★ **Daily Deck Slide (M3-06) (cont.)**

Directions

- Draw one prompt card.
- Search for the claim card that best matches the prompt.
- Place the three reason strips from Module 2 in a logical order to build the Argument.
- Find the evidence card that best proves the claim or reason.
- Write the Thinking sentence that explains how the evidence supports the reason.
- Add Understanding Others: state one reasonable opposing viewpoint in one sentence.
- Add Rebuttal: respectfully explain why your evidence still supports your chosen side.
- Add an Ending that reinforces the claim without simply copying it.
- Choose or write a Significance sentence that explains why the decision matters beyond this one response.
- Place the cards on the game mat.
- Read the full set aloud.
- Record your strongest set in your Interactive Notebook.

Interactive Notebook Title

CREATURES Build-a-Paper Challenge

Students copy:

prompt

claim

three reasons in logical order

evidence

thinking / explanation

understanding others / counterargument

rebuttal

ending

significance

Then write one sentence: Why do these pieces belong together? CREATURES

Extension: Some readers may believe _____. However, _____ because

_____. Teacher Look-For: The counterargument must be reasonable, and the rebuttal must return to the writer's side with text-based reasoning rather than dismissing the other view.

Teacher Reminder

 Teacher Script

“Use the games and activities in your Interactive Notebook to continually review all of the ECR concepts whenever you have free time in the classroom.”

Daily Deck Slide (M3-06) (cont.)

Card Game Materials 12 Prompt Cards From “A Day That Changed” Explain whether or not careful weather observations should matter more than quick assumptions when people make decisions about current conditions. Explain whether or not students should use repeated weather observations to understand the difference between weather and climate. Explain whether or not careful observation should matter more than quick assumptions when people make decisions about weather. Explain whether or not communities should use current weather evidence when planning outdoor events. Explain whether or not people should check current weather evidence before making important outdoor plans. Explain whether or not long-term climate patterns should influence long-term planning. From “Understanding the Texas Regions” Explain whether or not all four Texas regions should be valued as important parts of the state. Explain whether or not students should study all four Texas regions. Explain whether or not Texas geography should be considered important for understanding how people and communities live and work. Explain whether or not learning about all four Texas regions helps people appreciate the state more. Explain whether or not the four Texas regions should be seen as equally important parts of the state. Explain whether or not comparing Texas regions is a valuable way to learn about Texas. 12 Thesis (Central Idea) / Claim Cards From “A Day That Changed” Careful weather observations should matter more than quick assumptions because weather can change quickly and current evidence describes what is actually happening. Students should use repeated weather observations to understand weather and climate because time and evidence help separate short-term conditions from long-term patterns. Careful observation should matter more than quick assumptions because a first impression can become inaccurate as weather changes. Communities should use current weather evidence when planning outdoor events because conditions can shift within hours. People should check current weather evidence before making outdoor plans because earlier conditions may no longer describe what is happening. Long-term climate patterns should influence long-term planning because climate describes what is usual over many years rather than one unusual day. From “Understanding the Texas Regions” All four Texas regions should be valued because each contributes distinct landforms, climate conditions, resources, economic activities, and communities. Students should study all four Texas regions because no single region represents the full geography of Texas. Texas geography should be considered important because land, climate, water, vegetation, and resources shape how communities live and work. Learning about all four Texas regions helps people appreciate the state because Texas includes many different landscapes, resources, jobs, and ways of life. The four Texas regions should be seen as equally important because each one contributes different resources, economic activities, landforms, and communities. Comparing Texas regions is a valuable way to learn about Texas because comparison reveals how geography shapes settlement, work, and daily life. 12 Evidence Cards From “A Day That Changed” Jayden assumes the sunny morning will continue, but the wind strengthens, gray clouds arrive, the temperature drops, and rain begins before lunch. Ms. Rios explains that weather describes the condition of the atmosphere at a certain time and place and can change quickly. Ms. Rios explains that climate describes the usual weather patterns of a place over a long period of time. The class learns that a single rainy day does not mean the climate has changed. Jayden’s class

records temperature, wind, clouds, and rain in a weather journal so they can compare conditions. Ms. Rios explains that one week of notes shows recent weather, while describing climate requires information from many years. From “Understanding the Texas Regions” The Coastal Plains has flat land, rivers, frequent rainfall, farming, fishing, shipping, and large cities. The North Central Plains has rolling hills, grasslands, moderate rainfall, farming, and cattle ranching. The Great Plains is drier and windier and supports farming, ranching, irrigation, and wind energy. The Mountains and Basins has mountains, deserts, very little rainfall, oil, gas, mining, and tourism. The passage explains that landforms, climate, vegetation, and economic activities affect how people live in each region. The passage explains that all four regions have unique features and each plays an important role in Texas.

12 Explanation Cards From “A Day That Changed” This evidence shows that current observations are necessary because weather can change after an earlier observation. This detail proves that weather describes short-term conditions rather than a permanent pattern. This evidence shows why one day cannot be used to describe climate. This detail shows that repeated observations allow students to compare changing conditions instead of guessing. This evidence connects the amount of time observed to the kind of conclusion a person can make. This shows that strong decisions about current weather should be based on current evidence.

From “Understanding the Texas Regions” This evidence shows that land and climate create different opportunities for work in different regions. This detail helps readers see why cattle ranching, farming, shipping, energy, mining, and tourism are not equally common everywhere. This evidence shows that water and climate influence what plants grow and how people use the land. This shows that regional differences can influence where communities grow and what jobs are available. This detail explains why no single region can represent all of Texas geography. This evidence connects physical geography to the economy and daily life of Texans.

12 Significant Inferencing Cards From “A Day That Changed” Ultimately, people make stronger decisions when they update their thinking as new weather evidence appears. As you can see, one unusual day should not be confused with a long-term climate pattern. The big picture is that careful observation can replace an assumption with a more accurate conclusion. This teaches readers that evidence becomes stronger when it is collected and compared over time. Everyone can benefit when plans respond to actual conditions instead of first impressions. One lesson we can learn is that time matters when people decide whether they are describing weather or climate. From “Understanding the Texas Regions” Ultimately, Texas is easier to understand when all four regions are studied together. As you can see, different regions can contribute different resources and still be equally important to the state. The big picture is that geography helps explain why communities, jobs, and ways of life differ across Texas. Everyone can benefit from understanding how land, climate, water, and resources influence human choices. This teaches readers that a diverse state depends on many different physical regions and economic activities. One lesson we can learn is that comparing regions reveals connections among land, resources, work, and settlement.

Teacher Answer Key Samples for the Card Game Sample Set 1 Prompt: Explain whether or not careful weather observations should matter more than quick assumptions when people make decisions about current conditions.

Claim: Careful weather observations should matter because weather can change within hours and current evidence helps people describe what is actually happening.

Evidence: Jayden expected the sunny morning to continue, but wind,

clouds, cooler temperatures, and rain changed the conditions before lunch. Explanation: This detail shows that first impressions can become inaccurate when conditions change. Significant Inference: Everyone benefits when decisions are revised as new evidence appears. Sample Set 2 Prompt: Explain whether or not communities should use current weather evidence when planning outdoor events. Claim: Communities should use current weather evidence because weather can change quickly and plans should respond to actual conditions. Evidence: The passage shows teachers moving students inside when wind, clouds, cooler temperatures, and rain changed field day. Explanation: This shows that current observations can help people make safe, practical decisions. Significant Inference: As you can see, good planning depends on paying attention to changing evidence instead of assuming conditions will stay the same. Sample Set 3 Prompt: Explain whether or not all four Texas regions should be valued as important parts of the state. Claim: All four Texas regions should be valued because each contributes distinct landforms, climate conditions, resources, economic activities, and communities. Evidence: The passage explains that the Coastal Plains supports farming and shipping, the North Central Plains supports farming and ranching, the Great Plains supports agriculture and wind energy, and the Mountains and Basins supports oil, gas, mining, and tourism. Explanation: This shows that the regions differ, but each contributes something important to Texas. Significant Inference: A state can be strongest when different places contribute in different ways. Sample Set 4 Prompt: Explain whether or not Texas geography should be considered important for understanding how people and communities live and work. Claim: Texas geography should be considered important because landforms, climate, water, vegetation, and resources shape settlement and economic activity. Evidence: The passage explains that wetter regions support more farming and cities, while drier or mountainous regions have different settlement patterns and jobs such as ranching, mining, energy, and tourism. Explanation: This evidence shows that where people live and what work is common are connected to the physical features and resources of a place. Significant Inference: The big picture is that geography helps explain why communities across one state can develop in very different ways.

Day 3 — Discuss and Use Again

GRADUATE Focus

D — Discuss and Ask Questions

U — Use the Knowledge Again

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-07)

Write on the board: What made one evidence card stronger? How is explanation different from evidence? How did the significant inference connect to the big picture?

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-08)

Write on the board: Choose one prompt and independently build the CREATURES path: claim, reasons, evidence, logical argument, thinking, understanding others, rebuttal, ending, and significance.

D — Discuss and Ask Questions

🔊 Teacher Script

“Let’s talk about what made some card combinations work well and what made others feel weak or mismatched. Strong writers think carefully about how the pieces connect.”

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-08) (cont.)

Discussion Questions

🔊 Teacher Script

“What helped you know that one claim matched a prompt better than another?”

🔊 Teacher Script

“How did you decide which evidence card really supported the claim?”

🔊 Teacher Script

“What is the difference between evidence and explanation?”

 Teacher Script

"Why is the significant inferencing sentence important in argumentative writing?"

 Teacher Script

"How does theme make the whole paper stronger?"

 Teacher Script

"What happened when a card did not belong with the others?"

 Daily Deck Slide (M3-08) (cont.)

Possible Student Responses

 Teacher Script

"The claim had to clearly answer the prompt."

 Teacher Script

"The evidence had to prove the idea, not just mention the topic."

 Teacher Script

"Evidence is from the text, but explanation tells what the evidence means."

 Teacher Script

"The significant inferencing sentence gives the big picture."

 Teacher Script

"Theme helps the argument sound meaningful."

 Teacher Script

"When a card did not belong, the paragraph sounded confusing."

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-08) (cont.)

Possible Student Questions and Teacher Responses

Student: "Can one evidence card work for more than one prompt?" Teacher: "Sometimes yes, but it must still clearly prove the exact idea in that paragraph."

Student: "What if two explanation cards both sound good?" Teacher: "Then ask which one explains the evidence more directly and more deeply."

Student: "Can the significant inferencing sentence be my opinion?" Teacher: "Yes, but it must be a text-based big-picture thought, not a random opinion."

Student: "What if my paragraph sounds too short?" Teacher: "That is okay for practice. Today we are learning how to connect the parts. We can always grow the paragraph later."

Student: "Why do we keep talking about theme in argumentative writing?" Teacher: "Because a strong argument should not only prove a side. It should also help the reader understand why the idea matters."

SLIDE M3-08 - USE AGAIN - FINISH MY PAPER PIECES

Choose one prompt and independently build the CREATURES path: claim, reasons, evidence, logical argument, thinking, understanding others, rebuttal, ending, and significance.

U — Use the Knowledge Again

Independent Interactive Notebook Activity: "Finish My Paper Pieces"

Students now work independently to build a compact CREATURES argument from scratch using what they learned in the card game.

🔊 Teacher Script

"Open your Interactive Notebook and title your page: Cluster 6 Module 3 – Finish My Paper Pieces"

🔊 Teacher Script

"You will choose one prompt and write:"

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-08) (cont.)

a clear claim

three reasons in logical order

one strong piece of evidence

thinking that explains the evidence

one reasonable counterargument

a respectful rebuttal

an ending that reinforces the claim

a significance sentence that shows why the decision matters"

 Teacher Script

“Remember to make the final thinking sound like a lesson learned, a big picture, or a theme thought.”

Daily Deck Slide (M3-08) (cont.)

Student Directions Choose one prompt from the board. Write a matching claim. List three reasons and put them in a logical order. Select one strong piece of evidence from the passage. Write thinking that explains how the evidence supports the reason. Write one reasonable counterargument. Write a rebuttal that returns to your side with text-based reasoning. Write an ending that reinforces the claim. Write a significance sentence that connects the decision to a larger lesson or big picture. Possible Prompts for Independent Work Explain whether or not students should use repeated observations to understand the difference between weather and climate. Explain whether or not all four Texas regions should be valued as important parts of the state. Explain whether or not learning geography helps people understand a community better. Explain whether or not careful observation should matter more than quick assumptions. Teacher Answer Key Guide Answers will vary, but strong responses should: clearly answer the sentence-statement prompt with a defensible claim develop three distinct reasons and organize them into a logical argument include relevant evidence directly from the passage use Thinking / explanation to show how the evidence supports the reason and claim acknowledge one reasonable opposing viewpoint through Understanding Others rebut that viewpoint respectfully with text-based reasoning write an Ending that reinforces the claim without copying it word for word finish with Significance that explains why the decision matters beyond this one response Sample Response Prompt: Explain whether or not all four Texas regions should be valued as important parts of the state.Claim: All four Texas regions should be valued because each one contributes something distinct to Texas.Reasons: The regions have different natural features; they support different resources and economic activities; and they help explain different settlement patterns and ways of life.Evidence: The passage explains that the Coastal Plains has rivers and shipping, the Great Plains has strong winds and wind energy, and the Mountains and Basins has mountains, deserts, oil, gas, mining, and tourism.Thinking: This evidence shows that no single region represents the whole state.Understanding Others: Some readers may believe the most populated region deserves the most attention.Rebuttal: However, the passage shows that every region provides important resources, work, landscapes, or communities, so importance is not measured only by population.Ending: All four Texas regions deserve to be studied as important parts of the state.Significance: When people understand how different regions contribute, they gain a fuller and more accurate picture of Texas. Notebook Reminder

 Teacher Script

"Please keep this work in your Interactive Notebook and use the games and activities in your Interactive Notebook to continually review all of the ECR concepts whenever you have free time in the classroom."

Day 4 — Award and Target

GRADUATE Focus

A — Award Yourself for A Job Well Done

T — Target Their Goals

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-09)

Write on the board: Circle the strongest paper piece you wrote. Label it: “This works because ____.”

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-10)

Write on the board: Choose one goal: claim clarity, logical reasons, evidence match, deeper Thinking, stronger counterargument/rebuttal, Ending, Significance, or overall coherence.

A — Award Yourself for A Job Well Done

Creative Recognition Ideas

CREATURES Builder BadgeStudents draw nine connected footprints or boxes and label them C-R-E-A-T-U-R-E-S. Under each letter, they write the job it represents:

C — Claim

R — Reasons

E — Evidence

A — Argument

T — Thinking

U — Understanding Others

R — Rebuttal

E — Ending

S — Significance

Paper Piece PrideStudents circle the part of their paragraph that they feel is strongest and write: “This is the piece I am most proud of.”

Theme GlowStudents place a star by the sentence that best shows a lesson learned or big picture.

Argument ApplauseRead aloud several strong significant inferencing sentences and celebrate them as “big-thinking endings.”

🔊 Teacher Script

“Today you did more than match cards. You practiced building real writing that sounds connected, supported, and meaningful. That is powerful work.”

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-10) (cont.)

SLIDE M3-10 - TARGET YOUR FULL ARGUMENT

Choose one goal: claim clarity, logical reasons, evidence match, deeper Thinking, stronger counterargument/rebuttal, Ending, Significance, or overall coherence.

T — Target Their Goals

Teacher Script

“Writers, now it is time to think about what you want to grow next. Great writing grows because writers notice what needs strengthening.”

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-10) (cont.)

Reflection Questions

Did my evidence clearly support my claim?

Did my Thinking / explanation explain instead of repeat?

Did I acknowledge a reasonable opposing viewpoint and rebut it respectfully?

Did my Ending reinforce my claim, and did my Significance sound meaningful?

Did all of my pieces fit together?

Did my writing connect to theme or the big picture?

Curiosity Questions

Why do some arguments sound more convincing than others?

How does theme make a paper stronger?

Why does explanation matter just as much as evidence?

How can a lesson from science or geography help people make better decisions today?

Why should people value Texas regions or ideas that come from different experiences?

Goal Stem

Teacher Script

“My next goal as an argumentative writer is to _____.”

Day 5 — Explain to Others

GRADUATE Focus

E — Explain to Others

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-11)

Write on the board: Teach CREATURES in order. Explain how claim, reasons, evidence, logical argument, thinking, understanding others, rebuttal, ending, and significance work together. Use an example from today.

E — Explain to Others

Turn and Teach

Teacher Script

“Turn to a partner and teach them how CREATURES helps build an argumentative paper. Name each letter in order, then explain which part is hardest for you and what helps you improve it.”

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-11) (cont.)

Student Turn-and-Teach Frames

Teacher Script

“CREATURES helps me remember ...”

Teacher Script

“A claim must ...”

Teacher Script

“Evidence matters because ...”

Teacher Script

“Thinking is different from evidence because ...”

Teacher Script

“A strong Significance sentence sounds like ...”

 Teacher Script

"Understanding Others helps my argument because ..."

 Teacher Script

"A respectful rebuttal should ..."

 Teacher Script

"My ending and significance work together by ..."

 Teacher Script

"One way theme helps argumentative writing is ..."

 Daily Deck Slide (M3-11) (cont.)

Teacher Listen-Fors

Listen for students saying:

prompt

claim

support

evidence

explanation

logical order

counterargument

rebuttal

ending

significance

significant inferencing

big picture

theme

Teacher Closing for This Section

 Teacher Script

"When you can explain the pieces of a paper to someone else, you are becoming the kind of writer who understands the work from the inside out."

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-11) (cont.)

Teacher Modeling Section

Model 1: From “A Day That Changed”

Prompt

Explain whether or not careful observation should matter more than quick assumptions when people make decisions about weather.

🔊 Teacher Script

“I need a claim that takes a side and declares the why.”

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-11) (cont.)

Claim: Careful observation should matter more than quick assumptions because weather can change quickly and current evidence is more reliable than a first impression.

Evidence: Jayden assumes the sunny morning will continue, but before lunch the wind strengthens, gray clouds arrive, the temperature drops, and rain begins.

Thinking / Explanation: This evidence shows that one early observation cannot guarantee what conditions will be later in the day.

Understanding Others / Counterargument: Some people may believe a quick first impression is enough for ordinary daily plans because checking conditions repeatedly takes extra time.

Rebuttal: However, the passage shows that weather can change within hours, so current observations are more reliable when conditions affect a plan.

Ending: Careful observation should guide weather-related decisions instead of quick assumptions.

Significance: Ultimately, people make stronger decisions when they update their thinking as new evidence appears.

Model 2: From “Understanding the Texas Regions”

Prompt

Explain whether or not students should study Texas regions and geographic features.

🔊 Teacher Script

“I choose yes, and now I will build the paragraph pieces so they all work together.”

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-11) (cont.)

Claim:Students should study all four Texas regions because each region helps explain a different relationship among land, climate, resources, jobs, and settlement.

Evidence:The passage explains that the Coastal Plains supports farming and shipping, the North Central Plains supports farming and ranching, the Great Plains supports agriculture and wind energy, and the Mountains and Basins supports oil, gas, mining, and tourism.

Thinking / Explanation:This evidence shows that regional geography affects the kinds of work, resources, and communities found in different parts of Texas.

Understanding Others / Counterargument:Some readers may believe students only need to study the most populated Texas region because it affects the largest number of people.

Rebuttal:However, every region contributes different landforms, resources, economic activities, and communities, so focusing on only one region gives an incomplete picture of Texas.

Ending:Students should study all four Texas regions to understand the state as a whole.

Significance:As you can see, understanding regional differences helps people see how geography shapes life and work across Texas.

Teacher Closing Words of Encouragement

🔊 Teacher Script

"Today, you practiced one of the most important writing HABITS you can learn—making every part of your paper belong. You worked on building writing with purpose, connection, and meaning, and that is exactly what strong writers do. Piece by piece and sentence by sentence, you are learning how to make your ideas fit together in a powerful way. Keep believing in your growth and keep taking pride in your effort. You are becoming a thoughtful, capable writer, and that matters more than you know."

Module 3 — Low, Medium, and High Exemplars

Low Exemplar

Prompt: Explain whether or not all four Texas regions should be valued as important parts of the state.

Claim: All four Texas regions should be valued because each one contributes something distinct to Texas.

What Needs Improvement

The claim takes a defensible side, but the response needs reasons, evidence, Thinking, Understanding Others, Rebuttal, Ending, and Significance.

Medium Exemplar

Prompt: Explain whether or not all four Texas regions should be valued as important parts of the state.

Claim: All four Texas regions should be valued because each one contributes something distinct to Texas.

Evidence: The passage explains that the Coastal Plains has rivers and shipping, the Great Plains has strong winds and wind energy, and the Mountains and Basins has mountains, deserts, oil, gas, mining, and tourism.

Explanation: This shows that each region offers different landforms, resources, and economic activities.

Significant Inference: No single region represents the whole state.

What Needs Improvement

The response connects evidence, explanation, and significance, but it still needs three reasons in logical order, Understanding Others, a rebuttal, and an Ending.

High Exemplar

Prompt: Explain whether or not all four Texas regions should be valued as important parts of the state.

Claim: All four Texas regions should be valued because each one contributes something distinct to Texas.

Reasons: The regions have different natural features; they support different resources and economic activities; and they help explain different settlement patterns and ways of life.

Evidence: The passage explains that the Coastal Plains has rivers and shipping, the Great Plains has strong winds and wind energy, and the Mountains and Basins has mountains, deserts, oil, gas, mining, and tourism.

Thinking: This evidence shows that no single region represents the whole state.

Understanding Others: Some readers may believe the most populated region deserves the most attention.

Rebuttal: However, the passage shows that every region provides important resources, work, landscapes, or communities, so importance is not measured only by population.

Ending: All four Texas regions deserve to be studied as important parts of the state.

Significance: When people understand how different regions contribute, they gain a fuller and more accurate picture of Texas.

Module 3 — Assessment Opportunities

Assessment	Student Evidence	Look-For
Auditory diagnostic	Names the missing CREATURES job and supplies a possible sentence.	Student explains what the missing job contributes.
Card-game formative check	Builds and justifies a matched argument set.	Every piece supports the exact claim and reason.
Independent notebook product	Completes the Finish My Paper Pieces response.	Claim, three reasons, evidence, Thinking, counterargument, rebuttal, Ending, and Significance are present and connected.
Turn-and-Teach	Explains CREATURES in order.	Student distinguishes evidence from Thinking and Ending from Significance.

Mastery Standard

A complete response is clear, supported, logical, respectful toward another reasonable viewpoint, and meaningful beyond the immediate topic.

Check the Learning

Before Instruction

Ask students to name as many CREATURES jobs as they can and explain the difference between evidence and explanation.

During Instruction

Listen for students justifying why a card belongs, identifying mismatched proof, and explaining what the evidence means rather than repeating it.

After Instruction

Students independently build the CREATURES path and circle the strongest paper piece with the label “This works because ____.”

Exit Check

Did the student clearly answer the prompt, organize three distinct reasons, use relevant passage evidence, explain the proof, acknowledge and rebut another viewpoint, reinforce the claim, and finish with significance?

Intervention — Module 3

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-12)

Write on the board: Build one paragraph physically from color-coded pieces. Add one trick card, remove it, and explain why it does not belong.
Intervention Activity

🔊 Teacher Script

“Paper Piece Puzzle Rescue” Small-Group Lesson

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-12) (cont.)

This intervention is for students who need extra support seeing how the parts of an argumentative paragraph fit together.

Goal

Students will physically build and rebuild a paragraph using color-coded pieces until they can explain why each piece belongs.

Materials

one simple prompt card
one matching claim card
three reason cards
three evidence cards
three explanation cards
three significant inferencing cards
color-coded paragraph mat labeled:
Claim
Reason
Evidence
Explain
Significant Inference

🔊 Teacher Script

“We are going to slow the paper down and build it like a puzzle. Good writers do not just collect pieces. They connect pieces.”

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-12) (cont.)

Step-by-Step

Read the prompt aloud.

Choose the matching claim.

Teacher places one reason card.

Students sort through two or three evidence cards and choose the one that fits best.

Students choose the explanation that actually explains the evidence.

Students choose the significant inferencing card that connects to theme or the big picture.

Read the full paragraph aloud.

Repeat with a second paragraph set.

Teacher Language

🔊 Teacher Script

"Listen carefully. Does this evidence prove this reason?" "Does this explanation tell how the evidence supports the reason?" "Does this final sentence sound like a big-picture thought?"

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-12) (cont.)

Expanded Support

After sorting, students rewrite the finished paragraph in their Interactive Notebook under the title:

Paper Piece Puzzle Rescue

Then students highlight:

the claim in one color

the evidence in one color

the explanation in one color

the significant inference in one color

Second Round Challenge

Give students one "trick card" that does not belong and ask them to explain why it should be removed.

Notebook Reminder

🔊 Teacher Script

"Please keep this page in your Interactive Notebook. Use the games and activities in your Interactive Notebook to continually review all of the ECR concepts whenever you have free time in the classroom."

Module 3 — Embedded Checks and Student Support

Teacher Check	Expected Student Response	If the Connection Is Weak
Does this evidence prove this reason?	Student states the exact link.	Offer two evidence cards and ask which fits best and why.
Does this explanation tell how the evidence supports the reason?	Student explains rather than repeats.	Ask, “What does this detail show?”
Is the opposing viewpoint reasonable?	Student names a fair alternative position.	Return to the prompt’s two possible sides.
Does the rebuttal return to the chosen side?	Student uses text-based reasoning respectfully.	Use the frame: Some readers may believe _____. However, _____ because _____.
Does the final sentence show the big picture?	Student connects to theme or why the decision matters.	Ask, “What can everyone learn from this?”

Language Supports

- “This evidence supports the reason because ____.”
- “Some readers may believe _____. However, _____ because ____.”
- “Ultimately, ____.”
- “The big picture is ____.”

Enrichment — Module 3

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-13)

Write on the board: Build a full CREATURES response, strengthen the claim and thinking, add a fair counterargument and rebuttal, deepen the significance, and defend why your final arrangement is strongest.
Enrichment Activity

🔊 Teacher Script

“Argument Architect Studio”

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-13) (cont.)

This enrichment is for students who are ready to move beyond matching pieces and into designing strong arguments with precision.

Goal

Students will construct a full argumentative response by choosing or revising the best pieces, then improving the paper so it sounds more polished and meaningful.

Phase 1: Card Build

Students choose:

1 prompt
1 claim
3 reason pieces in logical order
3 evidence pieces
3 thinking / explanation pieces
1 Understanding Others / counterargument piece
1 Rebuttal piece
1 Ending piece
1 Significance piece

They must justify why each piece belongs.

Phase 2: Upgrade the Paper

Students improve the paper by:

revising the claim to sound more precise
improving one Thinking / explanation sentence so it is deeper
strengthening the counterargument-and-rebuttal pair so it is fair, respectful, and evidence-based
revising the Ending and Significance so the response reinforces the claim and leaves a meaningful big-picture thought

Phase 3: Compare and Defend

Students compare two possible card combinations and explain which creates a stronger paper and why.

Teacher Script

"You are no longer just matching pieces. You are becoming an argument architect. Your job is to decide which pieces are strongest and then improve them even more."

★ **Daily Deck Slide (M3-13) (cont.)**

Extended Challenge

Students must add one original CREATURES piece not found in the card deck:
an original Thinking / explanation sentence or an original Understanding Others +
Rebuttal pair or

an original Significance sentence

Theme Extension

Require students to answer: "How does this paper teach a lesson about evidence, patterns, geography, or informed decisions beyond the immediate topic?"

Notebook Work

Title: Argument Architect Studio

Students glue their chosen pieces and write brief justifications under each one.

Module 3 — Additional Writing Opportunity

Full CREATURES Response

Choose one source prompt:

- Explain whether or not students should observe the weather carefully before making plans.
- Explain whether or not all four Texas regions should be valued as important parts of the state.
- Explain whether or not keeping a weather journal helps people understand the difference between weather and climate.
- Explain whether or not the resources of a region should shape how people live and work.

Build the complete path: Claim, three Reasons, Evidence, Argument in logical order, Thinking, Understanding Others, Rebuttal, Ending, and Significance.

Revision Pass

Underline the claim, number the reasons, box the evidence, circle the Thinking, bracket Understanding Others and Rebuttal, and star the sentence that gives the big picture. Revise any piece that does not clearly belong.

Module 3 — Auditory Engagement (Active Participation)

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-03)

Write on the board: Listen to the paper pieces. Which job is missing? Show the missing label, explain why it is needed, and supply a possible sentence.

AUDITORY ENGAGEMENT - ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

Approach: Listen for What Is Missing

Purpose: Students listen to an incomplete argumentative response and identify the missing CREATURES job. They evaluate completeness, name what the missing job contributes, and supply a possible sentence rather than merely copying information.

Listening Target: Listen for the job that is missing from the CREATURES structure, including claim, reason, evidence, thinking, counterargument, rebuttal, ending, or significance.

SLIDE M3-03 - LISTEN FOR WHAT IS MISSING

Listen to the paper pieces. Which job is missing? Show the missing label, explain why it is needed, and supply a possible sentence.

🔊 Teacher Script

"I am going to read a set of paper pieces. One important job will be missing. Listen for the gap, name it, and tell me what that missing piece would do for the reader."

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-03) (cont.)

Round 1: Claim + reason + evidence + significant inference, but no explanation.

Answer Key / Look-For: Missing: explanation. It must show how the evidence proves the reason.

Round 2: Reason + evidence + explanation + significant inference, but no claim.

Answer Key / Look-For: Missing: claim. The reader needs to know the writer's position and the overall why.

Round 3: Claim + reasons + evidence + thinking + ending + significance, but the writer never acknowledges another viewpoint or responds to it.

Answer Key / Look-For: Missing: Understanding Others and Rebuttal. The writer should state one reasonable opposing view and then bring the reasoning back to the chosen side.

Fresh Recall: Cover notes. Say the nine CREATURES jobs in order from memory: claim, reasons, evidence, argument, thinking, understanding others, rebuttal, ending, significance.

Pause Points

|| Pause Point 1 — After Reading

Can students collect claim-worthy ideas and exact supporting details from both passages?

|| Pause Point 2 — After Modeling

Can students explain how evidence differs from Thinking and how both connect to the reason?

|| Pause Point 3 — During the Card Game

Can students reject a mismatched card and justify why it does not belong?

|| Pause Point 4 — During Independent Use

Can students create a reasonable counterargument and a respectful, text-based rebuttal?

|| Pause Point 5 — Before Closure

Can students reinforce the claim in the Ending and show why the decision matters in Significance?

Module 3 — My Progress Tracker

Directions: Check one box for each skill. Use your notebook evidence to explain your rating.

I Can...	Not Yet	With Support	Independently	My Evidence
state a clear claim that answers the prompt				
organize three distinct reasons in logical order				
select relevant evidence that truly supports a reason				
write Thinking that explains instead of repeats				
acknowledge a reasonable opposing viewpoint				
rebut the opposing viewpoint respectfully with text-based reasoning				
write an Ending that reinforces the claim				
write Significance that shows why the decision matters				
explain how all CREATURES parts work together				

My next goal as an argumentative writer is to _____.

Module 3 — Teacher Closure and Reflection

✓ Overarching Question — Answer

Question: How do the parts of CREATURES work together to make an argumentative response clear, supported, logical, and meaningful?

Answer: CREATURES makes each part of an argument do a clear job. The claim takes a position; reasons and evidence build support; argument and thinking organize and explain the proof; understanding others and rebuttal address another reasonable viewpoint; the ending reinforces the claim; and significance shows why the decision matters beyond the paper. When the parts connect, the response becomes logical, convincing, respectful, and meaningful.

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-14)

Write on the board: How do the parts of CREATURES work together to make an argumentative response clear, supported, logical, and meaningful? Answer: CREATURES makes each part of an argument do a clear job. The claim takes a position; reasons and evidence build support; argument and thinking organize and explain the proof; understanding others and rebuttal address another reasonable viewpoint; the ending reinforces the claim; and significance shows why the decision matters beyond the paper. When the parts connect, the response becomes logical, convincing, respectful, and meaningful.

Module 3 — Remote Learning

Virtual Classroom Adjustment for Remote Learners

Run Module 3 online by posting both high-stamina passages and a shared CREATURES organizer before class, then reading the auditory rounds aloud while students display the missing job in chat or on camera and explain what it contributes. Recreate the Build-a-Paper Challenge with movable cards on a shared slide, assign pairs to breakout rooms, and require each pair to justify every match before recording its strongest set in a digital Interactive Notebook. During independent work, students choose one source prompt and draft the complete CREATURES path in a private document; respond with questions such as “Does this evidence prove this reason?” and “Does this explanation tell what the evidence means?” so the student retains the thinking. Students can circle or highlight their strongest paper piece digitally, set a goal in the chat or learning platform, and complete Turn-and-Teach in breakout pairs. Keep the color-coded Paper Piece Puzzle Rescue available for small-group intervention and the Argument Architect Studio available as an enrichment board. End with students answering the overarching question aloud or in writing and submitting one final response that shows Claim, Reasons, Evidence, Argument, Thinking, Understanding Others, Rebuttal, Ending, and Significance working together.

MODULE

4

**Beginning and Ending an
Argumentative Letter**

Week 4 • Very High Stamina

Module 4: Beginning and Ending an Argumentative Letter

Week 4 - Very High Stamina - Cluster 6 (ECR Argumentative Correspondence)

Beginning and Ending an Argumentative Letter

Teacher Script

“When students learn that writing has an audience, a purpose, and a heart, their words begin to matter in powerful ways.”

Overarching Question

How does writing for a real audience change the way we begin, support, and end an argumentative letter?

★ Daily Deck Slide (M4-01)

Write on the board: Cluster 6 | ECR Argumentative Correspondence | Module 4 | Very High Stamina passages. Overarching Question: How does writing for a real audience change the way we begin, support, and end an argumentative letter?

Module Passage Set — Very High Stamina

Teacher Script

“A Day That Changed” and “Understanding the Texas Regions” provide detailed evidence about careful observation, weather and climate, geography, resources, settlement, and the four Texas regions.”

Module Independent Product

Students create an audience-aware greeting, opening and claim, big-picture closing thought, and respectful closing for an argumentative letter.

Module 4 — Family Communication

This Week at a Glance

- The big skill: beginning and ending an argumentative letter for a real audience.
- The HABIT: strong writers shape their message for the person who will read it.
- The two passages: “A Day That Changed” and “Understanding the Texas Regions.”

One Question to Ask at Home

Teacher Script

“Who is your reader, and how did that audience change your greeting, wording, and ending?”

One Way to Help

Invite your child to choose a real audience for an opinion. Ask for a respectful greeting, a clear claim with support, and a closing thought that leaves the reader with the big picture.

Family Letter

Dear Families,

This week your child is learning to shape an argumentative letter for a real audience. The argument still needs a clear claim and proof, but the recipient changes the greeting, register, explanation, evidence, and closing. Students will use “A Day That Changed” and “Understanding the Texas Regions” as evidence sources while they practice clear openings and meaningful endings.

At home, ask your child to explain why a letter to a principal may sound different from a letter to a classmate. Then invite your child to say a respectful opening and a final thought that helps the reader remember why the issue matters.

With appreciation, Your child’s teacher - The Writing Academy LLC

Carta para las Familias

Estimadas familias:

Esta semana su hijo o hija está aprendiendo a adaptar una carta argumentativa para una audiencia real. El argumento todavía necesita una afirmación clara y pruebas, pero el destinatario cambia el saludo, el registro, la explicación, la evidencia y el cierre. Los estudiantes usarán “A Day That Changed” y “Understanding the Texas Regions” como fuentes de evidencia mientras practican comienzos claros y finales significativos.

En casa, pídale a su hijo o hija que explique por qué una carta dirigida al director puede sonar diferente de una carta dirigida a un compañero de clase. Luego invítelo o invítela a decir un comienzo respetuoso y un pensamiento final que ayude al lector a recordar por qué el tema importa.

Con aprecio, El maestro o la maestra de su hijo o hija - The Writing Academy LLC

Module 4 — Family Conversation Starters

- How does knowing the recipient change a writer’s greeting and tone?
- What must stay the same in an argument even when the audience changes?
- Why should a closing thought sound meaningful instead of rushed?
- Which detail from either passage would convince a teacher, principal, classmate, or community leader?

Family Activity — Audience Shift

Choose one claim and say it first to a classmate, then to a principal. Discuss which words changed and which central idea stayed the same.

Family Activity — Ending Upgrade

Compare “Thank you for reading my letter” with “Ultimately, understanding all four Texas regions helps people see how geography shapes the way Texans live and work.” Discuss which ending leaves a stronger big-picture thought and why.

Module 4 — Lesson Overview and Standards

Lesson Overview

Students move from an argumentative paper to an argumentative letter. They still choose a side and support it, but now communicate to a specific audience. The module focuses on how to start and end a letter while keeping its body connected to claim, reasons, evidence, explanation, and theme.

BIG Goal: Students shape an argumentative letter for a real audience with a clear claim, support, respectful tone, and meaningful ending.

Writing TEKS for This Module

TEKS	Student Expectation (verbatim TEKS breakout)
4.11(A)(i)	plan a first draft by selecting a genre for a particular topic, purpose, and audience using a range of strategies
4.11(B)(i)	develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction
4.11(B)(iii)	develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including a conclusion
4.11(B)(iv)	develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by developing an engaging idea with relevant details
4.11(C)(i)	revise drafts to improve sentence structure
4.11(C)(ii)	revise drafts to improve word choice
4.11(E)(i)	publish written work for appropriate audiences
4.12(C)(i)	compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using genre characteristics
4.12(C)(ii)	compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using craft

Standards Integrity Note

This lesson uses an argumentative letter format. Grade 4 TEKS 4.12(D)(i) specifically requires correspondence that requests information, so it is not claimed as direct coverage unless the teacher adds a genuine information-request task. The argumentative writing itself is aligned to TEKS 4.12(C).

Module 4 — TEKS and ELPS (Cluster 6 · from the Scope & Sequence)

These are the standards listed for Cluster 6 in the Teach BIG Scope and Sequence, in the same form the chart uses.

TEKS — Cluster 6 (from the Scope & Sequence)

Writing Process

- (11)(B)(i) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction
- (11)(B)(ii) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including transitions
- (11)(B)(iii) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including a conclusion
- (11)(B)(iv) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by developing an engaging idea with relevant details

Writing Genre

- (12)(C)(i) compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using genre characteristics
- (12)(C)(ii) compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using craft
- (12)(D)(i) compose correspondence that requests information

Revising

- (11)(C)(i–viii) revise drafts to improve sentence structure and word choice; improve coherence by adding, deleting, combining, and rearranging ideas; and improve clarity by adding and deleting ideas

Editing

- (11)(D)(i)–(xxix), (xxx), (xxxiii)–(xxxv) edit drafts using standard English conventions — complete simple and compound sentences with subject-verb agreement and avoidance of splices, run-ons, and fragments; irregular verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, pronouns, and coordinating conjunctions; capitalization; commas in compound sentences; and grade-appropriate spelling

ELPS — Cluster 6 (from the Scope & Sequence)

Writing Process

- 4(D)(iii) write content-area texts using a variety of transition words
- 4(F)(i)–(ii), (v)–(vi) write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting details using appropriate content and style for purpose and audience

Writing Genre

- 4(C)(i) write using a combination of both high-frequency words and content-area vocabulary
- 4(D)(i)–(iii) write content-area texts using a variety of sentence lengths, sentence types, and transition words
- 4(E)(i)–(ii) write content-area-specific text using conventions and grammatical structures
- 4(F)(i)–(xvi) write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting details or supporting evidence using appropriate content, style, register, and conventions for purpose and audience

Revising

- 4(C)(i) write using a combination of both high-frequency words and content-area vocabulary
- 4(D)(i)–(iii) write content-area texts using a variety of sentence lengths, sentence types, and transition words
- 4(E)(ii) write content-area-specific text using grammatical structures
- 4(F)(i)–(ii), (v)–(vi) write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting details using appropriate content and style for purpose and audience

Editing

- 4(A)(i) apply relationships between sounds and letters of the English language to represent sounds when writing [Teacher only]
- 4(B)(i)–(ii) write text following conventional spelling patterns and rules
- 4(C)(i) write using a combination of both high-frequency words and content-area vocabulary
- 4(D)(i)–(iii) write content-area texts using a variety of sentence lengths, sentence types, and transition words
- 4(E)(i)–(ii) write content-area-specific text using conventions and grammatical structures

Language Domains

Domain	How this module builds it
Listening	Students finish audience-aware thoughts in their own words and listen for how audience changes correspondence.
Speaking	Students discuss tone and teach a partner two ways audience changes a letter.
Reading	Students read two very-high-stamina passages and identify convincing details for specific recipients.
Writing	Students build, draft, and revise a greeting, opening/claim, big-picture closing thought, and respectful closing.

Module 4 — Learning Destination

I Can Statements

- I can shape an argumentative letter for a real audience with a clear claim, support, respectful tone, and meaningful ending.
- I can choose a greeting, register, and closing that fit my recipient.
- I can begin with a clear purpose and claim and end with a big-picture thought.
- I can select passage evidence that will be convincing to my intended reader.

I Will Statements

- I will read closely, listen actively, and discuss my reasoning.
- I will use text evidence, write independently, reflect on my growth, and explain my thinking to others.
- I will identify my recipient before I choose my words and tone.
- I will revise my opening and ending so the letter sounds respectful, purposeful, and complete.

Success Criteria

- My greeting and register fit the audience.
- My opening explains why I am writing and states a clear claim.
- My support is relevant to the recipient and the passage.
- My closing thought communicates a big picture, theme, or lesson learned.

Module 4 — Rigor and Misconceptions

Rigor Safeguard

Teachers may reread passages, model one audience-aware opening, provide letter-part cards, and permit oral rehearsal. Teachers may not select the student's position, evidence, or final thought. The student must make the audience-aware choices.

Rigor and Cognitive Demand

Level	Student Thinking	Evidence
Literal	Identify recipient and letter parts.	Correctly ordered greeting, introduction, claim, support, closing thought, closing, and signature.
Inferential	Explain how audience changes register, wording, and evidence.	Audience-aware choices with a reason.
Evaluative	Compare two openings or endings and defend the more convincing version.	A revision and explanation tied to purpose, audience, and theme.

Educator Insight

Students often think a letter is just a paragraph with “Dear” at the top, but argumentative correspondence must still be structured and purposeful. Another common misconception is that the ending of a letter should simply stop instead of leaving the audience with a final thought. Watch for letters that have a greeting and closing but no clear claim or reasons. Some students may also write too casually and forget that the audience should be addressed respectfully. Others may confuse the greeting with the introduction and skip explaining why they are writing. Help students by teaching that every part of the letter has a job. Strong letters sound organized, respectful, and meaningful.

Module 4 — Thinking Levels

The Five Thinking Levels

Level	Color	Thinking Stage	Audience-Aware Correspondence
Level 1	Red	Foundational	Labels or repeats a letter part.
Level 2	Orange	Emergent	Places letter parts in order with support.
Level 3	Yellow	Visible	Connects claim and passage evidence for a named recipient.
Level 4	Green	Independent	Adjusts register, wording, support, and closing for the audience.
Level 5	Blue	Reflective	Creates a meaningful theme-based ending and defends why it fits the reader.

Challenge: Write openings to two different recipients for the same claim. Adjust register and tone, then explain what changed and what stayed the same.

Module 4 — Vocabulary

Tier 1 Vocabulary — Everyday Words

Word	Student-Friendly Definition	Oral Rehearsal Frame
letter	a written message sent to someone	My letter is written to ____.
reader	the person who reads a message	My reader needs to know ____.
begin	to start	I will begin with ____.
end	to finish	I will end by ____.
polite	showing good manners	This sounds polite because ____.
idea	a thought or belief	My main idea is ____.
reason	why something is true or important	One reason is ____.
proof	information that shows a claim is sound	My proof is ____.
voice	the way a writer sounds	My writing voice sounds ____.
message	what the writer wants the reader to understand	My message is ____.

Tier 2 Vocabulary — Academic Words

Word	Student-Friendly Definition	Oral Rehearsal Frame
correspondence	written communication to a specific person or group	This correspondence is written to ____.
audience	the intended reader of a message	My audience is ____.
recipient	the person who receives the letter	The recipient is ____.
greeting	the respectful opening of a letter	My greeting is ____.
claim	the writer's clear argumentative position	My claim is ____.
support	reasons and proof that strengthen the claim	My support shows ____.
evidence	specific details used as proof	One piece of evidence is ____.
purpose	the reason the writer is communicating	My purpose is ____.
respectful	showing consideration through appropriate tone and language	This sounds respectful because ____.
closing	the words and final thought used to end a letter	My closing fits because ____.

Tier 3 Vocabulary — Passage and Correspondence Words

Word	Pronunciation	Student-Friendly Definition	Oral Rehearsal Frame
weather	WETH-ur	the condition of the air at a certain time and place	The weather changed when ____.
climate	KLY-mit	the usual weather patterns of a place over a long time	Our climate is usually ____.
region	REE-jun	an area of land that shares common features	Each Texas region has ____.
geography	jee-OG-ruh-fee	the study of land, water, climate, and how people use them	Geography shapes ____.
resources	REE-sor-siz	useful materials such as oil, water, or soil	The resources of a region help people ____.
settlement	SET-ul-munt	a place where people come to live and work	People built a settlement here because ____.
register	REJ-uh-ster	language chosen to fit an audience and situation	My register fits my reader because ____.
argumentative	ar-gyuh-MEN-tuh-tiv	presenting a position with reasons and evidence	My argumentative letter claims ____.
persuade	per-SWAYD	to make someone believe something by giving reasons	To persuade my reader, I ____.
significance	sig-NIF-ih-kuns	why something matters beyond the immediate topic	The significance of my claim is ____.

Module 4 — Background Knowledge and Teacher Context

★ Daily Deck Slide (M4-02)

Write on the board: Read with audience and purpose in mind. In “A Day That Changed,” collect evidence that could persuade a teacher, principal, classmate, or community leader about careful observation, weather journals, and the difference between weather and climate. In “Understanding the Texas Regions,” collect evidence about why geography, resources, settlement patterns, and all four regions matter.

Purpose of This Module In Module 4, students move from writing an argumentative paper to writing an argumentative letter. They will still choose a side and support that side, but now they must communicate their thinking to a specific audience. This module focuses on how to start a letter and how to end a letter while keeping the body of the letter connected to claim, reasons, evidence, explanation, and theme. Students will learn that argumentative correspondence should sound respectful, clear, and convincing. They will practice opening a letter, addressing a recipient, stating their claim, and ending with a closing that reflects the big picture or lesson learned. **CREATURES Connection:** The claim, reasons, evidence, logical argument, thinking, counterargument, rebuttal, ending, and significance can all travel into correspondence. The audience changes the tone and format, but the argument still needs strong support.

Quick Teacher Reference

Module 4 applies the Cluster 6 argument to a real audience. Students use “A Day That Changed” to support claims about careful observation, changing weather, weather journals, and long-term climate patterns. They use “Understanding the Texas Regions” to support claims about geography, regional differences, resources, economic activity, settlement, and the importance of all four Texas regions. The argumentative structure remains the same, but audience changes the greeting, register, wording, and closing.

Module 4 — Materials and Teacher Preparation

copies of both passages interactive notebooks scissors glue crayons or colored pencils cut-apart letter parts prompt cards matching cards task cards envelopes or baggies for card sets chart paper or whiteboard pencils highlighters teacher answer key practice pockets in interactive notebooks

Module 4 — Anchor Charts and the DOT Reading HABIT

Anchor Chart 1: Parts of an Argumentative Letter Write: Date Greeting Introduction Claim Body Closing Thoughts Closing Signature Anchor Chart 2: Letter Beginnings Write: Dear _____, I am writing to share my thoughts about _____. I believe _____ because _____. Thank you for taking time to read my letter. Anchor Chart 3: Letter Endings Write: Thank you for considering my ideas. I hope you will think about this carefully. As you can see, _____. Ultimately, _____. Sincerely, Your student, Respectfully, Anchor Chart 4: If You Have to Decide, Declare the Why Write: If you have to decide, declare the why. Decision prompts need a claim. Claims need reasons. Letters need an audience. Anchor Chart 5: Theme in a Letter Write: Strong letters do more than state an opinion. Strong letters teach a lesson or reveal a big picture. A good ending leaves the reader thinking.

DOT Reading HABIT

- D — Details: Mark passage details that could convince a real audience.
- O — Organization: Notice how greeting, introduction, claim, support, closing thought, closing, and signature work together.
- T — Theme: Identify the big picture or lesson a strong closing can leave with the reader.

Module 4 — Mentor Text: Audience-Aware Opening and Ending

Prompt

Explain in a letter to your teacher whether or not all four Texas regions should be valued as important parts of the state.

Teacher Model

Dear Teacher,

I am writing to share why I believe all four Texas regions should be valued as important parts of the state. Each region should be valued because each one has different landforms, climate, resources, and economic activities. In the passage, the Coastal Plains has rivers and shipping, the Great Plains has strong winds and wind energy, and the Mountains and Basins has mountains, deserts, oil, gas, and mining. This shows that no single region represents the whole state. Ultimately, understanding every region helps people gain a fuller and more accurate picture of Texas.

Sincerely, A Thoughtful Student

Mentor Notice-and-Name

- The greeting identifies a real audience.
- The introduction explains the purpose and states a claim.
- The evidence names specific features and resources from three Texas regions.
- The closing thought communicates a big-picture idea about geography and how regions shape Texas.

Module 4 — TRACKS: Reading for Audience-Aware Evidence

Use TRACKS tags to collect passage language that could support an argumentative letter.

Letter	Reading Lens	Question
T	Time	When do events or changes happen?
R	Result	What changed or resulted?
A	Action	What did a person or group do?
C	Character	Who matters in this evidence?
K	Key Idea	Which phrase names an important idea?
S	Setting	Where does the passage place the reader?

For “A Day That Changed,” tag details about careful observation, changing weather, weather journals, and the difference between weather and climate. For “Understanding the Texas Regions,” tag details about landforms, climate, resources, economic activities, settlement patterns, and the four Texas regions.

Before Students Read

Preview the two passages with students before reading. Each passage appears twice: first a plain copy to read, then a color-coded copy. As you read, students TAP the TRACKS — they hunt for the six kinds of evidence and highlight each with the TRACKS color below. TRACKS marks the evidence in the passage; the shapes are used only to analyze the prompt.

The Six Types of Measurable Evidence: TRACKS

Students look for six kinds of measurable evidence in every passage. Use the same six categories, the same wording, and the same colors in every module.

T Time — Age, era, dates, cultural details, or historical details. Often associated with adjectives. (Highlight color: Pastel Green.)

R Reactions — Reactions, solutions, resolutions, or effects. Often associated with verbs and adverbs. (Highlight color: Pastel Purple.)

A Actions — Actions, problems, conflicts, or causes. Often associated with verbs and adverbs. (Highlight color: Pastel Yellow.)

C Character, Concept, Creature — Characters' or people's names, animals or animals' names, or major concepts used as the central idea. Often nouns or proper nouns. (Highlight color: Pastel Yellow.)

K Key Knowledge — All other important information necessary to the meaning of the passage that is not accounted for by another TRACKS category (background knowledge). (Highlight color: Pastel Orange.)

S Scenery / Setting — Setting characteristics that are acknowledged or measured through the five senses. (Highlight color: Pastel Green.)

PASSAGE 11 — A Day That Changed

[1] Jayden woke up early, excited for field day. When he looked outside, the sky was bright and clear. The sun was already warming the air, and the morning felt calm and peaceful. “It’s going to be a great day,” he said as he grabbed his backpack and headed to school.

[2] By mid-morning, students were outside running races and playing games. The weather felt just right. It was warm, with a light breeze, and the sky stayed clear. Jayden misjudged the weather and assumed the day would continue like this.

[3] But just before lunch, the conditions began to change. The wind grew stronger, and Jayden noticed the movement of gray clouds across the sky. The temperature dropped, and the air felt cooler against his skin. Jayden looked up, confused. “What happened to the sunshine?” he asked.

[4] Soon, light rain began to fall, and teachers quickly moved everyone inside. Some students were disappointed, but Ms. Rios saw it as a chance to explain.

[5] “This is weather,” she said. “Weather describes the condition of the atmosphere at a certain time and place. It can change quickly, even within a few hours.”

[6] Jayden thought about how different the morning had been.

[7] “Climate,” Ms. Rios continued, “describes the usual weather patterns of a place over a long period of time. Even though today became rainy and cool, our area is still known for having mostly hot summers.”

[8] After school, the clouds cleared, and the sun returned. Jayden realized that while the weather had changed throughout the day, the climate where he lived stayed consistent over time.

[9] The next morning, Ms. Rios asked the class to think back to field day. She drew a chart on the board with two headings: Weather and Climate. Under weather, students listed words such as sunny, windy, rainy, warm, and cool. Under climate, they wrote long-term patterns, such as hot summers and mild winters.

[10] Jayden raised his hand. “So weather is what happens today, but climate is what usually happens over many years?” he asked.

[11] “That’s right,” Ms. Rios said. “A single rainy day does not mean the climate has changed. Scientists study weather information for many years before describing a place’s climate.”

[12] The class talked about other examples. One student said that a snowy day in a usually warm place would be weather. Another student said that a desert having little rain year after year would describe climate. Jayden began to understand that both ideas were connected, but they were not the same.

[13] Ms. Rios gave each group a weather journal. She told the students they would observe the sky each afternoon for one week. They would write down the temperature, wind, clouds, and any rain. Then they would compare their notes.

[14] At recess, Jayden looked up at the sky again. This time, he noticed more than whether it was sunny or cloudy. He watched the direction the clouds moved. He felt the air on his

face. He saw that the leaves on the trees moved a little, which meant the wind was light.

[15] “Today is warm and calm,” Jayden wrote in his journal.

[16] The next day was different. The morning started cool, and the sky looked cloudy. By lunch, the sun peeked through the clouds, and the playground felt warmer. Jayden smiled when he noticed the change.

[17] “The weather changed again,” he said to his friend Maya.

[18] Maya nodded. “But that still does not change the climate,” she said. “Ms. Rios said climate takes a long time to describe.”

[19] On Wednesday, the class looked at a map of the United States. Ms. Rios pointed to different places. Some places were usually cold in winter. Some places were usually hot and dry. Some places had rain during the year.

[20] “People use climate information to make choices,” Ms. Rios explained. “Farmers think about climate when they decide which crops to grow. Families think about climate when they pack for trips. Builders may think about climate when they choose materials for homes.”

[21] Jayden imagined a farmer planning a field. If a place usually received very little rain, the farmer would need crops that could grow with less water. If a place usually had plenty of rain, different crops might grow better there.

[22] On Thursday, the students studied a picture of a desert. The land looked dry, and only a few plants grew there. Then they studied a picture of a forest with tall green trees.

[23] “Both places can have weather that changes from day to day,” Ms. Rios said. “A desert can have a cloudy day. A forest can have a sunny day. But the climate of each place is based on what usually happens over a long time.”

[24] Jayden wrote that idea carefully in his notebook. He drew a small sun beside the word weather and a long line beside the word climate. The line helped him remember that climate is measured over many years.

[25] By Friday, the class had collected several days of weather notes. Some days were sunny. One day was cloudy. One day had light rain. The temperature changed each day too. Ms. Rios asked the students what their notes showed.

[26] “They show the weather for this week,” Jayden said.

[27] “Exactly,” Ms. Rios answered. “One week of notes helps us describe recent weather. To describe climate, we would need information from many years.”

[28] Jayden reviewed his field day notes. At first, he had felt disappointed when the rain came. Now he understood why the change had happened. The atmosphere was always moving, and weather could shift quickly.

[29] That afternoon, the class went outside for science. The grass was still damp, but the sky was blue again. Ms. Rios asked everyone to stand quietly and observe.

[30] Jayden felt warm sunlight on his arms. He saw a few white clouds drifting across the sky. He knew he was describing weather because these were the conditions at that time and place.

[31] Ms. Rios asked the students to describe the weather without using the word nice. He wrote, "The temperature is warm. The wind is light. The sky is mostly clear. The ground is a little wet from earlier rain."

[32] "That is a strong observation," Ms. Rios said. "You used details instead of just giving an opinion."

[33] Jayden felt proud. Before field day, he would have simply said the weather was good or bad. Now he knew that careful details helped people understand what was happening.

[34] On Monday, Ms. Rios asked students to connect the lesson to real life. Jayden thought about gardens, farms, and trips. People use weather to make daily choices, such as carrying an umbrella or wearing a jacket. They use climate to understand what is common in a place over time.

[35] "That is a great connection," Ms. Rios said. "Weather affects daily choices, and climate helps explain long-term patterns."

[36] The class then looked at a simple graph. It showed the average temperature in their area for each month of the year. The line rose in the summer and dropped in the winter. Jayden noticed that the graph did not show one single day. It showed a pattern.

[37] "This graph helps us understand climate," Ms. Rios said. "It shows what is usual for our area."

[38] Jayden compared the graph to his weather journal. His journal had details from a few days. The graph showed information from many years. That difference helped him remember the main idea.

[39] Later that day, the principal announced that field day would be finished the following week. The students cheered. Jayden was excited, but this time he did not assume the weather would stay perfect all day. He checked the sky before recess and noticed the clouds carefully.

[40] When field day returned, the morning was warm and bright again. Students lined up for races, tug-of-war, and ball toss games. Jayden felt hopeful, but he also paid attention to the air. The wind stayed gentle, and the sky remained mostly clear.

[41] At lunch, Ms. Rios asked Jayden what he noticed.

[42] "The weather today is sunny and warm," Jayden said. "But that only tells us about today. Our climate is the usual pattern over a long time."

[43] "Exactly," Ms. Rios said.

[44] By the end of the day, Jayden was tired but happy. He had finished the relay race, laughed with his friends, and learned to look at the sky in a new way. Field day had started as a day for games, but it became a lesson about observing the world.

[45] When he got home, Jayden told his family what he had learned. "Weather can change in a few hours," he said, "but climate is the usual pattern over a long time."

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would stay sunny. Instead, he knew to observe, compare, and think about time. Field day had changed, but it had helped him understand an important science idea.

Student Annotation Guide — A Day That Changed

T — Time

over a long period of time

R — Reactions

The temperature dropped

A — Actions

the conditions began to change

C — Character/Concept/Creature

Jayden

K — Key Knowledge

the condition of the atmosphere

S — Scenery/Setting

the sky was bright and clear

TRACKS EVIDENCE HIGHLIGHTING — A Day That Changed

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would stay sunny. Instead, he knew to observe, compare, and think about time. Field day had changed, but it had helped him understand an important science idea.

PASSAGE 12 — Understanding the Texas Regions

[1] Texas is a very large state, and its land varies from one area to another. Some parts have forests and rivers, while others have dry deserts or wide, open plains. These areas are called regions. Each region has its own landforms, climate, vegetation, and economic activities. These differences help explain how people live and work across Texas.

[2] A region is an area that has certain features in common. Texas has four main physical regions. They are the Coastal Plains, the North Central Plains, the Great Plains, and the Mountains and Basins. Each region has land that looks different. Each region also has different weather patterns, plants, and jobs. These differences are important because people often choose where to live based on the land, climate, and resources around them.

[3] Geography affects daily life in many ways. In some parts of Texas, people live near rivers, forests, and the coast. In other parts, people live near grasslands, dry plains, mountains, or deserts. Some communities grew because the land was good for farming. Other communities grew because people could raise cattle, ship goods, drill for oil, or mine minerals. By studying the regions of Texas, people can understand why life is not the same in every part of the state.

[4] The Coastal Plains is the largest region and stretches along the Gulf of Mexico. It includes flat land, many rivers, and thick forests. The climate has warmth and humidity, with frequent rainfall. This makes the region well suited for farming crops like cotton and corn. Fishing, shipping, and jobs in large cities are also important to the economy.

[5] The Coastal Plains has more rainfall than the other regions of Texas. Because of this, many plants and trees can grow there. Forests are common in the eastern part of the region. Rivers also flow through the Coastal Plains, and they help provide water for people, animals, farms, and businesses. Water is one reason many people have settled in this region over time.

[6] The Gulf of Mexico is very important to the Coastal Plains. It gives people a place to fish, travel, and ship goods. A port is a place where ships load and unload goods. Ports along the Gulf help Texas trade with other states and countries. Goods such as food, oil, machines, and other products can move in and out of Texas by ship. This makes shipping an important part of the region's economy.

[7] Many large cities are located in the Coastal Plains. Houston is one of the largest cities in Texas and is important for energy, medicine, transportation, and business. Corpus Christi and Galveston are also connected to the Gulf of Mexico. These cities support jobs in fishing, tourism, shipping, and trade. Since many people live in the Coastal Plains, there are also many jobs in schools, stores, hospitals, offices, and factories.

[8] Farming is another important activity in the Coastal Plains. The warm climate, rainfall, and flat land help farmers grow crops. Cotton, corn, rice, and other crops can be grown in different parts of the region. Some people also raise animals. The climate allows for a long growing season, which means farmers have more time during the year to plant and harvest crops.

[9] The land in the Coastal Plains affects how people live. Since the region has rivers, flat land, and a warm climate, many towns and cities developed there. People can farm, fish,

ship goods, and work in businesses. The Coastal Plains shows how water and climate can help a region grow. It is the largest Texas region, and it plays a major role in the state's population and economy.

[10] The North Central Plains has rolling hills, grasslands, and more trees than western Texas. The climate is milder, with moderate rainfall. Because of these conditions, many people raise cattle and grow crops. Small towns, farms, and settlements are common throughout this region.

[11] The North Central Plains is located west of the Coastal Plains. The land is not as flat as the Coastal Plains, but it is not as dry as far West Texas. This region has prairies, grasslands, and rolling hills. A prairie is a large area of grassland. These grasslands are useful because they provide food for cattle. When cattle eat grass in a field, they are grazing. Grazing is an important part of ranching.

[12] Ranching has been important in the North Central Plains for a long time. The region's open land and grass made it a good place to raise cattle. Ranchers used the land to care for herds of cattle. In Texas history, cattle ranching became a major part of the state's culture. Cowboys, cattle drives, and ranches are often connected to this region. Even today, many people in the North Central Plains still work in ranching or jobs related to agriculture.

[13] Farming is also important in the North Central Plains. The region gets moderate rainfall, which means it gets some rain but not as much as the Coastal Plains. Farmers can grow crops, but they must still pay attention to the weather. If there is too little rain, crops may not grow well. If there is enough rain, the soil can support farming. People may grow wheat, corn, hay, and other crops in this region.

[14] Many towns in the North Central Plains are smaller than the large cities in the Coastal Plains. These towns often grew near farms, ranches, rivers, or railroads. In the past, railroads helped people move goods from one place to another. Farmers and ranchers could use railroads to send crops and cattle to markets. A market is a place where people buy and sell goods. Because of transportation, small towns became important centers for trade.

[15] The climate of the North Central Plains affects how people live. The weather is usually milder than the weather in the Great Plains or Mountains and Basins. Since the region has more trees than western Texas, people may see wooded areas along rivers and streams. Still, grasslands are a major feature. These grasslands help support cattle ranching, farming, and small communities.

[16] The North Central Plains is important because it connects eastern and western Texas. It has features of both areas. It is not as wet and forested as the Coastal Plains, but it is not as dry as the Great Plains or Mountains and Basins. Its rolling hills, grasslands, farms, ranches, and towns help make it an important part of Texas.

[17] The Great Plains is located farther west and is known for its wide, open spaces. The land is drier, and strong winds are common. Fewer trees grow here, but ranching and farming are still major activities. Some areas also produce wind energy.

[18] The Great Plains has a much drier climate than the regions to the east. Since it gets less rainfall, fewer trees grow there. Grasses are more common because they can survive

with less water. The land is open, and a person can often see far across the plains. The wide spaces make this region different from the forested areas of East Texas.

[19] Farming in the Great Plains can be difficult because the land is dry. Farmers have to use water carefully. Some farmers use irrigation to help crops grow. Irrigation is a way of bringing water to crops when there is not enough rain. This can help farmers grow wheat, cotton, corn, and other crops. However, using water wisely is important because water is a limited resource in dry areas.

[20] Ranching is also important in the Great Plains. The wide grasslands provide space for cattle to graze. Ranchers can raise animals on large areas of land. Since there are fewer trees and more open spaces, ranching works well in many parts of the region. The land may seem empty, but it supports important work.

[21] The Great Plains is also known for strong winds. Wind can be a challenge because it can blow dust and dry out the land. However, wind can also be used as a resource. In some parts of the Great Plains, wind turbines are used to make electricity. A wind turbine is a tall machine with blades that turn when the wind blows. The movement helps create energy. Wind energy is important because it comes from a resource that can be used again and again.

[22] The Great Plains has important landforms. Palo Duro Canyon is located in this region and is one of the largest canyons in the United States. A canyon is a deep valley with steep sides. The Caprock Escarpment is another landform in this region. An escarpment is a steep slope or cliff that separates higher land from lower land. These landforms show that the Great Plains is not only flat land. It also has natural features that make it unique.

[23] People who live in the Great Plains have learned to adapt to the climate. To adapt means to change or adjust to fit the conditions around you. Since the region is dry and windy, people plan carefully for farming, ranching, and water use. They build communities that can handle the open land and changing weather. The Great Plains helps Texas by providing crops, cattle, and wind energy.

[24] The Mountains and Basins region is in far West Texas. It has tall mountains, dry deserts, and very little rainfall. Although fewer people live there, it is important for oil, gas, and mining.

[25] The Mountains and Basins region is the driest region in Texas. It receives very little rainfall compared to the other regions. Because of this, there are fewer plants and fewer people. The plants that do grow there must be able to survive with little water. Cacti, desert shrubs, and short grasses are common. These plants are adapted to hot, dry conditions.

[26] This region has landforms that are very different from the other regions. It has mountains, deserts, valleys, and basins. A basin is a low area of land that is often surrounded by higher land. The mountains make the region beautiful, but they can also make travel more difficult. Roads may have to go around mountains or through passes. The dry land also makes farming harder than in the wetter regions of Texas.

[27] Since the Mountains and Basins region is so dry, fewer large cities are found there. People often live in smaller communities. One major city in far West Texas is El Paso. El Paso is located near the border of Texas, New Mexico, and Mexico. Its location makes it

important for trade, transportation, and culture. Even though the region has fewer people overall, it still plays an important role in Texas.

[28] Oil, gas, and mining are important economic activities in the Mountains and Basins region. Some useful resources are found underground. People drill for oil and gas or mine minerals from the earth. Mining means removing useful materials from the ground. These resources are used for energy, building, and many products people use every day.

[29] Tourism is also important in the Mountains and Basins region. Many people visit far West Texas to see mountains, deserts, and parks. Big Bend National Park is located in this region. Visitors go there to hike, camp, watch wildlife, and see the Rio Grande. The Rio Grande forms part of the border between Texas and Mexico. The natural beauty of this region brings people from many places.

[30] The climate in the Mountains and Basins region affects how people live. Because there is little rainfall, people must use water carefully. Homes, farms, and businesses depend on limited water supplies. The dry climate also affects the kinds of jobs people do. Farming is not as common as it is in wetter regions, but ranching, mining, oil, gas, and tourism are important.

[31] Each region has unique features, but all of them play an important role in Texas. The landforms, climate, vegetation, and economic activities of each region affect how people live. By studying the regions of Texas, people can better understand why communities, jobs, and ways of life are different across the state.

[32] The Coastal Plains has flat land, many rivers, forests, rainfall, farming, fishing, shipping, and large cities. The North Central Plains has rolling hills, grasslands, farms, ranches, and small towns. The Great Plains has dry land, open spaces, strong winds, farming, ranching, and wind energy. The Mountains and Basins region has deserts, mountains, basins, little rainfall, oil, gas, mining, and tourism.

[33] These regions also help explain settlement patterns in Texas. A settlement pattern is the way people live in different places. More people often live in areas with water, good soil, transportation, and jobs. That is one reason the Coastal Plains has many large cities. Fewer people live in dry or mountainous areas because water and farming are more limited. Still, every region has resources that people can use.

[34] The regions of Texas show that geography matters. Geography is not just about naming places on a map. It is about understanding how land, water, climate, plants, animals, and people are connected. The physical features of a place can shape how people travel, work, build homes, and form communities.

[35] Texas is a diverse state because its regions are so different. Diverse means having many different parts or features. In one part of Texas, people may see forests, rivers, and the Gulf of Mexico. In another part, they may see prairies, cattle ranches, and farms. Farther west, they may see dry plains, strong winds, mountains, deserts, and basins.

[36] Learning about the four regions helps students understand Texas better. It shows why people in different areas may have different jobs and ways of life. It also shows how Texans depend on the land and its resources. From the coast to the mountains, each region helps shape the history, economy, and culture of Texas.

Student Annotation Guide — Understanding the Texas Regions

T — Time

the largest region

R — Reactions

how people live and work

A — Actions

Fishing, shipping, and jobs

C — Character/Concept/Creature

The Coastal Plains

K — Key Knowledge

landforms, climate, vegetation

S — Scenery/Setting

dry deserts or wide, open plains

TRACKS EVIDENCE HIGHLIGHTING — Understanding the Texas Regions

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Day 1 — Gather and Reveal



GRADUATE Infinity Lesson Cycle

AUDITORY ENGAGEMENT - ACTIVE PARTICIPATION Approach: Finish the Thought in Your Own Words Purpose: Students listen to a short description of audience, tone, or letter structure and finish the thought in their own words before writing. Oral rehearsal supports independent written correspondence. Listening Target: Listen for how audience changes the greeting, register, support, and ending of an argumentative letter. SLIDE M4-03 - FINISH THE THOUGHT IN YOUR OWN WORDS

★ Daily Deck Slide (M4-03)

Write on the board: Listen first. Then finish one stem aloud: “Because my audience is ___, I should ___.” “A respectful opening should ___.” “A strong closing thought should ___.” Teacher Script: “I will explain one part of audience-aware correspondence. Your job is not to repeat my exact sentence. Finish the idea in your own words, say it to a partner, and then write a shorter version.” Round 1: A letter to a principal should use a respectful greeting and clear academic language. Answer Key / Look-For: Possible finish: Because my audience is my principal, I should sound respectful and make my reason clear. Round 2: A closing thought should leave the reader with the larger importance of the claim. Answer Key / Look-For: Possible finish: A strong closing thought should help the reader remember why the issue matters. Fresh Recall: Close notes. Tell a partner two ways audience changes a letter and one way the argument itself stays the same. G — Gather Their Attention Attention Activity: “Mailbox Mystery” Bring in a decorated box, small mailbox, or paper bag labeled MAIL FOR WRITERS. Inside place a few envelopes addressed to different people such as: Dear Teacher Dear Principal Dear Classmates Dear Community Leader Pull them out one at a time. Teacher Script “Writers, today our thinking is taking a new direction. We are no longer just writing arguments on paper. Today, we are writing to someone.” Hold up an envelope. “When writers know who they are talking to, their writing becomes more purposeful.” Show another envelope. “This means we must think carefully about how to begin our letter and how to end it. A strong letter needs a respectful opening, a clear message, and a meaningful closing.” Write on the board: Argument + Audience = Argumentative Letter Then say: “Our HABIT today is this: strong writers shape their message for the person who will read it.” SLIDE M4-04 - ARGUMENT + AUDIENCE = ARGUMENTATIVE LETTER

★ Daily Deck Slide (M4-04)

Write on the board: A letter still needs a claim, reasons, evidence, explanation, and big-picture thinking. Audience changes greeting, register, wording, and closing. R — Reveal the Background Knowledge Teacher Script “Let’s review what we already know. In argumentative writing, we choose a side and support it. If you have to decide, declare the why. That still matters in a letter.” “But now we must also think about the format of a letter.” Write on the board: Parts of a Letter Greeting Introduction Claim Support Closing Thought Closing Signature Teacher Script “The greeting tells who you are writing to. The introduction explains why you are writing. The claim tells your side. The support explains why your side makes sense. The closing thought leaves the reader with a big idea, lesson learned, or theme. The closing politely ends the letter.” Board Example 1 Prompt: Explain in a letter to your teacher whether or not students should study all four Texas regions to understand how geography shapes life and work. Greeting: Dear Teacher, Opening / Claim: I am writing to explain why students should study all four Texas regions because landforms, climate, resources, and economic activities help explain how Texans live and work. Closing Thought: Ultimately, studying all four regions helps students see Texas as one state made of very different but connected places. “That is the frame. Of course, we would still add support in the middle.” Board Example 2 Prompt: Explain in a letter to your principal whether or not students should keep weather journals during a weather-and-climate unit. Greeting: Dear Principal, Opening / Claim: I am writing to explain why students should keep weather journals because repeated observations help us notice changes, compare conditions, and understand why a few days do not define climate. Closing Thought: Ultimately, careful records help students make conclusions from evidence instead of assumptions. “Strong endings should do more than say goodbye. They should help the audience understand the big picture.”

Day 2 — Attempt



SLIDE M4-06 - BUILD THE LETTER - DIRECTIONS

Daily Deck Slide (M4-06)

Write on the board: Match the sentence-statement prompt, recipient, greeting, opening/claim, closing thought, and closing. Check that tone fits the audience. A — Attempt the Activity Directions Main Activity: Cut-and-Paste Notebook Activity “Build the Letter” Matching Challenge Students will cut out the parts of a letter and physically build argumentative letters in their interactive notebooks. Set-Up Each pair or small group receives: 1 set of prompt cards 1 set of recipient cards 1 set of greeting cards 1 set of introduction / claim cards 1 set of closing-thought cards 1 set of closing cards notebook mat template Teacher Script “Today you will complete a matching challenge called Build the Letter. You will receive letter parts that have been cut apart. Your job is to match the pieces correctly and glue them into your Interactive Notebook.” “You must pay attention to: who the letter is written to what side the writer is taking how the letter begins how the letter ends” “Any game pieces that are not glued into your notebook need to be stored in your practice pockets in your interactive books so you can use them again.” How to Complete the Activity Step 1: Read the Prompt Card Read the prompt carefully and identify: what must be decided who the letter is being written to Step 2: Match the Recipient Choose the correct recipient card. Step 3: Match the Greeting Choose the greeting that correctly fits the recipient. Step 4: Match the Introduction / Claim Choose the sentence that introduces the letter and states the side clearly. Step 5: Match the Closing Thought Choose the ending thought that sounds like a big picture, lesson learned, or theme. Step 6: Match the Closing Choose the polite closing that best fits the audience. Step 7: Glue It Into the Interactive Notebook Title the page: Cluster 6 Module 4 – Build the Letter Students glue the parts in order. Step 8: Store Extra Pieces “Place all extra cards and reusable pieces into your practice pockets in your interactive books.” Game Card Sets 12 Prompt Cards Explain in a letter to your teacher whether or not students should study all four Texas regions to understand how geography shapes life and work. Explain in a letter to your principal whether or not students should keep weather journals during a weather-and-climate unit. Explain in a letter to your class whether or not all four Texas regions should be valued as important parts of the state. Explain in a letter to a community leader whether or not current weather evidence should matter more than quick assumptions when planning outdoor events. Explain in a letter to another student whether or not learning Texas geography is important. Explain in a letter to your social studies teacher whether or not geography should be used to explain why jobs and settlements differ across Texas. Explain in a letter to your teacher whether or not comparing the four Texas regions is a valuable way to learn about Texas. Explain in a letter to your principal whether or not long-term climate patterns should influence long-term school planning. Explain in a letter to your class whether or not the four Texas regions should be seen as equally important. Explain in a letter to another student whether or not learning about all four Texas regions helps people appreciate the state more. Explain in a letter to a community leader whether or not land, climate, water, and resources should be considered when planning community growth. Explain in a letter to your social studies teacher whether or not Texas geography helps explain how communities grow and connect. 12 Recipient Cards your teacher your principal your class a community leader another student your social studies teacher your teacher your principal your class another student a community leader your social studies teacher

Greeting Cards Dear Teacher, Dear Principal, Dear Classmates, Dear Community Leader, Dear Fellow Student, Dear Social Studies Teacher, 12 Introduction / Claim Cards I am writing to explain why students should study all four Texas regions because landforms, climate, resources, and economic activities help explain how Texans live and work. I am writing to share why I believe students should keep weather journals because repeated observations help students notice changes and distinguish recent weather from long-term climate. I am writing to explain why all four Texas regions should be valued because each one contributes distinct natural features, resources, economic activities, and communities to the state. I am writing to share why current weather evidence should matter more than quick assumptions because conditions can change within hours. I am writing to explain why learning Texas geography is important because it shows how land, water, climate, resources, and people are connected. I am writing to share why geography should be used to explain why jobs and settlements differ across Texas because regional conditions shape resources and economic activity. I am writing to explain why comparing the four Texas regions is a valuable way to learn about Texas because the comparison makes differences in land, climate, resources, and work visible. I am writing to share why long-term climate patterns should influence long-term school planning because climate describes what is usual over many years rather than one unusual day. I am writing to explain why the four Texas regions should be seen as equally important because each one contributes something different to the state. I am writing to share why learning about all four Texas regions helps people appreciate the state more because Texas includes forests, plains, deserts, mountains, farms, ranches, ports, energy resources, and many kinds of communities. I am writing to explain why land, climate, water, and resources should be considered when planning community growth because physical conditions affect where people can live, work, travel, and use resources. I am writing to share why Texas geography helps explain how communities grow and connect because landforms, water, climate, transportation, resources, and jobs influence settlement. 12 Closing-Thought Cards Ultimately, studying all four regions helps people understand how many different places contribute to Texas as a whole. As you can see, repeated weather observations help students make conclusions from evidence instead of assumptions. The big picture is that Texas regions can be very different and still deserve attention as important parts of the state. Everyone benefits when changing weather decisions are based on current evidence instead of a first impression. One lesson we can learn is that geography helps people understand why communities develop differently. Ultimately, communities can make stronger long-term choices when they consider land, climate, water, resources, and the needs of people. As you can see, meaningful learning happens when students compare real geographic patterns and evidence. The big picture is that long-term patterns can guide planning even though daily weather still changes. Everyone can benefit from understanding the role each Texas region plays in the state. One lesson we can learn is that exploring all four regions more deeply helps people appreciate the variety of Texas geography and ways of life. Ultimately, communities are better prepared when planners consider current conditions, long-term patterns, and local resources. As you can see, Texas geography is more than a list of places because it helps explain settlement, work, transportation, resources, and daily life. Closing Cards Sincerely, Respectfully, Your Student, A Thoughtful Learner, A Concerned Student, From a Curious Writer, Teacher Answer Key for Matching Challenge Sample Set 1 Prompt: Explain in a letter to your

teacher whether or not students should study all four Texas regions to understand how geography shapes life and work. Recipient: your teacher Greeting: Dear Teacher, Introduction / Claim: I am writing to explain why students should study all four Texas regions because landforms, climate, resources, and economic activities help explain how Texans live and work. Closing Thought: Ultimately, studying all four regions helps students understand Texas as one state made of very different but connected places. Closing: Sincerely, / Your Student, Sample Set 2 Prompt: Explain in a letter to your principal whether or not students should keep weather journals during a weather-and-climate unit. Recipient: your principal Greeting: Dear Principal, Introduction / Claim: I am writing to share why I believe students should keep weather journals because repeated observations help students notice changes, compare conditions, and distinguish recent weather from long-term climate. Closing Thought: As you can see, careful records help students make conclusions from evidence instead of assumptions. Closing: Respectfully, / A Concerned Student, Sample Set 3 Prompt: Explain in a letter to a community leader whether or not land, climate, water, and resources should be considered when planning community growth. Recipient: a community leader Greeting: Dear Community Leader, Introduction / Claim: I am writing to explain why land, climate, water, and resources should be considered when planning community growth because physical conditions affect settlement, work, transportation, and resource use. Closing Thought: Ultimately, communities are better prepared when planning responds to both local geography and long-term patterns. Closing: Respectfully, / A Thoughtful Learner, Sample Set 4 Prompt: Explain in a letter to another student whether or not learning Texas geography is important. Recipient: another student Greeting: Dear Fellow Student, Introduction / Claim: I am writing to explain why learning Texas geography is important because landforms, climate, water, resources, and economic activities help explain how communities live and work. Closing Thought: One lesson we can learn is that geography helps explain why life is different across the same state. Closing: From a Curious Writer,

Day 3 — Discuss and Use Again



SLIDE M4-07 - DISCUSS AUDIENCE AND TONE

★ Daily Deck Slide (M4-07)

Write on the board: How did the audience change the greeting? Which words sounded respectful? Which closing thought left the strongest big-picture message? D — Discuss and Ask Questions Teacher Script “Now let’s talk about what made a letter sound strong, respectful, and complete. Writers, every part of a letter has a job, and today you practiced noticing those jobs.” Discussion Questions “Why does an argumentative letter need a greeting?” “How is the beginning of a letter different from the middle?” “Why should a closing thought sound meaningful instead of rushed?” “What makes one closing fit an audience better than another?” “How does theme help the ending of a letter sound stronger?” “What happened when a letter part did not match the prompt or audience?” Possible Student Responses “The greeting shows who the letter is written to.” “The beginning explains why the writer is writing.” “A meaningful ending helps the reader remember the point.” “Different audiences need different tones.” “Theme helps the ending sound like a lesson learned.” “When parts did not match, the letter sounded confusing.” Possible Student Questions and Teacher Responses Student: “Can I say ‘Hi’ in an argumentative letter?” Teacher: “For this kind of writing, we want to sound respectful and purposeful, so ‘Dear’ is usually a stronger choice.” Student: “Does the claim go in the beginning or later?” Teacher: “In this lesson, we are practicing putting the claim near the beginning so the reader knows your side right away.” Student: “Can my closing thought be a question?” Teacher: “It can, but for this lesson a strong statement usually sounds clearer and more convincing.” Student: “What if I do not know how to end the letter?” Teacher: “Think about the big picture. Ask yourself, ‘What lesson or final thought do I want my reader to remember?’” Student: “Why are we using theme in a letter?” Teacher: “Because strong letters do not only state opinions. They help readers understand why the idea matters.”

SLIDE M4-08 - USE AGAIN - MY OPENING AND ENDING

★ Daily Deck Slide (M4-08)

Write on the board: Choose a sentence-statement letter prompt. Write the recipient, greeting, opening/claim, big-picture closing thought, and respectful closing. U — Use the Knowledge Again Independent Interactive Notebook Activity “My Letter Opening and My Letter Ending” Students will independently create one opening and one ending for an argumentative letter. Teacher Script “Open your Interactive Notebook and title your page: Cluster 6 Module 4 – My Letter Opening and My Letter Ending” “Today you will choose one prompt and write: the greeting the opening sentence with your claim the closing thought the closing” “You are not writing the whole letter today. You are focusing on how to start and how to end it well.” “Remember that any reusable cards or game pieces need to be stored in your practice pockets in your interactive books.”

Student Directions Choose one prompt from the board. Write who the recipient is. Write a correct greeting. Write one opening sentence that introduces the topic and states your side. Write one closing thought that sounds like a big picture, theme, or lesson learned. Write a respectful closing.

Prompts for Independent Practice Explain in a letter to your teacher whether or not all four Texas regions should be valued as important parts of the state. Explain in a letter to your principal whether or not students should keep weather journals during a weather-and-climate unit. Explain in a letter to another student whether or not Texas geography is important. Explain in a letter to a community leader whether or not current weather evidence should matter more than quick assumptions when planning outdoor events.

Sample Answer Key Guide Sample 1 Prompt: Explain in a letter to your teacher whether or not all four Texas regions should be valued as important parts of the state. Greeting: Dear Teacher, Opening / Claim: I am writing to explain why all four Texas regions should be valued because each one contributes distinct physical features, resources, economic activities, and communities to Texas. Closing Thought: The big picture is that different regions can contribute in different ways and still deserve attention as important parts of the state. Closing: Sincerely, / Your Student, Sample 2 Prompt: Explain in a letter to your principal whether or not students should keep weather journals during a weather-and-climate unit. Greeting: Dear Principal, Opening / Claim: I am writing to share why I believe students should keep weather journals because repeated observations help students notice weather changes and distinguish recent conditions from long-term climate. Closing Thought: Ultimately, careful records help students make conclusions from evidence instead of assumptions. Closing: Respectfully, / A Concerned Student, Notebook Reminder “Please keep this page in your Interactive Notebook, and store any reusable pieces in your practice pockets in your interactive books so you can review them later.”

Day 4 — Award and Target



SLIDE M4-09 - AWARD YOURSELF

★ Daily Deck Slide (M4-09)

Write on the board: Underline your strongest audience-aware choice and finish: “This fits my reader because ____.” A — Award Yourself for A Job Well Done Expanded Recognition Ideas Mailbox Master BadgeStudents draw a small mailbox in their notebook and write: “I can begin and end an argumentative letter with purpose.” Golden Greeting AwardStudents star the greeting and opening they feel sound most respectful and clear. Closing Thought SpotlightStudents underline their strongest closing thought and label it: “My best big-picture ending.” Practice Pocket PrideStudents organize their letter parts neatly in their practice pockets and do a quick “materials check” celebration. Audience ApplauseInvite a few students to read only their opening and closing aloud. Celebrate how clearly their writing sounds addressed to a real person. Teacher Script “Today you practiced something powerful. You learned how to open a letter in a clear, respectful way and how to end it with meaning. That is the kind of writing that sounds thoughtful and mature.”

SLIDE M4-10 - TARGET YOUR CORRESPONDENCE

★ Daily Deck Slide (M4-10)

Write on the board: Choose one goal: stronger greeting, clearer purpose, more respectful register, better evidence, or more meaningful ending. T — Target Their Goals Expanded Teacher Script “Writers, now it is time to think about what you want to strengthen next. Strong writers do not only finish work. They reflect on it, improve it, and set goals for where their writing can grow.” Reflection Questions Did my greeting match the audience? Did my opening clearly state why I was writing? Did my claim sound strong and clear? Did my closing thought sound like a big picture or lesson learned? Did my closing fit the tone of my audience? Did my letter sound respectful from beginning to end? Curiosity Questions Why does audience matter so much in a letter? How can the way we begin a letter affect how the reader feels? Why do strong endings stay with readers longer than weak ones? How does theme help an argumentative letter sound more meaningful? When might a person choose to write a letter instead of a regular paragraph? How can a respectful tone make an argument stronger? Goal Stem “My next goal in argumentative correspondence is to ____.” Target Extension Have students add one sticky note to their notebook page answering: What do I want my reader to remember most when they finish my letter?

Day 5 — Explain to Others



SLIDE M4-11 - TURN AND TEACH AUDIENCE AWARENESS

★ Daily Deck Slide (M4-11)

Write on the board: Teach a partner two ways the audience changes a letter and one way the argumentative structure stays the same. E — Explain to Others Turn and Teach Teacher Script “Turn to a partner and teach them how to begin and end an argumentative letter. Explain what each part needs to do.” Student Turn-and-Teach Frames “A greeting matters because ...” “The opening of a letter should ...” “A claim in a letter needs to ...” “A strong closing thought sounds like ...” “A respectful closing helps because ...” “One way theme helps a letter is ...” Teacher Listen-Fors Listen for these ideas: audience greeting claim purpose respectful closing thought theme big picture Teacher Closing for This Section “When you can teach someone else how to open and close a letter, you are starting to own the work as a writer.”

SLIDE M4-05 - MODEL AN AUDIENCE-AWARE OPENING

★ Daily Deck Slide (M4-05)

Write on the board: Dear Principal, I am writing to explain why students should keep weather journals because repeated observations help us notice changes, compare conditions, and understand why a few days do not define climate. Teacher Modeling Section Model 1 Prompt Explain in a letter to your teacher whether or not students should study all four Texas regions to understand how geography shapes life and work. Teacher Script “First, I identify my audience. I am writing to my teacher, so I want to sound respectful and clear.” Greeting: Dear Teacher, Opening / Claim: I am writing to explain why students should study all four Texas regions because landforms, climate, resources, and economic activities help explain how Texans live and work. Closing Thought: Ultimately, studying all four regions helps students see Texas as one state made of very different but connected places.

Closing: Sincerely, Your Student

Model 2 Prompt Explain in a letter to a community leader whether or not land, climate, water, and resources should be considered when planning community growth. Teacher Script “Now I am writing to a community leader, so I want my tone to sound respectful and thoughtful.” Greeting: Dear Community Leader, Opening / Claim: I am writing to explain why land, climate, water, and resources should be considered when planning community growth because physical conditions affect settlement, work, transportation, and resource use. Closing Thought: Ultimately, communities make stronger decisions when they use current evidence, long-term patterns, and local geographic conditions instead of relying on assumptions.

Closing: Respectfully, A Thoughtful Learner

Teacher Closing Words of Encouragement “Today, you learned that writing is not just about putting words on paper. It is about sharing your ideas with a real audience in a clear, thoughtful, and meaningful way. That is powerful. You practiced how to begin and end a letter with purpose, and that helps your message sound stronger and more complete. Every time you write with heart, structure, and respect for your reader, you grow as a writer. Keep going—you are becoming more confident, more thoughtful, and more prepared to use your words in ways that truly matter.” DETAILED VIRTUAL ADAPTATION SLIDE M4-15 - VIRTUAL CLASSROOM APPLICATION

★ Daily Deck Slide (M4-15)

Write on the board: Display the Very High Stamina passages and audience cards. Use oral rehearsal, Finish the Thought in Your Own Words, breakout letter matching, and a digital opening/closing workshop for a real recipient. Set Up Before Class Post the Very High Stamina passages, digital recipient cards, greeting cards, claim/opening cards, closing-thought cards, and respectful closings. Create a shared audience chart with Principal / Teacher / Classmate / Community Leader. Passage Access and Annotation Students identify evidence based on the recipient. For example, a principal may need evidence about the value of weather journals; a community leader may need evidence about geography, resources, settlement, or changing weather conditions. Auditory Engagement Online For Finish the Thought in Your Own Words, explain one audience-aware choice with students listening first. Students complete the stem orally in breakout pairs, then type a shorter version. Repeat with greeting, register, evidence, and closing significance. Collaborative Attempt Convert Build the Letter into a breakout-room matching challenge. Teams match prompt, recipient, greeting, opening/claim, closing thought, and closing. They must explain one mismatch before replacing it. Independent Use Students choose one sentence-statement letter prompt and independently draft the greeting, audience-aware opening/claim, selected support, big-picture closing thought, and respectful closing. Students may type or submit a clear photo of notebook work. ELPS and Accessibility Supports Keep examples of formal and student-friendly register visible, allow oral rehearsal and speech-to-text, provide greeting/closing banks, and use sentence frames without lowering the claim/evidence thinking demand. Formative Check and Feedback Check four things: the audience is named, the claim is clear, support fits the claim, and the closing leaves the reader with significance. Give one revision target tied to audience or argument. Closure and Publication Students read the opening and closing aloud to a partner as if they were the recipient. They make one final tone adjustment, then answer the overarching question in the tracker before publishing or sharing the final piece. OVERARCHING QUESTION - ANSWER Question: How does writing for a real audience change the way we begin, support, and end an argumentative letter? Answer: Writing for a real audience requires the writer to shape the greeting, register, explanation, evidence, and closing for the person who will read the letter. The argument still needs a clear claim and proof, but respectful tone and a meaningful final thought help the message sound purposeful and convincing. SLIDE M4-14 - ANSWER THE OVERARCHING QUESTION

★ Daily Deck Slide (M4-14)

Write on the board: How does writing for a real audience change the way we begin, support, and end an argumentative letter? Answer: Writing for a real audience requires the writer to shape the greeting, register, explanation, evidence, and closing for the person who will read the letter. The argument still needs a clear claim and proof, but respectful tone and a meaningful final thought help the message sound purposeful and convincing.

Module 4 — Low, Medium, and High Exemplars

Prompt: Explain in a letter to your principal whether or not all four Texas regions should be valued as important parts of the state.

Low Exemplar

- Student Response: “Dear Principal, The Texas regions are all important. Sincerely, A Student”
- What Is Working: The student identifies the recipient and takes a side.
- What Needs Improvement: Explain the purpose, support the claim with a passage-based why, use a meaningful closing thought, and choose a respectful closing.

Medium Exemplar

- Student Response: “Dear Principal, I am writing to explain why all four Texas regions should be valued because they are important. Thank you for reading my letter. Sincerely, A Student”
- What Is Working: The greeting fits the audience and the opening includes a claim and reason.
- What Needs Improvement: Replace the general reason with passage-specific support about landforms, climate, resources, and economic activities; strengthen the final thought so it communicates the big picture.

High Exemplar

- Student Response: “Dear Principal, I am writing to explain why all four Texas regions should be valued as important parts of the state because each region has different landforms, climate, resources, and economic activities. Ultimately, understanding every region helps people gain a fuller and more accurate picture of Texas. Respectfully, A Concerned Student”
- What Is Working: The greeting, register, claim, passage-based support, theme-based ending, and respectful closing work together for a real audience.

Module 4 — Assessment Opportunities

Formative Assessment

Use “My Letter Opening and My Letter Ending.” Students independently choose a prompt and write the recipient, greeting, opening/claim, big-picture closing thought, and respectful closing.

Success Criteria

Component	Student Requirement
Audience	Names the recipient and uses a fitting register.
Opening	Introduces the purpose and states a clear side.
Support	Uses a reason or detail aligned to the passage and reader.
Ending	Leaves a meaningful big picture, lesson, or theme.
Closing	Politely fits the intended audience.

Sample Answer Key Guide

Prompt: Explain in a letter to your principal whether or not all four Texas regions should be valued as important parts of the state. Greeting: Dear Principal, Opening / Claim: I am writing to share why I believe all four Texas regions should be valued because each one has different landforms, climate, resources, and economic activities. Closing Thought: Ultimately, understanding every region helps people gain a fuller and more accurate picture of Texas. Closing: Respectfully, / A Concerned Student,

Check the Learning

- Listen: During Finish the Thought in Your Own Words, listen for how audience changes greeting, register, support, and ending.
- Look: During Build the Letter, check whether each prompt, recipient, greeting, opening/claim, closing thought, and closing matches.
- Collect: Review “My Letter Opening and My Letter Ending” for an audience-aware opening and meaningful ending.

Fresh Recall: Close notes. Tell a partner two ways audience changes a letter and one way the argument itself stays the same.

Intervention — Module 4

SLIDE M4-12 - INTERVENTION - LETTER BUILDER RESCUE

★ Daily Deck Slide (M4-12)

Write on the board: Build a simple letter one piece at a time: greeting, introduction, claim, support, closing thought, closing. Explain each part's job. Intervention Activity "Letter Builder Rescue" Small-Group Support This intervention is for students who need extra support understanding the parts of a letter and how those parts work with argumentative writing. Goal Students will physically build a simple argumentative letter step by step and explain the purpose of each part. Materials enlarged letter-part cards one simple prompt one recipient card one claim card one evidence card one closing-thought card one closing card interactive notebook mini-template Teacher Script "Today we are going to rescue mixed-up letters by building them one piece at a time. A strong argumentative letter is not just a note. It is organized thinking written to a real person." Step-by-Step Show students the prompt. Show them who the letter is being written to. Lay out these labels: Greeting Introduction Claim Evidence / Support Closing Thought Closing Read one sample part at a time. Students place each card where it belongs. Read the full finished letter aloud. Students repeat with a second letter set using fewer supports. Sample Prompt for Intervention Explain in a letter to your teacher whether or not students should study all four Texas regions to understand how geography shapes life and work. Sample Recipient Your teacher Sample Built Letter Evidence example: The passage shows that the Coastal Plains, North Central Plains, Great Plains, and Mountains and Basins each have different combinations of landforms, climate, resources, economic activities, and communities. Expanded Support Have students highlight: greeting in yellow claim in blue evidence in green closing thought in pink closing in orange Then students glue a mini version into their Interactive Notebook under the title: Letter Builder Rescue Practice Pocket Reminder "Please cut out your mini letter-part pieces and store any game pieces in your practice pockets in your interactive books so you can review them later." Second-Tier Support Give students a mixed-up set with one incorrect card, such as an evidence card from the wrong passage, and ask: "Why does this not belong?"

Module 4 — Embedded Checks and Student Support

Teacher Move	Expected Response	Common Misconception	Teacher Response
Ask who will read the letter.	Student names a specific recipient.	The audience does not affect writing choices.	Ask which greeting and register fit that person.
Ask what the opening must do.	Student explains purpose and states a claim.	A greeting is the complete introduction.	Separate greeting, introduction, and claim cards.
Ask what the ending must do.	Student leaves a big idea, lesson, or theme.	The letter should simply stop or say goodbye.	Ask what the reader should remember most.
Ask what remains argumentative.	Student names claim, reasons, evidence, explanation, and big-picture thinking.	Letter format replaces support.	Return to “Argument + Audience = Argumentative Letter.”

Enrichment — Module 4

SLIDE M4-13 - ENRICHMENT - CORRESPONDENCE COACH

★ Daily Deck Slide (M4-13)

Write on the board: Write openings to two different recipients for the same claim. Adjust register and tone. Write a basic ending and a stronger theme-based ending, then defend the stronger choice. Enrichment Activity “Correspondence Coach Challenge” This enrichment is for students who are ready to go beyond simply building a letter and can begin making purposeful choices about audience, tone, and strong endings. Goal Students will write two short letter openings and two different letter endings for the same prompt and audience, then compare which version is more convincing and why. Phase 1: Audience Shift Students take one prompt and write to two different recipients, such as: a teacher a principal a student council member a classmate They must adjust the greeting and wording to fit the audience respectfully. Phase 2: Ending Upgrade Students write: one basic ending one stronger, more theme-based ending Then they explain which ending leaves the reader with a stronger big-picture thought. Teacher Script “You are becoming a correspondence coach. Your job is not just to write a letter. Your job is to think about who you are writing to, how you should sound, and what final thought will stay with your audience.” Phase 3: Stronger Than Before Students revise: the opening so it sounds clearer the closing thought so it sounds more meaningful the closing so it matches the audience Sample Enrichment Comparison Basic ending: Thank you for reading my letter. Stronger ending: Ultimately, studying all four Texas regions helps students understand how many different places contribute to Texas as a whole. Notebook Work Title: Correspondence Coach Challenge Students glue or copy: audience 1 opening audience 2 opening basic ending stronger ending explanation of which version is best and why Practice Pocket Reminder “Store your audience cards and ending cards in your practice pockets in your interactive books for future review.”

Module 4 — Additional Writing Opportunity

Writing Prompt

Explain in a letter to your social studies teacher whether or not learning about the Texas regions helps people understand how geography shapes the way Texans live and work.

Planning Support

1. Identify the recipient and purpose.
2. Choose a side and write the claim.
3. Select support from “Understanding the Texas Regions.”
4. Write a greeting and audience-aware opening.
5. End with a big-picture thought and respectful closing.

Drafting Space

Revise

Check that the greeting, register, support, and closing fit the audience. Strengthen the final thought so it leaves the reader with the larger importance of the claim.

Edit

Check complete sentences, capitalization of proper nouns, punctuation in the greeting and closing, spelling, and appropriate conventions for the intended audience.

Module 4 — Auditory Engagement (Active Participation)

Approach: Finish the Thought in Your Own Words Purpose: Students listen to a short description of audience, tone, or letter structure and finish the thought in their own words before writing. Oral rehearsal supports independent written correspondence. Listening Target: Listen for how audience changes the greeting, register, support, and ending of an argumentative letter. SLIDE M4-03 - FINISH THE THOUGHT IN YOUR OWN WORDS Listen first. Then finish one stem aloud: “Because my audience is ___, I should ___.” “A respectful opening should ___.” “A strong closing thought should ___.” Teacher Script: “I will explain one part of audience-aware correspondence. Your job is not to repeat my exact sentence. Finish the idea in your own words, say it to a partner, and then write a shorter version.” Round 1: A letter to a principal should use a respectful greeting and clear academic language. Answer Key / Look-For: Possible finish: Because my audience is my principal, I should sound respectful and make my reason clear. Round 2: A closing thought should leave the reader with the larger importance of the claim. Answer Key / Look-For: Possible finish: A strong closing thought should help the reader remember why the issue matters. Fresh Recall: Close notes. Tell a partner two ways audience changes a letter and one way the argument itself stays the same.

Pause Points

|| Pause Point — Name the Reader

Stop and think: Who will receive this letter, and what register fits that person?

|| Pause Point — State the Purpose

Stop and think: Does the opening explain why I am writing and clearly state my claim?

|| Pause Point — Select Convincing Support

Stop and think: Which passage detail will matter most to this reader?

|| Pause Point — Leave the Big Picture

Stop and think: What lesson or final thought do I want my reader to remember?

Module 4 — My Progress Tracker

Teacher Script

“This tracker helps you notice how your writing changes when you write to a real audience. Mark each skill honestly and use your target to guide your next letter.”

I Can...	Not yet	Getting set	I can do it
Identify the audience and purpose.			
Choose a greeting and register that fit the recipient.			
Begin with a clear purpose and claim.			
Select relevant support from a passage.			
End with a meaningful big-picture thought and respectful closing.			

My next goal in argumentative correspondence is to:

Module 4 — Teacher Closure and Reflection

Teacher Closing Words of Encouragement

Teacher Script

“Today, you learned that writing is not just about putting words on paper. It is about sharing your ideas with a real audience in a clear, thoughtful, and meaningful way. That is powerful. You practiced how to begin and end a letter with purpose, and that helps your message sound stronger and more complete. Every time you write with heart, structure, and respect for your reader, you grow as a writer. Keep going—you are becoming more confident, more thoughtful, and more prepared to use your words in ways that truly matter.”

Overarching Question — Answer

How does writing for a real audience change the way we begin, support, and end an argumentative letter?

Writing for a real audience requires the writer to shape the greeting, register, explanation, evidence, and closing for the person who will read the letter. The argument still needs a clear claim and proof, but respectful tone and a meaningful final thought help the message sound purposeful and convincing.

Daily Deck Slide (M4-14)

Write on the board: How does writing for a real audience change the way we begin, support, and end an argumentative letter? Answer: Writing for a real audience requires the writer to shape the greeting, register, explanation, evidence, and closing for the person who will read the letter. The argument still needs a clear claim and proof, but respectful tone and a meaningful final thought help the message sound purposeful and convincing.

Teacher Reflection

Which students shape greeting, register, support, and ending for a specific audience?

Which students still need support separating the greeting, introduction, and claim?

Which students create a meaningful final thought rather than simply stopping?

Module 4 — Remote Learning



Virtual Classroom Adjustment for Remote Learners

Display the two very-high-stamina passages and all five anchor charts in the class stream. Run Mailbox Mystery with digital envelopes addressed to a teacher, principal, classmates, and community leader; students respond in chat with the register each reader needs. For Finish the Thought in Your Own Words, students listen before completing one stem aloud in a breakout pair and writing a shorter version. Recreate Build the Letter on shared slides with movable prompt, recipient, greeting, opening/claim, closing-thought, and closing cards, and ask partners to explain each match before placing it. Students complete “My Letter Opening and My Letter Ending” in a private document, then underline their strongest audience-aware choice and add their correspondence goal as a comment. Finish with partner Turn and Teach in breakout rooms and collect the opening and ending as the independent evidence of learning.