

THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC

A SUBSIDIARY OF TEACH BIG®

GRADE



Cluster 4

Building a Strong Argument



STUDENT WORKBOOK

Student Name: _____

Teacher / Class: _____

Date Started: _____

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Grade 4 Cluster 4

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Grade 4 Cluster 4

Modules 1-4 Combined Student Workbook

Welcome, Thinker!

A note to you before we begin.

Dear Writer,

Welcome to Cluster 4, where you learn to write an argument. This week you meet CREATURES, our roadmap for argumentative writing. CREATURES stands for Claim, Reasons, Evidence, Argument, Thinking, Understanding Others, Rebuttal, Ending, and Significance.

In Module 1 you build the foundation - the first three parts: C - Claim (take a side you can defend), R - Reasons (tell why your side makes sense), and E - Evidence (prove it from the text). You will read "The Wealth of Mansa Musa" and "Four Regions, One Big Adventure" and decide which positions the passages can support.

Remember our reminder: **Take a side. Tell why. Prove it from the text.** A true detail is not evidence unless it directly proves your reason.

Your friends at The Writing Academy®

How This Book Helps Me Think

Use these routines and visual cues in every module.

How This Book Helps Me Think

This workbook is built to help you do more of the thinking for yourself.

THE INDEPENDENCE ROUTINE

Attempt	Try the thinking first.
Check	Use the built-in check when one is provided.
Adjust	Fix what you can.
Ask if Needed	Ask for help when you truly need it.

Attempt -> Check -> Adjust -> Ask if Needed

Visual Conventions You Will See

- Dashed line = CUT • Solid line = FOLD
- Scissors symbol = cut page
- STUDENT SUPPORT = another way, same rigor
- READY TO STRETCH? = visible next move
- Tiny Tracks = pause, name thinking level, point to proof.

The Five Thinking Levels

A thinking level describes what your brain is doing - not who you are.

Level	Student Meaning	My Next Cognitive Move
 Foundational	I follow directions or repeat information.	FIND IT - locate, name, identify.
 Emergent	I begin trying ideas independently.	CONNECT IT - link a clue to an idea.
 Visible	I connect ideas directly to text evidence.	EXPLAIN IT - show what evidence proves.
 Independent	I combine evidence with my own reasoning.	USE IT - apply the thinking on my own.
 Reflective	I connect evidence to broader understanding.	EXTEND IT - defend, evaluate, connect, or teach.

BUILDING THE CREATURES ARGUMENT HIGHER

Level 1 names a claim, reason, or piece of evidence. Level 2 connects a reason to a claim but stops before explaining. Level 3 explains what the evidence proves. Level 4 combines relevant evidence with reasoning to defend the claim. Level 5 connects the issue to a larger understanding. Grow an argument up one level by making the match stronger, not just by adding more words.

MOVE YOUR THINKING


Foundational
RECALL


Emergent
CONNECT


Visible
EXPLAIN


Independent
USE


Reflective
EXTEND

TRACKS - Six Types of Measurable Evidence

TAP the TRACKS while you read. Hunt for all six kinds of evidence.

Symbol	Color	Evidence Type	What to Look For
	Pastel Green	T - Time	age, era, dates, cultural details, or historical details
	Pastel Purple	R - Reactions	reactions, solutions, resolutions, or effects
	Pastel Yellow	A - Actions	actions, problems, conflicts, or causes
	Pastel Yellow	C - Character, Concept, Creature	characters' or people's names, animals, or major concepts
	Pastel Orange	K - Key Knowledge	important information necessary to meaning not in another category
	Pastel Green	S - Scenery / Setting	setting details measured through the five senses

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Write the letter, symbol, or color beside evidence. A marked detail becomes evidence only when it directly proves the reason in your C -> R -> E chain.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

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CLUSTER 4



M O D U L E



CREATURES Foundation

The Parts of a Strong Argument



Pocket Practice



Attach scratch paper on the left, right, and bottom edges.
Leave the top edge open to make a pocket for this module's activity cards.



Attach scratch paper on the left, right, and bottom edges.
Leave the top edge open to make a pocket for this module's activity cards.

Why This Module Matters

A strong argument stands on a foundation you can defend.

WHY THIS MODULE MATTERS

An argumentative response is not just an opinion. It stands on a foundation you can defend: a clear **Claim**, logical **Reasons**, and relevant **Evidence**. This module introduces CREATURES, the complete argumentative-writing roadmap, and teaches the first three parts deeply - C, R, and E. A claim must answer the argument of the prompt, reasons must logically support that claim, and evidence must come from the text and directly prove a reason.

Essential Question

How do a clear claim, logical reasons, and relevant evidence create the foundation of a strong argumentative response?

Keep this question in mind all module. You will answer it on the last page.

How This Book Helps Me Think

This workbook is built to help you do more of the thinking for yourself.

THE INDEPENDENCE ROUTINE

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- Tiny Tracks = pause, name thinking level, point to proof.

The Standards I Am Learning - Part 1

Read the official TEKS. Directly under it, read how a student can say the same standard.

TEKS 11(B)(iii) - Official Standard

develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including a conclusion

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can organize my writing with a clear structure that ends with a strong conclusion.

TEKS 12(C)(i) - Official Standard

compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using genre characteristics

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use the parts readers expect in an argumentative (opinion) response.

TEKS 12(C)(ii) - Official Standard

compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using craft

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use purposeful words and sentence choices to make my argument work well.

TEKS 11(C)(i) - Official Standard

revise drafts to improve sentence structure

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can change my sentences so my ideas are clearer and sound better.

The Standards I Am Learning - Part 2

Read the official TEKS. Directly under it, read how a student can say the same standard.

TEKS 11(C)(ii) - Official Standard

revise drafts to improve word choice

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can choose more precise words so my argument shows stronger thinking.

TEKS 11(C)(iii) - Official Standard

revise drafts to improve coherence by adding, deleting, and combining ideas

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can add, delete, and combine ideas so my argument holds together.

TEKS 11(D)(i) - Official Standard

edit drafts using standard English conventions, including complete simple sentences with subject-verb agreement

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can check that my simple sentences are complete and that my subjects and verbs agree.

TEKS 11(D)(vi) - Official Standard

edit drafts using standard English conventions, including past tense of irregular verbs

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use the correct past tense of irregular verbs.

The Standards I Am Learning - Part 3

Read the official TEKS. Directly under it, read how a student can say the same standard.

TEKS 11(D)(vii) - Official Standard

edit drafts using standard English conventions, including singular nouns

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use singular nouns correctly when I mean one person, place, thing, or idea.

TEKS 11(D)(viii) - Official Standard

edit drafts using standard English conventions, including plural nouns

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use plural nouns correctly when I mean more than one.

TEKS 11(D)(ix) - Official Standard

edit drafts using standard English conventions, including common nouns

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use common nouns correctly for general people, places, things, and ideas.

TEKS 11(D)(x) - Official Standard

edit drafts using standard English conventions, including proper nouns

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can capitalize proper nouns like Mansa Musa and Texas correctly.

The Standards I Am Learning - Part 4

Read the official TEKS. Directly under it, read how a student can say the same standard.

TEKS 11(D)(xxxiii) - Official Standard

edit drafts using standard English conventions, including correct spelling of words with grade-appropriate orthographic patterns

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can spell words correctly using grade-level spelling patterns.

TEKS 11(D)(xxxv) - Official Standard

edit drafts using standard English conventions, including correct spelling of high-frequency words

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can spell words I see and use often correctly.

TEKS 4.7(C) - Official Standard

use text evidence to support an appropriate response

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use text evidence to support my response.

The ELPS I Am Learning

Read the official ELPS. Directly under it, read how you can say the same standard.

ELPS 4(F)(vi) - Official Standard

write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting details using appropriate content and style for [a] specific purpose and audience

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can explain or justify an idea with supporting details for my purpose and audience.

ELPS 4(D)(iii) - Official Standard

write content-area texts using a variety of transition words

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use transition words that make the relationship among ideas clear.

ELPS 4(E)(ii) - Official Standard

write content-area-specific text using grammatical structures

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use correct grammatical structures when I write about this topic.

ELPS 4(C)(i) - Official Standard

write using a combination of both high-frequency words and content-area vocabulary

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can combine familiar words with precise words from this module.

ELPS 4(F)(ii) - Official Standard

write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting details using appropriate style for [a] specific purpose

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can explain my thinking with supporting details and a fitting style.

My Module 1 Learning Launchpad

Read the destination, then choose how you will show up for the work.

I CAN

- write a clear claim that directly answers an argumentative prompt.
- give distinct, logical reasons that support my claim.
- choose accurate, relevant evidence that proves each exact reason.
- explain whether a C → R → E chain is defensible from the passage.

I WILL

- take a side I can defend.
- tell why my side makes sense with logical reasons.
- prove each reason with evidence from the text.
- revise a claim when the available evidence cannot support it.

LEARNING DESTINATION

I will build the foundation of an argument - a defensible claim, logical reasons, and relevant evidence - and explain why each evidence choice fits its reason.

MY LAUNCHPAD PROMISE

The CREATURES part I will practice first is _____ because

My Module 1 Learning Dashboard

Circle where you think your learning is right now. Come back on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday to see how your thinking grows.

I know a lot about this / I know a little bit about this / This is new to me

Circle one for each skill, each day.

Skill	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Write a clear, defensible claim	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new
Give distinct, logical reasons	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new
Choose relevant evidence from the text	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new
Explain why evidence fits a reason	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new
Check my sentence for conventions	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new

My goal for this module:

Tier 1 Vocabulary - Everyday Words

Say the word, learn its meaning, then rehearse the complete frame.

choice

Say it: CHOYS

What it means: a decision between possibilities

Try the frame: The writer's choice was ____.

clear

Say it: KLEER

What it means: easy to understand

Try the frame: My claim is clear because ____.

fact

Say it: FAKT

What it means: information that is true

Try the frame: One fact from the text is ____.

idea

Say it: eye-DEE-uh

What it means: a thought a writer can express

Try the frame: My idea about the passage is ____.

match

Say it: MACH

What it means: to connect things that belong together

Try the frame: This evidence matches the reason because ____.

Tier 1 Vocabulary - Everyday Words

Say the word, learn its meaning, then rehearse the complete frame.

prove

Say it: PROOV

What it means: to show that an idea is supported

Try the frame: I can prove my reason by ____.

side

Say it: SYD

What it means: one position in a disagreement

Try the frame: The side I will defend is ____.

strong

Say it: STRAWNG

What it means: able to do its job well

Try the frame: My argument is strong because ____.

text

Say it: TEKST

What it means: the passage a reader uses

Try the frame: The text says ____.

true

Say it: TROO

What it means: accurate or correct

Try the frame: This detail is true, and it proves ____.

Tier 2 Vocabulary - Academic Words

Say the word, learn its meaning, then rehearse the complete frame.

argument

Say it: AR-gyuh-muhnt

What it means: a connected case built from a claim, reasons, evidence, and thinking

Try the frame: My argument shows that ____.

claim

Say it: KLAYM

What it means: a clear position that directly answers the argumentative prompt

Try the frame: My claim is ____.

defensible

Say it: dih-FEN-suh-buhl

What it means: able to be supported with logical reasons and evidence

Try the frame: My claim is defensible because ____.

evidence

Say it: EV-uh-duhns

What it means: accurate information from the text used as proof

Try the frame: My evidence is ____.

position

Say it: puh-ZISH-uhn

What it means: the side or conclusion a writer chooses to defend

Try the frame: The position I chose is ____.

Tier 2 Vocabulary - Academic Words

Say the word, learn its meaning, then rehearse the complete frame.

reason

Say it: REE-zuhn

What it means: a logical idea that explains why the claim should be accepted

Try the frame: One reason my claim makes sense is ____.

region

Say it: REE-juhn

What it means: an area with shared geographic features, such as one of the four Texas regions

Try the frame: This region offers work such as ____.

relevant

Say it: REL-uh-vuhnt

What it means: directly connected to the claim or reason being proved

Try the frame: This evidence is relevant because it proves ____.

support

Say it: suh-PORT

What it means: information or reasoning that makes an idea stronger

Try the frame: This detail supports my reason because ____.

trade

Say it: TRAYD

What it means: the exchange of goods, a major source of Mali's growth

Try the frame: Trade helped Mali because ____.

Tier 3 Vocabulary - Argumentative-Writing Words

Say the word, learn its meaning, then rehearse the complete frame.

coherence

Say it: koh-HEER-uhns

What it means: the way ideas connect and flow clearly

Try the frame: My response has coherence because ____.

commerce

Say it: KOM-ers

What it means: the exchange of goods through trade

Try the frame: Commerce grew in Mali when ____.

conventions

Say it: kuhn-VEN-shuhnz

What it means: agreed rules for correct written language

Try the frame: I checked my conventions by ____.

CREATURES

Say it: KREE-churz

What it means: the nine-part argumentative-writing roadmap

Try the frame: The CREATURES part I am building is ____.

distractor

Say it: dih-STRAK-ter

What it means: a choice that does not do the required job

Try the frame: This card is a distractor because it does not ____.

Tier 3 Vocabulary - Argumentative-Writing Words

Say the word, learn its meaning, then rehearse the complete frame.

paraphrase

Say it: PAIR-uh-frayz

What it means: to restate text accurately in new words

Try the frame: I can paraphrase the evidence by ____.

rebuttal

Say it: rih-BUHT-uhl

What it means: a response that answers another position

Try the frame: A rebuttal answers the other side by ____.

resolution

Say it: rez-uh-LOO-shuhn

What it means: the way a problem or conflict is settled

Try the frame: The resolution in the passage was ____.

resource

Say it: REE-sors

What it means: something available that people can use

Try the frame: One resource in this region is ____.

significance

Say it: sig-NIF-ih-kuhns

What it means: why an issue matters beyond the paper

Try the frame: This issue matters beyond the paper because ____.

Meet CREATURES

The nine-part roadmap for argumentative writing. This module builds the foundation: C + R + E.

C - CLAIM

R - REASONS

E - EVIDENCE

THE FULL CREATURES ROADMAP

Letter	Move	Memory Cue
C	Claim	Take a side you can defend.
R	Reasons	Tell why your side makes sense.
E	Evidence	Prove it from the text.
A	Argument	Build the connected case.
T	Thinking	Explain how and why the proof matters.
U	Understanding Others	Show that you understand another view.
R	Rebuttal	Answer the other view.
E	Ending	Close the argument on purpose.
S	Significance	Give the Bluebird Moment - why the issue matters beyond this paper.

This module builds the foundation: C + R + E.

THE FOUNDATION - C, R, E

C - Claim	Take a side you can defend. A claim directly answers the argumentative prompt and can be supported with text evidence.
R - Reasons	Tell why your side makes sense. Strong reasons are distinct, logical, and connected to the claim - not another version of the claim.
E - Evidence	Prove it from the text. Evidence must be accurate, relevant, and strong enough to support the exact reason.

REMEMBER

CREATURES gives us a memory path so we do not forget an important part of the case. Today we build only the foundation - a claim, reasons, and evidence a writer can actually defend.

Reading the Argument Prompt

An argument prompt is a statement that asks you to take a defensible position.

TOPIC vs. CLAIM vs. REASON vs. EVIDENCE

Topic	names what the writing is about.
Claim	takes a defensible position.
Reason	explains why that position makes sense.
Evidence	proves the reason with text support.

THE CLAIM TEST

Direct? Defensible? Evidence available?

If you cannot find evidence for a claim, the claim may be too broad, too vague, or not defensible from the passage.

THE EVIDENCE TEST

Does it connect? Does it strongly support? Is it important enough to prove the reason?

ORAL REHEARSAL FRAME

My claim is _____. One reason is _____. My evidence is _____. This evidence fits because _____.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Point to the Claim Test and the Evidence Test as you check a chain. You still decide whether the claim is defensible and whether the evidence fits.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

The DOT Reading HABIT

Dot. Discover. Drop.

Step	What I Do
D - Dot	Place a small dot above any word that seems unfamiliar as I read.
O - Discover	Discover the meaning from context, a resource, or discussion.
T - Drop	Go back and erase the dot once I can explain the word.

WORDS TO REMEMBER

Dot the word. Discover the meaning. Drop the dot.

AS YOU READ

Apply the HABIT to CREATURES vocabulary and to words in both passages so you can choose an accurate claim, reason, or piece of evidence.

☐ Dot in the passage ☐ List in the margin ☐ Ask after reading

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

If making a dot is difficult, circle the unfamiliar word or tell a partner which word you want to learn.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

MY FIRST THINKING (DAY ONE)

Answer now. You will answer this question again near the end.

How do a clear claim, logical reasons, and relevant evidence create the foundation of a strong argumentative response?

My thinking level before we begin:

MOVE YOUR THINKING



Foundational RECALL



Emergent CONNECT



Visible EXPLAIN



Independent USE



Reflective EXTEND

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Say your answer first or use this starter: An argument is strong when ____ because ____.
Then write your own thinking.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

The Wealth of Mansa Musa

Passage 7 — Low Stamina • Nonfiction • Part 1 of 1

AS YOU READ

Use the DOT HABIT for unfamiliar words. TAP the TRACKS by marking exact evidence. Ask: Which details could support a defensible claim about leadership or regional opportunity?

[1] A long time ago in West Africa, there was a strong and successful kingdom called Mali. One of its most well-known rulers was Mansa Musa. He became king in the early 1300s and is often remembered as one of the richest people in history. Mali became wealthy because it controlled important trade routes. Traders traveled across the hot Sahara Desert carrying gold and salt, which were very valuable.

[2] Mansa Musa made smart choices that helped his kingdom grow. He made sure traders could move safely, which brought more people and goods into Mali. As a result, cities like Timbuktu became busy and important places. Timbuktu was also known for learning, where people studied subjects like math, science, and religion.

[3] One of the most famous parts of Mansa Musa's life was his trip to Mecca, called a pilgrimage. During this journey, he gave away large amounts of gold to people in need. His actions made many people notice how wealthy Mali was.

[4] Because of the choices he made, Mali became known as a powerful and important kingdom. People still talk about Mansa Musa today when they learn about African history and how trade and education helped kingdoms grow.

The Wealth of Mansa Musa - TRACKS Evidence Hunt 1

Study the exact words from the passage. Verbally explain why each clue fits its TRACKS category.

TRACKS	Exact Evidence	Why It Fits
T • Time	"in the early 1300s"	It fits because _____
C ★ Character, Concept, Creature	"Mansa Musa"	It fits because _____
K ♦ Key Knowledge	"controlled important trade routes"	It fits because _____
S ▼ Scenery / Setting	"the hot Sahara Desert"	It fits because _____
A ▲ Actions	"He made sure traders could move safely"	It fits because _____
R ■ Reactions	"brought more people and goods into Mali"	It fits because _____

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Point to the TRACKS chart and use this frame: This is ____ evidence because ____.
You still choose the reason.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

The Wealth of Mansa Musa - TRACKS Evidence Hunt 2

Study the exact words from the passage. Verbally explain why each clue fits its TRACKS category.

TRACKS	Exact Evidence	Why It Fits
C ★ Character, Concept, Creature	"a strong and successful kingdom called Mali"	It fits because _____
K ♦ Key Knowledge	"gold and salt, which were very valuable"	It fits because _____
R ■ Reactions	"cities like Timbuktu became busy and important places"	It fits because _____
K ♦ Key Knowledge	"Timbuktu was also known for learning"	It fits because _____
A ▲ Actions	"gave away large amounts of gold to people in need"	It fits because _____
T • Time	"his trip to Mecca, called a pilgrimage"	It fits because _____

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Point to the TRACKS chart and use this frame: This is ____ evidence because ____.
You still choose the reason.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Four Regions, One Big Adventure

Passage 8 — Low Stamina • Fiction • Part 1 of 1

AS YOU READ

Use the DOT HABIT for unfamiliar words. TAP the TRACKS by marking exact evidence. Ask: Which details could support a defensible claim about leadership or regional opportunity?

[1] "Road trip!" Xavier shouted as his family packed the car. They were driving across Texas to learn about its different regions.

[2] Their first stop was the Mountains and Basins in far West Texas. Xavier noticed tall, rocky mountains and dry land. "It's really hot here," he said. There were only a few plants, like cacti. His mom explained that people in this region often work in mining and oil because of the natural resources found underground.

[3] Next, they traveled to the Great Plains. The land looked wide and flat with rolling hills. The weather was still dry, but not as hot. Xavier saw ranches and fields. "This must be where people raise cattle," he said. His dad nodded and added that farming is also common here.

[4] After that, they reached the North Central Plains. "Everything looks greener and more colorful!" Xavier said. There were more trees and grass, and the land had gentle hills. The climate was milder, and people raised livestock and grew crops.

[5] Finally, they arrived at the Coastal Plains near the Gulf of Mexico. It was humid, and Xavier could feel the warm, moist air. There were rivers, forests, and even beaches. "This region has a lot of different jobs," his mom said, "like farming, fishing, and working in big cities."

[6] As they headed home, Xavier rethought about what he had seen. Each region looked different, but all were important parts of Texas.

Four Regions, One Big Adventure - TRACKS Evidence Hunt 1

Study the exact words from the passage. Verbally explain why each clue fits its TRACKS category.

TRACKS	Exact Evidence	Why It Fits
C ★ Character, Concept, Creature	"Zavier"	It fits because _____
A ▲ Actions	"driving across Texas to learn about its different regions"	It fits because _____
S ▼ Scenery / Setting	"tall, rocky mountains and dry land"	It fits because _____
K ♦ Key Knowledge	"people in this region often work in mining and oil"	It fits because _____
S ▼ Scenery / Setting	"wide and flat with rolling hills"	It fits because _____
A ▲ Actions	"they traveled to the Great Plains"	It fits because _____

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Point to the TRACKS chart and use this frame: This is ____ evidence because ____.
You still choose the reason.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Four Regions, One Big Adventure - TRACKS Evidence Hunt 2

Study the exact words from the passage. Verbally explain why each clue fits its TRACKS category.

TRACKS	Exact Evidence	Why It Fits
K ♦ Key Knowledge	"people raise cattle"	It fits because _____
S ▼ Scenery / Setting	"warm, moist air"	It fits because _____
K ♦ Key Knowledge	"farming, fishing, and working in big cities"	It fits because _____
R ■ Reactions	"Everything looks greener and more colorful!"	It fits because _____
T • Time	"As they headed home"	It fits because _____
R ■ Reactions	"all were important parts of Texas"	It fits because _____

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Point to the TRACKS chart and use this frame: This is ____ evidence because ____.
You still choose the reason.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Day 1 - GATHER

Auditory Engagement: Listen, Label, and Defend. Pencils down first.

LISTEN, LABEL, AND DEFEND

Listen for the job each sentence performs. Decide whether it is a Claim, a Reason, or an Evidence sentence. Then defend the label with one clue. Hold up C, R, or E after each sentence.

LISTEN TO THESE THREE

- "Protecting trade had the greater impact on Mali." -> C
- "Safe routes brought more merchants and goods into Mali." -> R
- "The passage says he made sure traders could move safely." -> E

FRESH RECALL

With notes covered, explain the difference among C, R, and E in 20 seconds.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

If labeling is difficult, sort three sentence cards (Claim, Reason, Evidence) with a partner, then say the clue that proves each label aloud.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Day 1 - REVEAL

Reveal the background knowledge. Take a side. Tell why. Prove it from the text.

SAY IT WITH ME

- C - Claim: the position you will defend.
- R - Reasons: the strongest logical supports for the claim.
- E - Evidence: exact or accurately paraphrased proof from the text.

ARGUMENT PROMPTS ASK FOR A DEFENSIBLE POSITION

Test every piece: Does it match the prompt? Does it support the claim? Can the passage prove it? A strong argumentative response begins with a choice the writer can defend.

WHAT IF A CLAIM HAS NO EVIDENCE?

If the text cannot support the claim, the claim may be too broad, too vague, or not defensible. That is when real writers revise the claim.

DAY 1 CLOSING

A claim _____. A reason _____. Evidence _____.

Day 2 - ATTEMPT

Build the Creature. How to play.

THE GOAL

Work in a team with mixed Claim, Reason, Evidence, and distractor cards. Assemble a defensible argument foundation and justify every match.

HOW TO PLAY

1. Draw one Claim card.
2. Choose the Reason cards that logically support it.
3. Match the strongest Evidence card to each reason.
4. Reject distractors and explain why they do not belong.
5. Read the completed C → R → E chain aloud.

SUCCESS CHECK

A claim takes a defensible side. A reason tells why the side makes sense without repeating the claim. Evidence is accurate, relevant proof from the text. A distractor is a true detail that does not prove the exact claim.

BEFORE YOU CUT

Dashed lines mean CUT. Match the Claim, Reasons, and Evidence first; then use the self-check backs to adjust if needed.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Use the recording page instead of cutting. Write each card in the table and label it C, R, E, or distractor. You still justify each match.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

✂ CUT PAGE - CREATURES Foundation Sorting Cards

Cut on the dashed lines, then build and defend a matching chain.

CLAIM (C)

Take a side you can defend. A claim directly answers the argumentative prompt and can be proved with text evidence.

REASON (R)

Tell why your side makes sense. A logical support that is distinct and not a repeat of the claim.

EVIDENCE (E)

Prove it from the text. Accurate, relevant proof that supports the exact reason.

HOW TO PLAY

Draw a Claim card. Choose Reason cards that support it. Match the strongest Evidence card to each reason. Reject distractors and explain why.

Self-Check Backs - CREATURES

Foundation Sorting Cards

Check the card labels only after your group commits to a complete chain.

R REASON Why it makes sense	C CLAIM The position
 PLAY IT Build the Creature	E EVIDENCE Proof from the text

✂ CUT PAGE - Build the Creature Cards - Set A (The Wealth of Mansa Musa)

Cut on the dashed lines, then build and defend a matching chain.

CLAIM CARD

Protecting trade had the greater impact on Mali.

REASON CARD

Safe routes encouraged merchants to visit Mali.

REASON CARD

More trade brought goods and wealth into the kingdom.

DISTRACTOR CARD

Mansa Musa traveled to Mecca. This is true, but it does not directly prove this claim unless the writer connects it to reputation or generosity.

Self-Check Backs - Build the Creature Cards - Set A (The Wealth of Mansa Musa)

Check the card labels only after your group commits to a complete chain.

R REASON Why it makes sense	C CLAIM Take a side
X DISTRACTOR Reject and explain why	R REASON Why it makes sense

✂ CUT PAGE - Build the Creature Evidence Cards - Set A (The Wealth of Mansa Musa)

Cut on the dashed lines, then build and defend a matching chain.

EVIDENCE CARD

"He made sure traders could move safely, which brought more people and goods into Mali."

EVIDENCE CARD

Timbuktu became a busy and important place as trade grew.

MATCH IT

Place each Evidence card under the reason it proves. Ask: Does this evidence prove this exact reason?

RECORD & JUSTIFY

Read the completed C -> R -> E chain aloud. Explain in one sentence why each evidence choice fits its reason.

Self-Check Backs - Build the Creature Evidence Cards - Set A (The Wealth of Mansa Musa)

Check the card labels only after your group commits to a complete chain.

E EVIDENCE Proof from the text	E EVIDENCE Proof from the text
✓ JUSTIFY Say why it fits	→ MATCH IT Reason to evidence

✂ CUT PAGE - Build the Creature Cards - Set B (Four Regions, One Big Adventure)

Cut on the dashed lines, then build and defend a matching chain.

CLAIM CARD

The Coastal Plains provide the widest variety of job opportunities.

REASON CARD

Water and coastal resources support fishing and transportation-related work.

REASON CARD

Farms, forests, and large cities create several different kinds of jobs.

HOW TO PLAY

Draw the Claim card. Choose Reason cards that support it. Then find Evidence that proves each exact reason.

Self-Check Backs - Build the Creature Cards - Set B (Four Regions, One Big Adventure)

Check the card labels only after your group commits to a complete chain.

R REASON Why it makes sense	C CLAIM Take a side
★ PLAY IT Build the Creature	R REASON Why it makes sense

✂ CUT PAGE - Build the Creature Evidence Cards - Set B (Four Regions, One Big Adventure)

Cut on the dashed lines, then build and defend a matching chain.

EVIDENCE CARD

The passage names farming, fishing, and working in big cities as Coastal Plains jobs.

DISTRACTOR CARD

The Mountains and Basins are hot and dry. This is accurate but does not directly prove the Coastal Plains claim.

MATCH IT

Place the Evidence card under the reason it proves. Reject any card that is true but off the claim.

RECORD & JUSTIFY

Read the completed C -> R -> E chain aloud. Explain why the distractor does not belong.

Self-Check Backs - Build the Creature Evidence Cards - Set B (Four Regions, One Big Adventure)

Check the card labels only after your group commits to a complete chain.

 DISTRACTOR Reject and explain why	 EVIDENCE Proof from the text
 JUSTIFY Say why it fits	 MATCH IT Reason to evidence

Build the Creature - My Recording Sheet

Record both card sets. Say why each card is a Claim, Reason, Evidence, or distractor.

Set	Card	Job (C / R / E / distractor)	Why It Fits (or why to reject)
A - Claim			
A - Reason			
A - Evidence			
A - Distractor			
B - Claim			
B - Reason			
B - Evidence			
B - Distractor			

NO-CUT PATHWAY

You do not have to cut the cards. Read each card, write its job in the table, and explain your choice aloud or in the last column. Reject any distractor and tell why it does not prove the claim.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Use the CREATURES Foundation Sorting Cards as a reference. Point to the job card that matches before you write.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Day 3 - DISCUSS

What makes an argument strong?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How is a claim different from a topic?
- What makes one reason stronger than another?
- Why can a true detail still be weak evidence?
- What should a writer do when a claim has little evidence available?

WHAT WE NOTICED

A claim takes a side; a topic only names the subject. A strong reason gives us something important to prove. A true detail can be weak if it does not match the reason - that is the difference between information and evidence. We revise the claim if the text cannot support it.

MY DISCUSSION NOTES

A match that made me stop and think:

How I decided whether the proof really did the job:

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Use this frame: This is information, but it becomes evidence when _____. Talk it through before you write.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Day 3 - USE AGAIN: CREATURES

Foundation Builder

Read the prompt, then plan your claim, reasons, and evidence.

PROMPT

Argue whether protecting trade or supporting learning had the greater impact on Mali. Use evidence from the passage to support your position.

C - CLAIM

Write one clear claim that takes a defensible position:

R - REASONS

Reason 1 (why my side makes sense):

Reason 2 (a different logical reason):

E - EVIDENCE

Evidence for Reason 1 (the author's exact words):

Evidence for Reason 2:

This fits because...

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Use the Meet CREATURES chart and the Claim and Evidence Tests. You still choose the claim, the reasons, and the evidence.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

My CREATURES Foundation - Draft Space

Build the whole C $\rightarrow$ R $\rightarrow$ E chain. Make sure every piece of evidence proves its exact reason.

SUCCESS CHECK

- ☐ Claim is direct and defensible ☐ Reasons are distinct and logical
☐ Evidence is accurate and relevant ☐ Each evidence choice proves its reason

[illegible]

Standards Application Check - My Editing Standards

Read the official standard, then say it in student-friendly words.

TEKS 11(D)(i) - Official Standard

edit drafts using standard English conventions, including complete simple sentences with subject-verb agreement

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can check that my simple sentences are complete and that my subjects and verbs agree.

TEKS 11(D)(vi) - Official Standard

edit drafts using standard English conventions, including past tense of irregular verbs

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use the correct past tense of irregular verbs.

TEKS 11(D)(vii) - Official Standard

edit drafts using standard English conventions, including singular nouns

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use singular nouns correctly when I mean one person, place, thing, or idea.

TEKS 11(D)(viii) - Official Standard

edit drafts using standard English conventions, including plural nouns

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use plural nouns correctly when I mean more than one.

Module 1 Conventions Sweep

This is not a new paragraph. It is a quick quality check on a sentence you already wrote.

COPY ONE SENTENCE FROM YOUR C -> R -> E CHAIN

MARK AND CHECK

1. Underline the subject once and the verb twice; do they agree?
2. Check any irregular past-tense verb you used.
3. Circle a singular noun; box a plural noun.
4. Underline a common noun; capitalize proper nouns like Mansa Musa, Mali, Timbuktu, Sahara, Texas, and Coastal Plains.
5. Check spelling patterns and high-frequency words.

IF I FOUND SOMETHING TO FIX

Write the corrected sentence:

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Point to the subject, verb, and nouns with a partner or use an approved word list. You still decide what changes.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Day 4 - AWARD Yourself

An award counts when you point to evidence in your own C -> R -> E chain.

GIVE YOURSELF CREDIT FOR BUILDING YOUR FOUNDATION

- I wrote a claim I can defend.
- I gave distinct, logical reasons.
- I matched relevant evidence to each reason.
- I explained why each evidence choice fits.

Partner chant: Take a side! Tell why! Prove it from the text!

MY AWARD

My argument foundation is stronger because

The evidence choice I am proudest of is

because it fits my reason. My proof is on page _____.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Choose one part and point to proof before writing. Rehearse: This part is strong because my evidence ____ proves my reason ____.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

MOVE YOUR THINKING



Foundational
RECALL



Emergent
CONNECT



Visible
EXPLAIN



Independent
USE



Reflective
EXTEND

Day 4 - TARGET Your Next Growth

A useful target names the precise part you will strengthen next.

CHOOSE ONE TARGET

- ☐ Clearer claim ☐ Less repeated reasons
☐ Stronger evidence ☐ More direct match to the prompt ☐ More precise academic language

BUILD A PRECISE TARGET

My strongest CREATURES letter today was _____. The letter I still need to strengthen is _____ because

One evidence choice I would replace is _____ because

Next time I will make my claim more defensible by

CURIOSITY QUESTIONS

Why might two people defend different claims for the same prompt? How do stronger evidence matches make an argument more convincing?

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Raise your target one level: name how you could connect your claim to a larger understanding about the topic.

Day 5 - EXPLAIN to Others

Turn and teach: your explanation is proof of your understanding.

TEACH-BACK FRAME

A _____ is _____. It matters because _____. For example, from the passage, _____.

MY TEACHING CARD

The part I am teaching (Claim, Reason, or Evidence):

What its job is:

Why it matters:

My example from either passage:

LISTENER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Restate the part and its job.
- Give one example from either passage.
- Ask: Does that evidence prove this exact reason?
- End by saying the full CREATURES acronym together.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Rehearse with a partner or make an approved audio recording before the teach-back. Teach the foundation without reading notes, in your own words.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

MY THINKING NOW

Answer the module question again. Then compare it with your first thinking.

How do a clear claim, logical reasons, and relevant evidence create the foundation of a strong argumentative response?

WHAT CHANGED?

Circle or underline something you can explain now that you could not explain at the beginning.

My thinking grew because

My thinking level now:

MOVE YOUR THINKING


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MY MODULE CHECK-IN

Award. Target. Explain. Use proof, not just feelings.

AWARD

Star your strongest C/R/E chain. Complete: “My argument foundation is stronger because ____.” Name the evidence choice you are proudest of and explain why it fits.

TARGET

Choose one: clearer claim, less repeated reasons, stronger evidence, a more direct match to the prompt, or more precise academic language.

EXPLAIN

Teach the difference among Claim, Reason, and Evidence without reading notes. Give one example from either passage, switch roles, and end by saying the full CREATURES acronym.

I Can...	Not Yet	Getting Set	I Can Do It
Write a clear, defensible claim	☐	☐	☐
Give distinct, logical reasons	☐	☐	☐
Choose relevant evidence from the text	☐	☐	☐
Explain why evidence fits a reason	☐	☐	☐
Reject a true detail that does not prove the claim	☐	☐	☐
Teach the full CREATURES acronym to a partner	☐	☐	☐

Day 5 - Writing Opportunity - Build the CREATURES Foundation

Read the prompt, then build a defensible C -> R -> E chain.

PROMPT

Argue which Texas region offers the strongest combination of work opportunities based on the passage. Use evidence to support your position.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

- My claim directly answers the prompt.
- My reasons are logical and distinct.
- My evidence comes from the passage and proves the exact reason.
- My C -> R -> E chain forms a strong argumentative foundation.

MY FIRST DECISION

The position I will defend:

One reason my side makes sense:

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Read the prompt aloud. Choose the position whose evidence you can prove most clearly. Then run the Claim Test before you plan.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Plan My CREATURES Foundation

Plan the whole chain before you draft. Claim first, then reasons, then evidence.

1. C - CLAIM

Write one clear, defensible claim that answers the prompt.

2. R - REASONS

Two distinct reasons that tell why the claim makes sense.

3. E - EVIDENCE

One accurate, relevant piece of evidence for each reason.

4. WHY EACH EVIDENCE FITS

Under each evidence choice, explain: This fits because...

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Use the Meet CREATURES chart and the passage TRACKS hunts. You choose the exact evidence and explain why it proves your reason.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

CREATURES Foundation Draft - Page 1

Keep your claim, reasons, and evidence connected.

MEANING CHECK

After each reason, ask: Does my evidence prove this exact reason? Reject any true detail that does not do the job.

[illegible]

CREATURES Foundation Draft - Page 2

Continue only if you need more space. A longer response is not stronger unless the evidence proves the reasons.

PRECISION CHECK

Read your evidence. Does it directly prove the reason, or is it just a true fact? Adjust for a stronger, more relevant match.

[illegible]

Revise, Edit, and Share

Improve one C/R/E chain, run the Conventions Sweep, then explain one decision.

REVISE

Improve one sentence's structure or word choice so the thinking is clearer. Add one idea that strengthens coherence; delete one idea that distracts; combine repeated ideas when useful.

Before:

After:

EDIT - Conventions Sweep

- ☐ Subject-verb agreement
 ☐ Irregular past tense
 ☐ Singular / plural nouns
☐ Common / proper nouns
 ☐ Spelling patterns
 ☐ High-frequency spelling

SHARE

My partner heard my argument get stronger when I _____ because

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Read only your claim and strongest evidence-reason match to a partner. The feedback must name a specific reason or evidence choice.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Tiny Tracks

Did every piece of evidence prove its exact reason? Use proof.

Tiny Tracks

Small Steps. Big Growth.

I just learned:

My thinking level:

MOVE YOUR THINKING



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USE



Reflective
EXTEND

☐ Easy ☐ Just Right ☐ Challenging

Support I used: _____

My proof is on page: _____ My next move: _____

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Point to your claim, reasons, and evidence. Defend the evidence choice that proves its reason most directly.

PROOF OF TRANSFER

I knew I could build an argument foundation for a new prompt because on page _____ I

READY TO STRETCH? - Two Defensible Claims

Argumentative writing can have more than one defensible position. Build two.

CHALLENGE PROMPT

Argue whether protecting trade or supporting learning had the greater impact on Mali. Use evidence from the passage to support your position.

BUILD TWO FOUNDATIONS

Claim 1:

Reason + evidence for Claim 1:

Claim 2:

Reason + evidence for Claim 2:

JUSTIFY

Decide which claim has stronger evidence available and defend your choice. The stronger response is the one the writer can support more logically and accurately with the available evidence.

MOVE YOUR THINKING



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USE



Reflective
EXTEND

Portfolio Evidence + Closing Reflection

Choose the pages that best show what your thinking did during Module 1.

Evidence	Page	What It Proves About My Thinking
1		
2		
3		

LOOK HOW MY THINKING MOVED

At first, I...

Now I...

My biggest improvement was...

MODULE 1 CLOSING IDEA

An argument stands on a foundation you can defend. A clear claim tells the reader exactly what position you will defend. Logical reasons explain why that position makes sense, and relevant evidence proves each reason with accurate support from the text. Together, C, R, and E give the argument a strong foundation that the rest of CREATURES can build upon.

Essential Question - Answered

You started with an Essential Question. Now connect this answer to what you learned in Module 1.

OUR ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How do a clear claim, logical reasons, and relevant evidence create the foundation of a strong argumentative response?

My Answer

I write a clear claim that tells exactly what position I will defend, add logical reasons that explain why that position makes sense, and use relevant evidence as accurate text support for each reason. Together, C, R, and E create the strong foundation that the rest of CREATURES builds upon.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Start with the claim: My claim is ____, one reason is ____, and my proof is ____.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

The Writing Academy[®], LLC

CLUSTER 4



M O D U L E



From Facts to a Coherent Case

Turning Facts into an Argument



Pocket Practice



Attach scratch paper on the left, right, and bottom edges.
Leave the top edge open to make a pocket for this module's activity cards.



Attach scratch paper on the left, right, and bottom edges.
Leave the top edge open to make a pocket for this module's activity cards.

Why This Module Matters

An argument is a connected case, not a pile of facts.

WHY THIS MODULE MATTERS

In Cluster 4 you argue an opinion. In Module 1 you learned Claim, Reasons, and Evidence. This module zooms in on two powerful CREATURES moves: A - Argument (the connected line your whole case follows) and T - Thinking (the sentence that explains how and why your evidence supports your reason and claim). Adding more facts does not make an argument stronger. Every fact must have a job, and your Thinking is what makes the reader trust the fact.

Essential Question

How do Argument and Thinking turn separate reasons and evidence into one coherent case for a claim?

Keep this question in mind all module. You will answer it on the last page.

How This Book Helps Me Think

This workbook is built to help you do more of the thinking for yourself.

THE INDEPENDENCE ROUTINE

Attempt	Try the thinking first.
Check	Use the built-in check when one is provided.
Adjust	Fix what you can.
Ask if Needed	Ask for help when you truly need it.

Attempt -> Check -> Adjust -> Ask if Needed

Visual Conventions You Will See

- Dashed line = CUT • Solid line = FOLD
- Scissors symbol = cut page
- STUDENT SUPPORT = another way, same rigor
- READY TO STRETCH? = visible next move
- Tiny Tracks = pause, name thinking level, point to proof.

The Standards I Am Learning - Part 1

Read the official TEKS and how a student can say the same standard.

TEKS 11(B)(ii) - Official Standard

develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including transitions

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can organize my draft with transitions that connect my ideas.

TEKS 12(C)(i) - Official Standard

compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using genre characteristics

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can write an opinion essay with the parts readers expect.

TEKS 12(C)(ii) - Official Standard

compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using craft

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use purposeful words and sentence choices to make my argument work well.

The Standards I Am Learning - Part 2

Read the official TEKS and how a student can say the same standard.

TEKS 11(C)(i) - Official Standard

revise drafts to improve sentence structure

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can change my sentences so my ideas are clearer and sound better.

TEKS 11(C)(ii) - Official Standard

revise drafts to improve word choice

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can choose more precise words so my response shows stronger thinking.

TEKS 11(C)(iii) - Official Standard

revise drafts by adding ideas for coherence

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can add ideas so my argument holds together.

The Standards I Am Learning - Part 3

Read the official TEKS and how a student can say the same standard.

TEKS 11(C)(iv) - Official Standard

revise drafts by deleting ideas for coherence

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can take out ideas that do not fit my argument.

TEKS 11(C)(v) - Official Standard

revise drafts by combining ideas for coherence

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can combine ideas so my sentences connect smoothly.

TEKS 11(D)(xv) - Official Standard

edit drafts using standard English conventions, including prepositions

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use prepositions correctly in my writing.

TEKS 11(D)(xvi) - Official Standard

edit drafts using standard English conventions, including prepositional phrases

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use prepositional phrases correctly in my writing.

TEKS 4.7(C) - Official Standard

use text evidence to support an appropriate response

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use text evidence to support my response.

The ELPS I Am Learning

Read the official ELPS. Directly under it, read how you can say the same standard.

ELPS 4(D)(iii) - Official Standard

write content-area texts using a variety of transition words

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use language that fits this writing work.

ELPS 4(F)(i) - Official Standard

write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting details using appropriate content for [a] specific purpose

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use language that fits this writing work.

ELPS 4(C)(i) - Official Standard

write using a combination of both high-frequency words and content-area vocabulary

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use language that fits this writing work.

ELPS 4(D)(ii) - Official Standard

write content-area texts using a variety of sentence types

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use language that fits this writing work.

ELPS 4(E)(ii) - Official Standard

write content-area-specific text using grammatical structures

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use language that fits this writing work.

My Module 2 Learning Launchpad

Read the destination, then choose how you will show up.

I CAN

- connect my reasons and evidence into a coherent line of argument.
- build Claim -> Reason -> Evidence -> Thinking chains that stay connected to one claim.
- explain how and why evidence supports a reason instead of repeating it.
- use transitions to show cause, effect, method, and relationships among ideas.

I WILL

- read closely and speak about my thinking.
- organize two reason/evidence/thinking chains into one coherent argument.
- revise a jump in logic and make my Thinking visible.
- use WHY to explain reasons and HOW to explain method, keeping my Claim at the center.

LEARNING DESTINATION

I will connect my reasons and evidence into a coherent line of argument and explain how the evidence supports my claim.

MY LAUNCHPAD PROMISE

The argument move I will practice first is _____ because

My Module 2 Learning Dashboard

Circle where you think your learning is right now. Come back on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday to see how your thinking grows.

I know a lot about this / I know a little bit about this / This is new to me

Circle one for each skill, each day.

Skill	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Build a defensible claim	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new
Connect reasons and evidence	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new
Write Thinking that explains	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new
Use transitions to connect	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new
Edit prepositions	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new

My goal:

Tier 1 Vocabulary

Say the word, learn its meaning, then rehearse the frame.

choice

Say it: CHOYS

What it means: a decision

Try the frame: One choice the writer made was ____.

connect

Say it: kuh-NEKT

What it means: to join ideas so they make sense together

Try the frame: I connect my ideas by ____.

explain

Say it: ik-SPLAYN

What it means: to tell how or why something works

Try the frame: I explain my thinking by ____.

link

Say it: LINK

What it means: a connection between ideas

Try the frame: The link between these ideas is ____.

matter

Say it: MAT-er

What it means: to be important

Try the frame: This detail matters because ____.

Tier 1 Vocabulary

Say the word, learn its meaning, then rehearse the frame.

order

Say it: OR-der

What it means: the arrangement of ideas

Try the frame: I put my reasons in this order: ____.

prove

Say it: PROOV

What it means: to support an idea with evidence

Try the frame: This evidence helps prove ____.

result

Say it: ri-ZULT

What it means: what happens because of a choice or condition

Try the frame: The result was ____.

show

Say it: SHOH

What it means: to make something clear

Try the frame: This detail shows ____.

strong

Say it: STRAWNG

What it means: clear and well supported

Try the frame: My argument is strong because ____.

Tier 2 Vocabulary

Say the word, learn its meaning, then rehearse the frame.

argument

Say it: AR-gyuh-muhnt

What it means: a connected line of reasoning that supports a claim

Try the frame: My argument is that ____.

cause

Say it: KAWZ

What it means: something that helps make an event or result happen

Try the frame: The cause was ____.

coherent

Say it: koh-HEER-uhnt

What it means: organized so ideas connect and make sense together

Try the frame: My argument is coherent because ____.

effect

Say it: ih-FEKT

What it means: a result that happens because of a cause

Try the frame: The effect was ____.

influence

Say it: IN-floo-uhns

What it means: the power to affect a result or decision

Try the frame: One influence was ____.

Tier 2 Vocabulary

Say the word, learn its meaning, then rehearse the frame.

method

Say it: METH-uhd

What it means: the way something happens or is done

Try the frame: The method was ____.

opportunity

Say it: op-er-TOO-nuh-tee

What it means: a useful chance or possibility created by conditions or choices

Try the frame: This created the opportunity to ____.

relationship

Say it: ri-LAY-shuhn-ship

What it means: the way two ideas, events, or conditions connect

Try the frame: The relationship here is ____.

thinking

Say it: THINK-ing

What it means: the explanation of how and why evidence supports the claim

Try the frame: My thinking is that ____.

transition

Say it: tran-ZISH-uhn

What it means: a word or phrase that shows how ideas relate

Try the frame: One transition I can use is ____.

Tier 3 Vocabulary

Say the word, learn its meaning, then rehearse the frame.

claim

Say it: KLAYM

What it means: the defensible position at the center of an argument

Try the frame: My claim is that ____.

climate

Say it: KLY-mit

What it means: the usual weather of a place

Try the frame: The climate here is ____.

Coastal Plains

Say it: KOH-stuhl PLAYNZ

What it means: a Texas region with rivers, forests, beaches, farms, fishing, and large cities

Try the frame: The Coastal Plains have ____.

commerce

Say it: KOM-ers

What it means: the buying, selling, and movement of goods

Try the frame: Commerce grew when ____.

economy

Say it: ih-KON-uh-mee

What it means: the system of work, trade, and money in a place

Try the frame: The economy grew because ____.

Tier 3 Vocabulary

Say the word, learn its meaning, then rehearse the frame.

evidence

Say it: EV-uh-duhns

What it means: accurate proof from the text

Try the frame: The evidence is ____.

reason

Say it: REE-zuhn

What it means: a point that explains why a claim makes sense

Try the frame: One reason is ____.

resources

Say it: REE-sor-siz

What it means: useful materials found in a place

Try the frame: One resource is ____.

Timbuktu

Say it: tim-buk-TOO

What it means: a city known for trade and learning

Try the frame: Timbuktu became ____.

vegetation

Say it: vej-uh-TAY-shuhn

What it means: the plants growing in an area

Try the frame: There was more vegetation because ____.

The DOT Reading Habit

Dot. Discover. Drop.

Step	What It Means
D - Dot	Place a small dot above any unfamiliar word.
O - Discover	Discover its meaning as we learn.
T - Drop	Erase the dot once you know the meaning.

WORDS TO REMEMBER

Dot the word. Discover the meaning. Drop the dot. As you reread, trace relationships among choices, conditions, and outcomes.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Circle the unfamiliar word or tell a partner which word you want to learn.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

The CREATURES Argumentative-Writing Roadmap

The full nine-letter memory path for a strong argument.

Letter	Move	Student Memory Cue
C	Claim	Take a defensible position.
R	Reasons	Organize logical support.
E	Evidence	Prove the reasons.
A	Argument	Make the whole case coherent.
T	Thinking	Explain how and why the evidence works.
U	Understanding Others	Represent another viewpoint accurately.
R	Rebuttal	Respond with reasoning and evidence.
E	Ending	Reinforce and synthesize.
S	Significance	Give the Bluebird Moment: why it matters beyond the paper.

REMEMBER

CREATURES is the architecture of a full argumentative response, not a demand for exactly nine sentences. C is the central claim. R, E, and T can repeat across body paragraphs. This module's deep focus is A + T. In CREATURES, T always means Thinking.

This Module's Deep Focus: A + T

Argument connects the case. Thinking makes your mind visible.

A - ARGUMENT

Argument is bigger than one sentence. It is the connected line of reasoning across the response: Claim sets direction, Reason gives a point, Evidence proves it, Thinking explains the proof, and Argument connects every chain back to the Claim.

T - THINKING

Thinking makes the writer's mind visible. It explains how and why the evidence supports the reason and strengthens the claim. Repeating evidence is not thinking.

THE ARGUMENT CHAIN

Claim -> Reason -> Evidence -> Thinking -> connect back to Claim.

CLAIM

›

REASON

›

EVIDENCE

›

THINKING

›

CONNECT

MODEL CHAIN - Mansa Musa

C: Protecting trade had the greater impact on Mali. R: Safe travel encouraged more merchants. E: "He made sure traders could move safely, which brought more people and goods into Mali." T: This supports the claim because safer routes increased trade and strengthened the kingdom's economy. A: The chain stays connected to the same claim and leads to the next reason.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Box the Claim, underline the Reason, and point to the Thinking sentence.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

WHY and HOW Inside CREATURES

Both kinds of thinking help - but neither replaces your claim.

Thinking Word	What It Explains	Clue Words
WHY	the reason behind a point	because, since, therefore, as a result
HOW	the method, path, or relationship	by, through, with, during, across

TRANSITION BANK

first, another reason, for example, because, therefore, as a result, however, most importantly, together

RELATIONSHIPS AMONG IDEAS

• cause and effect • method or path • comparison • problem and solution

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Choose one detail from either passage. Name the relationship it shows and explain why that connection matters to a claim.

My Learning Destination

Know what success will look and sound like.

BIG GOAL

I will connect my reasons and evidence into a coherent line of argument and explain how the evidence supports my claim.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

- My claim takes a defensible position.
- Each reason and evidence choice connects to the same claim.
- Each Thinking sentence explains what the evidence proves.
- My transitions show how ideas relate.

I WILL KNOW I AM READY WHEN...

MY FIRST THINKING (DAY ONE)

Answer now. You will answer again near the end.

How do Argument and Thinking turn separate reasons and evidence into one coherent case for a claim?

MOVE YOUR THINKING



Foundational RECALL



**Emergent
CONNECT**



Visible
EXPLAIN



**Independent
USE**



Reflective EXTEND

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Say your answer first, then write your own thinking.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

The Wealth of Mansa Musa

Passage 1 - Medium Stamina - 519 words • Nonfiction • Part 1 of 2

AS YOU READ

Use the DOT HABIT. TAP the TRACKS. Trace cause, effect, method, and relationships among ideas that can support an argument chain.

[1] A long time ago in West Africa, there was a strong and successful kingdom called Mali. One of its most well-known rulers was Mansa Musa. He became king in the early 1300s and is often remembered as one of the richest people in history. Mali became wealthy because it controlled important trade routes. Traders traveled across the hot Sahara Desert carrying gold and salt, which were very valuable.

[2] Trade was very important to the people of Mali. Merchants traveled long distances across the desert to exchange goods with people from many different places. These journeys could take weeks or even months. Traders used camels because they could carry heavy loads and travel through the hot, dry desert with little water. Along the trade routes, merchants traded not only gold and salt but also cloth, tools, spices, and other useful items. As trade increased, Mali became richer and more powerful.

[3] Mansa Musa made smart choices that helped his kingdom grow. He made sure traders could move safely, which brought more people and goods into Mali. Soldiers protected many of the trade routes, making travelers feel safe as they crossed the desert. Because people trusted that the roads were safe, more merchants chose to visit Mali. This helped the kingdom earn even more wealth through trade.

[4] As a result, cities like Timbuktu became busy and important places. People from many different regions visited the city to buy and sell goods. Timbuktu was also known for learning, where people studied subjects like math, science, and religion. Students and teachers gathered to share ideas and learn from one another. Many books were copied by hand so that knowledge could be passed from one generation to the next. This made Timbuktu one of the most respected centers of learning in Africa.

[5] One of the most famous parts of Mansa Musa's life was his trip to Mecca, called a pilgrimage. This journey covered thousands of miles and included a large group of travelers. Along the way, Mansa Musa stopped in many cities. During this journey, he gave away large amounts of gold to people in need. His actions made many people notice how wealthy Mali was. Stories about his kindness and great wealth spread to places far from Africa.

The Wealth of Mansa Musa - Continued 2

Passage 1 - Medium Stamina - 519 words • Nonfiction • Part 2 of 2

AS YOU CONTINUE READING

Keep numbering, dotting unfamiliar words, and marking exact TRACKS evidence you could connect to a claim.

[6] People who met Mansa Musa told others about the rich kingdom of Mali. Travelers, merchants, and mapmakers shared stories about the kingdom's gold, busy cities, and successful trade. As more people learned about Mali, they became interested in visiting and trading with the kingdom. These stories helped Mali become known throughout parts of Africa, Europe, and the Middle East.

[7] Because of the choices he made, Mali became known as a powerful and important kingdom. Mansa Musa supported both trade and education, helping his people succeed in many ways. His leadership showed that a strong ruler could improve a kingdom by protecting trade, encouraging learning, and helping others. People still talk about Mansa Musa today when they learn about African history and how trade and education helped kingdoms grow. His story reminds us that wise decisions and strong leadership can leave a lasting impact for many years.

The Wealth of Mansa Musa - TRACKS Evidence Hunt

Verbally explain why each exact clue fits.

TRACKS	Exact Evidence	Why It Fits
T • Time	"in the early 1300s"	It fits because _____
R ■ Reactions	"Mali became richer and more powerful"	It fits because _____
A ▲ Actions	"Soldiers protected many of the trade routes"	It fits because _____
C ★ Character, Concept, Creature	"Mansa Musa"	It fits because _____
K ♦ Key Knowledge	"Many books were copied by hand"	It fits because _____
S ▼ Scenery / Setting	"the hot, dry desert"	It fits because _____

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Use: This is ____ evidence because _____. You still choose the reason.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Four Regions, One Big Adventure

Passage 2 - Medium Stamina - 533 words • Nonfiction • Part 1 of 2

AS YOU READ

Use the DOT HABIT. TAP the TRACKS. Trace cause, effect, method, and relationships among ideas that can support an argument chain.

[1] "Road trip!" Xavier shouted as his family packed the car. They were driving across Texas to learn about its different regions. Instead of only reading about them in books, Xavier would get to see each region with his own eyes. He packed a notebook so he could write down interesting facts and compare what made each place special. His parents told him that every region had its own landforms, climate, plants, and jobs.

[2] Their first stop was the Mountains and Basins in far West Texas. Xavier noticed tall, rocky mountains and dry land. "It's really hot here," he said. There were only a few plants, like cacti. His mom explained that people in this region often work in mining and oil because of the natural resources found underground. As they drove through the area, Xavier spotted steep cliffs and long stretches of open land. He realized that the dry climate made it difficult for many plants to grow, but the region still had valuable resources that helped many people earn a living.

[3] Next, they traveled to the Great Plains. The land looked wide and flat with rolling hills. The weather was still dry, but not as hot. Xavier saw ranches and fields. "This must be where people raise cattle," he said. His dad nodded and added that farming is also common here. They passed large herds of cattle grazing in grassy pastures. Xavier also noticed fields where crops were growing. He learned that the open land and wide spaces make this region a good place for both ranching and farming.

[4] After that, they reached the North Central Plains. "Everything looks greener and more colorful!" Xavier said. There were more trees and grass, and the land had gentle hills. The climate was milder, and people raised livestock and grew crops. The family stopped at a small park to stretch their legs. Birds chirped from nearby trees while a cool breeze moved through the grass. Xavier noticed that this region looked very different from the dry land they had visited earlier. He wrote in his notebook that the North Central Plains had more vegetation because it received more rainfall.

Four Regions, One Big Adventure - Continued 2

Passage 2 - Medium Stamina - 533 words • Nonfiction • Part 2 of 2

AS YOU CONTINUE READING

Keep numbering, dotting unfamiliar words, and marking exact TRACKS evidence you could connect to a claim.

[5] Finally, they arrived at the Coastal Plains near the Gulf of Mexico. It was humid, and Xavier could feel the warm, moist air. There were rivers, forests, and even beaches. "This region has a lot of different jobs," his mom said, "like farming, fishing, and working in big cities." As they explored, they saw boats along the water and busy highways leading into large cities. Xavier enjoyed watching the waves and listening to seabirds flying overhead. He understood why so many people lived and worked in this region.

[6] On the drive home, Xavier looked through the notes he had written during the trip. He thought about how each region had its own climate, landforms, plants, and types of jobs. Although they were all part of Texas, each one offered something different. He realized that learning about the regions from a textbook was helpful, but seeing them in person made the information easier to remember.

[7] As they headed home, Xavier rethought about what he had seen. Each region looked different, but all were important parts of Texas.

Four Regions, One Big Adventure - TRACKS Evidence Hunt

Verbally explain why each exact clue fits.

TRACKS	Exact Evidence	Why It Fits
T • Time	"On the drive home"	It fits because _____
R ■ Reactions	"seeing them in person made the information easier to remember"	It fits because _____
A ▲ Actions	"He packed a notebook"	It fits because _____
C ★ Character, Concept, Creature	"Zavier"	It fits because _____
K ♦ Key Knowledge	"the open land and wide spaces make this region a good place for both ranching and farming"	It fits because _____
S ▼ Scenery / Setting	"Birds chirped from nearby trees while a cool breeze moved through the grass"	It fits because _____

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Use: This is ____ evidence because _____. You still choose the reason.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Day 1 - GATHER: Hear the Broken Chain

Pencils down. Listen for the missing link.

Listen to each chain. Show R, E, T, or TRANSITION for the part that is missing or weak.

Example: "Protecting trade mattered. The passage says traders moved safely. Timbuktu was important." -> T is missing; the writer never explains how the evidence supports the point.

FRESH RECALL

Say Claim -> Reason -> Evidence -> Thinking from memory and explain how Argument connects the chain.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Show R, E, T, or TRANSITION with a card or hand signal, then name the missing link.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Day 1 - REVEAL: The Argument Chain

See how Argument connects every piece back to the claim.

MODEL - Mansa Musa

C: Protecting trade had the greater impact on Mali. R: Safe travel encouraged more merchants to visit the kingdom. E: "He made sure traders could move safely, which brought more people and goods into Mali." T: This supports the claim because safety did more than protect travelers; it increased the movement of goods and people, which strengthened the kingdom's economy. A: Another reason protected trade mattered is that growing commerce helped cities such as Timbuktu become busier.

MODEL - Texas Regions

C: Natural resources have a greater influence than climate on work across Texas. R: Natural resources directly shape several important jobs. E: People in the Mountains and Basins work in mining and oil because valuable resources are found underground. T: This supports the claim because the resource itself creates the work opportunity, showing a direct connection between what the land contains and how people earn a living.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Box the Claim, underline the Reason, and point to the Thinking sentence in each model.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Argument Chain Relay

Build and explain the chain before your team moves.

HOW TO PLAY

1. Build Claim -> Reason -> Evidence -> Thinking in the correct order.
2. Add a transition that connects to the next reason.
3. Read the chain aloud. If it sounds like a jump or a list, revise A - the Argument.
4. Explain which Thinking sentence makes the reasoning clearest.

THE DECK

Teams receive mixed cards: claims, reasons, evidence, thinking, transitions, and distractors. Race to assemble a coherent chain - but speed does not count unless the chain makes logical sense. Set aside any distractor and be ready to explain why it does not fit.

QUICK CHECK

Did I keep one Claim? Does each Reason connect to it? Does my Thinking explain the proof? Does my transition connect to the next idea?

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

No scissors? Number the cards 1-8 in your notebook, point to each in order, and say the chain aloud. Set aside the distractor and record the same complete chain.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

✂ CUT PAGE - Argument Chain Relay Cards

Dashed lines mean CUT.

CARD 1 • CLAIM Supporting learning had the greater long-term impact on Mali.	CARD 2 • REASON Education helped Timbuktu become respected for knowledge as well as trade.
CARD 3 • EVIDENCE The passage explains that students and teachers gathered to study and share ideas.	CARD 4 • THINKING This supports the claim because education created knowledge that could keep helping people after a single trade transaction ended.
CARD 5 • TRANSITION In addition, learning helped Mali become known beyond its wealth.	CARD 6 • EVIDENCE Many books were copied by hand so that knowledge could pass to the next generation.
CARD 7 • THINKING This matters because recorded knowledge could keep teaching people long after the writers were gone.	CARD 8 • DISTRACTOR Traders used camels to cross the hot, dry desert. (Off-claim - set this card aside.)

Argument Chain Relay - Self-Check Backs

Check each role only after you build the complete chain.

REASON

ARGUMENT CHAIN RELAY

Card 2

CLAIM

ARGUMENT CHAIN RELAY

Card 1

THINKING

ARGUMENT CHAIN RELAY

Card 4

EVIDENCE

ARGUMENT CHAIN RELAY

Card 3

EVIDENCE

ARGUMENT CHAIN RELAY

Card 6

TRANSITION

ARGUMENT CHAIN RELAY

Card 5

DISTRACTOR

ARGUMENT CHAIN RELAY

Card 8

THINKING

ARGUMENT CHAIN RELAY

Card 7

Argument Chain Relay - Recording

Save at least two coherent chains.

CHAIN 1

Claim:

Reason:

Evidence:

Thinking:

Transition to next reason:

CHAIN 2

Claim:

Reason:

Evidence:

Thinking:

Transition to next reason:

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Say the chain aloud before recording. You still choose the Thinking sentence.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Day 3 - DISCUSS

What makes a line of argument coherent?

- What makes an argument sound like one connected case instead of a list?
- How is Thinking different from repeating the evidence?
- When does a transition improve the Argument?
- How can WHY and HOW thinking both help an argumentative response?

MY DISCUSSION NOTES

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Use: The evidence says _____. That proves _____, so my Thinking sentence is _____.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Argument Chain Foldable

Fold, then complete the work under each flap.

FOUR FLAPS

Claim	Take a defensible position.
Reason + Evidence	Give a point and prove it from the passage.
Thinking	Explain how and why the evidence supports the reason.
Connect (Argument)	Add a transition that links to the next reason and back to the claim.

WORKED EXAMPLE

C: Natural resources have the greater influence on how Texans live and work. R: Underground resources create specialized work in the Mountains and Basins. E: People often work in mining and oil because of resources found underground. T: This supports the claim because the jobs exist specifically because the resources are present in the land.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Keep your claim at the center. Every flap must connect back to it.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Independent - Build Argument Chain 1

Argue whether climate or natural resources have the greater influence on how people live and work across Texas.

PROMPT

Argue whether climate or natural resources have the greater influence on how people live and work across Texas. Write reason one of your argument.

Claim (keep it the same for both chains):

Reason:

Evidence from the passage:

Thinking (how/why the evidence supports the reason):

Transition:

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Underline your Thinking sentence and draw an arrow back to the reason it explains.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Independent - Build Argument Chain 2

Argue whether climate or natural resources have the greater influence on how people live and work across Texas.

PROMPT

Argue whether climate or natural resources have the greater influence on how people live and work across Texas. Write reason two of your argument.

Claim (keep it the same for both chains):

Reason:

Evidence from the passage:

Thinking (how/why the evidence supports the reason):

Transition:

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Underline your Thinking sentence and draw an arrow back to the reason it explains.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Module 2 Prepositions and Coherence Sweep

Edit for connection and correct prepositions.

READ

Mansa Musa strengthened Mali through protected trade routes. Because merchants could travel more safely, more people and goods entered the kingdom.

1. Underline one transition.
2. Circle one preposition (through, by, during, across, with).
3. Box one prepositional phrase.
4. Revise one sentence that repeats instead of explains.

TRANSFER TO MY SENTENCE

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Point to each feature in the model before checking your own.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Day 4 - AWARD Yourself

Point to evidence in your own work.

CHOOSE

- Defensible Claim Award
- Connected Chain Award
- Visible Thinking Award
- Smooth Transition Award
- Precise Vocabulary Award

MY AWARD

I award myself the _____ Award because

My argument became more coherent when I

My proof is on page ____:

CLASS CHEER

Claim! Reason! Evidence too! Thinking makes the argument true!

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Highlight the Thinking sentence that makes your reasoning most visible before writing.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

MOVE YOUR THINKING



**Foundational
RECALL**



**Emergent
CONNECT**



**Visible
EXPLAIN**



**Independent
USE**



**Reflective
EXTEND**

Day 4 - TARGET Your Next Move

Choose one source-based target.

- ☐ Use smoother transitions.
- ☐ Give stronger evidence explanation.
- ☐ Make a clearer link back to the claim.
- ☐ Do less listing.
- ☐ Use more precise cause-and-effect language.

MY TARGET

One place my argument jumps is

One Thinking sentence I can deepen is

My next argument will feel more connected if I

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

How can one prompt lead to more than one strong argument? Explain.

Day 5 - EXPLAIN or Educate Others

Teach the argument chain.

TEACH-BACK FRAME

A strong argument connects proof to a claim because _____. First I state my _____. Then I give a _____ and _____. Finally, my Thinking sentence explains _____.

Teach Claim -> Reason -> Evidence -> Thinking to a partner:

Explain how Argument is the line that connects every chain into one case:

Give one sentence that is evidence and one that is thinking:

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Rehearse aloud, then explain in your own words.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

MY THINKING NOW

Answer the module question again.

How do Argument and Thinking turn separate reasons and evidence into one coherent case for a claim?

WHAT CHANGED?

MOVE YOUR THINKING



**Foundational
RECALL**



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CONNECT**



**Visible
EXPLAIN**



**Independent
USE**



**Reflective
EXTEND**

Check the Learning

Coherence and transition check.

STANDARDS APPLICATION CHECK

Underline transitions. Circle the claim. Box each evidence phrase. Put a T beside each reasoning sentence. Revise one jump in logic, one vague word, and one sentence that repeats instead of explains. Edit prepositions and prepositional phrases and check sentence completeness.

TEACHER MODEL

Weak: "Mansa Musa helped trade. He protected routes. Timbuktu was busy." Stronger: "Mansa Musa strengthened Mali through protected trade routes. Because merchants could travel more safely, more people and goods entered the kingdom. This shows that security supported economic growth and helped important cities become busier."

MY REVISED CHAIN

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Read your chain aloud. Fix any place where the reader must guess why a detail matters.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

MY MODULE CHECK-IN

Award. Target. Explain.

AWARD

Highlight the T sentence that makes your reasoning most visible. Complete: “My argument became more coherent when I ____.”

TARGET

Choose one: smoother transitions, stronger evidence explanation, a clearer link back to the claim, less listing, or more precise cause/effect language.

EXPLAIN

Teach C → R → E → T to a partner. Explain how A connects every chain into one case, then give one sentence that is evidence and one that is thinking.

Day 5 - Writing Opportunity - Protecting Trade or Supporting Learning?

Build two connected argument chains.

PROMPT

Argue whether protecting trade or supporting learning had the greater impact on Mali. Build two distinct Reason/Evidence/Thinking chains from "The Wealth of Mansa Musa" and connect them into one coherent Argument.

Claim:

Reason 1:

Evidence 1:

Thinking 1:

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Underline each Thinking sentence. Explain how it interprets the evidence instead of repeating it.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Plan My Argument

Gather evidence and explain what it proves.

REASON 2

EVIDENCE 2

THINKING 2 (what it proves)

TRANSITION THAT CONNECTS THE CHAINS

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Use the TRACKS hunt. You still explain each detail.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Argument Draft - Page 1

Begin with your claim. Connect every chain back to it.

DRAFTING FOCUS

Use purposeful structure, accurate evidence, transitions, and Thinking that explains how each piece of proof supports the claim.

[illegible]

Argument Draft - Page 2

Begin with your claim. Connect every chain back to it.

DRAFTING FOCUS

Use purposeful structure, accurate evidence, transitions, and Thinking that explains how each piece of proof supports the claim.

[illegible]

Revise, Edit, and Share

Improve coherence and check conventions.

REVISE

☐ sentence structure ☐ word choice ☐ add / delete / combine ideas for coherence

EDIT

☐ prepositions ☐ prepositional phrases ☐ transitions ☐ sentence completeness

ONE REVISION

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Read a claim and a Thinking sentence aloud. You still choose the revision.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Tiny Tracks

Point to every part of your argument chain.

Tiny Tracks

Small Stops. Big Growth.

I just learned:

My thinking level:

MOVE YOUR THINKING



Foundational
RECALL



Emergent
CONNECT



Visible
EXPLAIN



Independent
USE



Reflective
EXTEND

☐ Easy ☐ Just Right ☐ Challenging

Support I used: _____

My proof is on page: _____ My next move: _____

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Defend how your transitions connect both chains to one claim.

READY TO STRETCH? - Rebuild the Argument

Turn strong facts with weak organization into a coherent case.

STRONG FACTS, WEAK ORDER

The Coastal Plains have rivers. People fish there. Texas has four regions. Natural resources matter.

REORDER AND CONNECT

Reorder the parts, add transitions, and write deeper Thinking sentences.

WHICH REVISION HELPED MOST?

Explain which change most improved the Argument and why the new order is more persuasive.

MOVE YOUR THINKING



Foundational
RECALL



Emergent
CONNECT



Visible
EXPLAIN



Independent
USE



Reflective
EXTEND

Portfolio Evidence + Closing Reflection

Choose pages that prove your Module 2 growth.

Evidence	Page	What It Proves
1		
2		
3		

At first, I...

Now I...

MODULE 2 CLOSING IDEA

Argument organizes reasons, evidence, transitions, and ideas so they build one connected case instead of a disconnected list. Thinking explains how and why each piece of evidence supports the reason and strengthens the claim. Together, Argument and Thinking make the writer's logic visible, so the reader never has to guess why a detail matters.

Essential Question - Answered

You started with an Essential Question. Now connect this answer to what you learned in Module 2.

OUR ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How do Argument and Thinking turn separate reasons and evidence into one coherent case for a claim?

My Answer

I use A - Argument to organize reasons, evidence, transitions, and ideas into one connected case instead of a list. I use T - Thinking to explain how and why each piece of evidence supports its reason and strengthens the claim, so my logic is visible to the reader.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Start with a reason: My reason is ____, my evidence is ____, and it matters because ____.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

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CLUSTER 4



M O D U L E



Understanding Others and Rebuttal

Counterclaim and Rebuttal



Pocket Practice



Attach scratch paper on the left, right, and bottom edges.
Leave the top edge open to make a pocket for this module's activity cards.



Attach scratch paper on the left, right, and bottom edges.
Leave the top edge open to make a pocket for this module's activity cards.

Why This Module Matters

Understand the other side, then answer it with evidence.

WHY THIS MODULE MATTERS

An argument becomes more credible when a writer can represent another viewpoint fairly and respond to it with evidence instead of dismissing it. In CREATURES, U - Understanding Others states the other reasonable view accurately and respectfully, and the second R - Rebuttal answers that exact point with reasoning and evidence that defends or refines your central claim.

Essential Question

How can accurately understanding another viewpoint help us write a stronger and more respectful rebuttal?

Keep this question in mind all module. You will answer it on the last page.

How This Book Helps Me Think

This workbook is built to help you do more of the thinking for yourself.

THE INDEPENDENCE ROUTINE

Attempt	Try the thinking first.
Check	Use the built-in check when one is provided.
Adjust	Fix what you can.
Ask if Needed	Ask for help when you truly need it.

Attempt -> Check -> Adjust -> Ask if Needed

Visual Conventions You Will See

- Dashed line = CUT • Solid line = FOLD
- Scissors symbol = cut page
- STUDENT SUPPORT = another way, same rigor
- READY TO STRETCH? = visible next move
- Tiny Tracks = pause, name thinking level, point to proof.

The Standards I Am Learning - Part 1

Read the official TEKS. Directly under it, read how a student can say the same standard.

TEKS 11(B)(ii) - Official Standard

develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including transitions

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can organize my argument with purposeful structure and transitions.

TEKS 12(C)(i) - Official Standard

compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using genre characteristics

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can write an argument using the parts readers expect in an opinion piece.

TEKS 12(C)(ii) - Official Standard

compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using craft

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use purposeful words and sentences so my argument works well.

The Standards I Am Learning - Part 2

Read the official TEKS. Directly under it, read how a student can say the same standard.

TEKS 11(C)(vi) - Official Standard

revise drafts by rearranging ideas for coherence

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can rearrange my ideas so the argument holds together.

TEKS 11(D)(xvii) - Official Standard

edit drafts using standard English conventions, including pronouns, including reflexive

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use reflexive pronouns like myself or itself correctly.

The Standards I Am Learning - Part 3

Read the official TEKS. Directly under it, read how a student can say the same standard.

TEKS 11(D)(xxi) - Official Standard

edit drafts using standard English conventions, including capitalization of historical periods

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can capitalize the names of historical periods correctly.

TEKS 11(D)(xxii) - Official Standard

edit drafts using standard English conventions, including capitalization of historical events

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can capitalize the names of historical events correctly.

TEKS 11(D)(xxvi) - Official Standard

edit drafts using standard English conventions, including capitalization of titles of essays

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can capitalize the titles of essays correctly.

TEKS 4.7(C) - Official Standard

use text evidence to support an appropriate response

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use text evidence to support my response.

The ELPS I Am Learning

Read the official ELPS. Directly under it, read how you can say the same standard.

ELPS 4(F)(ix) - Official Standard

write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting evidence using appropriate content for a specific purpose

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use supporting evidence that fits my purpose.

ELPS 4(D)(iii) - Official Standard

write content-area texts using a variety of transition words

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use transition words like however to connect my viewpoint and rebuttal.

ELPS 4(F)(x) - Official Standard

write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting evidence using appropriate style for a specific purpose

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use supporting evidence and a fitting style for my purpose.

ELPS 4(C)(i) - Official Standard

write using a combination of both high-frequency words and content-area vocabulary

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can combine familiar words with precise argument words from this module.

ELPS 4(F)(ii) - Official Standard

write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting details using appropriate style for a specific purpose

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can explain my thinking with supporting details and a fitting style.

My Module 3 Learning Launchpad

Read the destination, then choose how you will show up for the work.

I CAN

- acknowledge another viewpoint accurately and respond with reasoning and evidence that defends or refines my claim.
- represent another viewpoint accurately, respectfully, and specifically.
- write a rebuttal that answers the actual point with reasoning and evidence.
- explain when another reasonable view helps me refine my claim.

I WILL

- read closely, speak about my thinking, use evidence accurately, and explain how each CREATURES move strengthens an argumentative response.
- use a fair frame such as "Some readers may argue..." before responding.
- respect the idea and answer it with reasoning instead of attacking the person.
- check whether my rebuttal defends or refines my central claim.

LEARNING DESTINATION

I will listen for another view accurately and answer it with an evidence-based response.

MY LAUNCHPAD PROMISE

The fair-argument habit I will practice first is _____ because

My Module 3 Learning Dashboard

Circle where you think your learning is right now. Come back on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday to see how your thinking grows.

I know a lot about this / I know a little bit about this / This is new to me

Circle one for each skill, each day.

Skill	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Represent another view fairly	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new
Answer the actual point	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new
Use reasoning or evidence	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new
Keep my claim clear	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new
Refine my claim when needed	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new

My goal for this module:

Tier 1 Vocabulary - Everyday Words

Say the word, learn its meaning, then rehearse the complete frame.

agree

Say it: uh-GREE

What it means: to share or accept an idea

Try the frame: I can agree that ____ while still claiming ____.

answer

Say it: AN-ser

What it means: to respond directly

Try the frame: I answer the point by ____.

change

Say it: CHAYNJ

What it means: to make something different

Try the frame: I may change my claim by ____.

choose

Say it: CHOOZ

What it means: to select after thinking

Try the frame: I choose this rebuttal because ____.

fair

Say it: FAIR

What it means: treating an idea honestly and without twisting it

Try the frame: This sentence is fair because ____.

Tier 1 Vocabulary - Everyday Words

Say the word, learn its meaning, then rehearse the complete frame.

hear

Say it: HEER

What it means: to receive and understand spoken words

Try the frame: I heard the viewpoint say ____.

listen

Say it: LIS-uhn

What it means: to pay attention to what another person says

Try the frame: I listen for ____.

point

Say it: POYNT

What it means: one idea used to explain a position

Try the frame: The point I must answer is ____.

side

Say it: SYDE

What it means: one position in a disagreement

Try the frame: Another side may say ____.

strong

Say it: STRAWNG

What it means: able to support a position well

Try the frame: This response is strong because ____.

Tier 2 Vocabulary - Academic Words

Say the word, learn its meaning, then rehearse the complete frame.

accurate

Say it: AK-yuh-rut

What it means: correct and faithful to the text or viewpoint

Try the frame: My sentence is accurate because ____.

acknowledge

Say it: ak-NOL-ij

What it means: to recognize an idea fairly before responding

Try the frame: I acknowledge the point by ____.

counterpoint

Say it: KOWN-ter-poynt

What it means: a different idea or position that challenges part of an argument

Try the frame: A counterpoint to my claim is ____.

credibility

Say it: kred-uh-BIL-uh-tee

What it means: the quality of being believable or trustworthy

Try the frame: Fairness builds credibility because ____.

perspective

Say it: per-SPEK-tiv

What it means: a particular way of viewing an event or issue

Try the frame: From this perspective, ____.

Tier 2 Vocabulary - Academic Words

Say the word, learn its meaning, then rehearse the complete frame.

rebuttal

Say it: ri-BUT-uhl

What it means: a reasoned response to another viewpoint

Try the frame: My rebuttal answers ____.

refine

Say it: ri-FYNE

What it means: to improve or make a claim more precise after considering another idea

Try the frame: I can refine my claim by ____.

respectful

Say it: ri-SPEKT-fuhl

What it means: responding to ideas without insulting or misrepresenting people

Try the frame: I sound respectful when ____.

understanding

Say it: un-der-STAN-ding

What it means: accurately recognizing what another viewpoint is saying

Try the frame: I show understanding when ____.

viewpoint

Say it: VYOO-poynt

What it means: the way a person sees or understands an issue

Try the frame: One viewpoint is ____.

Tier 3 Vocabulary - Domain Words

Say the word, learn its meaning, then rehearse the complete frame.

central claim

Say it: SEN-truhl KLAYM

What it means: the main position the writer defends

Try the frame: My rebuttal connects to the central claim by ____.

claim refinement

Say it: KLAYM ri-FYNE-muhnt

What it means: making a claim more precise after considering another viewpoint

Try the frame: Claim refinement helps when ____.

CREATURES roadmap

Say it: KREE-churz ROHD-map

What it means: the nine-part memory architecture for a complete argumentative response

Try the frame: The CREATURES roadmap helps me ____.

evidence-based response

Say it: EV-uh-duhns bayst ri-SPONS

What it means: a response supported by text evidence or specific reasoning

Try the frame: My evidence-based response uses ____.

fair viewpoint frame

Say it: FAIR VYOO-poynt FRAYM

What it means: an opening such as “Some readers may argue...” that introduces another view respectfully

Try the frame: My fair viewpoint frame is ____.

Tier 3 Vocabulary - Domain Words

Say the word, learn its meaning, then rehearse the complete frame.

intellectual fairness

Say it: in-tuh-LEK-choo-uhl FAIR-nis

What it means: representing an idea accurately before answering it

Try the frame: Intellectual fairness requires ____.

reasoning

Say it: REE-zuh-ning

What it means: thinking that explains how evidence supports a position

Try the frame: My reasoning shows ____.

rebuttal frame

Say it: ri-BUT-uhl FRAYM

What it means: wording that respectfully begins the answer to another view

Try the frame: I begin my rebuttal with ____.

straw-man response

Say it: STRAW man ri-SPONS

What it means: an unfair response to a weakened or twisted version of another view

Try the frame: I avoid a straw-man response by ____.

Understanding Others

Say it: un-der-STAN-ding UTH-erz

What it means: the CREATURES move that states another viewpoint accurately, respectfully, and specifically

Try the frame: My U sentence fairly says ____.

The DOT Reading Habit

Discover. Organize. Think.

Step	What I Do
D - Discover	Mark evidence connected to impact, importance, work, or opportunity.
O - Organize	Group evidence beneath the reasonable position it could support.
T - Think	Decide whether each position is represented fairly and which evidence best answers it.

WORDS TO REMEMBER

Discover the evidence. Organize it under a position. Think about which position is fair.

AS YOU READ

☐ Discover impact evidence ☐ Organize it under a position ☐ Think about fairness

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

If choosing a position is hard, read one piece of evidence aloud and tell a partner which side it could support.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

The CREATURES Roadmap

CREATURES is the memory architecture of a full argumentative response.

THE NINE CREATURES MOVES

C - Claim	Take a side you can defend.
R - Reasons	Tell why your side makes sense.
E - Evidence	Prove it from the text.
A - Argument	Build one clear, connected line of argument.
T - Thinking	Explain how and why the evidence supports the reason and claim.
U - Understanding Others	State the other viewpoint accurately, respectfully, and specifically.
R - Rebuttal	Respond with reasoning and evidence that defends or refines the claim.
E - Ending	Bring the argument to a purposeful close.
S - Significance	Create the Bluebird Moment: explain why the issue matters beyond this paper.

THIS MODULE'S FOCUS: U + R

C is the central claim, and CREATURES T always means Thinking. This module gently adds U - Understanding Others and the second R - Rebuttal.

WORDS TO REMEMBER

Hear the other side (U). Then respond with evidence (R).

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Point to the C on the roadmap, then to U and the second R. Say what each move asks a writer to do.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

U - Understanding Others and R - Rebuttal

Represent the other view fairly, then answer the exact point.

U - UNDERSTANDING OTHERS

State the other viewpoint accurately, respectfully, and specifically. The other side should be able to say, "Yes, that is what I meant."

R - REBUTTAL

Respond to that viewpoint using reasoning and evidence that defends or refines your claim. A rebuttal answers reasoning with reasoning - it never attacks the person.

FAIR VIEWPOINT FRAMES

"Some readers may argue that..." "Another reasonable view is..." "A reader could point out that..."

REBUTTAL FRAMES

"However, the stronger evidence shows..." "That point matters, but..." "Even though..., the passage more strongly supports..."

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Say a fair viewpoint frame aloud, then a respectful rebuttal frame. You still choose the evidence that answers the point.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Fair or Unfair? Representing Another Viewpoint

A rebuttal answers the real other view - not a weaker version of it.

WHAT MAKES A VIEWPOINT FAIR?

- It represents the actual reason accurately.
- Its wording is respectful and specific.
- The other side would agree, "Yes, that is what I meant."

AVOID THE STRAW-MAN RESPONSE

A straw-man response answers a weakened or twisted version of another view, such as "Some people think something silly." Represent the idea fairly first.

FAIR / UNFAIR MODEL

Unfair	"Some people think learning is dumb."
Fair	"Some readers may argue that supporting learning had the greater impact because Timbuktu became a respected center of study."

WORDS TO REMEMBER

Respect the idea, not attack the person. Represent it so its owner would agree.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Read one viewpoint sentence and decide FAIR or UNFAIR. If it is unfair, rewrite it so the other side would agree it is accurate.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

My Learning Destination

Know what success will look and sound like.

BIG GOAL

I will listen for another view accurately and answer it with an evidence-based response.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

- The other viewpoint would agree that I represented the idea accurately.
- My wording is respectful and specific.
- My rebuttal directly answers the point with reasoning or evidence.
- My original claim remains clear or becomes more precise.

INDEPENDENT PRODUCT

I will write a claim, a reason/evidence/thinking chain, one fair U viewpoint, and one evidence-based R rebuttal that defends or refines my claim.

I WILL KNOW I AM READY WHEN...

MY FIRST THINKING (DAY ONE)

Answer now. You will answer this question again near the end.

How can accurately understanding another viewpoint help us write a stronger and more respectful rebuttal?

My thinking level before we begin:

MOVE YOUR THINKING



Foundational RECALL



Emergent CONNECT



Visible
EXPLAIN



Independent USE



Reflective EXTEND

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Say your answer first or use this starter:
Understanding the other side helps
because _____. Then write your own thinking.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

The Wealth of Mansa Musa

Passage 7 — High Stamina • Nonfiction • Part 1 of 3

AS YOU READ

Use the DOT habit for evidence about impact and importance. TAP the TRACKS by marking exact evidence. Notice places where two readers could reasonably disagree.

You can use the passage from Module 1 or Module 2 as a support instead of this longer one.

[1] A long time ago in West Africa, there was a strong and successful kingdom called Mali. One of its most well-known rulers was Mansa Musa. He became king in the early 1300s and is often remembered as one of the richest people in history. Mali became wealthy because it controlled important trade routes. Traders traveled across the hot Sahara Desert carrying gold and salt, which were very valuable.

[2] Trade was one of the most important parts of life in Mali. Long before airplanes, trains, or trucks, merchants traveled by camel across the Sahara Desert to exchange goods with people living far away. These trips could last for weeks or even months. The desert was hot during the day and cold at night, so the journey was not easy. Camels were helpful because they could carry heavy loads and travel long distances with very little water. Merchants packed supplies, food, and valuable goods before beginning their long trips.

[3] Gold was one of Mali's greatest natural resources. People wanted gold because it could be made into coins, jewelry, and decorations. Salt was just as important because it helped preserve food and keep people healthy. Some places had plenty of gold but little salt, while other places had salt but not much gold. This made trading useful for everyone. Merchants also traded cloth, tools, leather, spices, pottery, and other goods that people needed in their daily lives. As more trade took place, Mali's wealth continued to grow.

[4] Mansa Musa understood how important trade was to his kingdom. He made smart choices that helped merchants feel safe while traveling. Soldiers guarded many of the trade routes, and laws helped protect people and their goods. Because traders knew they could travel safely, more merchants visited Mali. Every new trade journey brought more people, more products, and more opportunities for the kingdom to grow stronger.

[5] As trade increased, cities throughout Mali became larger and busier. One of the most famous cities was Timbuktu. Merchants filled the marketplaces with colorful goods from many different places. People could find gold, salt, cloth, books, pottery, and other valuable items. Travelers speaking different languages met to buy, sell, and share ideas. The city became an important meeting place for people from across Africa.

The Wealth of Mansa Musa - Continued 2

Passage 7 — High Stamina • Nonfiction • Part 2 of 3

AS YOU READ

Use the DOT habit for evidence about impact and importance. TAP the TRACKS by marking exact evidence. Notice places where two readers could reasonably disagree.

You can use the passage from Module 1 or Module 2 as a support instead of this longer one.

[6] Timbuktu was known for much more than trade. It also became one of the greatest centers of learning during its time. Students traveled long distances to study with respected teachers. They learned subjects such as math, science, history, geography, and religion. Since printing presses had not yet been invented in the area, books were carefully copied by hand. These books were treated with great care because they contained valuable knowledge. Many families believed that education could help improve a person's future.

[7] Teachers in Timbuktu encouraged students to ask questions, solve problems, and continue learning throughout their lives. Libraries held many handwritten books, and scholars spent years studying them. Visitors were often surprised to see how much learning took place in the city. The success of Timbuktu showed that education could become just as valuable as trade.

[8] One of the most famous parts of Mansa Musa's life was his trip to Mecca, called a pilgrimage. This journey covered thousands of miles and lasted many months. Mansa Musa traveled with a large group of people that included family members, soldiers, workers, servants, and merchants. Hundreds of camels carried supplies for the long trip across deserts and through cities. The journey required careful planning because everyone needed enough food and water to safely reach each stop.

[9] During his pilgrimage, Mansa Musa gave away large amounts of gold to people in need. He wanted to help others and share the wealth of his kingdom. His generosity became famous wherever he traveled. Many people had never seen so much gold before. Stories about the wealthy king spread quickly from city to city as travelers shared what they had witnessed.

[10] After hearing these stories, people became curious about Mali. Merchants wanted to trade with the kingdom, while travelers hoped to visit its famous cities. Mapmakers even began including Mali on their maps because so many people had heard about its wealth. Although stories sometimes became exaggerated as they were passed along, they helped make Mali one of the best-known kingdoms of its time.

The Wealth of Mansa Musa - Continued 3

Passage 7 — High Stamina • Nonfiction • Part 3 of 3

AS YOU READ

Use the DOT habit for evidence about impact and importance. TAP the TRACKS by marking exact evidence. Notice places where two readers could reasonably disagree.

You can use the passage from Module 1 or Module 2 as a support instead of this longer one.

[11] Mansa Musa believed that wealth should also be used to improve his kingdom. He supported the building of mosques, schools, and other important buildings. Skilled workers and builders helped create places where people could gather, worship, and learn. These improvements made cities more beautiful and gave people more opportunities to study and work together.

[12] The kingdom continued to grow because many people worked together. Farmers raised crops that fed families and travelers. Craftspeople made tools, clothing, pottery, and jewelry. Merchants carried goods across trade routes, while teachers helped students gain new knowledge. Soldiers protected the kingdom, allowing trade and learning to continue. Every group played an important role in Mali's success.

[13] Life in Mali was busy because people depended on one another. Farmers relied on merchants to sell extra crops. Merchants depended on safe roads. Students depended on teachers, and families depended on workers who built homes, schools, and marketplaces. Each person's job helped the kingdom become stronger.

[14] Even after Mansa Musa's pilgrimage ended, people continued talking about him. His journey showed the world that Mali was rich, organized, and powerful. Travelers wrote about the kingdom, and these stories spread across Africa, Europe, and the Middle East. Although many years have passed, historians still study Mansa Musa because of the important role he played in African history.

[15] Today, people remember Mansa Musa not only because of his great wealth but also because of his leadership. He understood that protecting trade, encouraging education, and helping others could strengthen an entire kingdom. His choices allowed cities like Timbuktu to grow into places known for both business and learning. His story reminds us that wise leaders think about the future and make decisions that help many people.

[16] Because of the choices he made, Mali became known as a powerful and important kingdom. People still talk about Mansa Musa today when they learn about African history and how trade and education helped kingdoms grow. His life shows that wealth can be used to improve communities, support learning, and create opportunities for future generations. His lasting impact continues to teach students around the world about the importance of leadership, trade, and education.

The Wealth of Mansa Musa - TRACKS Evidence Hunt

Study the exact words from the passage. Verbally explain why each clue fits its TRACKS category.

TRACKS	Exact Evidence	Why It Fits
T • Time	“in the early 1300s”	It fits because _____
R ■ Reactions	“Mali's wealth continued to grow”	It fits because _____
A ▲ Actions	“made smart choices that helped merchants feel safe while traveling”	It fits because _____
C ★ Character, Concept, Creature	“Mansa Musa”	It fits because _____
K ♦ Key Knowledge	“protecting trade, encouraging education, and helping others”	It fits because _____
S ▼ Scenery / Setting	“across the Sahara Desert”	It fits because _____

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Point to the TRACKS chart and use this frame: This is ___ evidence because _____. You still choose which evidence answers a viewpoint.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Four Regions, One Big Adventure

Passage 8 — High Stamina • Fiction • Part 1 of 4

AS YOU READ

Use the DOT habit for evidence about impact and importance. TAP the TRACKS by marking exact evidence. Notice places where two readers could reasonably disagree.

You can use the passage from Module 1 or Module 2 as a support instead of this longer one.

[1] “Road trip!” Xavier shouted as his family packed the car. They were driving across Texas to learn about its different regions. Instead of only reading about them in books, Xavier would get to see each region with his own eyes. He packed a notebook so he could write down interesting facts and compare what made each place special. His parents told him that every region had its own landforms, climate, plants, and jobs.

[2] Before they left, Xavier looked at a map of Texas. He noticed that the state was much larger than he had remembered. “Are we really going to see all four regions?” he asked.

[3] “We are,” his dad replied. “It will take some time, but by the end of the trip you’ll understand why each region is unique.”

[4] Xavier smiled as they loaded the last bags into the car. He wondered which region would become his favorite.

[5] Their first stop was the Mountains and Basins in far West Texas. Xavier noticed tall, rocky mountains and dry land. “It’s really hot here,” he said. There were only a few plants, like cacti. His mom explained that people in this region often work in mining and oil because of the natural resources found underground.

[6] As they drove through the area, Xavier saw steep cliffs, rocky hills, and wide stretches of open land. The sky seemed larger than anywhere he had ever been. Every now and then, he spotted a cactus growing beside the road.

[7] “There aren’t many trees,” Xavier noticed.

[8] “That’s because this region is very dry,” his mom explained. “Plants must be able to survive with very little rainfall.”

[9] The family stopped at a lookout where they could see miles across the desert landscape. The mountains rose high above the valleys below. Xavier thought the scenery looked different from anywhere else in Texas.

[10] “It almost feels like another state,” he said.

[11] His dad smiled. “That’s one reason learning about regions is important. Even though this is all Texas, the land can look very different.”

Four Regions, One Big Adventure - Continued 2

Passage 8 — High Stamina • Fiction • Part 2 of 4

AS YOU READ

Use the DOT habit for evidence about impact and importance. TAP the TRACKS by marking exact evidence. Notice places where two readers could reasonably disagree.

You can use the passage from Module 1 or Module 2 as a support instead of this longer one.

[12] As they continued driving, they passed signs for oil wells and mining areas. Xavier remembered what his mom had said about natural resources. He wrote in his notebook that the Mountains and Basins region is known for its mountains, desert climate, cacti, mining, and oil production.

[13] The next day, the family traveled into the Great Plains. The land looked wide and flat with rolling hills. The weather was still dry, but not as hot. Xavier saw ranches and fields.

[14] “This must be where people raise cattle,” he said.

[15] His dad nodded and added that farming is also common here.

[16] Soon they passed large groups of cattle grazing across grassy fields. Long fences stretched across the land, and barns stood near the ranch houses.

[17] “I’ve never seen so many cows,” Xavier laughed.

[18] His sister pointed toward a field filled with crops. “Look! Farmers grow food here too.”

[19] Their parents explained that the open grasslands make the region a good place for ranching. Farmers also grow crops because much of the land is useful for agriculture.

[20] The family stopped at a small roadside picnic area for lunch. As they ate, Xavier noticed the steady wind moving across the tall grass.

[21] “The land goes on forever,” he said.

[22] “It does seem that way,” his dad answered. “Wide-open spaces are one of the things people remember most about the Great Plains.”

[23] Before leaving, Xavier added more notes to his notebook. He wrote that the Great Plains have rolling hills, wide grasslands, ranches, farms, cattle, and a dry climate.

[24] Later, they reached the North Central Plains.

[25] “Everything looks greener and more colorful!” Xavier said.

[26] There were more trees and grass, and the land had gentle hills. The climate was milder, and people raised livestock and grew crops.

Four Regions, One Big Adventure - Continued 3

Passage 8 — High Stamina • Fiction • Part 3 of 4

AS YOU READ

Use the DOT habit for evidence about impact and importance. TAP the TRACKS by marking exact evidence. Notice places where two readers could reasonably disagree.

You can use the passage from Module 1 or Module 2 as a support instead of this longer one.

[27] The family stopped at a small park to stretch their legs. Birds chirped from nearby trees while a cool breeze moved through the grass. Wildflowers grew along the walking trail, and butterflies floated from flower to flower.

[28] “This feels different already,” Xavier said.

[29] His mom agreed. “This region usually receives more rainfall than the ones we’ve already visited.”

[30] As they walked through the park, Xavier noticed ponds, trees, and green fields. He realized why so many farms were located nearby.

[31] “We’ve seen cattle in more than one region,” he said.

[32] “That’s true,” his dad replied. “Some jobs can be found in more than one region, but the land and climate are still different.”

[33] They visited a small farm where workers cared for animals and planted crops. Xavier enjoyed asking questions about what farmers grew each year. He learned that different crops grow well because of the region’s soil and climate.

[34] Before getting back into the car, Xavier wrote that the North Central Plains have gentle hills, trees, grasslands, livestock, crops, and a milder climate.

[35] Finally, they arrived at the Coastal Plains near the Gulf of Mexico. It was humid, and Xavier could feel the warm, moist air. There were rivers, forests, and even beaches.

[36] “This region has a lot of different jobs,” his mom said, “like farming, fishing, and working in big cities.”

[37] As they explored, they saw fishing boats tied along the shore. People worked at marinas, while others loaded seafood onto trucks. They also drove through large cities filled with busy streets, tall buildings, stores, and neighborhoods.

[38] “This place has a little bit of everything,” Xavier said.

[39] His dad nodded. “Many people live in the Coastal Plains because there are so many different opportunities to work.”

[40] The family spent time walking along the beach. Xavier watched waves roll onto the shore while seabirds flew overhead. He noticed that the air felt much wetter than it had in the other regions.

Four Regions, One Big Adventure - Continued 4

Passage 8 — High Stamina • Fiction • Part 4 of 4

AS YOU READ

Use the DOT habit for evidence about impact and importance. TAP the TRACKS by marking exact evidence. Notice places where two readers could reasonably disagree.

You can use the passage from Module 1 or Module 2 as a support instead of this longer one.

[41] “The humidity makes it feel warmer,” his mom explained.

[42] Nearby, they crossed a bridge over a river flowing toward the Gulf. Thick forests surrounded parts of the highway, giving the region a very different look from the rocky mountains and open grasslands they had already visited.

[43] Xavier carefully added one more page to his notebook. He wrote that the Coastal Plains have rivers, forests, beaches, humid weather, farming, fishing, large cities, and many kinds of jobs.

[44] On the drive home, Xavier read through all of his notes. He compared the four regions one last time. The Mountains and Basins had tall mountains, deserts, and valuable natural resources. The Great Plains had wide grasslands, ranches, farms, and rolling hills. The North Central Plains had greener land, gentle hills, livestock, and crops. The Coastal Plains had forests, rivers, beaches, humid weather, and many different industries.

[45] His notebook was filled with facts, but the trip had taught him even more than he had written down. Seeing each region helped him understand why Texans live and work differently across the state. The climate, landforms, and natural resources all help shape the way people use the land.

[46] As they crossed back into their hometown, Xavier smiled.

[47] “I thought every part of Texas would look about the same,” he admitted.

[48] His dad laughed. “Now you know better.”

[49] “I do,” Xavier replied. “Each region has its own story.”

[50] As they headed home, Xavier rethought about what he had seen. Each region looked different, but all were important parts of Texas.

Four Regions, One Big Adventure - TRACKS Evidence Hunt

Study the exact words from the passage. Verbally explain why each clue fits its TRACKS category.

TRACKS	Exact Evidence	Why It Fits
T • Time	“The next day”	It fits because _____
R ■ Reactions	“Each region has its own story.”	It fits because _____
A ▲ Actions	“driving across Texas to learn about its different regions”	It fits because _____
C ★ Character, Concept, Creature	“Zavier”	It fits because _____
K ♦ Key Knowledge	“climate, landforms, and natural resources”	It fits because _____
S ▼ Scenery / Setting	“near the Gulf of Mexico”	It fits because _____

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Point to the TRACKS chart and use this frame: This is ___ evidence because ____.
You still choose which evidence answers a viewpoint.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Day 1 - GATHER

Auditory Engagement: Two Voices, One Evidence Check.

LISTEN FOR FAIRNESS AND EVIDENCE

Hear each round first. Listen for whether the speaker represented the other viewpoint fairly and whether the rebuttal actually uses reasoning or evidence.

Round	Fair or Unfair? Evidence or None?
Round 1: "Some readers may argue supporting learning mattered most because knowledge can last for generations."	
Response: "That point is reasonable; however, safe trade brought people and goods into Mali and helped the kingdom grow immediately."	
Round 2: "Some people think learning is dumb."	

FRESH RECALL

Say one fair U frame and one respectful R frame from memory.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

If the rounds are hard to judge, say aloud with a partner: A fair viewpoint sounds like _____. A strong rebuttal answers with _____.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Day 1 - REVEAL

A fair U + a strong R. The rebuttal does not insult the other view - it answers it.

MODEL - MANSA MUSA

C - Claim: Protecting trade had the greater impact on Mali.

U - Understanding Others: Some readers may argue that supporting learning mattered more because Timbuktu became known as an important center of study.

R - Rebuttal: That point is strong, but protected trade had a broader immediate effect because safe routes brought more merchants and goods into Mali.

T - Thinking: This response acknowledges the value of learning while explaining why the evidence for protected trade better matches the claim about overall impact.

MODEL - TEXAS REGIONS

C - Claim: Natural resources have a greater impact than climate on work opportunities across Texas.

U: Another reasonable view is that climate matters most because temperature and rainfall affect vegetation and farming.

R: Climate clearly matters; however, the passage repeatedly connects specific resources to specific work, including mining, oil, fishing, farming, and city-based jobs.

NOTICE AND DEFEND

Why does a fair U make a rebuttal more credible?

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Underline the claim once and circle the fair U sentence. Then explain why the rebuttal answers the actual point.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Day 2 - ATTEMPT

Perspective Switchboard - how to play.

THE GOAL

Take a claim, hear another reasonable viewpoint, and build a rebuttal that answers the actual point with reasoning and evidence.

HOW TO PLAY

1. Draw a claim card.
2. Draw two possible U viewpoint cards.
3. Choose the fairest, most accurate viewpoint.
4. Build a rebuttal using one piece of text evidence.
5. Partner checks: "Would the other side agree this represents the view fairly?"

ROLES

One partner is the Viewpoint Voice and one is the Rebuttal Builder. After each round, switch roles so both practice accurate listening and evidence-based response.

BEFORE YOU CUT

Dashed lines mean CUT. Sort each viewpoint, commit to your answer, and then use the self-check backs.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Use the card number on the mat instead of cutting. You still choose, build, and check the same way.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Perspective Switchboard - My Rounds (Mansa Musa)

Prompt: Argue whether protecting trade or supporting learning had the greater long-term impact on Mali.

MY CLAIM

The claim card I drew:

THE FAIREST VIEWPOINT (U)

The most accurate viewpoint I chose:

MY REBUTTAL (R)

My evidence-based answer to that point:

FAIRNESS CHECK

Would the other side agree? Yes / Not yet - because:

Perspective Switchboard - My Rounds (Texas Regions)

Prompt: Argue whether natural resources or climate has the greater impact on work across Texas.

MY CLAIM

The claim card I drew:

THE FAIREST VIEWPOINT (U)

The most accurate viewpoint I chose:

MY REBUTTAL (R)

My evidence-based answer to that point:

FAIRNESS CHECK

Would the other side agree? Yes / Not yet - because:

✂ CUT PAGE - Perspective Switchboard Cards - Set A (Mansa Musa) 1

Cut on the dashed lines, then sort and answer each viewpoint.

CARD 1

“Protecting trade had the greater impact on Mali.”

Read me. Sort me. Answer me.

CARD 2

“Supporting learning had the greater long-term impact on Mali.”

Read me. Sort me. Answer me.

CARD 3

“Some readers may argue supporting learning had the greater long-term impact because knowledge could continue helping future generations.”

Read me. Sort me. Answer me.

CARD 4

“Some readers may argue protecting trade had the greater impact because safe routes increased merchants, goods, and wealth.”

Read me. Sort me. Answer me.

CARD 5

“Some readers may argue Mansa Musa's pilgrimage mattered most because it increased Mali's reputation beyond Africa.”

Read me. Sort me. Answer me.

Self-Check Backs - Perspective Switchboard Cards - Set A (Mansa Musa)

1

Check the card type only after your group commits to an answer.

CLAIM CARD PERSPECTIVE SWITCHBOARD · Set A (Mansa Musa) · Card 2	CLAIM CARD PERSPECTIVE SWITCHBOARD · Set A (Mansa Musa) · Card 1
VIEWPOINT (U) PERSPECTIVE SWITCHBOARD · Set A (Mansa Musa) · Card 4	VIEWPOINT (U) PERSPECTIVE SWITCHBOARD · Set A (Mansa Musa) · Card 3
	VIEWPOINT (U) PERSPECTIVE SWITCHBOARD · Set A (Mansa Musa) · Card 5

✂ CUT PAGE - Perspective Switchboard Cards - Set B (Texas Regions) 1

Cut on the dashed lines, then sort and answer each viewpoint.

CARD 1

“Natural resources have a greater impact than climate on work opportunities across Texas.”

Read me. Sort me. Answer me.

CARD 2

“Some readers may argue climate has the greater influence because rainfall and temperature affect plants, farming, and daily conditions.”

Read me. Sort me. Answer me.

CARD 3

“Some readers may argue natural resources have the greater influence because resources create specific jobs and economic opportunities.”

Read me. Sort me. Answer me.

CARD 4

“Some readers may argue location has the greater influence in the Coastal Plains because access to water and cities supports many kinds of work.”

Read me. Sort me. Answer me.

Self-Check Backs - Perspective Switchboard Cards - Set B (Texas Regions) 1

Check the card type only after your group commits to an answer.

VIEWPOINT (U)

PERSPECTIVE SWITCHBOARD · Set
B (Texas Regions) · Card 2

CLAIM CARD

PERSPECTIVE SWITCHBOARD · Set
B (Texas Regions) · Card 1

VIEWPOINT (U)

PERSPECTIVE SWITCHBOARD · Set
B (Texas Regions) · Card 4

VIEWPOINT (U)

PERSPECTIVE SWITCHBOARD · Set
B (Texas Regions) · Card 3

✂ CUT PAGE - Perspective Switchboard Cards - Set C (Fair or Unfair?) 1

Cut on the dashed lines, then sort and answer each viewpoint.

CARD 1

“Some people think learning is dumb.”

Read me. Sort me. Answer me.

CARD 2

“Some people think learning was better. They are wrong.”

Read me. Sort me. Answer me.

CARD 3

“People who care about learning do not understand trade.”

Read me. Sort me. Answer me.

CARD 4

“Some readers may argue learning had a greater long-term impact because knowledge can continue helping future generations.”

Read me. Sort me. Answer me.

CARD 5

“Some readers may argue that supporting learning had the greater impact because Timbuktu became a respected center of study.”

Read me. Sort me. Answer me.

Self-Check Backs - Perspective Switchboard Cards - Set C (Fair or Unfair?) 1

Check the card type only after your group commits to an answer.

UNFAIR

PERSPECTIVE SWITCHBOARD · Set
C (Fair or Unfair?) · Card 2

UNFAIR

PERSPECTIVE SWITCHBOARD · Set
C (Fair or Unfair?) · Card 1

FAIR

PERSPECTIVE SWITCHBOARD · Set
C (Fair or Unfair?) · Card 4

UNFAIR

PERSPECTIVE SWITCHBOARD · Set
C (Fair or Unfair?) · Card 3

FAIR

PERSPECTIVE SWITCHBOARD · Set
C (Fair or Unfair?) · Card 5

Perspective Switchboard - My Recording Sheet

Record each round: claim, fair viewpoint, and evidence-based rebuttal.

Round	Claim	Fair Viewpoint (U)	My Rebuttal (R)
Round 1			
Round 2			
Round 3			
Round 4			

ANSWER-KEY PRINCIPLE

A correct response must (1) represent the alternate viewpoint accurately, (2) use respectful language, (3) respond to the actual point raised, and (4) support the rebuttal with reasoning and evidence.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Say each rebuttal aloud before recording.
Make sure it answers the actual point instead of repeating the claim.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Day 3 - DISCUSS

Why does fair representation help? Explain, do not merely label.

TALK IT THROUGH

What makes a viewpoint representation fair?

Why can acknowledging a good point make your own argument stronger?

What is the difference between rebutting an idea and attacking a person?

When might considering another view cause a writer to refine the claim?

CONNECT TO THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How can accurately understanding another viewpoint help us write a stronger and more respectful rebuttal?

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Use the frame: A fair viewpoint is one the other side would agree with. A strong rebuttal answers with ____.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Day 3 - USE AGAIN: Independent U + R Response

Prompt: Argue whether protecting trade or supporting learning had the greater long-term impact on Mali.

WRITE THE CHAIN

- Write a clear claim.
- Build one strong reason/evidence/thinking chain.
- Write one accurate "Some readers may argue..." sentence.
- Respond with "However..." or another respectful rebuttal frame.
- Use evidence or specific reasoning in the rebuttal.

MY U + R PLAN

My claim:

My fair U viewpoint:

My evidence-based R rebuttal:

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Reread the passage and gather evidence.
Read your U sentence as if you held that viewpoint; revise it if it sounds unfair.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

U + R Draft - Mansa Musa

Write your claim, one R/E/T chain, a fair U, and an evidence-based R.

SUCCESS CHECK

☐ Viewpoint is accurate and fair ☐ Rebuttal answers the actual point ☐ Claim stays clear or becomes more precise

[illegible]

Day 3 - USE AGAIN: Texas Regions

Write a fair U and evidence-based R for a second claim.

GIVEN CLAIM

Natural resources have a greater impact than climate on work opportunities across Texas.

MY U + R PLAN

The climate viewpoint (fair U):

My evidence-based R rebuttal:

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Use evidence about mining, oil, fishing, farming, or city-based jobs. You still decide which evidence best answers the point.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Module 3 Standards Application - Coherence, Reflexive Pronouns, and Capitalization

Rearrange for coherence, then edit reflexive pronouns and capitalization.

PERSPECTIVE + COHERENCE CHECK

Read U and R together. Rearrange them if the order interrupts the argument. Revise one vague phrase so the other viewpoint is represented more accurately.

My rearranged / revised sentence:

REFLEXIVE PRONOUN CHECK

Edit one sentence so it uses a reflexive pronoun correctly.

- Reflexive pronoun: "The writer reminded herself to represent the other view fairly."
- Reflexive pronoun: "The evidence itself supports the claim."

CAPITALIZATION CHECK

Capitalize historical periods and events correctly.

- Historical event / place name: the trade routes across the Sahara Desert.
- Title of an essay: capitalize the important words in a title.

My edited sentence:

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Point to the reflexive pronoun and the capitalized name with a partner. You still decide what to change.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Day 4 - AWARD Yourself

An award counts when you point to fair, evidence-based thinking in your own work.

STAR YOUR MOST ACCURATE VIEWPOINT

Put a star beside the sentence that represents another view most accurately.

FAIR ARGUER BADGE

Class cheer: "Hear the other side! Answer with proof! A fair argument holds up to the truth!"

MY AWARD

My rebuttal became stronger when I

This U + R pair is credible because

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Choose one U + R pair and point to proof before writing. Rehearse: I award this pair because it ____.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

MOVE YOUR THINKING



Foundational
RECALL



Emergent
CONNECT



Visible
EXPLAIN



Independent
USE



Reflective
EXTEND

Day 4 - TARGET Your Next Move

A useful target names the precise fair-argument habit you will practice.

CHOOSE ONE TARGET

- ☐ More accurate viewpoint ☐ More respectful wording
☐ Stronger rebuttal evidence ☐ Clearer response to the actual point
☐ Willingness to refine the claim

CURIOSITY QUESTIONS

- One phrase that helped me sound respectful was...
- One place my rebuttal needs more evidence is...
- The hardest part of representing another view fairly was...
- Next time I will respond to the exact point by...

BUILD A PRECISE TARGET

My next fair-argument goal is _____ because

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Use the target choices as a starting point. You still explain why the chosen target fits your work.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Day 5 - EXPLAIN or Educate Others

Turn and teach: your explanation is proof of your understanding.

TEACH U + R

Teach a partner why Understanding Others comes before Rebuttal. Give one fair viewpoint sentence and one respectful, evidence-based rebuttal.

MY TEACHING CARD

Understanding Others means:

Rebuttal means:

One fair viewpoint sentence is:

My respectful, evidence-based rebuttal is:

A rebuttal is not an insult or a repeated claim because:

LISTENER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Check that the viewpoint is fair and accurate.
- Listen for reasoning or evidence in the rebuttal.
- Ask whether the claim stayed clear or was refined.
- Notice respectful wording.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Rehearse with a partner or make an approved audio recording before the teach-back. Use the card, but explain in your own words.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

MY THINKING NOW

Answer the module question again. Then compare it with your first thinking.

How can accurately understanding another viewpoint help us write a stronger and more respectful rebuttal?

WHAT CHANGED?

Circle or underline something you can explain now that you could not explain at the beginning.

My thinking grew because

My thinking level now:

MOVE YOUR THINKING



**Foundational
RECALL**



**Emergent
CONNECT**



**Visible
EXPLAIN**



**Independent
USE**



**Reflective
EXTEND**

Check the Learning

Informal, low-stakes ways to show what you understand.

QUICK CHECK 1 - WHICH IS FAIR?

Choose the fair viewpoint: "Some people think learning is dumb." OR "Some readers may argue learning had a greater long-term impact because knowledge can continue helping future generations."

My choice and why:

QUICK CHECK 2 - WEAK REBUTTAL

Explain why "They are wrong" is not a strong rebuttal.

My answer:

QUICK CHECK 3 - CREDIBILITY

Explain why acknowledging a reasonable point can strengthen credibility.

My answer:

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Choose Listen, Look, or Collect: say a fair viewpoint aloud, point to a respectful rebuttal, or hand in a U + R page.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

MY MODULE CHECK-IN

Award. Target. Explain. Use proof, not just feelings.

AWARD

Put a star beside the sentence that represents another view most accurately. Complete: “My rebuttal became stronger when I ____.”

TARGET

Choose one: a more accurate viewpoint, more respectful wording, stronger rebuttal evidence, a clearer response to the actual point, or willingness to refine the claim.

EXPLAIN

Teach why Understanding Others comes before Rebuttal. Give one fair viewpoint sentence and one respectful evidence-based rebuttal, then explain why a rebuttal is not an insult or a repeated claim.

I Can...	Not Yet	Getting There	I Can Do It
Explain U - Understanding Others and R - Rebuttal	☐	☐	☐
Represent another view accurately	☐	☐	☐
Answer the actual point with reasoning or evidence	☐	☐	☐
Keep my central claim clear	☐	☐	☐
Refine my claim when another view reveals a weakness	☐	☐	☐

Day 5 - Writing Opportunity - Perspective and Work Across Texas

Use one claim; write a fair U for the other side and an evidence-based R.

USE THIS CLAIM

Natural resources have a greater impact than climate on work opportunities across Texas.

WHAT TO WRITE

- Write one fair U sentence for the climate viewpoint.
- Write one evidence-based R rebuttal that answers the actual point.
- Decide whether the viewpoint gives you a reason to refine the claim.

MY FIRST DECISION

The climate viewpoint I will represent fairly:

Passage pages I will use:

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Reread the Texas Regions passage first. Choose evidence about mining, oil, fishing, farming, or city-based jobs.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Plan My U + R Response

Draft the claim, the fair U, and the evidence-based R before you write it out.

1. CLAIM - State the side you will defend

2. UNDERSTANDING OTHERS - Represent the other view accurately and respectfully

3. REBUTTAL - Answer the actual point with reasoning and evidence

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Use the U + R mentor page and the passage. You choose the fair viewpoint and the evidence that answers it.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

U + R Draft - Page 1

Keep the other viewpoint fair and the rebuttal connected to your claim.

FAIRNESS CHECK

After the U sentence, ask: Would the other side agree this represents the view fairly?

After the R, ask: Does it answer the actual point?

[illegible]

U + R Draft - Page 2

Continue only if you need more space. Stronger does not mean longer.

DEFEND OR REFINER CHECK

Does the evidence support my original claim, or should I make the claim more precise?

[illegible]

Revise, Edit, and Share

Rearrange for coherence, run the Conventions Sweep, then explain one decision.

REVISE

Read your U and R aloud.

REARRANGE if the order interrupts the argument:

REVISE one vague phrase so the other view is more accurate:

EDIT - Conventions Sweep

☐ Reflexive pronoun ☐ Capitalization of historical periods, events, and titles

My edited sentence:

SHARE

My partner heard fair thinking when I _____ because

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Read only your claim, your fair U, and your R to a partner. The feedback must name whether the viewpoint sounds fair.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Tiny Tracks

Did your independent response represent the other view fairly?

Tiny Tracks

Small Steps. Big Growth.

I just learned:

My thinking level:

MOVE YOUR THINKING



Foundational
RECALL



Emergent
CONNECT



Visible
EXPLAIN



Independent
USE



Reflective
EXTEND

☐ Easy ☐ Just Right ☐ Challenging

Support I used: _____

My proof is on page: _____ My next move: _____

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Point to your fair U and your evidence-based R. Defend why the other side would agree your U is accurate.

PROOF OF TRANSFER

I knew I could use the U + R habit in a new response because on page _____ I

READY TO STRETCH? - Refine the Claim

Write a fair U and a strong R, then decide whether to refine your claim.

DIRECTIONS

Write a fair U and a strong R. Then decide whether the other viewpoint reveals a weakness in your original claim. Revise the claim if needed and explain why refinement makes the argument stronger.

SAMPLE - REFINEMENT

A sophisticated writer may keep the same position but narrow it - for example, changing "trade mattered most" to "protected trade had the greatest immediate economic impact."

MY FAIR U + STRONG R

U:

R:

JUSTIFY

Does the other viewpoint give me a reason to refine my claim? Why does refinement make the argument stronger?

Portfolio Evidence + Closing Reflection

Choose the pages that best show what your thinking did during Module 3.

Evidence	Page	What It Proves About My Thinking
1		
2		
3		

LOOK HOW MY THINKING MOVED

At first, I...

Now I...

My biggest improvement was...

My next cognitive address is...

MODULE 3 CLOSING IDEA

Understanding Others requires the writer to represent another viewpoint accurately before responding. When the writer acknowledges a reasonable point and then answers that exact point with reasoning and evidence, the rebuttal becomes more credible, respectful, and persuasive. Considering another view can also help the writer refine the original claim.

Essential Question - Answered

You started with an Essential Question. Now connect this answer to what you learned in Module 3.

OUR ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How can accurately understanding another viewpoint help us write a stronger and more respectful rebuttal?

My Answer

I represent another viewpoint accurately before I respond. When I acknowledge a reasonable point and answer that exact point with reasoning and evidence, my rebuttal becomes more credible, respectful, and persuasive, and I may refine my original claim.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Start with the other view: Some people think ____, but ____ because ____.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

The Writing Academy[®], LLC

CLUSTER 4



M O D U L E



Ending, Significance, and the Full Argument

Finishing the Whole Argument



Pocket Practice



Attach scratch paper on the left, right, and bottom edges.
Leave the top edge open to make a pocket for this module's activity cards.



Attach scratch paper on the left, right, and bottom edges.
Leave the top edge open to make a pocket for this module's activity cards.

Why This Module Matters

The Ending closes the case; Significance lifts the idea beyond the paper.

WHY THIS MODULE MATTERS

You complete the argumentative roadmap by learning E — Ending and S — Significance. The Ending brings the reasoning together. Significance is the Bluebird Moment: the final big-picture idea that explains why the argument matters beyond the paper. Then you assemble a complete argumentative ECR with all nine CREATURES moves.

Essential Question

How do Ending and Significance complete a CREATURES argument and leave the reader with a meaningful Bluebird Moment?

Keep this question in mind all module. You will answer it on the last page.

How This Book Helps Me Think

This workbook is built to help you do more of the thinking for yourself.

THE INDEPENDENCE ROUTINE

Attempt	Try the thinking first.
Check	Use the built-in check when one is provided.
Adjust	Fix what you can.
Ask if Needed	Ask for help when you truly need it.

Attempt -> Check -> Adjust -> Ask if Needed

Visual Conventions You Will See

- Dashed line = CUT • Solid line = FOLD
- Scissors symbol = cut page
- STUDENT SUPPORT = another way, same rigor
- READY TO STRETCH? = visible next move
- Tiny Tracks = pause, name thinking level, point to proof.

The Standards I Am Learning - Part 1

Read the official TEKS and how a student can say the same standard.

TEKS 11(B)(ii) - Official Standard

develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including transitions

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can organize my draft with transitions that connect my ideas.

TEKS 11(B)(iii) - Official Standard

develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including a conclusion

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can end my draft with a purposeful conclusion.

TEKS 12(C)(i) - Official Standard

compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using genre characteristics

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use the parts readers expect in an opinion or argument essay.

TEKS 12(C)(ii) - Official Standard

compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using craft

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use purposeful words and sentence choices so my argument works well.

The Standards I Am Learning - Part 2

Read the official TEKS and how a student can say the same standard.

TEKS 11(C)(vi) - Official Standard

revise drafts by rearranging ideas for coherence

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can move my ideas around so my whole argument flows clearly.

TEKS 11(D)(xvii) - Official Standard

edit drafts using standard English conventions, including pronouns, including reflexive

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use pronouns, including reflexive pronouns, correctly.

TEKS 11(D)(xxi) - Official Standard

edit drafts using standard English conventions, including capitalization of historical periods

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can capitalize the names of historical periods.

TEKS 11(D)(xxii) - Official Standard

edit drafts using standard English conventions, including capitalization of historical events

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can capitalize the names of historical events.

The Standards I Am Learning - Part 3

Read the official TEKS and how a student can say the same standard.

TEKS 11(D)(xxiii) - Official Standard

edit drafts using standard English conventions, including capitalization of historical documents

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can capitalize the names of historical documents.

TEKS 11(D)(xxiv) - Official Standard

edit drafts using standard English conventions, including capitalization of titles of books

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can capitalize titles of books correctly.

TEKS 11(D)(xxv) - Official Standard

edit drafts using standard English conventions, including capitalization of titles of stories

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can capitalize titles of stories correctly.

TEKS 11(D)(xxvi) - Official Standard

edit drafts using standard English conventions, including capitalization of titles of essays

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can capitalize titles of essays correctly.

The Standards I Am Learning - Part 4

Read the official TEKS and how a student can say the same standard.

TEKS 11(D)(xxvii) - Official Standard

edit drafts using standard English conventions, including capitalization of languages

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can capitalize the names of languages.

TEKS 11(D)(xxviii) - Official Standard

edit drafts using standard English conventions, including capitalization of races

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can capitalize the names of races correctly.

TEKS 11(D)(xxix) - Official Standard

edit drafts using standard English conventions, including capitalization of nationalities

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can capitalize the names of nationalities correctly.

TEKS 4.7(C) - Official Standard

use text evidence to support an appropriate response

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use text evidence to support my response.

The ELPS I Am Learning

Read the official ELPS. Directly under it, read how you can say the same standard.

ELPS 4(D)(iii) - Official Standard

write content-area texts using a variety of transition words

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use language that fits this argumentative work.

ELPS 4(F)(ix) - Official Standard

write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting evidence using appropriate content for [a] specific purpose

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use language that fits this argumentative work.

ELPS 4(F)(x) - Official Standard

write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting evidence using appropriate style for [a] specific purpose

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use language that fits this argumentative work.

ELPS 4(C)(i) - Official Standard

write using a combination of both high-frequency words and content-area vocabulary

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use language that fits this argumentative work.

ELPS 4(F)(ii) - Official Standard

write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting details using appropriate style for [a] specific purpose

HOW I SAY THE STANDARD!

I can use language that fits this argumentative work.

My Module 4 Learning Launchpad

Read the destination, then choose how you will show up.

I CAN

- write a purposeful ending, explain significance beyond the paper, and use the full CREATURES framework.
- reinforce my central claim and synthesize my strongest reasoning in E — Ending.
- write S — Significance as a Bluebird Moment that grows from the argument.
- use all nine CREATURES moves to plan and produce a coherent argumentative ECR.

I WILL

- read closely, speak about my thinking, and use evidence accurately.
- check that my Ending closes the case without copying the claim or adding a new reason.
- connect my Significance sentence to the evidence before lifting the idea into a larger world.
- revise and edit a full CREATURES response for coherence, structure, and conventions.

LEARNING DESTINATION

I will build a complete argumentative ECR: a defensible claim, coherent R/E/T support, a fair U/R exchange, a purposeful Ending, and a Bluebird Moment that shows why the issue matters beyond the paper.

MY LAUNCHPAD PROMISE

The CREATURES move I will practice first is _____ because

My Module 4 Learning Dashboard

Circle where you think your learning is right now. Come back on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday to see how your thinking grows.

I know a lot about this / I know a little bit about this / This is new to me

Circle one for each skill, each day.

Skill	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Write a purposeful E — Ending	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new
Write S — Significance as a Bluebird Moment	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new
Explain all nine CREATURES moves	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new
Build coherent R/E/T chains + a fair U/R	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new
Assemble a complete argumentative ECR	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new	a lot / a little / new

My goal:

Tier 1 Vocabulary

Say the word, learn its meaning, then rehearse the complete frame.

choice

Say it: CHOYS

What it means: an act of deciding

Try the frame: This choice affects ____.

close

Say it: KLOHZ

What it means: to bring something to an end

Try the frame: I close the case by ____.

end

Say it: END

What it means: the final part

Try the frame: At the end, I ____.

fair

Say it: FAIR

What it means: accurate and respectful

Try the frame: The other viewpoint is fair because ____.

grow

Say it: GROH

What it means: to develop or become greater

Try the frame: My Bluebird Moment grows from ____.

Tier 1 Vocabulary

Say the word, learn its meaning, then rehearse the complete frame.

lesson

Say it: LES-uhn

What it means: an idea learned from experience

Try the frame: The larger lesson is ____.

matter

Say it: MAT-er

What it means: to be important

Try the frame: This matters because ____.

strong

Say it: STRONG

What it means: effective or well supported

Try the frame: My strongest reasoning is ____.

whole

Say it: HOHL

What it means: all parts considered together

Try the frame: The whole argument shows ____.

world

Say it: WURLD

What it means: people and places beyond one paper

Try the frame: This idea reaches the world by ____.

Tier 2 Vocabulary

Say the word, learn its meaning, then rehearse the complete frame.

Bluebird Moment

Say it: BLOO-burd MOH-muhnt

What it means: the final big-picture idea that explains why the argument matters beyond the paper

Try the frame: My Bluebird Moment is ____.

community

Say it: kuh-MYOO-nih-tee

What it means: a group of people connected by place, interest, or shared life

Try the frame: This matters to my community because ____.

conclusion

Say it: kun-KLOO-zhun

What it means: the final section that closes the response

Try the frame: My conclusion closes the case by ____.

ending

Say it: EN-ding

What it means: the purposeful conclusion that reinforces the claim

Try the frame: My ending ____.

impact

Say it: IM-pakt

What it means: a strong effect or influence

Try the frame: The greater impact is ____ because ____.

Tier 2 Vocabulary

Say the word, learn its meaning, then rehearse the complete frame.

legacy

Say it: LEG-uh-see

What it means: a lasting effect left by a person, choice, or community

Try the frame: The legacy of ____ is ____.

reinforce

Say it: ree-in-FORS

What it means: strengthen an idea by returning to it with added understanding

Try the frame: I reinforce my claim by ____.

responsibility

Say it: rih-spon-suh-BIL-ih-tee

What it means: the duty to make thoughtful choices and consider consequences

Try the frame: One responsibility is ____.

significance

Say it: sig-NIF-uh-kuhns

What it means: the larger importance of an issue, idea, or position

Try the frame: The significance of my claim is ____.

synthesize

Say it: SIN-thuh-syz

What it means: combine the most important ideas into a new, concise understanding

Try the frame: I synthesize my reasoning by ____.

Tier 3 Vocabulary

Say the word, learn its meaning, then rehearse the complete frame.

alternate viewpoint

Say it: AWL-ter-nit VYOO-point

What it means: another reasonable way to see the issue

Try the frame: The alternate viewpoint is ____.

Bluebird Moment

Say it: BLOO-burd MOH-muhnt

What it means: the final idea that lifts meaning beyond the paper

Try the frame: My Bluebird Moment leaves the reader with ____.

central claim

Say it: SEN-truhl KLAYM

What it means: the defensible position at the center of an argument

Try the frame: My central claim is ____.

CREATURES

Say it: KREE-churz

What it means: the nine-move roadmap for a complete argumentative response

Try the frame: CREATURES helps me ____.

evidence-based

Say it: EV-uh-duhns BAYST

What it means: supported with proof from the text

Try the frame: My response is evidence-based because ____.

Tier 3 Vocabulary

Say the word, learn its meaning, then rehearse the complete frame.

full ECR

Say it: FULL ee-see-AR

What it means: a complete extended constructed response

Try the frame: My full ECR includes ____.

line of argument

Say it: LINE uhv AR-gyuh-muhnt

What it means: the connected reasoning that makes the whole case coherent

Try the frame: The line of argument moves from ____ to ____.

purposeful ending

Say it: PUR-puhs-fuhl EN-ding

What it means: a conclusion that reinforces and synthesizes

Try the frame: My purposeful ending ____.

rebuttal

Say it: ree-BUT-uhl

What it means: a reasoned response to another viewpoint

Try the frame: My rebuttal answers ____.

significance statement

Say it: sig-NIF-uh-kuhns STAYT-muhnt

What it means: the sentence that explains why the issue matters beyond the paper

Try the frame: My significance statement shows ____.

The DOT Reading Habit

Discover. Organize. Think.

Step	What It Means
D - Discover	Identify evidence that supports a final judgment about impact and details that suggest a larger lesson.
O - Organize	Group support into logical R/E/T chains and locate evidence for a fair alternate viewpoint.
T - Think	Explain how and why the evidence works, then decide what lasting meaning can grow from the case.

WORDS TO REMEMBER

DOT supports close reading. CREATURES remains the architecture of the argumentative response, and CREATURES T always means Thinking.

AS YOU READ

☐ Discover evidence for a judgment about impact ☐ TAP the TRACKS ☐ Ask what larger lesson the case suggests

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Circle a detail that could support a final judgment, or tell a partner which larger lesson you notice.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

The Full CREATURES Roadmap

CREATURES is the architecture of a complete argumentative response.

Letter	Move	Student Memory Cue
C	Claim	Take a defensible position.
R	Reasons	Organize logical support.
E	Evidence	Prove the reasons.
A	Argument	Make the whole case coherent.
T	Thinking	Explain how and why the evidence works.
U	Understanding Others	Represent another viewpoint accurately.
R	Rebuttal	Respond with reasoning and evidence.
E	Ending	Reinforce and synthesize.
S	Significance	Create the Bluebird Moment: why it matters beyond the paper.

ABOUT THE ARCHITECTURE

The letters are a memory path, not a demand for exactly nine sentences. C usually appears as the central claim. R, E, and T can repeat across body paragraphs. A describes the coherence of the whole line of argument. U and the second R are gentle, respectful viewpoint practice in Grade 4. The final E and S close the response, with S serving as the Bluebird Moment. CREATURES T always means Thinking.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Say the letters in order. Point to each move and tell what job it does for the reader.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Ending and Significance (E + S)

Bring the case home. Then let the Bluebird fly.

E — ENDING

Reinforce the claim + synthesize the most important reasoning + close purposefully. An ending should sound familiar but more mature, because the body has already supplied the reasoning.

S — SIGNIFICANCE

Explain why the issue or position matters beyond this paper. Ask: Who else should care? What larger lesson applies? Why does this matter in communities, leadership, decision-making, or real life?

THE BLUEBIRD MOMENT

Significance is the Bluebird Moment: the final idea that rises above the paper and leaves the reader with meaning. The Bluebird flies beyond the paper, but it still leaves from the evidence nest.

REINFORCE, DO NOT REPEAT

Do not copy the claim word for word, and do not add a brand-new reason at the end. Significance should not become an unrelated inspirational quote - it must grow from the argument.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Say your Ending, then your Significance sentence. Point to the reasoning your Ending brings together.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Study a Complete Ending + Significance

See how E closes the case and S lifts the meaning.

MODEL — MANSA MUSA

E — Ending: In the end, protecting trade had the greater impact on Mali because safer routes increased commerce and helped the kingdom grow stronger.

S — Significance / Bluebird Moment: Mansa Musa's example shows that leaders can create lasting opportunity when they protect the systems people rely on and make choices that help communities grow.

MODEL — TEXAS REGIONS

E — Ending: Overall, natural resources have a greater influence on work opportunities because they directly support mining, oil, fishing, farming, and other industries across Texas.

S — Significance / Bluebird Moment: Understanding how resources shape opportunity can help communities make thoughtful decisions about jobs, growth, and how they care for the land they depend on.

CHECK THE ENDING AND THE BLUEBIRD

What reasoning does each Ending bring together?

How does each Significance sentence reach beyond the paper while staying connected to the evidence?

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Read one model at a time. You still explain how the Significance sentence grows from the evidence nest.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

MY FIRST THINKING (DAY ONE)

Answer now. You will answer again near the end.

How do Ending and Significance complete a CREATURES argument and leave the reader with a meaningful Bluebird Moment?

MOVE YOUR THINKING



**Foundational
RECALL**



**Emergent
CONNECT**



**Visible
EXPLAIN**



**Independent
USE**



**Reflective
EXTEND**

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Say your answer first or begin: My Ending finishes my argument by ____, and my Bluebird Moment _____. Then write your own thinking.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

The Wealth of Mansa Musa

Passage 7 — Very High Stamina • Nonfiction • Part 1 of 5

AS YOU READ

Use the DOT HABIT. TAP the TRACKS. Numbered paragraphs help you return to exact evidence. Mark details that support a final judgment about impact and a larger lesson.

You can use the passage from Module 1 or Module 2 as a support instead of this longer one.

[1] A long time ago in West Africa, there was a strong and successful kingdom called Mali. One of its most well-known rulers was Mansa Musa. He became king in the early 1300s and is often remembered as one of the richest people in history. Mali became wealthy because it controlled important trade routes. Traders traveled across the hot Sahara Desert carrying gold and salt, which were very valuable.

[2] Trade was one of the most important parts of life in Mali. Long before airplanes, trains, or trucks, merchants traveled by camel across the Sahara Desert to exchange goods with people living far away. These trips could last for weeks or even months. The desert was hot during the day and cold at night, so the journey was not easy. Camels were helpful because they could carry heavy loads and travel long distances with very little water. Merchants packed supplies, food, and valuable goods before beginning their long trips.

[3] Traveling across the Sahara required careful planning. Merchants often traveled together in groups called caravans. Traveling with others made the journey safer because people could help one another if problems happened along the way. Caravan leaders knew where to find water and places to rest. They also understood the safest paths through the desert. Even with good planning, strong winds, blowing sand, and extreme temperatures could make every trip challenging.

[4] Gold was one of Mali's greatest natural resources. People wanted gold because it could be made into coins, jewelry, and decorations. Salt was just as important because it helped preserve food and keep people healthy. Before refrigerators existed, salt helped keep food from spoiling during long trips. Some places had plenty of gold but very little salt, while other places had large salt mines but little gold. This made trading useful for everyone. Merchants also traded cloth, leather, pottery, spices, beads, tools, and other valuable goods. As trade increased, Mali became wealthier each year.

[5] Many people earned their living through trade. Some mined gold, while others cut large blocks of salt from the ground. Craftspeople created beautiful items that merchants could sell in busy markets. Farmers raised crops that fed families, travelers, and workers throughout the kingdom. Every person's job helped Mali become stronger and more successful.

The Wealth of Mansa Musa - Continued 2

Passage 7 — Very High Stamina • Nonfiction • Part 2 of 5

AS YOU CONTINUE READING

Keep numbering, discovering evidence, and marking exact TRACKS details. Mark one detail that could support a final judgment or a larger lesson.

You can use the passage from Module 1 or Module 2 as a support instead of this longer one.

[6] Mansa Musa understood how important trade was to his kingdom. He made smart choices that helped merchants feel safe while traveling. Soldiers guarded many of the trade routes, and laws helped protect people and their goods. Because traders knew they could travel safely, more merchants visited Mali. Every new trade journey brought more people, more products, and more opportunities for the kingdom to grow stronger.

[7] The king also encouraged fairness in trade. Merchants wanted to visit places where they could buy and sell goods honestly. As more people trusted Mali's marketplaces, trade continued to increase. Visitors returned home with stories about the kingdom's wealth, safe roads, and busy cities. These stories encouraged even more travelers to visit Mali.

[8] As trade increased, cities throughout Mali became larger and busier. One of the most famous cities was Timbuktu. Merchants filled the marketplaces with colorful goods from many different places. People could find gold, salt, cloth, books, pottery, leather goods, spices, and handmade jewelry. Travelers speaking different languages met to buy, sell, and share ideas. The city became an important meeting place for people from across Africa.

[9] Marketplaces were exciting places filled with activity. Merchants displayed their goods while customers compared prices and looked for the best products. The sounds of conversations, animals, and trading filled the air throughout the day. Children often watched their families work while learning how business was done. These busy markets helped people meet others from different cultures and regions.

[10] Timbuktu was known for much more than trade. It also became one of the greatest centers of learning during its time. Students traveled long distances to study with respected teachers. They learned subjects such as math, science, geography, history, astronomy, and religion. Since printing presses had not yet been invented in the area, books were carefully copied by hand. These books were treated with great care because they contained valuable knowledge. Many families believed that education could help improve a person's future.

[11] Teachers encouraged students to ask thoughtful questions and search for evidence to support their ideas. Lessons often included reading, writing, problem-solving, and discussions. Students worked hard because education opened doors to new opportunities. Scholars spent years studying important books and sharing what they learned with others. Their work helped spread knowledge across many regions.

The Wealth of Mansa Musa - Continued 3

Passage 7 — Very High Stamina • Nonfiction • Part 3 of 5

AS YOU CONTINUE READING

Keep numbering, discovering evidence, and marking exact TRACKS details. Mark one detail that could support a final judgment or a larger lesson.

You can use the passage from Module 1 or Module 2 as a support instead of this longer one.

[12] Libraries in Timbuktu became famous because they stored thousands of handwritten books. Families often protected these books for generations because they believed knowledge was valuable. Visitors from distant places were amazed by the city's dedication to learning. The success of Timbuktu showed that education could become just as important as trade in building a strong society.

[13] One of the most famous parts of Mansa Musa's life was his trip to Mecca, called a pilgrimage. This journey covered thousands of miles and lasted many months. Mansa Musa traveled with a large group that included family members, soldiers, workers, servants, merchants, and guides. Hundreds of camels carried supplies for the journey. Food, water, clothing, tents, and gold all had to be packed before leaving. Planning such a large trip required careful organization.

[14] As the group traveled from city to city, many people came to see the famous king. Some hoped to trade with his group, while others simply wanted to witness the enormous caravan passing through their town. The sight of so many travelers and camels impressed everyone who watched them. News about Mansa Musa spread quickly wherever he went.

[15] During his pilgrimage, Mansa Musa gave away large amounts of gold to people in need. He wanted to help others and share the wealth of his kingdom. His generosity became famous throughout the places he visited. Many people had never seen so much gold before. Some stories explained that he gave away so much gold that its value changed in certain cities for a period of time. Whether every story was completely accurate or not, people everywhere recognized his kindness and generosity.

[16] After hearing these stories, people became curious about Mali. Merchants wanted to trade with the kingdom, while travelers hoped to visit its famous cities. Writers recorded stories about Mansa Musa, and mapmakers began including Mali on their maps because so many people had heard about its wealth. These stories spread across Africa, Europe, and the Middle East, making Mali one of the most recognized kingdoms of its time.

The Wealth of Mansa Musa - Continued 4

Passage 7 — Very High Stamina • Nonfiction • Part 4 of 5

AS YOU CONTINUE READING

Keep numbering, discovering evidence, and marking exact TRACKS details. Mark one detail that could support a final judgment or a larger lesson.

You can use the passage from Module 1 or Module 2 as a support instead of this longer one.

[17] Mansa Musa believed that wealth should also be used to improve his kingdom. He supported the building of mosques, schools, libraries, and other important buildings. Skilled builders and workers created places where people could gather, worship, and learn. These improvements made cities more beautiful and gave people additional opportunities to study, teach, and work together.

[18] The kingdom continued to grow because many people worked together. Farmers raised crops that fed families and travelers. Craftspeople made tools, clothing, pottery, and jewelry. Merchants carried goods across trade routes, while teachers helped students gain new knowledge. Soldiers protected the kingdom, allowing trade and learning to continue without constant fear of attack. Every group played an important role in Mali's success.

[19] Life in Mali depended on teamwork. Farmers relied on merchants to sell extra crops. Merchants depended on safe roads and trustworthy trading partners. Students depended on teachers, and teachers depended on people who carefully copied books by hand. Builders created schools, homes, markets, and places of worship. Each person contributed something important to the kingdom, helping it remain successful for many years.

[20] Families also passed important skills from one generation to the next. Children learned how to farm, trade, build, or create useful goods by watching adults work. As they grew older, they practiced these skills themselves. This helped preserve knowledge and allowed the kingdom to continue growing.

[21] Even after Mansa Musa's pilgrimage ended, people continued talking about him. His journey showed the world that Mali was rich, organized, and powerful. Travelers wrote about the kingdom's wealth, successful trade routes, and centers of learning. Although stories sometimes became larger than life as they spread, they helped introduce many people to the kingdom of Mali.

The Wealth of Mansa Musa - Continued 5

Passage 7 — Very High Stamina • Nonfiction • Part 5 of 5

AS YOU CONTINUE READING

Keep numbering, discovering evidence, and marking exact TRACKS details. Mark one detail that could support a final judgment or a larger lesson.

You can use the passage from Module 1 or Module 2 as a support instead of this longer one.

[22] Today, historians continue studying Mansa Musa because his leadership changed the history of West Africa. His success shows that trade, education, and good leadership can help a kingdom grow stronger. Students around the world learn about Mali because it became one of the greatest trading empires in African history. The story of Timbuktu also reminds people that learning and education have always been valuable.

[23] Because of the choices he made, Mali became known as a powerful and important kingdom. Mansa Musa understood that protecting trade, encouraging education, and helping others could strengthen an entire nation. His leadership allowed cities like Timbuktu to become famous for both business and learning. People still talk about Mansa Musa today when they study African history and discover how trade routes connected different cultures. His life reminds us that wise decisions, strong leadership, and a commitment to learning can leave a lasting impact for generations. Even hundreds of years later, his story continues to inspire people to understand the importance of education, cooperation, and using resources wisely to help others.

The Wealth of Mansa Musa - TRACKS Evidence Hunt

Study the exact words, then verbally explain which judgment or lesson each detail could support.

TRACKS	Exact Evidence	Judgment or Lesson It Could Support
T • Time	“in the early 1300s”	It could support _____
R ■ Reactions	“more opportunities for the kingdom to grow stronger”	It could support _____
A ▲ Actions	“supported the building of mosques, schools, libraries, and other important buildings”	It could support _____
C ★ Character, Concept, Creature	“Mansa Musa”	It could support _____
K ♦ Key Knowledge	“protecting trade, encouraging education, and helping others”	It could support _____
S ▼ Scenery / Setting	“across the hot Sahara Desert”	It could support _____

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Use: This is ____ evidence. It could support _____. You still choose the judgment or lesson it fits.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Day 1 - GATHER: Ending or Bluebird?

Listen for whether a sentence is E — Ending or S — Significance. Explain the clue.

ENDING OR BLUEBIRD?

An Ending closes THIS paper by reinforcing the claim. A Significance sentence lifts the idea into the world BEYOND this paper - the Bluebird Moment.

1. “In the end, protected trade had the greater impact because it increased commerce and supported Mali’s growth.” Label: **E — Ending** (reinforces this paper’s claim).
2. “Leaders today can learn from this example that protecting systems people depend on can create opportunities far beyond one decision.” Label: **S — Significance** (explains why the idea matters beyond this paper).

SORT ONE ROUND

Read a sentence aloud. Decide E or S, then explain the clue that proves the label.

FRESH RECALL

Say the final four CREATURES letters in order: U -> R -> E -> S.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Say the sentence, name E or S, then point to the clue before you write.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Four Regions, One Big Adventure

Passage 8 — Very High Stamina • Narrative • Part 1 of 5

AS YOU READ

Use the DOT HABIT. TAP the TRACKS. Numbered paragraphs help you return to exact evidence. Mark details that support a final judgment about impact and a larger lesson.

You can use the passage from Module 1 or Module 2 as a support instead of this longer one.

[1] “Road trip!” Xavier shouted as his family packed the car. They were driving across Texas to learn about its different regions. Instead of only reading about them in books, Xavier would get to see each region with his own eyes. He packed a notebook so he could write down interesting facts and compare what made each place special. His parents told him that every region had its own landforms, climate, plants, and jobs.

[2] Before they left, Xavier spread a large map of Texas across the kitchen table. The state looked enormous. He traced their route with his finger and smiled.

[3] “It’s hard to believe one state can have so many different places,” he said.

[4] His dad nodded. “Texas is one of the largest states in the country. That means the land, weather, and resources can change a lot from one place to another.”

[5] “I wonder which region I’ll like best,” Xavier said.

[6] “You’ll have to wait until the end of the trip to decide,” his mom replied.

[7] As they drove west, Xavier watched the scenery outside the window slowly change. At first he saw neighborhoods, farms, and trees. After several hours, the trees became fewer, the ground looked drier, and rocky hills appeared in the distance.

[8] Their first stop was the Mountains and Basins in far West Texas. Xavier noticed tall, rocky mountains and dry land. “It’s really hot here,” he said. There were only a few plants, like cacti. His mom explained that people in this region often work in mining and oil because of the natural resources found underground.

[9] The family stopped at a scenic overlook where they could see for miles. High mountains rose above wide valleys, and the bright blue sky stretched across the horizon. The air felt dry, and the wind carried dust across the rocky ground.

[10] “I’ve never seen mountains this tall,” Xavier said quietly.

[11] His dad smiled. “This is one of the only places in Texas where you’ll find mountain ranges like these.”

Four Regions, One Big Adventure - Continued 2

Passage 8 — Very High Stamina • Narrative • Part 2 of 5

AS YOU CONTINUE READING

Keep numbering, discovering evidence, and marking exact TRACKS details. Mark one detail that could support a final judgment or a larger lesson.

You can use the passage from Module 1 or Module 2 as a support instead of this longer one.

[12] As they continued exploring, Xavier noticed that most of the plants were small and spread far apart. There were cacti, shrubs, and patches of dry grass.

[13] “Why aren’t there many trees?” he asked.

[14] “This region doesn’t get much rain,” his mom explained. “Only plants that can survive with very little water grow well here.”

[15] They passed signs showing oil wells and mining sites in the distance. His dad explained that valuable natural resources beneath the ground have helped create jobs for many people over the years. Xavier thought it was interesting that even though the land looked empty, it still provided important resources.

[16] Before leaving, the family stopped to take pictures of the mountains. Xavier realized that this region looked nothing like the places he had visited near home. Even though it was dry and rocky, it had its own kind of beauty.

[17] The next morning, the family headed toward the Great Plains. As the miles passed, the mountains slowly disappeared behind them. The land became flatter, and wide grasslands stretched toward the horizon.

[18] “The view changed again,” Xavier noticed.

[19] “It sure did,” his dad replied. “Every region has its own features.”

[20] The weather was still fairly dry, but it did not feel quite as hot. Soon they began passing large ranches surrounded by long fences.

[21] “This must be where people raise cattle,” Xavier said.

[22] His dad nodded and added that farming is also common here.

[23] They watched herds of cattle grazing across open fields while farmers drove tractors through nearby crops. The wide-open spaces seemed to go on forever.

[24] “I’ve never seen so much land,” Xavier said.

[25] “That space is one reason ranching works so well here,” his mom explained. “There is plenty of room for livestock to graze.”

[26] The family stopped for lunch at a small picnic area. As they ate, a steady breeze moved through the tall grass.

[27] “It feels windy,” Xavier said.

Four Regions, One Big Adventure - Continued 3

Passage 8 — Very High Stamina • Narrative • Part 3 of 5

AS YOU CONTINUE READING

Keep numbering, discovering evidence, and marking exact TRACKS details. Mark one detail that could support a final judgment or a larger lesson.

You can use the passage from Module 1 or Module 2 as a support instead of this longer one.

[28] “With fewer trees and lots of open land, the wind can travel easily across the plains,” his dad explained.

[29] After lunch they visited a ranch where a rancher answered questions about caring for cattle. Xavier learned that raising livestock requires hard work every day. The animals need food, water, and safe places to live.

[30] On the drive away from the ranch, Xavier looked out across the rolling hills and thought about how different this region was from the Mountains and Basins. There were still wide open spaces, but instead of rocky mountains, the land was covered with grass.

[31] Later that day, the family reached the North Central Plains.

[32] “Everything looks greener and more colorful!” Xavier said.

[33] There were more trees and grass, and the land had gentle hills. The climate was milder, and people raised livestock and grew crops.

[34] The family stopped at a community park filled with walking trails and tall shade trees. Birds sang from the branches while butterflies floated from flower to flower. A cool breeze made the afternoon feel comfortable.

[35] “This place feels different,” Xavier said.

[36] His mom smiled. “This region usually receives more rainfall than the ones we’ve already visited.”

[37] As they walked, Xavier noticed ponds, grassy fields, and trees growing in every direction. He realized why so many farms were nearby.

[38] They later visited a family farm where workers cared for animals and tended rows of growing crops. One farmer explained that the climate and soil help many plants grow well in this region.

[39] “So weather can change what people grow?” Xavier asked.

[40] “It certainly can,” the farmer replied. “People often choose crops that grow best in the local climate.”

[41] While driving through nearby towns, Xavier noticed fields stretching beside country roads. Some farms raised cattle while others grew crops. He remembered seeing cattle in the Great Plains too, but the scenery here looked much greener.

[42] His dad reminded him that regions can share some similarities while still being different.

Four Regions, One Big Adventure - Continued 4

Passage 8 — Very High Stamina • Narrative • Part 4 of 5

AS YOU CONTINUE READING

Keep numbering, discovering evidence, and marking exact TRACKS details. Mark one detail that could support a final judgment or a larger lesson.

You can use the passage from Module 1 or Module 2 as a support instead of this longer one.

[43] “That’s why we study more than one characteristic,” he explained. “We look at the land, the weather, the plants, and the kinds of work people do.”

[44] Xavier thought about everything he had learned so far. Every region had something that made it easy to recognize.

[45] The next morning, they continued their trip toward the Coastal Plains near the Gulf of Mexico.

[46] As soon as they stepped out of the car, Xavier noticed the warm, sticky air.

[47] “It feels different here,” he said.

[48] His mom smiled.

[49] “That’s humidity. The air contains more moisture near the Gulf.”

[50] It was humid, and Xavier could feel the warm, moist air. There were rivers, forests, and even beaches. “This region has a lot of different jobs,” his mom said, “like farming, fishing, and working in big cities.”

[51] The family first visited a busy fishing harbor where boats lined the docks. Fishermen unloaded their catches while seabirds circled overhead.

[52] “I’ve never seen so many boats,” Xavier said.

[53] His dad explained that the Gulf of Mexico supports fishing, which provides jobs for many people.

[54] Later they drove through thick forests where tall trees shaded the highway. Soon they entered one of Texas’s large cities. Cars filled the roads, and tall buildings reached high into the sky.

[55] “There are so many people here,” Xavier said.

[56] “Large cities create many different kinds of jobs,” his mom explained. “People may work in schools, hospitals, stores, offices, factories, or many other places.”

[57] As they continued driving, Xavier realized that this region looked very different from every other place they had visited. It had beaches, forests, rivers, farms, neighborhoods, and busy cities all within the same region.

[58] The family spent the afternoon walking along the beach. Waves rolled onto the shore while children played in the sand. Xavier watched pelicans glide over the water and listened to the sound of the surf.

Four Regions, One Big Adventure - Continued 5

Passage 8 — Very High Stamina • Narrative • Part 5 of 5

AS YOU CONTINUE READING

Keep numbering, discovering evidence, and marking exact TRACKS details. Mark one detail that could support a final judgment or a larger lesson.

You can use the passage from Module 1 or Module 2 as a support instead of this longer one.

[59] “I think this might be my favorite stop,” he said.

[60] His parents smiled.

[61] “Every region has something special,” his dad replied.

[62] On the drive home, Xavier looked through the pages of his notebook. He compared everything he had seen during the trip. The Mountains and Basins were dry with tall mountains and valuable natural resources. The Great Plains had wide grasslands, ranches, and farms. The North Central Plains were greener with gentle hills, crops, and livestock. The Coastal Plains had rivers, forests, beaches, humid weather, large cities, and many different industries.

[63] As the sun began to set, Xavier looked out the car window one last time.

[64] “I thought Texas would look the same everywhere,” he admitted.

[65] His dad smiled.

[66] “A lot of people think that until they travel across the state.”

[67] “I understand now,” Xavier replied. “The land changes from place to place, and that changes how people live and work.”

[68] His mom nodded proudly.

[69] “That’s exactly what makes each region important.”

[70] As they headed home, Xavier rethought about what he had seen. Each region looked different, but all were important parts of Texas.

Four Regions, One Big Adventure - TRACKS Evidence Hunt

Study the exact words, then verbally explain which judgment or lesson each detail could support.

TRACKS	Exact Evidence	Judgment or Lesson It Could Support
T • Time	“The next morning”	It could support _____
R ■ Reactions	“that changes how people live and work”	It could support _____
A ▲ Actions	“driving across Texas to learn about its different regions”	It could support _____
C ★ Character, Concept, Creature	“Zavier”	It could support _____
K ♦ Key Knowledge	“landforms, climate, plants, and jobs”	It could support _____
S ▼ Scenery / Setting	“near the Gulf of Mexico”	It could support _____

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Use: This is ____ evidence. It could support _____. You still choose the judgment or lesson it fits.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Day 1 - GATHER: Ending or Bluebird?

Listen for whether a sentence is E — Ending or S — Significance. Explain the clue.

ENDING OR BLUEBIRD?

An Ending closes THIS paper by reinforcing the claim. A Significance sentence lifts the idea into the world BEYOND this paper - the Bluebird Moment.

1. “In the end, protected trade had the greater impact because it increased commerce and supported Mali’s growth.” Label: **E — Ending** (reinforces this paper’s claim).
2. “Leaders today can learn from this example that protecting systems people depend on can create opportunities far beyond one decision.” Label: **S — Significance** (explains why the idea matters beyond this paper).

SORT ONE ROUND

Read a sentence aloud. Decide E or S, then explain the clue that proves the label.

FRESH RECALL

Say the final four CREATURES letters in order: U -> R -> E -> S.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Say the sentence, name E or S, then point to the clue before you write.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Day 1 - REVEAL: The Whole Creature at Once

This is the first time you use the whole creature in one response.

FULL CREATURES AT A GLANCE

C Claim - take a defensible position. R Reasons - organize logical support. E Evidence - prove the reasons. A Argument - make the whole case coherent. T Thinking - explain how/why the evidence works. U Understanding Others - represent another viewpoint accurately. R Rebuttal - respond with reasoning/evidence. E Ending - reinforce and synthesize. S Significance - the Bluebird Moment: why it matters beyond the paper.

MODEL E + S — MANSA MUSA

E: In the end, protecting trade had the greater impact on Mali because safer routes increased commerce and helped the kingdom grow stronger. S: Mansa Musa's example shows that leaders can create lasting opportunity when they protect the systems people rely on.

MODEL E + S — TEXAS REGIONS

E: Overall, natural resources have a greater influence on work opportunities because they directly support mining, oil, fishing, and farming across Texas. S: Understanding how resources shape opportunity can help communities make thoughtful decisions about jobs, growth, and how they care for the land.

CHECK

What reasoning does each model Ending bring together, and how does each Bluebird Moment reach beyond the paper?

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Say each model aloud. You still explain what the evidence shows.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Build the Full CREATURES Case

Read. Plan. Build the whole creature, letter by letter.

HOW TO PLAY

1. Teams choose a defensible C — Claim.
2. Teams build two R/E/T chains.
3. Teams arrange the chains so A — Argument flows logically.
4. Teams draw one U viewpoint and write an accurate representation.
5. Teams write an R — Rebuttal that uses reasoning and evidence.
6. Teams write an E — Ending that reinforces the claim and synthesizes the best reasoning.
7. Teams write an S — Significance Bluebird Moment: why the issue matters beyond the paper.
8. Teams read the full argument aloud. Listeners name any missing or weak CREATURES move.

TEAM PROMPT

Argue whether protecting trade or supporting learning created the more important legacy for Mali. Use evidence from the passage and acknowledge another reasonable viewpoint.

NO-CUT PATHWAY

Do not want to cut? Use the card numbers below without cutting. Build the same map on the recording page and write one sentence for each CREATURES move.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Build one section at a time: C -> one R/E/T chain -> U/R -> E/S. Read the finished case aloud to hear its coherence.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Before You Cut

Get the cards and recording page ready.

SET UP

Cut on the dashed lines, build the complete CREATURES map, and use the self-check backs after your group commits.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Use the numbered no-cut pathway and build the same CREATURES map on the recording page.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

✂ CUT PAGE - Build the Full CREATURES Case Cards 1

Cut on the dashed lines, then build the whole case in order.

CARD 1 — C : Claim

Memory cue: Take a defensible position.
Our sentence for this move:

CARD 2 — R : Reasons

Memory cue: Organize logical support.
Our sentence for this move:

CARD 3 — E : Evidence

Memory cue: Prove the reasons.
Our sentence for this move:

CARD 4 — A : Argument

Memory cue: Make the whole case coherent.
Our sentence for this move:

Self-Check Backs - Build the Full CREATURES Case Cards 1

Check each CREATURES move only after your group commits.

R**BUILD THE FULL CREATURES CASE****Card 2 — Reasons****C****BUILD THE FULL CREATURES CASE****Card 1 — Claim****A****BUILD THE FULL CREATURES CASE****Card 4 — Argument****E****BUILD THE FULL CREATURES CASE****Card 3 — Evidence**

✂ CUT PAGE - Build the Full CREATURES Case Cards 2

Cut on the dashed lines, then build the whole case in order.

CARD 5 — T : Thinking

Memory cue: Explain how and why the evidence works.

Our sentence for this move:

CARD 6 — U : Understanding Others

Memory cue: Represent another viewpoint accurately.

Our sentence for this move:

CARD 7 — R : Rebuttal

Memory cue: Respond with reasoning and evidence.

Our sentence for this move:

CARD 8 — E : Ending

Memory cue: Reinforce and synthesize.

Our sentence for this move:

Self-Check Backs - Build the Full CREATURES Case Cards 2

Check each CREATURES move only after your group commits.

U

BUILD THE FULL CREATURES CASE
Card 6 — Understanding Others

T

BUILD THE FULL CREATURES CASE
Card 5 — Thinking

E

BUILD THE FULL CREATURES CASE
Card 8 — Ending

R

BUILD THE FULL CREATURES CASE
Card 7 — Rebuttal

✂ CUT PAGE - Build the Full CREATURES Case Cards 3

Cut on the dashed lines, then build the whole case in order.

CARD 9 — S : Significance

Memory cue: Create the Bluebird Moment: why it matters beyond the paper.

Our sentence for this move:

Self-Check Backs - Build the Full CREATURES Case Cards 3

Check each CREATURES move only after your group commits.

S

BUILD THE FULL CREATURES CASE

Card 9 — Significance

Build the Full CREATURES Case - Recording

Build the whole creature and write one sentence for each move.

OUR CLAIM (C)

R/E/T CHAINS

Reason 1 + Evidence 1 + Thinking 1; Reason 2 + Evidence 2 + Thinking 2.

A — ARGUMENT · U — UNDERSTANDING OTHERS · R — REBUTTAL

E — ENDING and S — SIGNIFICANCE (Bluebird Moment)

Build the Full CREATURES Case - Self-Check

Compare only after your team finishes the whole case.

SAMPLE TEAM ANSWER KEY

C: Supporting learning created the more important legacy for Mali. E — Ending: Overall, support for learning created the more important legacy because it strengthened Timbuktu's reputation and helped knowledge continue across generations. S — Significance: Communities today can still learn from Mali that investing in knowledge creates opportunities that may continue long after one leader or one period of wealth has passed.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Say: Our strongest CREATURES move is ____ because _____. You still build every letter yourself.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Day 3 - DISCUSS

A full argument is a system. Every part affects another part.

Which CREATURES letter was easiest to build? Which needed the deepest thinking?

How did U/R change or strengthen the claim?

How is an Ending different from a Significance sentence?

Where did the argument need a transition or rearrangement to improve A — Argument?

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Use: The hardest letter was ____ because _____. My Ending closes the case; my Significance _____.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Plan My Full CREATURES ECR

Prompt: Argue whether climate or natural resources have the greater influence on how people live and work across Texas.

C — CLAIM

Choose a defensible position from the passage.

R / E / T — TWO CHAINS

Two reasons, strong evidence for each, and how/why each proves the claim.

A • U • R

Arrange the reasons coherently, represent one fair alternate viewpoint, and answer it with reasoning and evidence.

E — ENDING • S — SIGNIFICANCE

Reinforce and synthesize, then lift the idea into a Bluebird Moment.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Label the planning organizer with C R E A T U R E S. You still choose each idea.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Full CREATURES Exemplar - Texas Regions

Study how every move contributes to one coherent case.

C — Claim: Natural resources have the greater influence on how Texans live and work because resources directly shape many of the jobs and economic opportunities across the state.

R/E/T Chain 1: In the Mountains and Basins, resources underground support mining and oil work. The passage explains people often work in those industries because of the natural resources found there. This supports the claim because the jobs are directly connected to what the land provides.

R/E/T Chain 2: The Coastal Plains show rivers, forests, beaches, farms, fishing, and large cities. These details show a wide range of resources can support several kinds of work at once.

A — Argument: The first reason shows specialized work from underground resources; the second expands to a region where water, land, and cities create many industries.

U — Understanding Others: Some readers may argue climate has the greater influence because rainfall and temperature affect vegetation and farming.

R — Rebuttal: Climate affects daily conditions, but the passage connects natural resources more directly to a wider range of specific jobs.

E — Ending: Overall, natural resources have the greater influence on work opportunities because they directly shape what industries can grow in different Texas regions.

S — Significance / Bluebird Moment: Understanding the relationship between resources and opportunity can help communities make wiser choices about jobs, growth, and how they use and protect the land that supports them.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Read one CREATURES move at a time. You still explain how the Ending and the Bluebird grow from the evidence.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Module 4 Cumulative ECR Quality Check

Check the full response you built.

TRACE C -> R/E/T -> U/R -> E/S

CHECK

- ☐ defensible claim ☐ two logical R/E/T chains ☐ coherent A — Argument
- ☐ fair U — Understanding Others ☐ evidence-based R — Rebuttal
- ☐ E — Ending reinforces and synthesizes ☐ S — Significance is a source-rooted Bluebird Moment
- ☐ added, deleted, combined, or rearranged ideas for coherence
- ☐ pronouns; capitalization of historical periods, events, documents, titles, languages, races, nationalities
- ☐ spelling and high-frequency words ☐ accurate quotation

MY REVISED ECR

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Point to one feature at a time and read aloud. You still decide each revision.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Full CREATURES Draft - Page 1

Plan with CREATURES, then write a complete response.

DRAFTING FOCUS

C -> R/E/T -> U/R -> E/S. Reinforce and synthesize in your Ending; let your Bluebird Moment grow from the evidence.

[illegible]

Full CREATURES Draft - Page 2

Continue only if you need more space.

ENDING + BLUEBIRD CHECK

Does my Ending close the case without copying the claim, and does my Significance sentence show why the issue matters beyond the paper?

[illegible]

Day 4 - AWARD Your Full CREATURES Response

An award counts when you point to evidence in your own work.

CHOOSE

- Claim Builder - my claim is defensible.
- Reasoning Architect - my R/E/T chains are logical and coherent.
- Fair Thinker - I represented another viewpoint accurately and answered it.
- Purposeful Ender - my Ending reinforces and synthesizes.
- Bluebird Writer - my Significance sentence grows from the argument.

CLASS CHEER

Close the case! Lift it high! Let the Bluebird Moment fly!

MY AWARD

I award myself the _____ Award because

Star your Bluebird Moment. The part of my argument that sounds most like a real writer is ____ because ____.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Star your Bluebird Moment and circle your Ending before writing.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

MOVE YOUR THINKING



**Foundational
RECALL**



**Emergent
CONNECT**



**Visible
EXPLAIN**



**Independent
USE**



**Reflective
EXTEND**

Day 4 - TARGET Your Next Argument

Choose one CREATURES target from this module.

- ☐ C clarity - make the claim more defensible.
- ☐ R distinction - build more distinct reasons.
- ☐ E strength - choose stronger evidence.
- ☐ A coherence - connect the whole case.
- ☐ T depth - explain how and why more deeply.
- ☐ U/R fairness - represent and answer another view.
- ☐ E/S - a stronger Ending and Bluebird Moment.

MY TARGET

My strongest CREATURES letter is ____ because

My next-letter target is

My next Bluebird Moment will be stronger if I

CURIOSITY QUESTIONS

Why does an Ending sound familiar but more mature? How does a fair rebuttal make an argument stronger? Why must the Bluebird Moment leave from the evidence nest?

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Choose one listed target. You still explain why it matches your work.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Day 5 - EXPLAIN: Teach the Whole Creature

Teaching the whole creature is your final memory test.

TEACH-BACK PLAN

Partner A teaches C through T. Partner B teaches U through S. Then build one oral argument together from a passage prompt. Finish by explaining why S is called the Bluebird Moment.

The nine CREATURES moves in order:

What E — Ending and S — Significance each do:

Why T always means Thinking:

Why the Bluebird Moment must grow from the evidence nest:

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Rehearse with a partner or make an approved audio recording. Explain the job each letter does, do not just recite the letters.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

MY THINKING NOW

Answer the module question again.

How do Ending and Significance complete a CREATURES argument and leave the reader with a meaningful Bluebird Moment?

WHAT CHANGED?

Circle or underline something you can explain now that you could not explain at the beginning.

MOVE YOUR THINKING


Foundational
RECALL


Emergent
CONNECT


Visible
EXPLAIN


Independent
USE


Reflective
EXTEND

MY MODULE CHECK-IN

Award. Target. Explain. Use proof, not just feelings.

AWARD

Color or check every CREATURES letter you successfully used. Star your Bluebird Moment and complete: “The part of my argument that sounds most like a real writer is ____ because ____.”

TARGET

Choose one: C clarity, R distinction, E strength, A coherence, T depth, U fairness, R rebuttal, E ending, or S significance.

EXPLAIN

Partner A teaches C through T. Partner B teaches U through S. Build one oral argument together and explain why S is called the Bluebird Moment.

I Can...	Not Yet	Getting Set	I Can Do It
Write a purposeful E — Ending	☐	☐	☐
Write S — Significance as a Bluebird Moment	☐	☐	☐
Explain all nine CREATURES moves	☐	☐	☐
Build coherent R/E/T chains + a fair U/R	☐	☐	☐
Assemble a complete argumentative ECR	☐	☐	☐

Check the Learning

Quick Check - show what you can do independently.

QUICK CHECK

1. Explain how E — Ending differs from S — Significance.
2. State all nine CREATURES moves and explain why T always means Thinking.
3. Diagnose the weak conclusion: “So natural resources are important.”
4. Explain why a Bluebird Moment must grow from the evidence nest.

ANSWER KEY

1. Ending reinforces the claim and synthesizes the strongest reasoning; Significance explains why the issue matters beyond the paper. 2. Claim, Reasons, Evidence, Argument, Thinking, Understanding Others, Rebuttal, Ending, Significance - Thinking explains how and why the evidence supports the claim. 3. The sentence is too general; it neither reinforces the complete claim nor synthesizes the developed reasoning. 4. Significance reaches beyond the paper but must stay connected to its evidence and reasoning rather than becoming random.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Answer aloud first, then write. You still explain each answer in your own words.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Day 5 - Writing Opportunity - Full CREATURES ECR

Build the opposite defensible position, then compare the two cases.

CHOICE 1

Argue that climate has the greater influence on how people live and work across Texas. Use only evidence from “Four Regions, One Big Adventure.”

CHOICE 2

Argue that natural resources have the greater influence. Use only evidence from “Four Regions, One Big Adventure.”

MY CHOICE

Choice: ____ My defensible claim:

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Read both positions aloud. Choose the case whose evidence you can explain most clearly.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Plan My Opposite CREATURES Case

Plan the whole creature for your chosen position.

C — CLAIM

R / E / T — TWO CHAINS

A · U · R

E — ENDING · S — SIGNIFICANCE

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Label the organizer with C R E A T U R E S.
You still decide which reasons are strongest.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Additional CREATURES Draft - Page 1

Write your complete argumentative response.

DRAFTING FOCUS
C -> R/E/T -> U/R -> E/S. Close the case, then let your Bluebird Moment fly.

DRAFTING FOCUS
C -> R/E/T -> U/R -> E/S. Close the case, then let your Bluebird Moment fly.

[illegible]

Additional CREATURES Draft - Page 2

Write your complete argumentative response.

DRAFTING FOCUS

C -> R/E/T -> U/R -> E/S. Close the case, then let your Bluebird Moment fly.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines, typical of notebook paper. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

Revise, Edit, and Share

Improve coherence, check conventions, then explain one choice.

REVISE

☐ add a missing idea ☐ delete a distraction ☐ combine repeated ideas ☐ rearrange for a stronger A — Argument ☐ Ending reinforces and synthesizes ☐ Bluebird grows from the argument

EDIT

☐ complete sentences ☐ agreement ☐ pronouns, including reflexive ☐ capitalization of historical periods, events, documents, titles, languages, races, nationalities ☐ spelling

ONE REVISION

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Read the claim, Ending, and Significance aloud. You still decide the revision.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Tiny Tracks

Point to the proof you chose.

Tiny Tracks

Small Stops. Big Growth.

I just learned:

My thinking level:

MOVE YOUR THINKING



Foundational
RECALL



Emergent
CONNECT



Visible
EXPLAIN



Independent
USE



Reflective
EXTEND

☐ Easy ☐ Just Right ☐ Challenging

Support I used: _____

My proof is on page: _____ My next move: _____

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Defend how your Bluebird Moment reaches beyond the paper while staying rooted in the evidence.

READY TO STRETCH? - Two Complete CREATURES Cases

Build two defensible arguments from opposite positions on the same prompt.

PROMPT

Argue whether climate or natural resources have the greater influence on how people live and work across Texas.

CASE 1

Build a complete CREATURES case for one position.

CASE 2

Build a complete CREATURES case for the opposite position.

COMPARE

Compare evidence strength, reasoning depth, rebuttal quality, and Bluebird Moments. Decide which case is more persuasive and justify your evaluation with the CREATURES rubric.

Study Three CREATURES Ending Exemplars

Notice how a conclusion grows from weak to strong.

PROMPT

Argue whether climate or natural resources have the greater influence on how people live and work across Texas.

LOW

“So natural resources are important.”

Why does this sentence fail to reinforce the claim or synthesize the reasoning?

MEDIUM

“Overall, natural resources have the greater influence on work opportunities because they directly shape important industries across Texas.”

Why is this a strong Ending that still needs S — Significance?

HIGH

E — Ending: Overall, natural resources have the greater influence on work opportunities because they directly shape what industries can grow in different Texas regions. S — Significance / Bluebird Moment: Understanding the relationship between resources and opportunity can help communities make wiser choices about jobs, growth, and how they use and protect the land that supports them.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Underline the Ending and the Significance in different ways. You still justify the level.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.

Portfolio Evidence + Closing Reflection

Choose pages that prove your Module 4 growth.

Evidence	Page	What It Proves
1		
2		
3		

At first, I...

Now I...

MODULE 4 CLOSING IDEA

The Ending closes the case by reinforcing the claim and synthesizing the strongest reasoning. Significance is the Bluebird Moment - it lifts the idea beyond the paper to show why the argument matters in communities, leadership, decisions, and the world around us. Together, E and S complete the full CREATURES argument and leave the reader with a lasting idea.

Essential Question - Answered

You started with an Essential Question. Now connect this answer to what you learned in Module 4.

OUR ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How do Ending and Significance complete a CREATURES argument and leave the reader with a meaningful Bluebird Moment?

My Answer

I use E - Ending to close the argument by reinforcing my claim and synthesizing my strongest reasoning. Then I use S - Significance to lift the idea beyond the paper and explain why it matters to communities, leaders, decisions, or the world; that final idea is my Bluebird Moment.

STUDENT SUPPORT - Another Way to Show What You Know

Start with the ending: My claim again is ____, and it matters because ____.

Ready to Stretch? Take Your Thinking Further!

Complete the thinking without the support, then point to evidence and explain why your choice works.