

THE WRITING ACADEMY®

A SUBSIDIARY OF TEACH BIG®

GRADE



Cluster 1

Short Constructed Response (Informational)

TEACHER LESSON PLAN GUIDE

Grade 5 • Cluster 1

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Statement of Purpose

Cluster 1 opens Grade 5 by teaching students to write a strong Short Constructed Response to WHY and HOW prompts. The guiding idea is that the words a writer chooses reveal the level of their thinking, so when students upgrade their language they upgrade their thinking.

Across four modules students move from recognizing and upgrading thinking levels, to stating a clear central idea, to selecting strong evidence, and finally to explaining why that evidence matters. Each week the writing stamina grows from Low to Very High.

Abstract

Module 1, Understanding and Upgrading Thinking Levels in WHY and HOW Responses, introduces the response and its parts. Module 2, Writing a Strong Thesis (Central Idea) Using TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER, focuses on a central idea that answers the prompt directly.

Module 3, Using Evidence to Support Thinking, teaches students to choose the most relevant details from the source, and Module 4, Writing the Explanation Sentence, completes the response by explaining how the evidence supports the central idea. Every day follows the Teach BIG GRADUATE routine, moving students from gathering and revealing the skill, through attempting, discussing, and using it, to awarding growth, targeting the next step, and explaining their thinking to others.

Standards at a Glance

The TEKS below are taught and practiced across Cluster 1. The **exact, verbatim Student Expectation wording** for each — quoted from the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills — appears on the **TEKS Correlations** page inside each module, along with where in the week it is taught.

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

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

M O D U L E

1

**Understanding and Upgrading
Thinking Levels in WHY and
HOW Responses**

Week 1 • Low Stamina

Module 1: Understanding and Upgrading Thinking Levels in WHY and HOW Responses

Week 1 - Low Stamina - Cluster 1 (Short Constructed Response)

When Students Level Up Their Language, They Level Up Their Thinking

Teacher Script

"When students level up their language, they level up their thinking - and when thinking grows, achievement follows."

Module Overarching Question

How can writers upgrade WHY and HOW SCR responses so their word choice shows deeper thinking?

Today We Will Look For

- words that reveal a thinking level: says and shows versus suggests, indicates, demonstrates, and establishes
- how a WHY response uses a complex sentence with a subordinating word such as because
- how a relational HOW response uses a simple sentence with a preposition such as through or by
- how historical, cultural, and environmental setting shapes the ideas we explain

Student reminder: Your words show your thinking level.

Why This Module Matters

This introductory module acquaints students with the Thinking Levels Charts in their Interactive Notebooks. Students look at sample student responses, find the words and phrases that lead into evidence and explanation, determine the response level, and then upgrade the response one level at a time. Using two Cluster 1 passages, students learn that precise language - not length - shows the depth of their thinking.

Module Passage Set - Low Stamina

Required stamina level for Module 1: Low Stamina. The same two Grade 5 Cluster 1 passages increase in length, detail, evidence distance, and conceptual demand across the four modules.

Passage	Reading Genre	Scope & Sequence Passage Reference	Student-Facing Word Count
From Tension to Revolution	Nonfiction	1	258
The Ocean Lesson	Fiction	2	272

Teacher Passage Use Note: Use the stamina versions printed in this module. The lesson's passage-dependent prompts, models, games, examples, intervention, enrichment, and answer guidance should be completed with these assigned versions.

Module Independent Product

Independently identify the level of a WHY response and a HOW response, then rewrite each one level higher using accurate evidence, a clearer citation stem, and a more precise explanation.

Teacher Inspiration

Teacher Script

“When students level up their language, they level up their thinking—and when thinking grows, achievement follows.”

Module 1 - Family Communication

Purpose: Families are partners in this work. This page explains the week's learning, offers one question to ask at home, and gives one simple way to help.

This Week at a Glance

- The big skill: upgrading WHY and HOW short constructed responses by choosing more precise words - such as indicates, demonstrates, suggests, and establishes - to show deeper thinking. We use a "Thinking Levels" chart (Foundational, Emergent, Visible, Independent, Reflective), and your child revises a model response to climb one level higher.
- The reading: "From Tension to Revolution" (nonfiction) traces how colonial anger over taxation without representation, the Stamp Act, the Boston Massacre, and the Boston Tea Party built the road to the American Revolution. "The Ocean Lesson" (fiction) follows a girl named Nyla as she watches sea turtles follow instinct to the ocean and then watches orcas rely on learned behavior and teamwork - both showing how setting shapes behavior.
- The writing: your child takes a model response and rewrites it to move up one thinking level at a time, swapping vague phrases for citation stems and explanation words that make the thinking visible.

One Question to Ask at Home



Teacher Script

"You explained what the text says - now what word would make it sound like a thinker instead of a reteller?"

One Way to Help

When your child leans on "The text says..." or "The passage shows...", gently ask them to swap in a stronger word like indicates or demonstrates and to explain what the evidence means. Upgrading one word at a time is exactly this week's work.

Family Letter

Dear Families,

This week your fifth-grader is practicing a skill we call "upgrading" a short constructed response - taking a sentence that just restates a fact and rewriting it so the thinking behind the answer becomes visible. We use a simple chart with five levels - Foundational, Emergent, Visible, Independent, and Reflective - and your child revises a model answer to climb one level higher. The goal is not to write longer sentences; it is to choose a more precise word that shows how the evidence connects to the answer.

Both passages this week feed that work. "From Tension to Revolution" is a nonfiction piece tracing how colonial anger over taxation without representation, the Stamp Act, the Boston Massacre, and the Boston Tea Party built the road to the American Revolution. "The Ocean Lesson" is a fiction story in which a girl named Nyla watches sea turtles hatch and follow instinct to the ocean, then watches orcas rely on learned behavior and teamwork - both showing how setting shapes behavior. Your child's job is to explain why or how each passage makes its point, not just what happened.

Here is a small way to help at home: if you hear your child say, "The text says the orcas work together," ask, "What word would make that sound like a thinker instead of a reteller?" Suggest swapping in indicates, demonstrates, or suggests, and then ask whether the sentence now reaches one level higher on the Thinking Levels chart.

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

Carta para las Familias

Estimadas familias:

Esta semana, su hijo o hija de quinto grado practica una habilidad que llamamos "mejorar" una respuesta construida corta: tomar una oración que solo repite un dato y reescribirla para que el pensamiento detrás de la respuesta se vuelva visible. Usamos un cuadro sencillo con cinco niveles - Fundamental, Emergente, Visible, Independiente y Reflexivo - y su hijo o hija revisa una respuesta modelo para subir un nivel. La meta no es escribir oraciones más largas; es elegir una palabra más precisa que muestre cómo la evidencia se conecta con la respuesta.

Los dos textos de esta semana apoyan ese trabajo. "From Tension to Revolution" es un texto de no ficción que muestra cómo el enojo de los colonos por los impuestos sin representación, la Ley del Timbre, la Masacre de Boston y el Motín del Té de Boston construyeron el camino hacia la Revolución Americana. "The Ocean Lesson" es un texto de ficción en el que una niña llamada Nyla observa a las tortugas marinas seguir el instinto hacia el océano y luego observa a las orcas que dependen del comportamiento aprendido y del trabajo en equipo, ambos mostrando cómo el entorno moldea la conducta. La tarea de su hijo o hija es explicar por qué o cómo cada texto expone su idea, no solo qué pasó.

Una forma sencilla de ayudar en casa: si escucha a su hijo o hija decir, "El texto dice que las orcas trabajan juntas," pregunte, "¿Qué palabra haría que eso suene como un pensador y no como alguien que solo repite?" Sugiera cambiarla por indica, demuestra o sugiere, y luego pregunte si la oración ahora llega un nivel más alto en el cuadro de Niveles de Pensamiento.

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

Module 1 - Family Conversation Starters

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

- In "From Tension to Revolution," if you had to explain why the Stamp Act mattered more than just a tax, what word would you use to start your explanation, and why is it stronger than "the text says"?
- In "From Tension to Revolution," why might the author include both the Boston Massacre and the Boston Tea Party instead of only one?
- In "The Ocean Lesson," how would you explain the difference between the turtles' instinct and the orcas' learned behavior?
- Which word shows deeper thinking - "says," "shows," or "demonstrates" - and how can you tell?

Simple Family Activities

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

Family Activity - Upgrade It

Read a sentence together that starts with "The text says the turtles follow instinct." Ask your child to replace "The text says" with "indicates" or "demonstrates" and finish the sentence in their own words. Talk about whether the new sentence reaches one level higher on the Thinking Levels chart.

Family Activity - Thinker or Reteller

Read a sentence together that starts with "The passage shows that the Stamp Act made colonists angry." Ask your child to swap in "suggests" or "establishes" and explain why the word choice makes the thinking deeper. Then ask, "Does this sound like a thinker or a reteller?"

Module 1 - Lesson Overview and Standards

Lesson Overview

Module 1 opens Cluster 1. Students learn that the words a writer chooses reveal the level of their thinking. Using "From Tension to Revolution" and "The Ocean Lesson," students examine sample WHY and HOW short constructed responses, determine each response's thinking level, and upgrade it one level at a time with stronger citation stems, more precise word choice, and clearer explanation.

BIG Goal: Students will upgrade a WHY response and a HOW response by choosing precise language that shows deeper, clearer thinking.

Writing TEKS for This Module

The Student Expectation column below is the exact, full wording of each Grade 5 TEKS breakout - quoted verbatim from the Cluster 1 scope and sequence, not paraphrased or abbreviated. This module claims only the breakouts students directly demonstrate or intentionally practice.

Writing Process TEKS

TEKS	Student Expectation (verbatim TEKS breakout)
5.11(A)(i)	plan a first draft by selecting a genre for a particular topic, purpose, and audience using a range of strategies

Writing Genre TEKS

TEKS	Student Expectation (verbatim TEKS breakout)
5.12(B)(i)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea
5.12(B)(ii)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using genre characteristics
5.12(B)(iii)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using craft

Revising TEKS

TEKS	Student Expectation (verbatim TEKS breakout)
5.11(C)(i)	revise drafts to improve sentence structure
5.11(C)(ii)	revise drafts to improve word choice

Editing TEKS

TEKS	Student Expectation (verbatim TEKS breakout)
5.11(D)(i)	edit drafts using standard English conventions, including complete simple sentences with subject-verb agreement
5.11(D)(xxix)	edit drafts using standard English conventions, including correct spelling of high-frequency words

Where the Standards Are Visible in This Module

- Students revise model WHY and HOW SCR responses for stronger sentence structure and more precise word choice.
- Students explain their revisions orally and write brief evidence-based responses using content-area vocabulary.
- Students apply complete sentence and high-frequency spelling expectations while recording upgraded responses.

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

These are the standards listed for Cluster 1 in the Teach BIG Scope and Sequence, written in full rather than listed only by code, and grouped by category.

TEKS - Cluster 1 (from the Scope & Sequence)

Writing Process (Composition)

- 5.11(A)(i) plan a first draft by selecting a genre for a particular topic, purpose, and audience using a range of strategies
- 5.11(B)(i) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction

Writing Genre

- 5.12(B)(i) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea
- 5.12(B)(ii) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using genre characteristics
- 5.12(B)(iii) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using craft

Revising

- 5.11(C)(i) revise drafts to improve sentence structure
- 5.11(C)(ii) revise drafts to improve word choice

Editing

- 5.11(D)(i) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including complete simple sentences with subject-verb agreement
- 5.11(D)(vi) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including past tense of irregular verbs
- 5.11(D)(vii) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including collective nouns
- 5.11(D)(viii) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including adjectives, including their comparative forms
- 5.11(D)(ix) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including adjectives, including their superlative forms
- 5.11(D)(xxvii) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including correct spelling of words with grade-appropriate orthographic patterns
- 5.11(D)(xxix) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including correct spelling of high-frequency words

ELPS - Cluster 1 (breakouts this module addresses)

Listening

- 1(E)(i) demonstrate listening comprehension from information presented orally during formal classroom interactions by restating, responding, paraphrasing, summarizing, or asking for clarification or additional details

Speaking

- 2(B)(i) speak using content-area vocabulary during formal classroom interactions to demonstrate acquisition of new words
- 2(E)(i) narrate, describe, explain, justify, discuss, elaborate, or evaluate orally with increasing specificity in academic context or discourse

Writing

- 4(C)(i) write using a combination of both high-frequency words and content-area vocabulary
- 4(D)(ii) write content-area texts using a variety of sentence types
- 4(F)(i) write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting details using appropriate content for [a] specific purpose
- 4(F)(ix) write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting evidence using appropriate content for [a] specific purpose

Language Domains

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

Domain	How this module builds it
Listening	In Listen, Decide, and Defend, students hear two responses and decide which shows stronger thinking.
Speaking	Students defend a choice by naming the exact word or relationship that made a response stronger.
Reading	Students read both passages and mark details that show how setting shapes behavior.
Writing	Students rewrite WHY and HOW responses one thinking level higher with precise word choice.

Module 1 - Learning Destination

I Can Statements

- I can upgrade an SCR response by choosing precise language that shows deeper, clearer thinking.
- I can identify the thinking level of a response by the words it uses.
- I can write a WHY response as a complex sentence using a subordinating word such as because.
- I can write a relational HOW response as a simple sentence using a preposition such as through or by.

I Will Statements

- I will read closely, listen actively, discuss my reasoning, write independently, reflect on my growth, and explain my thinking to others.
- I will move a response up one thinking level at a time instead of just making it longer.
- I will use stronger citation stems and explanation words to show precise thinking.
- I will connect my responses to historical, cultural, and environmental setting.

Success Criteria

- I can name the thinking level of a response and point to the exact words that reveal it.
- I can upgrade a response one level higher with a stronger stem and a clearer explanation.
- I can match my sentence structure to a WHY prompt or a HOW prompt.
- I can support my answer with accurate evidence from the passage.

Evidence That Will Demonstrate Mastery

- The Listen, Decide, and Defend responses from the auditory engagement.
- The Level Up Showdown upgrades recorded in the Interactive Notebook.
- The independent WHY and HOW practice, rewritten one level higher.

Module 1 - Rigor and Misconceptions

Rigor Safeguard

You may read both passages aloud, reread them, and let students use the Thinking Levels Chart, the WHY and HOW thesis (central idea) charts, and the citation stems. You may provide oral rehearsal. You may not choose a student's words, write their upgraded response, or supply their explanation. The student must still identify the level, choose the stronger language, and explain why the new version shows deeper thinking.

Rigor and Cognitive Demand

Level of Thinking	What Students Must Do	Expected Degree of Independence	Evidence of the Thinking
Literal	Identify the thinking level of a response by its words.	Supported. The teacher may reread the response.	The student names the level and points to the exact words.
Inferential	Upgrade a response one level higher with a stronger stem and explanation.	Guided early, independent by Use Again.	The student rewrites a response that shows more precise thinking.
Evaluative	Judge which of two responses shows stronger thinking and defend it.	Independent by the game and the auditory task.	The student explains why precise language raises the level.

Educator Insight

Students often assume that longer writing automatically means deeper thinking, but precise language matters more than length. Many students remain at a lower level because they use basic verbs like says and shows without building stronger explanation. Some students confuse evidence and explanation and simply restate the text. Others copy stronger stems without understanding why those words change the level. Watch for students who can label a level but cannot explain why it fits. Ask them to point to the exact words that reveal the level. Reinforce that language reflects thinking, not decoration.

Module 1 - Thinking Levels

These charts support building rigor. Use them in every module to name the level of thinking a task and a student response require. Color-code the five levels to match the student Thinking Levels Chart.

The Five Thinking Levels

Level	Color	Thinking Stage	What the Language Shows
Level 1	Red	Foundational	Uses basic words like says, shows, or tells; restates the text.
Level 2	Orange	Emergent	Begins to use words like suggests or means and adds a little explanation.
Level 3	Yellow	Visible	Uses words like indicates or demonstrates and connects the evidence to an idea.
Level 4	Green	Independent	Uses words like establishes and shows a pattern that strengthens an inference.
Level 5	Blue	Reflective	Synthesizes ideas, reframes the meaning, and connects to a bigger idea or setting.

Words = Thinking Level

Move from says / shows toward suggests, indicates, demonstrates, and establishes, and toward synthesis language, only when the deeper explanation truly supports the stronger wording.

Level	Stage	Sample Citation and Explanation Language
Level 1	Foundational	The text says... This shows...
Level 2	Emergent	According to the text... This suggests...
Level 3	Visible	The text indicates that... This demonstrates that...
Level 4	Independent	The text establishes that... This pattern strengthens the inference that...
Level 5	Reflective	The evidence converges on the idea that... Ultimately, this reframes...

Challenge: Move a response up a level by choosing a more precise stem and a clearer explanation - not just more words.



Teacher Script

"A response is stronger when the citation stem and explanation match the depth of thinking the evidence can support."

Module 1 - Vocabulary

Vocabulary - Teacher Script

Teacher Script

"Before we begin, let's preview the words we will use to talk about thinking levels, evidence, and explanation - everyday words, academic words, and words from our two texts."

Tier 1 Vocabulary - Everyday Words

Word	Student-Friendly Definition	Oral Rehearsal Frame
answer	what you write or say to respond to a question or prompt	When I answer a prompt, I start by ____.
explain	to tell why something happened or how it works, not just what happened	To explain, I tell ____.
reason	the "why" behind an idea; the cause or support for it	The reason is ____.
choose	to pick the best evidence or detail to support your thinking	I choose this detail because ____.
clear	easy to understand, so the reader does not have to guess	A clear response helps the reader ____.
deeper	going past the surface to think about what something means or why it matters	To go deeper, I ask ____.
upgrade	to make a response better by adding stronger thinking or wording	I can upgrade my answer by ____.
level	a step that shows how deep the thinking is	This response is at level ____.
stronger	more convincing because it uses precise words and real evidence	A stronger response uses ____.
word	a single unit of meaning; the right word makes thinking sharper	I will swap this word for ____.

Tier 2 Vocabulary - Academic Words

Word	Student-Friendly Definition	Oral Rehearsal Frame
evidence	specific text proof used to support an answer	My evidence is ____.
explanation	the writer's thinking about what the evidence means and why it matters	My explanation shows ____.
thesis (central idea)	the sentence that directly answers the SCR prompt	My thesis (central idea) is ____.
infer	to combine text clues with reasoning to reach a supported idea	I can infer that ____.
suggests	signals an idea that the evidence reasonably points toward	The evidence suggests ____.
demonstrates	shows an idea clearly through evidence and reasoning	This demonstrates that ____.
supports	provides proof that strengthens a thesis (central idea) or explanation	This detail supports ____.
indicates	points toward a conclusion supported by the text	The text indicates that ____.
establishes	builds firm support for an idea through clear evidence	The text establishes that ____.
synthesizes	combines multiple details or ideas into a larger understanding	My response synthesizes ____.

Tier 3 Vocabulary - Passage-Specific Words

Word	Pronunciation	Student-Friendly Definition	Oral Rehearsal Frame
Parliament	PAR-luh-ment	the British law-making body that passed taxes and laws affecting the American colonies	Parliament passed the Stamp Act, and the colonists felt ____.
taxation	tak-SAY-shun	the act of collecting money through taxes	The colonists opposed taxation because ____.
representation	rep-ri-zen-TAY-shun	having someone speak for you in government	The colonists wanted representation because ____.
revolution	rev-uh-LOO-shun	a long fight to break away from a ruler or government	The American Revolution began because ____.
instinct	IN-stinkt	a behavior an animal is born with and does not learn	The sea turtles followed instinct by ____.
orcas	OR-kuhz	large ocean animals, also called killer whales, that hunt in groups	The orcas relied on learned behavior, which meant ____.
Intolerable Acts	in-TOL-er-uh-bul AKTS	the harsh laws Britain passed after the Boston Tea Party to punish the colonies	The Intolerable Acts angered colonists because ____.
Sons of Liberty	SUNZ uv LIB-er-tee	the group that, with Samuel Adams, helped organize resistance and spread ideas	Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty helped ____.
Boston Massacre	BAW-stun MAS-uh-ker	the 1770 killing of colonists by British soldiers that increased anger toward Britain	The Boston Massacre showed that ____.
coordinated	koh-OR-di-nay-tid	working together in an organized way	The orcas swam in coordinated ____.



Teacher Resource

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

Module 1 - Background Knowledge and Teacher Context

This module uses two Cluster 1 passages that support thinking-level work. In "From Tension to Revolution," students can explain how new taxes, the Stamp Act, the Boston Massacre, the Boston Tea Party, and the Intolerable Acts pushed the colonies from loyalty toward revolution - a historical and cultural setting. In "The Ocean Lesson," students can explain how sea turtles rely on instinct while orcas rely on learned behavior and teamwork - an environmental setting. Both passages let students practice precise citation and explanation about how setting shapes behavior.

More Background for the Teacher

Both passages stay the same across the four Cluster 1 modules; each grows in length, detail, evidence distance, and conceptual demand from module to module. In Module 1 (Low Stamina), students focus on noticing that the words in a response reveal a thinking level, and on upgrading a response one level at a time. Repeat the idea "Your words show your thinking level" throughout the module.

Module 1 - Materials and Teacher Preparation

This first module in Cluster 1 introduces the Thinking Levels Charts. Students look at sample responses, find the words that lead into evidence and explanation, determine the response level, and upgrade the response one level at a time. The major focus is helping students see that language reflects thinking.

Anchor Charts to Create

- Five Thinking Levels Chart: color-code the five levels (Foundational, Emergent, Visible, Independent, Reflective) to match the student Thinking Levels Chart.
- WHY Thesis (Central Idea) Chart - "WHY Responses Use Complex Sentences": include subordinating words and reason phrases - because, since, when, after, so that, although, even though, due to, given that, in light of.
- HOW Thesis (Central Idea) Chart - "HOW Responses Use Simple Sentences with Prepositions": include prepositions and connection phrases - by, through, in, with, during, through the use of, in response to, based on.
- Words = Thinking Level: Foundational, Emergent, Visible, Independent, Reflective.
- SCR Structure: Thesis (Central Idea), Evidence, Explanation.
- Setting Shapes Behavior: historical setting, cultural setting, environmental setting.
- Thinking Level Evidence Citation Stems: post the stages and stems so students can refer to them during the lesson.

Materials

- Printed copies of both Cluster 1 passages
- Interactive notebooks
- Student-sized Thinking Levels Charts for notebook use
- Glue and scissors
- Highlighters or colored pencils
- Spinner labeled 1-5
- Level Up game cards
- Simple gameboard path
- Student-selected "Pencil Guy" markers
- Optional dice
- Teacher-made slides for virtual learners

For the In-Person Teacher

- Prepare anchor charts before the lesson.
- Copy and cut game cards.
- Set out notebook supplies.

- Display both passages where all students can refer to quoted lines.

For the Virtual Teacher

- Turn the game cards into slides.
- Create a digital spinner from 1-5.
- Put the Thinking Levels Chart on a slide for students to see throughout the lesson.
- Ask students to respond in chat, with fingers, verbally, or by holding work up to the camera.
- Create movable labels for students to sort or upgrade thinking digitally.

Module 1 - The DOT Reading Habit

The DOT Reading Habit



Teacher Script

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

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

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

Apply DOT to passage words such as Parliament, representation, resistance, instinct, and coordinated without interrupting the first read for lengthy definitions.

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

Module 1 - The Thinking Levels Framework: Words Show Your Thinking

Teacher Script

“Strong readers and writers do not just answer a question. They choose words that show the depth of their thinking. Today we learn to notice the words that reveal a thinking level, and then upgrade a response one level at a time.”

Content Anchor

Strong readers and writers do not just answer a question. They choose words that show the depth of their thinking.

SCR Structure

A short constructed response has three parts.

- Thesis (Central Idea) - the sentence that directly answers the SCR prompt.
- Evidence - specific text proof used to support the answer.
- Explanation - the writer's thinking about what the evidence means and why it matters.

WHY Responses Use Complex Sentences

A WHY response usually uses a complex sentence with a subordinating word such as because. Use subordinating words and reason phrases: because, since, when, after, so that, although, even though, due to, given that, in light of.

HOW Responses Use Simple Sentences with Prepositions

A relational HOW response usually uses a simple sentence with a preposition such as through or by. Use prepositions and connection phrases: by, through, in, with, during, through the use of, in response to, based on.

The Level-Up Language Ladder

Level	Stage	From ... Toward
Level 1	Foundational	The text says... This shows...
Level 2	Emergent	According to the text... This suggests...
Level 3	Visible	The text indicates that... This demonstrates that...
Level 4	Independent	The text establishes that... This pattern strengthens the inference that...
Level 5	Reflective	The evidence converges on the idea that... Ultimately, this reframes...

Setting Shapes Behavior

Historical, cultural, and environmental setting can shape the ideas we explain in our responses. In "From Tension to Revolution," the historical and cultural setting shapes why the colonists resisted. In "The Ocean Lesson," the environmental setting shapes how the turtles and orcas survive.



Teacher Script

"When you move from says to indicates or establishes, you are showing more precise thinking. The explanation is not just longer. It is sharper, clearer, and more connected."

Module 1 - TRACKS: Reading Both Passages for Evidence

Before students upgrade a response, they read "From Tension to Revolution" and "The Ocean Lesson" and TAP the TRACKS to find the six kinds of measurable evidence. Reading for TRACKS gives students the exact details they will cite when they write and upgrade WHY and HOW responses.

The Six Types of Measurable Evidence: TRACKS

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

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

How to Use TRACKS

Teacher Script

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

Before Students Read

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

The Six Types of Measurable Evidence: TRACKS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PASSAGE 1 — From Tension to Revolution

[1] Before the American Revolution, the thirteen colonies were part of Great Britain, a superpower at the time. Many colonists considered themselves loyal to the king. However, this began to change after the French and Indian War. Although Great Britain gained land, it also gained significant debt. To recover money, Parliament placed new taxes on the colonies.

[2] One of these laws was the Stamp Act. It required colonists to pay taxes on printed materials such as newspapers and legal documents. Colonists strongly opposed this law because they had no representatives in Parliament. They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice, which led to the phrase “taxation without representation.”

[3] Tensions continued to rise. In 1770, the Boston Massacre occurred when British soldiers fired into a crowd of colonists, killing several people. This event increased anger and distrust toward British authority. A few years later, the Tea Act was passed, leading to the Boston Tea Party. After the Tea Act was passed, trouble was brewing in the colonies. During this protest, colonists dumped tea into Boston Harbor. Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty helped organize resistance and spread ideas.

[4] In response, Great Britain passed the Intolerable Acts, which punished the colonies and limited their rights. Instead of ending the conflict, these actions brought the colonies closer together. The colonists learned that there is strength in numbers.

[5] Over time, many colonists wanted to remove British control. The American Revolution became a fight for independence, leading to the Declaration of Independence and the creation of a new nation.

Student Annotation Guide — From Tension to Revolution

T — Time

Before the American Revolution; In 1770

R — Reactions

Colonists strongly opposed this law; This event increased anger and distrust toward British authority

A — Actions

Parliament placed new taxes on the colonies; British soldiers fired into a crowd of colonists

C — Character/Concept/Creature

Parliament; the Stamp Act; Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty

K — Key Knowledge

taxation without representation; The colonists learned that there is strength in numbers

S — Scenery/Setting

the thirteen colonies were part of Great Britain

TRACKS EVIDENCE HIGHLIGHTING — From Tension to Revolution

[1] Before the American Revolution, the thirteen colonies were part of Great Britain, a superpower at the time. Many colonists considered themselves loyal to the king. However, this began to change after the French and Indian War. Although Great Britain gained land, it also gained significant debt. To recover money, **Parliament placed new taxes on the colonies.**

[2] One of these laws was **the Stamp Act**. It required colonists to pay taxes on printed materials such as newspapers and legal documents. Colonists strongly opposed this law because they had no representatives in **Parliament**. They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice, which led to the phrase **“taxation without representation.”**

[3] Tensions continued to rise. In 1770, the Boston Massacre occurred when **British soldiers fired into a crowd of colonists**, killing several people. This event increased anger and distrust toward British authority. A few years later, the Tea Act was passed, leading to the Boston Tea Party. After the Tea Act was passed, trouble was brewing in the colonies. During this protest, colonists dumped tea into Boston Harbor. **Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty** helped organize resistance and spread ideas.

[4] In response, Great Britain passed the Intolerable Acts, which punished the colonies and limited their rights. Instead of ending the conflict, these actions brought the colonies closer together. **The colonists learned that there is strength in numbers.**

[5] Over time, many colonists wanted to remove British control. The American Revolution became a fight for independence, leading to the Declaration of Independence and the creation of a new nation.

PASSAGE 2 — The Ocean Lesson

[1] Nyla stood quietly on the beach as dozens of sea turtles began to hatch from the sand. One by one, they broke through their shells and started moving toward the ocean.

[2] “How do they know where to go?” Nyla asked.

[3] “They don’t need to be taught,” her guide explained. “It’s an instinct. They are born with that behavior.”

[4] Nyla watched closely. The turtles moved slowly but with determination. Even though birds circled above and the sand was uneven, most continued toward the water. Their instinct guided them through the transition from sand to ocean, increasing their chances of survival during a dangerous moment.

[5] The guide smiled and said, “Slow and steady wins the race.”

[6] Later that day, Nyla visited a marine biology exhibit at an aquarium. She stopped in front of a large tank where a group of orcas swam together in coordinated patterns. A trainer explained how they hunt in the wild.

[7] “Orcas rely on learned behavior,” he said. “Young orcas observe older members of their group. Over time, they learn strategies and practice working together.”

[8] The trainer smiled and said, “These orcas are a whale of a team.”

[9] Nyla noticed how the orcas stayed close and moved as a team. Their actions seemed planned and purposeful.

[10] “So they have to learn how to survive?” Nyla asked.

[11] “Yes,” the trainer replied. “Their success depends on learning and cooperation.”

[12] Nyla thought about what she had seen. The turtles relied on instinct to act quickly without guidance. The orcas relied on learning and teamwork over time. Both types of behavior helped animals survive in their environments, even though they developed in different ways.

Student Annotation Guide — The Ocean Lesson

T — Time

Later that day

R — Reactions

The turtles moved slowly but with determination; Nyla noticed how the orcas stayed close and moved as a team

A — Actions

they broke through their shells and started moving toward the ocean; Their instinct guided them through the transition from sand to ocean

C — Character/Concept/Creature

Nyla; orcas

K — Key Knowledge

They are born with that behavior; Orcas rely on learned behavior; Their success depends on learning and cooperation

S — Scenery/Setting

on the beach; a marine biology exhibit at an aquarium

TRACKS EVIDENCE HIGHLIGHTING — The Ocean Lesson

[1] Nyla stood quietly on the beach as dozens of sea turtles began to hatch from the sand. One by one, they broke through their shells and started moving toward the ocean.

[2] “How do they know where to go?” Nyla asked.

[3] “They don’t need to be taught,” her guide explained. “It’s an instinct. They are born with that behavior.”

[4] Nyla watched closely. The turtles moved slowly but with determination. Even though birds circled above and the sand was uneven, most continued toward the water. Their instinct guided them through the transition from sand to ocean, increasing their chances of survival during a dangerous moment.

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Day 1 - Gather and Reveal



TEKS and ELPS for Today

Standard	Student Expectation (verbatim breakout)
TEKS 5.11(A)(i)	plan a first draft by selecting a genre for a particular topic, purpose, and audience using a range of strategies
TEKS 5.12(B)(ii)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using genre characteristics
ELPS 1(E)(i)	demonstrate listening comprehension from information presented orally during formal classroom interactions by restating, responding, paraphrasing, summarizing, or asking for clarification or additional details
ELPS 2(E)(i)	narrate, describe, explain, justify, discuss, elaborate, or evaluate orally with increasing specificity in academic context or discourse

Day 1 Purpose

Students gather the idea that a response can be stronger or weaker, then reveal that the words a writer chooses show the level of their thinking.

Reading Purpose

Read for setting, challenge, and response. Notice one detail from each passage that shows how historical or environmental conditions shape what people or animals do. Keep those details ready for WHY and HOW SCR practice.

G - Gather: Stronger Thinking or Weaker Thinking?

Compare two SCR responses. Decide which one shows deeper thinking, point to the exact language that proves your decision, and explain why precision matters.

Teacher Script

"Today, we are going to become thinking detectives. I am going to show you two student responses. Both answer a question, but one shows stronger thinking. Your job is to decide which one and explain why."

Prompt: Why did colonists protest British laws?

Response A: The colonists protested because they were taxed. The text says, "It required colonists to pay taxes on printed materials..." This shows they were upset.

Response B: The colonists protested British laws because they were taxed without representation and believed the treatment was unfair. According to the text, "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..." This suggests the colonists wanted fairness and a say in decisions that affected them.

Teacher Script

"Turn and talk. Which response shows stronger thinking and why?"

Possible Student Responses:

- "Response B is stronger."
- "It has stronger words."
- "It explains more clearly."
- "It says 'According to the text' and 'This suggests.'"

Teacher Script

"Yes. Today we will learn that the words students choose tell us the level of thinking happening in their brains."

Daily Deck Slide (M1-04 - Gather)

Write on the board: Stronger Thinking or Weaker Thinking? Compare two SCR responses. Decide which one shows deeper thinking, point to the exact language that proves your decision, and explain why precision matters.

R - Reveal: Words Show Your Thinking Level

Teacher Script

"I am going to say the Auditory Engagement while you take notes in your own Interactive Notebook. Listen for the important key words and fill in the blanks as you hear them."

Auditory Engagement Script (read aloud): "Your words show your THINKING level. A response at a lower level often uses simple words like SAYS, SHOWS, or TELLS. A response at a stronger level uses words like SUGGESTS, INDICATES, DEMONSTRATES, and ESTABLISHES. The strongest responses do not just answer. They SYNTHESIZE ideas and explain them clearly. A WHY response usually uses a complex sentence with a subordinating word like BECAUSE. A relational HOW response usually uses a simple sentence with a preposition like THROUGH or BY. When we upgrade our words, we upgrade our THINKING. The Thinking Levels Chart helps us move one level at a time. Historical, cultural, and environmental SETTING can shape the ideas we explain in our

responses."

Interactive Notebook Fill-In:

- Your words show your THINKING level.
- Lower-level responses often use SAYS, SHOWS, and TELLS.
- Stronger responses may use SUGGESTS, INDICATES, DEMONSTRATES, and ESTABLISHES.
- Strong responses SYNTHESIZE ideas.
- A WHY response often uses BECAUSE.
- A relational HOW response often uses THROUGH or BY.
- The Thinking Levels Chart helps us upgrade our THINKING.
- Historical, cultural, and environmental SETTING can shape responses.

Teacher Script

"Open your Interactive Notebook and glue in your Thinking Levels Chart. We are going to use this chart all through the lesson."

Board text: Words = Thinking Level

Teacher Script

"If a student writes, 'The text says,' that tells me something about the level of thinking. If a student writes, 'The text establishes' or 'The evidence converges on,' that tells me something different. Today, we are learning to notice those differences."

Daily Deck Slide (M1-05 - Reveal)

Write on the board: Reveal the Level-Up Language Ladder. Move from says/shows toward suggests, indicates, demonstrates, establishes, and synthesis language only when the deeper explanation truly supports the stronger wording.

Day 1 Closing

Partner completion: "One change that can raise a response's thinking level without making it longer is ____."

Day 2 - Attempt

A

TEKS and ELPS for Today

Standard	Student Expectation (verbatim breakout)
TEKS 5.11(C)(ii)	revise drafts to improve word choice
TEKS 5.12(B)(iii)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using craft
ELPS 2(B)(i)	speak using content-area vocabulary during formal classroom interactions to demonstrate acquisition of new words
ELPS 4(F)(ix)	write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting evidence using appropriate content for [a] specific purpose

Day 2 Purpose

Students attempt upgrading through Level Up Showdown: spin, draw a response card, identify its current thinking level, upgrade it one level, and explain what changed in the reasoning - not just the vocabulary.

★ Daily Deck Slide (M1-06 - Attempt)

Write on the board: Level Up Showdown. Spin, draw a response card, identify its current thinking level, upgrade it one level, and explain what changed in the reasoning - not just the vocabulary.

Game: Level Up Showdown - Cluster 1 Edition

Teacher Script

"You will play a game where you identify a thinking level and then upgrade it. Each time you upgrade a response, you help a writer think more deeply."

Directions:

- Spin to land on a level from 1 to 5.
- Draw a task card.
- Read the response aloud.
- Identify the level using the Thinking Levels Chart.
- Upgrade it one level higher.

- Move your Pencil Guy marker on the gameboard.
- Record at least two upgraded responses in your Interactive Notebook.

Teacher Script

"Your Interactive Notebook is where you keep your best upgrades. Use these notebook pages, game cards, and review pieces whenever you have free time in the classroom so you can continue growing your ECR habits."



Task Card 1

The text says, "It required colonists to pay taxes on printed materials..." This shows the colonies had taxes. Answer: Level 1 - Foundational. Upgrade Example: According to the text, "It required colonists to pay taxes on printed materials..." This suggests the new law created conflict.



Task Card 2

The author says, "They are born with that behavior." This means turtles use instinct. Answer: Level 1 - Foundational. Upgrade Example: According to the text, "They are born with that behavior." This suggests sea turtles rely on instinct from the beginning of life.



Task Card 3

According to the text, "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..." This suggests the colonists were upset. Answer: Level 2 - Emergent. Upgrade Example: The text indicates that "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..." This demonstrates that the colonists believed British rule was unjust.



Task Card 4

According to the text, "Young orcas observe older members of their group." This reveals they learn from others. Answer: Level 2 - Emergent. Upgrade Example: The text indicates that "Young orcas observe older members of their group." This demonstrates that orcas depend on learning within their social group.



Task Card 5

The text indicates that "This event increased anger and distrust toward British authority." This implies the conflict was growing. Answer: Level 3 - Visible. Upgrade Example: The text establishes that "This event increased anger and distrust toward British authority." This pattern strengthens the inference that British actions were pushing the colonies toward revolution.

**Task Card 6**

The text indicates that "Their instinct guided them in the right direction..." This underscores survival. Answer: Level 3 - Visible. Upgrade Example: The text establishes that "Their instinct guided them in the right direction..." This pattern strengthens the inference that the environmental setting requires immediate instinctive action.

**Task Card 7**

The text establishes that "Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty helped organize resistance..." This pattern strengthens the inference that colonists worked together against British control. Answer: Level 4 - Independent. Upgrade Example: The evidence converges on the idea that "Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty helped organize resistance..." Ultimately, this reframes the historical setting as one that turned frustration into organized resistance.

**Task Card 8**

The text establishes that "Young orcas observe older members of their group." Consequently, the group's survival depends on learning. Answer: Level 4 - Independent. Upgrade Example: Critically, the passage frames survival as a shared responsibility. The evidence converges on the idea that "Young orcas observe older members of their group." Therefore, the evidence warrants the conclusion that learning is essential to survival in the orcas' environment.



Task Card 9

The evidence converges on the idea that colonists resisted because they were "taxed without a voice." Ultimately, this reframes the conflict as a struggle over fairness and freedom. Answer: Level 5 - Reflective. Challenge Downgrade: The text establishes that colonists were "taxed without a voice." This pattern strengthens the inference that they felt treated unfairly.

**Task Card 10**

Critically, the passage frames survival differently for each animal. The evidence converges on the idea that turtles are "born with that behavior" while young orcas "observe older members of their group." Synthesizing these details reveals that survival may depend on instinct or learning, depending on the setting. Answer: Level 5 - Reflective. Challenge Downgrade: The text indicates that turtles are "born with that behavior" while young orcas "observe older members of their group." This demonstrates that animals survive in different ways.

**Notebook Connection** **Teacher Script**

"In your Interactive Notebook, create a page titled 'Thinking Level Upgrades.' Record two cards you worked on today. Write the original response, identify its level, and rewrite it one level higher."

Day 2 Closing **Teacher Script**

"Record your two best upgrades. Remember: when we upgrade our words, we upgrade our thinking."

Day 3 - Discuss and Use Again



TEKS and ELPS for Today

Standard	Student Expectation (verbatim breakout)
TEKS 5.11(C)(i)	revise drafts to improve sentence structure
TEKS 5.11(C)(ii)	revise drafts to improve word choice
TEKS 5.12(B)(i)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea
ELPS 4(D)(ii)	write content-area texts using a variety of sentence types

Day 3 Purpose

Students discuss what changed when they upgraded a response, then independently identify the level of a WHY response and a HOW response and rewrite each one level higher.

D - Discuss What Changed

Teacher Script

"Let's talk about what changed when you upgraded a response." Discussion Questions:"

- "What words showed the level of thinking?"
- "How did the citation stem change from one level to the next?"
- "What happened to the explanation as the level increased?"
- "How did stronger verbs improve the response?"
- "How does setting matter in the responses from these passages?"

Possible Student Responses:

- "We changed says to indicates."
- "We changed shows to demonstrates."
- "The explanation became more specific."
- "The stronger answer connected better to the prompt."
- "It talked more about the historical setting or the environment."

 Teacher Script

"Yes. Your vocabulary controls your thinking level. When you move from says to indicates or establishes, you are showing more precise thinking. The explanation is not just longer. It is sharper, clearer, and more connected."

Possible Student Questions:

- Student Question: "Can two students have different levels if they answer the same prompt?" Teacher Response: "Yes. The prompt may be the same, but the word choice, explanation, and depth of thinking may be very different."
- Student Question: "Do I always need big words?" Teacher Response: "You need the right words, not just big words. Strong thinking comes from precise words that match your meaning."
- Student Question: "Can I move up one level at a time?" Teacher Response: "Yes. That is exactly how strong writers grow."

 Teacher Script

"Connect to the Overarching Question: How can writers upgrade WHY and HOW SCR responses so their word choice shows deeper thinking?"

U - Use Again: Independent Interactive Notebook Practice **Teacher Script**

"Now you will use the chart on your own. You will determine the level of a response and then upgrade it."

WHY Practice

Prompt: Why did colonists protest British laws? Given Response: The colonists protested because they had taxes. The text says, "It required colonists to pay taxes on printed materials..." This means they did not like the law. Student Task: Determine the level. Rewrite the response one level higher. Underline the citation stem and circle the explanation words. Teacher Answer Example: The colonists protested British laws because they were taxed without representation and believed the treatment was unfair. According to the text, "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..." This suggests the colonists wanted fairness and a voice in government.

HOW Practice

Prompt: How does setting influence behavior in both passages? Given Response: Setting influences behavior by making people and animals act differently. The text says, "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..." and "Young orcas observe older members of their group." This shows behavior changes. Student Task: Determine the level. Rewrite the response one level higher. Use the HOW chart to choose a preposition. Teacher Answer Example: Setting influences behavior in both passages through conflict in

the colonies and learning in the ocean group. The text indicates that colonists felt it was "unfair to be taxed without a voice..." while "young orcas observe older members of their group." This demonstrates that historical and environmental settings shape how groups respond and survive.

★ **Daily Deck Slide (M1-07 and M1-08 - Discuss and Use Again)**

Write on the board: Which words revealed the original level? What became more specific? How did the explanation change as the response grew stronger? Then independently identify the level of a WHY response and a HOW response, and rewrite each one level higher using accurate evidence and a clearer relationship.

Day 3 Closing

🔊 **Teacher Script**

"Leave space under each original response so you can rewrite it again later at an even higher level. We are building a habit of upgrading one level at a time."

Day 4 - Award and Target



TEKS and ELPS for Today

Standard	Student Expectation (verbatim breakout)
TEKS 5.11(C)(ii)	revise drafts to improve word choice
TEKS 5.12(B)(iii)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using craft
ELPS 2(B)(i)	speak using content-area vocabulary during formal classroom interactions to demonstrate acquisition of new words

Day 4 Purpose

Students recognize the upgrades they made, then set a precise next goal for their thinking level.

A - Award

Teacher Script

"Give yourself credit for leveling up your thinking today." Award Options:"

- Notebook Recognition: Students write: "Today I leveled up by changing ____ to ____."
- Peer Recognition: Students tell a partner: "One strong word choice I noticed in your response was ____."
- Thinking Level Tracker: Students color the level they worked in today and circle the level they want to reach next.
- Classroom Celebration: "If you upgraded a response today, tap your notebook twice and say, 'My words show my thinking.'"

Teacher Script

"You should recognize your growth. Every stronger word is a stronger thought."

★ Daily Deck Slide (M1-09 - Award)

Write on the board: Name one word, stem, or explanation move that made your response stronger today. Example upgrades: says to indicates; shows to demonstrates; means to suggests.

T - Target

Teacher Script

"What thinking level are you working toward next?" Student Goal Options:"

- I want to move from Level 1 to Level 2.
- I want to move from Level 2 to Level 3.
- I want to use stronger explanation words.
- I want to use a better citation stem.
- I want to connect my answer more clearly to setting.
- I want to use my Thinking Levels Chart every time I write.

Interactive Notebook Reflection:

- My current thinking level is _____.
- My next level goal is _____.
- One word I want to start using is _____.
- One question I still have is _____.

Curiosity Questions:

- Can one word change how strong your answer sounds?
- Why do some verbs sound stronger than others?
- How do authors use stronger thinking when they write?
- How does historical setting make a response more complex?
- How does environmental setting change the kind of explanation you need?

Teacher Script

"Remember to refer to your Thinking Levels Charts to help you differentiate and upgrade your thinking."

★ Daily Deck Slide (M1-10 - Target)

Write on the board: Choose the next thinking level or language habit you want to reach and write one specific action you will take.

Day 4 Closing

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

Day 5 - Explain to Others

E

TEKS and ELPS for Today

Standard	Student Expectation (verbatim breakout)
TEKS 5.12(B)(ii)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using genre characteristics
TEKS 5.11(D)(i)	edit drafts using standard English conventions, including complete simple sentences with subject-verb agreement
ELPS 2(E)(i)	narrate, describe, explain, justify, discuss, elaborate, or evaluate orally with increasing specificity in academic context or discourse

Day 5 Purpose

Students teach a partner how to identify the current level of a response, upgrade one feature, and justify why the new version is stronger.

E - Turn and Teach

Teacher Script

"Turn to a partner and teach them how to upgrade a response." Student Directions:"

- Use the Thinking Levels Chart.
- Read one response from today.
- Identify the current level.
- Explain which words show the level.
- Upgrade the response one level higher.
- Explain why the new version is stronger.

Sentence Stems for Students:

- "This response is at Level ____ because it uses the words ____."
- "I can upgrade it by changing ____ to ____."
- "The new version is stronger because ____."
- "This response connects to setting by ____."

Teacher Monitoring - Listen for students who:

- identify exact words from the chart
- explain why the word choice matters
- use stronger citation stems
- connect the response to historical, cultural, or environmental setting

✓ **Module Overarching Question - Answer**

How can writers upgrade WHY and HOW SCR responses so their word choice shows deeper thinking?

Writers upgrade WHY and HOW SCR responses by matching sentence structure to the prompt type and replacing vague citation and explanation language with precise wording that makes the relationship among the answer, evidence, setting, and reasoning clearer.

★ **Daily Deck Slide (M1-11 and M1-14 - Explain and Answer)**

Write on the board: Teach a partner how to identify the current level of a response, upgrade one feature, and justify why the new version is stronger. Then answer:

Match the response structure to WHY or HOW thinking, choose precise citation and explanation language, and explain how the evidence supports the answer.

Teacher Closing Encouragement

🔊 **Teacher Script**

"Today you learned something powerful: your words reveal your thinking. Every time you choose a stronger stem, a clearer explanation, or a more precise verb, you are leveling up your mind. You do not have to jump to the highest level in one step. Strong thinkers grow one level at a time, and today you did exactly that. Be proud of the progress you made, because your thinking is getting stronger every time you write."

Module 1 - Low, Medium, and High Exemplars

Prompt: Why did colonists protest British laws? Write an SCR response, then upgrade it so your word choice shows deeper thinking.

Low Exemplar

- Student Response: The colonists protested because they were taxed. The text says, "It required colonists to pay taxes on printed materials..." This shows they were upset. (Level 1 - Foundational)
- What Is Working: The response answers the prompt and includes one piece of text evidence.
- Teacher Notes: The citation stem ("The text says") and explanation ("This shows they were upset") name a feeling only and stay at a foundational level.
- What Needs Improvement: Upgrade the stem to "According to the text" and the explanation to "This suggests," and explain the effect of the taxes rather than a feeling.

Medium Exemplar

- Student Response: According to the text, "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..." This suggests the colonists were upset about the taxes. (Level 2-3 - Emergent to Visible)
- What Is Working: A stronger citation stem and a clearer explanation begin to connect the evidence to an idea.
- Teacher Notes: The explanation still names a feeling ("upset") instead of the larger effect the evidence points toward.
- What Needs Improvement: Move to "The text indicates that..." This demonstrates that..." and explain that the colonists believed British rule was unjust.

High Exemplar

- Student Response: The colonists protested British laws because they were taxed without representation and believed the treatment was unfair. The text establishes that "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..." This pattern strengthens the inference that unfair taxation pushed the colonies toward organized resistance. (Level 4 - Independent)
- What Is Working: A complex WHY sentence, a precise citation stem ("The text establishes"), and an explanation that names a pattern and connects the evidence to the historical setting show deeper, clearer thinking.
- Teacher Notes: The response is precise and supportable, and it is ready to be pushed toward Level 5 by synthesizing the fairness idea into a big-picture reframe.

Module 1 - Assessment Opportunities

Field	Detail
Purpose	Determine whether students can identify a response's thinking level and upgrade it with precise citation and explanation language.
Who Administers It	The classroom teacher during the lesson.
Materials Needed	Both passages, the Thinking Levels Chart, the WHY and HOW thesis (central idea) charts, Level Up Showdown cards, and student notebooks.
Related TEKS Breakout	5.11(C)(ii) revise drafts to improve word choice; 5.11(C)(i) revise drafts to improve sentence structure
Task	Students play Level Up Showdown and complete the independent WHY and HOW practice, rewriting each response one level higher.
Expected Response	Students name the level, upgrade the citation stem and explanation, and match sentence structure to a WHY or HOW prompt.

Informal Assessment

During the lesson, observe Listen, Decide, and Defend and Level Up Showdown. Note whether students can name the level and point to the exact words that reveal it.

Formative Assessment

The Day 3 independent WHY and HOW practice serves as the formative check.

Formative Check Rubric/Scaffolding

Component	Student Requirement
Level	Must name the current thinking level of the response.
Citation Stem	Must upgrade the stem (for example, says to indicates or establishes).
Explanation	Must make the explanation more precise, not merely longer.
Structure	Must match a complex sentence to a WHY prompt or a preposition to a HOW prompt.

Answer Key - Sample Upgrade

Weak: The text says the colonists were upset. Upgraded: The text indicates that unfair taxation increased colonial resistance.

Check the Learning

✓ Check the Learning

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

- Verbal - Gather/Reveal - Listen and Defend: Students choose A or B and defend the stronger response by naming the exact word that raised the level.
- Visual/Physical - Attempt - Level Up Showdown: Students hold up fingers 1-5 to show a response's level, then move the Pencil Guy after an upgrade.
- Written - Discuss/Use - Upgrade the Response: Students rewrite a WHY or HOW response one level higher and underline the citation stem.

Assessment Option

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

- Listen - assess through Listen, Decide, and Defend and discussion.
- Look - observe a fingers 1-5 level check or a written upgrade.
- Collect - have students produce a two-card "Thinking Level Upgrades" notebook page you can examine.

Intervention - Module 1

Build the Response with Quotes and Thinking Levels

For students who need extra help identifying thinking levels, matching quotes to ideas, and building stronger responses one piece at a time. Slow it down and make the thinking visible.

Teacher Script

"We are going to slow it down and build our responses step by step. You do not have to jump to the strongest level all at once. We are going to move one level at a time."

Step 1: Match the Quote to the Idea. Give students quote strips:

- "It required colonists to pay taxes on printed materials..."
- "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..."
- "Their instinct guided them in the right direction..."
- "Young orcas observe older members of their group."

Students match each quote to an idea: unfair treatment; protest; instinct; learned behavior.

Step 2: Build a Basic Response. Teacher script: "Now we will build a Level 1 response together." Example: The text says, "Their instinct guided them in the right direction..." This shows turtles use instinct.

Step 3: Upgrade It Together. Teacher script: "Now let's move it up one level." Level 2 example: According to the text, "Their instinct guided them in the right direction..." This suggests turtles rely on instinct to survive. Then move again if students are ready: The text indicates that "Their instinct guided them in the right direction..." This demonstrates that the environmental setting requires immediate action.

Step 4: Color-Code the Response. Thesis (Central Idea) in one color; Evidence in one color; Explanation in one color.

Step 5: Write It in the Interactive Notebook. Students copy one built response and then upgrade one word on their own.

Additional Supports:

- Provide sentence stems at Levels 1, 2, and 3.
- Let students point to the chart while speaking.
- Give students only one quote at a time.
- Have them say the upgraded sentence aloud before writing it.

Goal: Students will understand that upgrading happens in small, manageable steps.

Module 1 - Embedded Checks and Student Support

Embedded Checks for Understanding

Teacher Move	Expected Response	Common Misconception	Teacher Response
Ask for the thinking level of a response.	Students name the level and point to the words.	Students think a longer answer is automatically higher.	Point out: precise language, not length, raises the level.
Ask students to upgrade a stem.	Students change says to indicates or establishes.	Students copy a stronger stem without changing the explanation.	Ask, "What does the evidence mean? Make the explanation match the stem."
Ask why a response is stronger.	Students name the exact word or relationship.	Students say "it is longer."	Ask, "Which word made the thinking more precise?"

Student Support Quick Reference

If a student...	Support to Provide
Restates the text instead of explaining	Use the Level 1-2-3 sentence stems and the "This suggests..." frame.
Copies a stem without understanding	Have them say what the evidence means before writing.
Cannot name a level	Use the Thinking Levels Chart and point to the exact words.
Masters quickly	Route to Module 1 enrichment (Multi-Level Response Lab).

Enrichment - Module 1

Multi-Level Response Lab

Students who master the concept use the Thinking Levels Chart intentionally and justify their word choices.

Teacher Script

"You are going to push beyond identifying levels. You will write the same idea at more than one level and explain why your word choices fit each level."

Directions:

- Choose one prompt.
- Write a response at Level 2.
- Rewrite it at Level 3.
- Rewrite it at Level 4 or 5.
- Explain why each version fits that level.

Prompt Choices:

- Why did colonists protest British laws?
- How does setting influence behavior in both passages?
- Why do orcas rely on learned behavior?
- How did British actions push the colonies toward revolution?

Example Progression:

- Level 2: According to the text, "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..." This suggests the colonists felt upset.
- Level 3: The text indicates that "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..." This demonstrates that the colonists believed British rule was unfair.
- Level 4: The text establishes that "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..." This pattern strengthens the inference that unfair taxation helped unite the colonies in resistance.
- Level 5: Critically, the passage frames the conflict around fairness and voice. The evidence converges on the idea that colonists were "taxed without a voice." Ultimately, this reframes the Revolution as a response to denied rights.

Advanced Challenge - Students must explain: why suggests fits one level; why demonstrates fits another; why frames or reframes signals higher thinking.

Extension: Students create one original task card for the class using a quote from one of the Cluster 1 passages.

Module 1 - Additional Writing Opportunity: Upgrade a Response

Prompt Bank (WHY and HOW)

Each prompt asks for a short constructed response you can write and then upgrade:

- Why did colonists protest British laws?
- How did British actions push the colonies toward revolution?
- Why do sea turtles rely on instinct?
- How do orcas learn to survive in their group?
- How does setting influence behavior in both passages?

Writing Prompt

Choose one prompt from the bank. Write a short response, then upgrade it one thinking level higher.

Connection to This Module

This week you learned that your words show your thinking level. Now write a response, name its level, and upgrade the citation stem and explanation so the thinking is more precise.

Planning Support

1. Answer the prompt with a thesis (central idea) sentence.
2. Add one piece of evidence from the passage.
3. Explain what the evidence means.
4. Name the level of your response.
5. Upgrade the stem and the explanation one level higher.

Step	Planning Guide
Step 1: Thesis (Central Idea)	Answer the prompt in one sentence (WHY = complex sentence; HOW = preposition).
Step 2: Evidence	Quote one exact detail from the passage.
Step 3: Explain and Upgrade	Explain the meaning, then upgrade the stem and explanation one level.

Drafting Space

Success Criteria

- My response answers the prompt with a clear thesis (central idea).
- My citation stem and explanation match the thinking level I am aiming for.
- My upgrade is more precise, not just longer.

Additional Writing Opportunity: Revise and Edit

Revise

Read your response aloud. Improve sentence structure and word choice so the thinking is precise. Match a complex sentence to a WHY prompt and a preposition to a HOW prompt.

Edit

Run the Conventions Sweep: complete simple sentence with subject-verb agreement, correct spelling of high-frequency words, and proper nouns (Parliament, Boston, Nyla) capitalized.

Module 1 - Auditory Engagement (Active Participation)

Approach: Listen, Decide, and Defend.

Purpose: Students hear two possible ways to describe or upgrade a response, decide which shows stronger thinking, and defend the decision with an exact word or idea from what they heard.

Listening Target: Listen for the wording that makes the relationship and reasoning more precise, not merely longer.

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

Teacher Script

"I will read two possible responses. Decide which one shows stronger thinking. Show A or B, then defend your choice by naming the exact word, relationship, or explanation that made it stronger."

Round	Response A	Response B	Answer / Look-For
1	The text says the colonists were upset.	The text indicates that unfair taxation increased colonial resistance.	B - it uses a more precise citation verb and explains the effect rather than naming a feeling only.
2	The turtles move because they have instinct.	The turtles move toward the ocean because instinct guides an immediate survival response.	B - it connects instinct to survival and explains why the behavior matters.
3	The text establishes that orcas learn from older members.	The text says orcas learn.	A - establishes and the specific relationship to older members show more precise thinking.

Transfer: Students hear a new short response from either passage and orally upgrade one feature before writing the improved version.

Fresh Recall: Cover the notes. Tell a partner one change that can raise a response's thinking level without simply making it longer.

Pause Points

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

|| Pause Point - Name the Level

Stop and think: What words in this response tell me its thinking level?

|| Pause Point - Choose a Stronger Stem

Stop and think: Which citation stem would raise this response one level - suggests, indicates, demonstrates, or establishes?

|| Pause Point - Match the Structure

Stop and think: Is this a WHY prompt (use because) or a HOW prompt (use through or by)?

|| Pause Point - Connect to Setting

Stop and think: How does the historical, cultural, or environmental setting shape my explanation?

Module 1 - My Progress Tracker

Teacher Script

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

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

I Can...	Not yet	Getting set	I can do it
Name the thinking level of a response.			
Point to the exact words that show the level.			
Upgrade a citation stem and explanation one level higher.			
Match a complex sentence to a WHY prompt.			
Match a preposition to a HOW prompt.			

One thing I am proud of:

One thing I want to get better at:

Module 1 - Teacher Closure and Reflection

Teacher Closure Script

Teacher Script

"At the beginning of this module, we asked how writers can upgrade WHY and HOW SCR responses so their word choice shows deeper thinking. Now we can answer it: writers match the response structure to WHY or HOW thinking, choose precise citation and explanation language, and explain how the evidence supports the answer."

Module Overarching Question - Answered

How can writers upgrade WHY and HOW SCR responses so their word choice shows deeper thinking? Writers upgrade WHY and HOW SCR responses by matching sentence structure to the prompt type and replacing vague citation and explanation language with precise wording that makes the relationship among the answer, evidence, setting, and reasoning clearer.

Teacher Reflection - Module 1

Which students can name a response's thinking level and point to the exact words?

Which students upgrade the citation stem and explanation instead of just adding length?

Which students still restate the text instead of explaining what the evidence means?

Who is ready for Module 2, building a strong SCR thesis (central idea) with TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER?

Teacher Notes

Module 1 - Remote Learning



Virtual Classroom Adjustment for Remote Learners

Use these adjustments to run Module 1 fully online without losing rigor or participation. For Listen, Decide, and Defend, read both responses aloud and have students type A or B in the chat or hold up one finger for A and two for B, then call on one student to defend the choice by naming the exact word that raised the level. Display both sample responses on a slide for the Gather activity and ask students to type A or B and be ready to explain why. Put the Thinking Levels Chart on a slide for students to see throughout the lesson, and create movable labels so students can sort or upgrade thinking digitally. For Level Up Showdown, use a shared slide deck with the cards and a digital spinner from 1 to 5; students read a card, then type the level and their upgraded version in the chat, or annotate directly on the slides. Display both passages in view-only form and provide separate digital copies for TRACKS highlighting. For Discuss, ask students to respond with one word in chat that changed, a verbal explanation, or fingers 1-5 to show what level they think a new sample might be. For the independent WHY and HOW practice, students may complete the work in their notebooks, on a slide, or in a shared document, then hold the notebook up to the camera or paste the upgraded response in the chat. For Award, students type one upgraded word pair in chat, such as says to indicates, shows to demonstrates, or means to suggests. For Target, students may type their next level goal in chat, hold up fingers for the level they want to reach, or respond verbally to one curiosity question. For Intervention, use draggable quotes and color-coded text boxes on slides; ask students to read a Level 1 sentence aloud, then work together to change one phrase at a time. For Enrichment, students submit their multi-level responses on a shared slide or read them aloud, highlighting the upgraded verbs and citation stems in different colors. For Explain to Others, use breakout rooms or paired unmuting so each student explains one upgrade aloud and tells why it is stronger.

M O D U L E

2

**Writing a Strong Thesis
(Central Idea) Using TOPIC,
CHARGE, and ANSWER**

Week 2 • Medium Stamina

Module 2: Writing a Strong Thesis (Central Idea) Using TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER

Week 2 - Medium Stamina - Cluster 1 (Short Constructed Response)

When Students Level Up Their Language, They Level Up Their Thinking



Teacher Script

"The way students begin their response determines the strength of everything that follows. When we teach them to start strong, we teach them to think strong."

Module Overarching Question

How do TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER work together to build a strong thesis (central idea) for WHAT, WHY, and HOW SCR prompts?

Today We Will Look For

- the TOPIC, the noun of importance that names the subject from the prompt
- the CHARGE, the verb of importance that names what the prompt asks the writer to do
- the ANSWER, the writer's own thinking that completes the thesis (central idea)
- how a WHAT prompt uses a simple sentence, a WHY prompt uses a complex sentence with because, and a relational HOW prompt uses a simple sentence with a preposition

Student reminder: A strong thesis (central idea) has all three pieces - TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER.

Why This Module Matters

Students often confuse answering a question with writing a complete thesis (central idea). In this module, students learn that a strong thesis (central idea) combines three pieces - TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER - and that the WHAT, WHY, or HOW prompt type decides the sentence structure. Using two Cluster 1 passages, students build, label, and upgrade thesis (central idea) statements so their thinking starts strong from the very first sentence.

Module Passage Set - Medium Stamina

Required stamina level for Module 2: Medium Stamina. The same two Grade 5 Cluster 1 passages increase in length, detail, evidence distance, and conceptual demand across the four modules.

Passage	Reading Genre	Scope & Sequence Passage Reference	Student-Facing Word Count
From Tension to Revolution	Nonfiction	1	506
The Ocean Lesson	Fiction	2	498

Teacher Passage Use Note: Use the stamina versions printed in this module. The lesson's passage-dependent prompts, models, games, examples, intervention, enrichment, and answer guidance should be completed with these assigned versions.

Module Independent Product

Independently write one WHAT thesis (central idea), one WHY thesis (central idea), and one relational HOW thesis (central idea), labeling the TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER in each and matching the sentence structure to the prompt type.

Teacher Inspiration

Teacher Script

“The way students begin their response determines the strength of everything that follows. When we teach them to start strong, we teach them to think strong.”

Module 2 - Family Communication

Purpose: Families are partners in this work. This page explains the week's learning, offers one question to ask at home, and gives one simple way to help.

This Week at a Glance

- The big skill: building a strong SCR thesis (central idea) from three pieces - TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER.
- The catch phrase: A strong thesis (central idea) has all three pieces.
- The two reading passages: "From Tension to Revolution" (about how new taxes and events like the Boston Tea Party pushed the American colonies toward revolution) and "The Ocean Lesson" (about how sea turtles rely on instinct while orcas rely on learned behavior and teamwork).

One Question to Ask at Home



Teacher Script

"What is your main point, and what are you being asked to do with it?"

One Way to Help

When your child answers a question, ask them to name the TOPIC (the subject), the CHARGE (what the question asks them to do), and the ANSWER (their own thinking). Putting all three together in one sentence is exactly this week's work.

Family Letter

Dear Families,

This week your child continues Cluster 1 of our fifth-grade writing curriculum, the Short Constructed Response. Your child will learn that a strong thesis (central idea) - the sentence that answers a prompt - is built from three pieces: the TOPIC (the important subject), the CHARGE (what the prompt asks the writer to do), and the ANSWER (the writer's own thinking). Your child will also learn that a WHAT prompt uses a simple sentence, a WHY prompt uses a complex sentence with a word like because, and a relational HOW prompt uses a simple sentence with a preposition.

We are reading two texts: "From Tension to Revolution," about how new taxes, the Stamp Act, the Boston Massacre, and the Boston Tea Party pushed the American colonies toward revolution, and "The Ocean Lesson," about a girl named Nyla who learns that sea turtles rely on instinct while orcas rely on learned behavior and teamwork. Your child will build thesis (central idea) statements about these texts and label the three pieces.

Please try this at home: When your child shares an idea, ask them to say it as a complete thesis (central idea) - name the subject, tell what they are being asked to do, and add their own thinking. For example, "The colonists protested British laws because they were taxed without representation and felt it was unfair."

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

Carta para las Familias

Estimadas familias:

Esta semana su hijo o hija continúa el Grupo 1 de nuestro currículo de escritura de quinto grado, la Respuesta Construida Corta (SCR). Su hijo o hija aprenderá que una tesis fuerte - la oración que responde a una pregunta - se construye con tres partes: el TEMA (el sujeto importante), la TAREA (lo que la pregunta le pide hacer al escritor) y la RESPUESTA (el pensamiento propio del escritor). Su hijo o hija también aprenderá que una pregunta de tipo WHAT usa una oración simple, una pregunta de tipo WHY usa una oración compleja con una palabra como "because," y una pregunta relacional de tipo HOW usa una oración simple con una preposición.

Leemos dos textos: "From Tension to Revolution," sobre cómo los nuevos impuestos, la Ley del Timbre, la Masacre de Boston y el Motín del Té de Boston llevaron a las colonias americanas hacia la revolución, y "The Ocean Lesson," sobre una niña llamada Nyla que aprende que las tortugas marinas dependen del instinto mientras que las orcas dependen del comportamiento aprendido y del trabajo en equipo. Su hijo o hija construirá tesis sobre estos textos y etiquetará las tres partes.

Por favor, intente esto en casa: Cuando su hijo o hija comparta una idea, pídale que la diga como una tesis completa - que nombre el sujeto, diga lo que se le pide hacer y agregue su propio pensamiento. Por ejemplo, "Los colonos protestaron contra las leyes británicas porque fueron gravados con impuestos sin representación y sintieron que era injusto."

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

Module 2 - Family Conversation Starters

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

- What is the difference between answering a question and writing a complete thesis (central idea)?
- What are the three pieces every strong thesis (central idea) needs?
- In "From Tension to Revolution," what would be a strong thesis (central idea) about why the colonists protested?
- In "The Ocean Lesson," how would you build a thesis (central idea) about how setting influences survival?

Simple Family Activities

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

Family Activity - Name the Three Pieces



Teacher Script

"a prompt aloud, such as "Why did colonists protest British laws?" Take turns naming the TOPIC, the CHARGE, and the ANSWER, then put them together into one complete sentence."

Family Activity - Match the Structure

Ask a WHAT question (use a simple sentence), a WHY question (use a complex sentence with because), and a HOW question (use a preposition such as through or by). Notice how the sentence changes with each prompt type.

Module 2 - Lesson Overview and Standards

Lesson Overview

Module 2 continues Cluster 1. Students learn that a strong thesis (central idea) is built from three pieces - TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER - and that the prompt type (WHAT, WHY, or HOW) decides the sentence structure. Using "From Tension to Revolution" and "The Ocean Lesson," students identify missing thesis (central idea) parts, build complete thesis (central idea) statements, and upgrade their word choice using the Thinking Levels Chart.

BIG Goal: Students will build a strong SCR thesis (central idea) by combining TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER and matching the sentence structure to the prompt type.

Writing TEKS for This Module

The Student Expectation column below is the exact, full wording of each Grade 5 TEKS breakout - quoted verbatim from the Cluster 1 scope and sequence, not paraphrased or abbreviated. This module claims only the breakouts students directly demonstrate or intentionally practice.

Writing Process TEKS

TEKS	Student Expectation (verbatim TEKS breakout)
5.11(B)(i)	develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction

Writing Genre TEKS

TEKS	Student Expectation (verbatim TEKS breakout)
5.12(B)(i)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea
5.12(B)(ii)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using genre characteristics
5.12(B)(iii)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using craft

Revising TEKS

TEKS	Student Expectation (verbatim TEKS breakout)
5.11(C)(i)	revise drafts to improve sentence structure

Editing TEKS

TEKS	Student Expectation (verbatim TEKS breakout)
5.11(D)(i)	edit drafts using standard English conventions, including complete simple sentences with subject-verb agreement
5.11(D)(vi)	edit drafts using standard English conventions, including past tense of irregular verbs
5.11(D)(viii)	edit drafts using standard English conventions, including adjectives, including their comparative forms
5.11(D)(ix)	edit drafts using standard English conventions, including adjectives, including their superlative forms

Where the Standards Are Visible in This Module

- Students organize the beginning of an SCR around a purposeful thesis (central idea) structure using TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER.
- Students match WHAT, WHY, and HOW prompts to appropriate sentence structures and revise incomplete or vague theses.
- Students practice cluster editing expectations in the sentences they build and refine.

Module 2 - TEKS and ELPS (Cluster 1 · from the Scope & Sequence)

These are the standards listed for Cluster 1 in the Teach BIG Scope and Sequence, written in full rather than listed only by code, and grouped by category.

TEKS - Cluster 1 (from the Scope & Sequence)

Writing Process (Composition)

- 5.11(A)(i) plan a first draft by selecting a genre for a particular topic, purpose, and audience using a range of strategies
- 5.11(B)(i) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction

Writing Genre

- 5.12(B)(i) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea
- 5.12(B)(ii) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using genre characteristics
- 5.12(B)(iii) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using craft

Revising

- 5.11(C)(i) revise drafts to improve sentence structure
- 5.11(C)(ii) revise drafts to improve word choice

Editing

- 5.11(D)(i) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including complete simple sentences with subject-verb agreement
- 5.11(D)(vi) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including past tense of irregular verbs
- 5.11(D)(vii) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including collective nouns
- 5.11(D)(viii) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including adjectives, including their comparative forms
- 5.11(D)(ix) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including adjectives, including their superlative forms
- 5.11(D)(xxvii) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including correct spelling of words with grade-appropriate orthographic patterns
- 5.11(D)(xxix) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including correct spelling of high-frequency words

ELPS - Cluster 1 (breakouts this module addresses)

Listening

- 1(E)(i) demonstrate listening comprehension from information presented orally during formal classroom interactions by restating, responding, paraphrasing, summarizing, or asking for clarification or additional details

Speaking

- 2(E)(i) narrate, describe, explain, justify, discuss, elaborate, or evaluate orally with increasing specificity in academic context or discourse
- 2(F)(i) restate, ask questions about, or respond to information during formal classroom interactions

Writing

- 4(C)(i) write using a combination of both high-frequency words and content-area vocabulary
- 4(D)(ii) write content-area texts using a variety of sentence types
- 4(E)(ii) write content-area specific text using grammatical structures
- 4(F)(i) write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting details using appropriate content for [a] specific purpose
- 4(F)(ix) write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting evidence using appropriate content for [a] specific purpose

Language Domains

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

Domain	How this module builds it
Listening	In Listen and Label, students hear thesis (central idea) parts and label each one as TOPIC, CHARGE, or ANSWER.
Speaking	Students name the job each phrase performs and explain how it helps build a complete thesis (central idea).
Reading	Students read both passages and mark details that could become the ANSWER part of a thesis (central idea).
Writing	Students build WHAT, WHY, and relational HOW thesis (central idea) statements and label the three pieces.

Module 2 - Learning Destination

I Can Statements

- I can build a strong SCR thesis (central idea) by combining TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER and matching the sentence structure to the prompt type.
- I can identify the TOPIC, the CHARGE, and the ANSWER in a thesis (central idea).
- I can match a WHAT prompt to a simple sentence, a WHY prompt to a complex sentence with because, and a relational HOW prompt to a simple sentence with a preposition.
- I can find and add a missing thesis (central idea) part.

I Will Statements

- I will read closely, listen actively, discuss my reasoning, write independently, reflect on my growth, and explain my thinking to others.
- I will label the three pieces of every thesis (central idea) I build.
- I will use stronger words from my Thinking Levels Chart to upgrade my thesis (central idea).
- I will make sure my sentence structure matches the prompt type.

Success Criteria

- I can name the three pieces of a strong thesis (central idea) and point to each one in a sentence.
- I can build a complete thesis (central idea) that answers the prompt and includes all three pieces.
- I can match my sentence structure to a WHAT, WHY, or HOW prompt.
- I can upgrade my thesis (central idea) with stronger, more precise word choice.

Evidence That Will Demonstrate Mastery

- The Listen and Label responses from the auditory engagement.
- The Thesis (Central Idea) Builder Showdown thesis (central idea) statements recorded in the Interactive Notebook.
- The independent WHAT, WHY, and relational HOW thesis (central idea) statements, each labeled with TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER.

Module 2 - Rigor and Misconceptions

Rigor Safeguard

You may read both passages aloud, reread them, and let students use the Thinking Levels Chart, the thesis (central idea) charts, the prompt-type chart, and the sentence strips. You may provide oral rehearsal. You may not choose a student's words, write their thesis (central idea), or supply their ANSWER. The student must still identify the prompt type, build the three pieces, and match the sentence structure.

Rigor and Cognitive Demand

Level of Thinking	What Students Must Do	Expected Degree of Independence	Evidence of the Thinking
Literal	Identify the TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER in a thesis (central idea).	Supported. The teacher may reread the prompt.	The student labels each of the three pieces.
Inferential	Build a complete thesis (central idea) and match it to the prompt type.	Guided early, independent by Use Again.	The student writes a thesis (central idea) with all three pieces and correct structure.
Evaluative	Judge whether a thesis (central idea) is complete and revise a weak one.	Independent by the game and the auditory task.	The student names the missing piece and repairs the thesis (central idea).

Educator Insight

Students often confuse answering the question with writing a complete thesis (central idea). Many will restate the prompt without adding their own thinking. Another common issue is using the wrong sentence structure for the prompt type, such as writing a simple sentence for a WHY question. Students may also leave out one of the three pieces, especially the ANSWER. Watch for vague verbs that do not clearly match the charge. Some students will avoid using subordinators or prepositions because they are unsure how to apply them. To fix this, model each type clearly and repeatedly connect structure to purpose. Reinforce that the words they choose reflect their level of thinking.

Module 2 - Thinking Levels

These charts support building rigor. Use them in every module to name the level of thinking a task and a student response require. Color-code the five levels to match the student Thinking Levels Chart.

The Five Thinking Levels

Level	Color	Thinking Stage	What the Language Shows
Level 1	Red	Foundational	Uses basic words like says, shows, or tells; restates the text.
Level 2	Orange	Emergent	Begins to use words like suggests or means and adds a little explanation.
Level 3	Yellow	Visible	Uses words like indicates or demonstrates and connects the evidence to an idea.
Level 4	Green	Independent	Uses words like establishes and shows a pattern that strengthens an inference.
Level 5	Blue	Reflective	Synthesizes ideas, reframes the meaning, and connects to a bigger idea or setting.

Words = Thinking Level

When you choose strong words from your Thinking Levels Chart, you upgrade your response. Move from says / shows toward suggests, indicates, demonstrates, and establishes only when the deeper thinking truly supports the stronger wording.

Level	Stage	Sample Citation and Explanation Language
Level 1	Foundational	The text says... This shows...
Level 2	Emergent	According to the text... This suggests...
Level 3	Visible	The text indicates that... This demonstrates that...
Level 4	Independent	The text establishes that... This pattern strengthens the inference that...
Level 5	Reflective	The evidence converges on the idea that... Ultimately, this reframes...

Challenge: Upgrade the ANSWER part of your thesis (central idea) by choosing a more precise verb and a clearer relationship - not just more words.



Teacher Script

"A thesis (central idea) is stronger when the word choice matches the depth of thinking the prompt requires."

Module 2 - Vocabulary

Vocabulary - Teacher Script

Teacher Script

"Before we begin, let's preview the words we will use to talk about the thesis (central idea), its three pieces, and the different prompt types - everyday words, academic words, and words from our two texts."

Tier 1 Vocabulary - Everyday Words

Word	Student-Friendly Definition	Oral Rehearsal Frame
topic	the main subject the prompt is about	The topic of this prompt is ____.
answer	the response you give to a question	My answer is ____.
build	to put pieces together to make something	I can build a thesis (central idea) by ____.
piece	one part of a bigger whole	The missing piece is ____.
sentence	a group of words that shares a complete idea	My sentence has ____.
ask	to put a question to someone	The prompt asks me to ____.
match	to pair things that go together	I can match the structure by ____.
begin	to start something	I begin my response with ____.
strong	powerful and clear	My thesis (central idea) is strong because ____.
missing	not there when it should be	The part that is missing is ____.

Tier 2 Vocabulary - Academic Words

Word	Student-Friendly Definition	Oral Rehearsal Frame
thesis (central idea)	a complete sentence that directly answers the prompt	My thesis (central idea) is ____.
structure	the way ideas and sentence parts are organized	The structure of a WHY thesis (central idea) is ____.
response	the written answer a student creates from a prompt and text	My response includes ____.
evidence	specific proof from the passage	My evidence is ____.
explanation	the thinking that tells what the evidence means	My explanation shows ____.
relationship	the connection between two ideas, events, details, or conditions	The relationship here is ____.
influence	the power to affect an action, idea, behavior, or result	Setting can influence ____.
connect	to show how ideas or details belong together	I connect these ideas by ____.
analyze	to examine parts closely in order to understand how they work	When I analyze the prompt, I see ____.
compare	to examine ideas or details for meaningful similarities or differences	I can compare ____ and ____.

Tier 3 Vocabulary - Passage-Specific Words

Word	Pronunciation	Student-Friendly Definition	Oral Rehearsal Frame
Parliament	PAR-luh-ment	the group in Great Britain that made laws and taxes for the colonies	Parliament decided to ____.
representation	rep-ri-zen-TAY-shun	having someone speak for you in government	The colonists wanted representation because ____.
colonists	KOL-uh-nists	people who lived in the American colonies	The colonists reacted by ____.
resistance	ri-ZIS-tuns	the act of fighting against or opposing something	The resistance grew when ____.
revolution	rev-uh-LOO-shun	a fight to change who holds power	The revolution began because ____.
instinct	IN-stinkt	a behavior an animal is born with and does not learn	The turtles used instinct to ____.
survival	sur-VY-vul	staying alive through a danger	Survival depended on ____.
orcas	OR-kuhz	large ocean animals, also called killer whales	The orcas showed that ____.
coordinated	koh-OR-di-nay-tid	working together in an organized way	The orcas swam in coordinated ____.
behavior	bi-HAY-vyur	the way a person or animal acts	Learned behavior means ____.



Teacher Resource

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

Module 2 - Background Knowledge and Teacher Context

This module uses two Cluster 1 passages that support thesis (central idea)-building work. In "From Tension to Revolution," students can build thesis (central idea) statements about how new taxes, the Stamp Act, the Boston Massacre, the Boston Tea Party, and the Intolerable Acts pushed the colonies from loyalty toward revolution - a historical and cultural setting. In "The Ocean Lesson," students can build thesis (central idea) statements about how sea turtles rely on instinct while orcas rely on learned behavior and teamwork - an environmental setting. Both passages give students rich subjects for the TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER pieces.

More Background for the Teacher

Both passages stay the same across the four Cluster 1 modules; each grows in length, detail, evidence distance, and conceptual demand from module to module. In Module 2 (Medium Stamina), students focus on building a complete thesis (central idea) from three pieces and matching sentence structure to prompt type. Remember that SETTING = WHERE + WHEN + WAY OF LIFE, a review from Module 1 that still shapes the ANSWER part of a thesis (central idea).

Module 2 - Materials and Teacher Preparation

This module teaches students to write a strong thesis (central idea) using the three pieces - TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER - and to match sentence structure to the WHAT, WHY, or HOW prompt type. The major focus is helping students see that a strong thesis (central idea) answers the prompt correctly and is structured based on the type of thinking required.

Anchor Charts to Create

- Three Pieces to a Thesis (Central Idea): TOPIC (noun of importance), CHARGE (verb of importance), ANSWER (student thinking).
- SCR Prompt Types: WHAT to a simple sentence (facts and details); WHY to a complex sentence (because and reasons); HOW (relational) to a simple sentence with a preposition (connections).
- SETTING = WHERE + WHEN + WAY OF LIFE (review from Module 1).
- Words = Thinking Level: Foundational, Emergent, Visible, Independent, Reflective.
- Thinking Level Vocabulary: post the stems so students can upgrade thesis (central idea) wording during the lesson.

Materials

- Printed copies of both Cluster 1 passages
- Interactive notebooks
- Student-sized Thinking Levels Charts for notebook use
- Highlighters or colored pencils
- Thesis (Central Idea) game cards (included below)
- Spinner labeled 1 = WHAT, 2 = WHY, 3 = HOW (paperclip and pencil or digital spinner)
- Sentence strips
- Student-selected "Pencil Guy" markers
- Teacher-made slides for virtual learners

For the In-Person Teacher

- Prepare anchor charts before the lesson.
- Copy and cut the thesis (central idea) game cards and piece cards.
- Set out notebook supplies.
- Display both passages where all students can refer to details for the ANSWER.

For the Virtual Teacher

- Create slides for thesis (central idea) breakdown examples.
- Create drag-and-drop TOPIC / CHARGE / ANSWER pieces.
- Use the chat for quick thesis (central idea) writing practice.
- Put the Thinking Levels Chart on a slide for students to see throughout the lesson.

Module 2 - The DOT Reading Habit

The DOT Reading Habit



Teacher Script

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

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

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

Apply DOT to passage words such as Parliament, representation, resistance, instinct, and coordinated without interrupting the first read for lengthy definitions.

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

Module 2 - The Thesis (Central Idea) Framework: TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER

Teacher Script

"A strong thesis (central idea) is more than a sentence. It is your voice, your thinking, and your understanding all in one. Today we learn to build a thesis (central idea) from three pieces and to match its structure to the prompt."

Content Anchor

A strong thesis (central idea) answers the prompt correctly AND is structured based on the type of thinking required.

Three Pieces to a Thesis (Central Idea)

A strong thesis (central idea) combines three pieces.

- TOPIC - the noun of importance; the main subject named in the prompt.
- CHARGE - the verb of importance; what the prompt asks the writer to do.
- ANSWER - the writer's own thinking that completes the sentence.

SCR Prompt Types Decide the Structure

- WHAT prompt - a simple sentence that states facts or details.
- WHY prompt - a complex sentence with a subordinating word such as because.
- HOW prompt (relational) - a simple sentence with a preposition such as through or by.

The Level-Up Language Ladder

Level	Stage	From ... Toward
Level 1	Foundational	The text says... This shows...
Level 2	Emergent	According to the text... This suggests...
Level 3	Visible	The text indicates that... This demonstrates that...
Level 4	Independent	The text establishes that... This pattern strengthens the inference that...
Level 5	Reflective	The evidence converges on the idea that... Ultimately, this reframes...

Setting Shapes the Answer

Historical, cultural, and environmental setting can shape the ANSWER part of a thesis (central idea). In "From Tension to Revolution," the historical and cultural setting shapes why the colonists resisted. In "The Ocean Lesson," the environmental setting shapes how the turtles and orcas survive.

Teacher Script

"When you choose strong words from your Thinking Levels Chart, you upgrade your thesis (central idea). A strong thesis (central idea) is not just longer. It is complete, precise, and matched to the prompt."

Module 2 - TRACKS: Reading Both Passages for Evidence

Before students build thesis (central idea) statements, they read "From Tension to Revolution" and "The Ocean Lesson" and TAP the TRACKS to find the six kinds of measurable evidence. Reading for TRACKS gives students the exact details they will use in the ANSWER part of their WHAT, WHY, and HOW thesis (central idea) statements.

The Six Types of Measurable Evidence: TRACKS

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

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

How to Use TRACKS

Teacher Script

"As we read BOTH passages, we hunt for all six kinds of evidence and highlight each one in its TRACKS color. Time is green, Reactions are purple, Actions are yellow, Character/Concept/Creature is yellow, Key Knowledge is orange, and Scenery/Setting is green. The exact words we highlight become the ANSWER details we use when we build our thesis (central idea) statements."

Before Students Read

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

The Six Types of Measurable Evidence: TRACKS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PASSAGE 1 — From Tension to Revolution

[1] Before the American Revolution, the thirteen colonies were part of Great Britain, a superpower at the time. Many colonists considered themselves loyal to the king and were proud to be British subjects. They followed British laws, traded with British merchants, and depended on Great Britain for protection. However, this began to change after the French and Indian War. Although Great Britain gained land, it also gained significant debt. To recover money, Parliament placed new taxes on the colonies.

[2] One of these laws was the Stamp Act. It required colonists to pay taxes on printed materials such as newspapers, legal documents, licenses, and playing cards. Colonists strongly opposed this law because they had no representatives in Parliament. They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice, which led to the phrase “taxation without representation.” Many colonists began to meet together, write letters, and speak out against the tax. Some refused to buy stamped paper, while others protested in the streets. These actions showed that the colonists were beginning to challenge British authority.

[3] Tensions continued to rise. In 1770, the Boston Massacre occurred when British soldiers fired into a crowd of colonists, killing several people. Before the shooting, colonists had gathered near the soldiers and shouted angrily. Some threw snowballs and other objects. The event shocked many people and increased anger and distrust toward British authority. Leaders such as Samuel Adams used the event to remind colonists that British soldiers were a threat to their rights.

[4] A few years later, the Tea Act was passed, leading to the Boston Tea Party. The Tea Act allowed one British company to sell tea at a lower price, but many colonists still saw it as another way for Parliament to control them. After the Tea Act was passed, trouble was brewing in the colonies. During this protest, colonists dumped tea into Boston Harbor. Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty helped organize resistance and spread ideas. Some colonists dressed as Native Americans to hide their identities as they threw the tea into the water. This protest showed that many colonists were willing to take bold action.

[5] In response, Great Britain passed the Intolerable Acts, which punished the colonies and limited their rights. One part of these acts closed Boston Harbor until the ruined tea was paid for. Another part allowed British officials to have more control over the colony of Massachusetts. Instead of ending the conflict, these actions brought the colonies closer together. Colonists in different places sent food, supplies, and support to Boston. They began to understand that one colony’s problem could become every colony’s problem. The colonists learned that there is strength in numbers.

[6] Over time, many colonists wanted to remove British control. They believed they should have a government that protected their rights and listened to their voices. The American Revolution became a fight for independence, leading to the Declaration of Independence and the creation of a new nation. What began as anger over taxes grew into a larger struggle for freedom, self-government, and independence.

Student Annotation Guide — From Tension to Revolution

T — Time

Before the American Revolution; In 1770

R — Reactions

Colonists strongly opposed this law; increased anger and distrust toward British authority

A — Actions

Parliament placed new taxes on the colonies; British soldiers fired into a crowd of colonists

C — Character/Concept/Creature

Parliament; the Stamp Act; Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty

K — Key Knowledge

taxation without representation; The colonists learned that there is strength in numbers

S — Scenery/Setting

the thirteen colonies were part of Great Britain

TRACKS EVIDENCE HIGHLIGHTING — From Tension to Revolution

[1] Before the American Revolution, the thirteen colonies were part of Great Britain, a superpower at the time. Many colonists considered themselves loyal to the king and were proud to be British subjects. They followed British laws, traded with British merchants, and depended on Great Britain for protection. However, this began to change after the French and Indian War. Although Great Britain gained land, it also gained significant debt. To recover money, **Parliament placed new taxes on the colonies.**

[2] One of these laws was **the Stamp Act**. It required colonists to pay taxes on printed materials such as newspapers, legal documents, licenses, and playing cards. Colonists strongly opposed this law because they had no representatives in **Parliament**. They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice, which led to the phrase **“taxation without representation.”** Many colonists began to meet together, write letters, and speak out against the tax. Some refused to buy stamped paper, while others protested in the streets. These actions showed that the colonists were beginning to challenge British authority.

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PASSAGE 2 — The Ocean Lesson

[1] Nyla stood quietly on the beach as dozens of sea turtles began to hatch from the sand. The morning air was cool, and small waves rolled onto the shore. At first, the sand looked still. Then tiny movements appeared near the nest. One by one, they broke through their shells and started moving toward the ocean.

[2] “How do they know where to go?” Nyla asked.

[3] “They don’t need to be taught,” her guide explained. “It’s an instinct. They are born with that behavior.”

[4] Nyla watched closely. The turtles moved slowly but with determination. Their small flippers pushed against the sand again and again. Some turtles slipped into shallow footprints, and others had to crawl around pieces of seaweed. Even though birds circled above and the sand was uneven, most continued toward the water. Their instinct guided them through the transition from sand to ocean, increasing their chances of survival during a dangerous moment.

[5] The guide smiled and said, “Slow and steady wins the race.”

[6] Nyla understood what the guide meant. The turtles were not the fastest animals on the beach, but they kept moving. They did not stop to look for help. They did not wait for an older turtle to show them the way. Their bodies and brains already knew what to do. Reaching the ocean quickly helped protect them from danger on the beach.

[7] Later that day, Nyla visited a marine biology exhibit at an aquarium. She stopped in front of a large tank where a group of orcas swam together in coordinated patterns. A trainer explained how they hunt in the wild.

[8] “Orcas rely on learned behavior,” he said. “Young orcas observe older members of their group. Over time, they learn strategies and practice working together.”

[9] The trainer smiled and said, “These orcas are a whale of a team.”

[10] Nyla noticed how the orcas stayed close and moved as a team. Their actions seemed planned and purposeful. One orca turned, and the others followed. Another slowed down, and the group changed direction together. The trainer explained that young orcas spend a long time watching and practicing. They learn which signals to follow and how to stay with the group.

[11] “So they have to learn how to survive?” Nyla asked.

[12] “Yes,” the trainer replied. “Their success depends on learning and cooperation.”

[13] Nyla thought about what she had seen. The turtles relied on instinct to act quickly without guidance. The orcas relied on learning and teamwork over time. Both types of behavior helped animals survive in their environments, even though they developed in different ways.

[14] As Nyla left the aquarium, she realized that survival could look different for different animals. Some behaviors were present from birth, like the turtles moving toward the sea. Other behaviors developed through practice, like the orcas hunting in a group. Instinct helped one animal act right away, while learning helped another animal improve over

time. Nyla smiled because both examples showed how animals are equipped to meet the challenges of their environments.

Student Annotation Guide — The Ocean Lesson

T — Time

Later that day

R — Reactions

The turtles moved slowly but with determination; Nyla noticed how the orcas stayed close and moved as a team

A — Actions

broke through their shells and started moving toward the ocean; Their instinct guided them through the transition from sand to ocean

C — Character/Concept/Creature

Nyla; orcas

K — Key Knowledge

They are born with that behavior; Orcas rely on learned behavior; Their success depends on learning and cooperation

S — Scenery/Setting

on the beach; a marine biology exhibit at an aquarium

TRACKS EVIDENCE HIGHLIGHTING — The Ocean Lesson

[1] Nyla stood quietly on the beach as dozens of sea turtles began to hatch from the sand. The morning air was cool, and small waves rolled onto the shore. At first, the sand looked still. Then tiny movements appeared near the nest. One by one, they broke through their shells and started moving toward the ocean.

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time. Nyla smiled because both examples showed how animals are equipped to meet the challenges of their environments.

Day 1 - Gather and Reveal



TEKS and ELPS for Today

Standard	Student Expectation (verbatim breakout)
TEKS 5.11(B)(i)	develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction
TEKS 5.12(B)(i)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea
ELPS 1(E)(i)	demonstrate listening comprehension from information presented orally during formal classroom interactions by restating, responding, paraphrasing, summarizing, or asking for clarification or additional details
ELPS 2(F)(i)	restate, ask questions about, or respond to information during formal classroom interactions

Day 1 Purpose

Students gather the idea that an answer can be incomplete, then reveal that a strong thesis (central idea) is built from three pieces - TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER.

Reading Purpose

Read for cause, relationship, and a direct answer. Mark details that could help you build the ANSWER part of a thesis (central idea) about colonial protest, instinct, learned behavior, or how setting influences actions.

G - Gather: What's Missing?

Examine an incomplete answer and identify which thesis (central idea) part is missing: TOPIC, CHARGE, or ANSWER.



Teacher Script

"I am going to show you a response. Your job is to figure out what is missing."



Daily Deck Slide

"The colonists protested."

 Teacher Script

"Turn and tell your partner - what is missing from this answer?"

Students respond.

 Teacher Script

"This answer is missing the most important part - your thinking, the ANSWER."

Possible Student Responses:

- "It does not say why."
- "It is missing the reason."
- "It does not have the answer part."

 Daily Deck Slide (M2-04 - Gather)

Write on the board: What's Missing? Examine an incomplete answer and identify which thesis (central idea) part is missing: TOPIC, CHARGE, or ANSWER.

R - Reveal: TOPIC + CHARGE + ANSWER **Teacher Script**

"As I speak, you will listen carefully and write the missing words in your Interactive Notebook. These are the key words you must remember."

Auditory Engagement Script (read aloud): "A strong thesis (central idea) has THREE pieces. The first piece is the TOPIC. This is the main idea from the question. The second piece is the CHARGE. This is what the question is asking you to do. The third piece is the ANSWER. This is your thinking. There are different types of prompts. A WHAT prompt uses a SIMPLE sentence with facts. A WHY prompt uses a COMPLEX sentence with a subordinating word like BECAUSE. A HOW prompt uses a SIMPLE sentence with a PREPOSITION to show relationships. When you choose strong words from your THINKING LEVEL chart, you upgrade your response."

Interactive Notebook Fill-In:

- A thesis (central idea) has THREE pieces.
- The TOPIC is the main idea from the question.
- The CHARGE is what the question asks you to do.
- The ANSWER is your thinking.
- WHAT = SIMPLE sentence.
- WHY = COMPLEX sentence with BECAUSE.
- HOW = SIMPLE sentence with a PREPOSITION.

- Use your THINKING LEVEL chart to upgrade word choice.

Teacher Script

"Connect WHAT prompts to simple fact statements, WHY prompts to reason relationships, and HOW prompts to relationship language."

Board text: TOPIC + CHARGE + ANSWER = a strong thesis (central idea).

Daily Deck Slide (M2-05 - Reveal)

Write on the board: Reveal TOPIC + CHARGE + ANSWER. Connect WHAT prompts to simple fact statements, WHY prompts to reason relationships, and HOW prompts to relationship language.

Day 1 Closing

Partner completion: "The three pieces of a strong thesis (central idea) are ___, ___, and ___."

Day 2 - Attempt



TEKS and ELPS for Today

Standard	Student Expectation (verbatim breakout)
TEKS 5.11(B)(i)	develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction
TEKS 5.12(B)(iii)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using craft
ELPS 4(D)(ii)	write content-area texts using a variety of sentence types
ELPS 4(F)(i)	write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting details using appropriate content for [a] specific purpose

Day 2 Purpose

Students attempt thesis (central idea) building through Thesis (Central Idea) Builder Showdown: draw a prompt, identify its type, assemble all three thesis (central idea) pieces, and check that the sentence structure matches the thinking required.

★ Daily Deck Slide (M2-06 - Attempt)

Write on the board: Thesis (Central Idea) Builder Showdown. Draw a prompt, identify its type, assemble all three thesis (central idea) pieces, and check that the sentence structure matches the thinking required.

Game: Thesis (Central Idea) Builder Showdown - Cluster 1 Edition

Teacher Script

"You will play a game where you build a complete thesis (central idea) from three pieces. Each time you build a strong thesis (central idea), you start your thinking with strength and clarity."

Students work in groups of 3-4. Each group receives Prompt Cards, Piece Cards (TOPIC / CHARGE / ANSWER), and a Spinner (1 = WHAT, 2 = WHY, 3 = HOW). Students may choose a "Pencil Guy" as their game marker if using a gameboard.

Prompt Cards (from the passages):

- What caused tension between Great Britain and the colonies?
- Why did colonists protest British laws?
- How does setting influence behavior in both passages?

Directions:

- Spin to determine your prompt type.
- Draw a prompt card.
- As a group, build a complete thesis (central idea) using the three pieces.
- Make sure your sentence matches the type of prompt.
- Move your Pencil Guy marker on the gameboard.
- Write one thesis (central idea) and label TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER in your Interactive Notebook.

Teacher Script

"Keep these cards in your notebook pocket to review anytime. Use these notebook pages, game cards, and review pieces whenever you have free time in the classroom so you can continue growing your ECR habits."

WHAT Example

Answer: "Tension between Great Britain and the colonies was caused by taxes and lack of representation."

WHY Example

Answer: "The colonists protested British laws because they were taxed without representation and felt it was unfair."

HOW Example

Answer: "Setting influences behavior in both passages through the colonists' protests and the animals' survival methods."

Notebook Connection

Teacher Script

"In your Interactive Notebook, write one thesis (central idea) and label the three pieces: TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER."

Day 2 Closing

Teacher Script

"Record your strongest thesis (central idea). Remember: a complete thesis (central idea) needs all three pieces."

Day 3 - Discuss and Use Again



TEKS and ELPS for Today

Standard	Student Expectation (verbatim breakout)
TEKS 5.11(C)(i)	revise drafts to improve sentence structure
TEKS 5.12(B)(i)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea
TEKS 5.12(B)(ii)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using genre characteristics
ELPS 4(E)(ii)	write content-area specific text using grammatical structures

Day 3 Purpose

Students discuss how the prompt tells them which sentence structure to use, then independently write one WHAT, one WHY, and one relational HOW thesis (central idea), labeling the three pieces in each.

D - Discuss



Teacher Script

"How did you know which sentence structure to use?" Discussion Questions:"

- "How did the prompt tell you which sentence structure to use?"
- "Which of the three thesis (central idea) pieces was easiest to miss?"
- "What made your thesis (central idea) strong?"
- "How can stronger words improve your thinking?"

Possible Student Responses:

- "We looked at the prompt. The prompt tells you how to think."
- "It had all three pieces."
- "Missing one piece weakens your thinking."

Possible Student Questions:

- Student Question: "What if I don't know what words to use?" Teacher Response: "Use your Thinking Levels Chart to choose stronger words."
- Student Question: "What happens if my thesis (central idea) does not match the prompt?" Teacher Response: "The reader may be confused. Match a WHY prompt to a complex sentence and a HOW prompt to a preposition."

 Teacher Script

"Connect to the Overarching Question: How do TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER work together to build a strong thesis (central idea) for WHAT, WHY, and HOW SCR prompts?"

U - Use Again: Independent Interactive Notebook Practice **Teacher Script**

"Write one thesis (central idea) for each prompt type. Label the three pieces."

WHAT Practice

Prompt: What event increased tension between colonists and British soldiers? Student Task: Write a WHAT thesis (central idea) as a simple sentence. Label TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER. Teacher Answer Example: The Boston Massacre increased tension between colonists and British soldiers.

WHY Practice

Prompt: Why do sea turtles rely on instinct? Student Task: Write a WHY thesis (central idea) as a complex sentence using because. Label TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER. Teacher Answer Example: Sea turtles rely on instinct because they must act quickly in a dangerous environment.

HOW Practice (Relational)

Prompt: How does setting influence survival in both passages? Student Task: Write a relational HOW thesis (central idea) using a preposition. Label TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER. Teacher Answer Example: Setting influences survival in both passages through instinct in sea turtles and learned behavior in orcas.

 Daily Deck Slide (M2-07 and M2-08 - Discuss and Use Again)

Write on the board: How did the prompt tell you which sentence structure to use? Which of the three thesis (central idea) pieces was easiest to miss? Then independently write one WHAT, one WHY, and one relational HOW thesis (central idea), and label TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER in each.

Day 3 Closing



Teacher Script

"Leave space under each thesis (central idea) so you can upgrade its word choice later. We are building a habit of starting strong."

Day 4 - Award and Target



TEKS and ELPS for Today

Standard	Student Expectation (verbatim breakout)
TEKS 5.11(C)(i)	revise drafts to improve sentence structure
TEKS 5.12(B)(iii)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using craft
ELPS 2(E)(i)	narrate, describe, explain, justify, discuss, elaborate, or evaluate orally with increasing specificity in academic context or discourse

Day 4 Purpose

Students recognize the strong thesis (central idea) statements they built, then set a precise next goal for their thesis (central idea) writing.

A - Award

Teacher Script

"You have just built strong thinking from the very first sentence." Award Options:"

- Notebook Recognition: Students write: "My strongest thesis (central idea) today was ____."
- Highlight the Pieces: Students highlight the TOPIC, the CHARGE, and the ANSWER in their strongest thesis (central idea).
- Self-Check: Students confirm, "I used the correct structure for my prompt."
- Peer Recognition: Students tell a partner: "One strong thing I saw in your thesis (central idea) was ____."

Teacher Script

"You are learning to start your thinking with strength and clarity."

★ Daily Deck Slide (M2-09 - Award)

Write on the board: Highlight the strongest thesis (central idea) you wrote and name which of its three pieces is especially clear.

T - Target **Teacher Script**

"What is your goal for your next thesis (central idea)?" Student Goal Options:"

- I want to use stronger vocabulary.
- I want to match the correct structure.
- I want to include all three pieces.
- I want to make my ANSWER clearer.

Interactive Notebook Reflection:

- My goal for my next thesis (central idea) is to _____.
- The prompt type that is hardest for me is _____.
- One word I want to start using is _____.
- One question I still have is _____.

Curiosity Questions:

- What happens if your thesis (central idea) does not match the prompt?
- Which type of thesis (central idea) is hardest for you and why?
- How can stronger words improve your thinking?
- How does setting shape the ANSWER part of your thesis (central idea)?

 Teacher Script

"Strong thinkers always set their next goal. Refer to your Thinking Levels Chart to help you upgrade your thesis (central idea)."

★ Daily Deck Slide (M2-10 - Target)

Write on the board: Choose one thesis (central idea) habit to improve - stronger vocabulary, correct sentence structure, or all three pieces present.

Day 4 Closing

Complete the sentence: "My next goal is to strengthen my thesis (central idea) by _____."

Day 5 - Explain to Others

E

TEKS and ELPS for Today

Standard	Student Expectation (verbatim breakout)
TEKS 5.12(B)(ii)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using genre characteristics
TEKS 5.11(D)(i)	edit drafts using standard English conventions, including complete simple sentences with subject-verb agreement
ELPS 2(E)(i)	narrate, describe, explain, justify, discuss, elaborate, or evaluate orally with increasing specificity in academic context or discourse

Day 5 Purpose

Students teach a partner how to build a thesis (central idea) using the three pieces and demonstrate them in one original thesis (central idea).

E - Turn and Teach

Teacher Script

"Turn to your partner and explain how to build a thesis (central idea) using the three pieces. Then give an example."

Student Directions:

- Explain TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER.
- Give a sample thesis (central idea).
- Identify the prompt type.
- Explain why the thesis (central idea) is complete.

Sentence Stems for Students:

- "The TOPIC of my thesis (central idea) is ____."
- "The CHARGE asks me to ____."
- "My ANSWER is ____."
- "This is a ____ prompt, so I used a ____ sentence."

Teacher Monitoring - Listen for students who:

- name all three pieces
- match the correct structure to the prompt type
- explain their reasoning clearly
- connect the ANSWER to setting

✓ **Module Overarching Question - Answer**

How do TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER work together to build a strong thesis (central idea) for WHAT, WHY, and HOW SCR prompts?

TOPIC identifies the important subject, CHARGE names what the prompt requires the writer to do, and ANSWER supplies the writer's thinking. Together, the three pieces create a complete thesis (central idea), while the WHAT, WHY, or HOW prompt type guides the sentence structure.

★ **Daily Deck Slide (M2-11 and M2-14 - Explain and Answer)**

Write on the board: Teach TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER to a partner and demonstrate them in one original thesis (central idea). Then answer: TOPIC names the subject, CHARGE names the task, and ANSWER supplies the writer's thinking. Together they form a complete thesis (central idea) that matches the prompt type.

Teacher Closing Encouragement

🔊 **Teacher Script**

"Today you learned how to begin your thinking with strength. A strong thesis (central idea) is more than a sentence - it is your voice, your thinking, and your understanding all in one. Keep building, keep growing, and keep challenging yourself to think at a higher level every time you write."

Module 2 - Low, Medium, and High Exemplars

Prompt: Why did colonists protest British laws? Write an SCR thesis (central idea), then make sure it includes all three pieces - TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER - and matches the prompt type.

Low Exemplar

- Student Response: The colonists protested. (Missing the ANSWER)
- What Is Working: The response names a TOPIC (the colonists) and a CHARGE (protested).
- Teacher Notes: The thesis (central idea) stops before the ANSWER, so it does not include the writer's own thinking about why.
- What Needs Improvement: Add the ANSWER using a WHY structure with because, such as "because they were taxed without representation."

Medium Exemplar

- Student Response: The colonists protested because of taxes. (TOPIC, CHARGE, and a partial ANSWER)
- What Is Working: The thesis (central idea) now includes all three pieces and uses a complex sentence with because, matching a WHY prompt.
- Teacher Notes: The ANSWER is present but general; it names taxes without the idea of representation or fairness.
- What Needs Improvement: Sharpen the ANSWER with more precise thinking, such as "because they were taxed without representation and believed the treatment was unfair."

High Exemplar

- Student Response: The colonists protested British laws because they were taxed without representation and believed the treatment was unfair. (TOPIC, CHARGE, and a precise ANSWER in a complete WHY thesis (central idea))
- What Is Working: The thesis (central idea) includes all three pieces, uses a complex WHY sentence with because, and states a precise ANSWER that connects to the historical setting.
- Teacher Notes: The TOPIC (the colonists and British laws), the CHARGE (protested), and the ANSWER (taxed without representation and unfair treatment) work together in one clear sentence that starts the response with strength.

Module 2 - Assessment Opportunities

Field	Detail
Purpose	Determine whether students can build a complete thesis (central idea) from TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER and match its structure to the prompt type.
Who Administers It	The classroom teacher during the lesson.
Materials Needed	Both passages, the Thinking Levels Chart, the prompt-type chart, Thesis (Central Idea) Builder Showdown cards, and student notebooks.
Related TEKS Breakout	5.11(B)(i) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction; 5.11(C)(i) revise drafts to improve sentence structure
Task	Students play Thesis (Central Idea) Builder Showdown and complete the independent WHAT, WHY, and relational HOW thesis (central idea) practice, labeling the three pieces in each.
Expected Response	Students build a complete thesis (central idea), label TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER, and match sentence structure to the prompt type.

Informal Assessment

During the lesson, observe Listen and Label and Thesis (Central Idea) Builder Showdown. Note whether students can name the three pieces and identify a missing one.

Formative Assessment

The Day 3 independent WHAT, WHY, and relational HOW thesis (central idea) practice serves as the formative check.

Formative Check Rubric/Scaffolding

Component	Student Requirement
TOPIC	Must name the important subject from the prompt.
CHARGE	Must name what the prompt asks the writer to do.
ANSWER	Must supply the writer's own thinking.
Structure	Must match a simple sentence to WHAT, a complex sentence to WHY, and a preposition to a relational HOW prompt.

🔑 Answer Key - Sample Thesis (Central Idea) Statements

WHAT: The Boston Massacre increased tension between colonists and British soldiers.

WHY: Sea turtles rely on instinct because they must act quickly in a dangerous environment. HOW: Setting influences survival in both passages through instinct in sea turtles and learned behavior in orcas.

Check the Learning

✓ Check the Learning

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

- Verbal - Gather/Reveal - What's Missing: Students name which thesis (central idea) part is missing from an incomplete answer.
- Visual/Physical - Attempt - Thesis (Central Idea) Builder Showdown: Students hold up one, two, or three fingers to show how many thesis (central idea) pieces a sentence has, then move the Pencil Guy after building a complete thesis (central idea).
- Written - Discuss/Use - Build a Thesis (Central Idea): Students write a WHAT, WHY, or relational HOW thesis (central idea) and label the three pieces.

Assessment Option

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

- Listen - assess through Listen and Label and discussion.
- Look - observe a fingers 1-3 piece check or a labeled thesis (central idea).
- Collect - have students produce a three-thesis (central idea) notebook page you can examine.

Intervention - Module 2

Step-by-Step Thesis (Central Idea) Builder

For students who need extra help building a thesis (central idea) one piece at a time. Slow it down and make each piece visible.

Teacher Script

"We are going to build a thesis (central idea) one piece at a time. You do not have to write the whole sentence all at once."

Step 1: Start with the Prompt. Give students the prompt: Why did colonists protest?

Step 2: Provide Guided Strips.

- TOPIC: The colonists
- CHARGE: protested
- ANSWER (provided): because they were taxed without representation

Teacher Script

"Let's put the three pieces together to make one sentence." Students physically assemble the sentence: "The colonists protested because they were taxed without representation."

Step 3: Remove Support Gradually. First remove the full sentence, then remove the ANSWER, then remove the CHARGE. Students rebuild the thesis (central idea) independently each time.

Step 4: Use the Word Bank. Provide a word bank of connecting words: because, through, by, due to. Students choose the word that matches the prompt type.

Step 5: Highlight the Pieces. Students highlight TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER in their finished thesis (central idea).

Additional Supports:

- Give students one piece at a time.
- Let students point to the anchor chart while speaking.
- Have them say the thesis (central idea) aloud before writing it.

Goal: Students independently construct all three pieces.

Module 2 - Embedded Checks and Student Support

Embedded Checks for Understanding

Teacher Move	Expected Response	Common Misconception	Teacher Response
Ask which thesis (central idea) part is missing.	Students name TOPIC, CHARGE, or ANSWER.	Students think restating the prompt is a complete thesis (central idea).	Point out: a thesis (central idea) also needs the ANSWER, your own thinking.
Ask students to match structure to a prompt.	Students use a simple sentence for WHAT, because for WHY, a preposition for HOW.	Students use a simple sentence for a WHY prompt.	Ask, "What does this prompt ask you to do? Match the structure to the prompt."
Ask why a thesis (central idea) is strong.	Students name all three pieces and the matched structure.	Students say "it is longer."	Ask, "Does it have all three pieces and the right structure?"

Student Support Quick Reference

If a student...	Support to Provide
Restates the prompt without thinking	Provide the ANSWER frame ("because...", "through...") and ask what they think.
Uses the wrong sentence structure	Point to the prompt-type chart and name the prompt type together.
Leaves out a piece	Use the three piece cards and check for TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER.
Masters quickly	Route to Module 2 enrichment (Advanced Thesis (Central Idea) Challenge).

Enrichment - Module 2

Advanced Thesis (Central Idea) Challenge

Students who master the concept write a thesis (central idea), upgrade its vocabulary and precision, then create a second strong version that answers the same prompt in a different accurate way.



Teacher Script

"You are now thinking beyond the expected. Push your thinking further."

Directions:

- Choose one prompt.
- Write a thesis (central idea).
- Rewrite it using stronger vocabulary.
- Add a second version using a different structure.

Example:

- Original: Setting influences behavior in both passages.
- Upgraded: Setting significantly shapes behavior in both passages through historical conflict and environmental survival demands.

Prompt Choices:

- What caused tension between Great Britain and the colonies?
- Why did colonists protest British laws?
- Why do sea turtles rely on instinct?
- How does setting influence survival in both passages?

Advanced Challenge - Students must explain: why their upgraded verb is stronger; why the structure matches the prompt type; how the second version stays accurate.

Extension: Students create their own prompt and exchange with a partner.

Module 2 - Additional Writing Opportunity: Build a Thesis (Central Idea)

Prompt Bank (WHAT, WHY, and HOW)

Each prompt asks for a thesis (central idea) you can build and then upgrade:

- What caused tension between Great Britain and the colonies?
- Why did colonists protest British laws?
- Why do sea turtles rely on instinct?
- How do orcas learn to survive in their group?
- How does setting influence behavior in both passages?

Writing Prompt

Choose one prompt from the bank. Build a strong thesis (central idea) using all three pieces - TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER - and match the sentence structure to the prompt type.

Connection to This Module

This week you learned that a strong thesis (central idea) has three pieces and that the prompt type decides the sentence structure. Now build a thesis (central idea), label the three pieces, and upgrade your word choice.

Planning Support

1. Name the TOPIC from the prompt.
2. Name the CHARGE - what the prompt asks you to do.
3. Add your ANSWER - your own thinking.
4. Match the structure to the prompt type.
5. Upgrade the word choice using the Thinking Levels Chart.

Step	Planning Guide
Step 1: TOPIC	Name the important subject from the prompt.
Step 2: CHARGE	Name what the prompt asks you to do.
Step 3: ANSWER and Structure	Add your thinking, then match the sentence structure to WHAT, WHY, or HOW.

Drafting Space

Success Criteria

- My thesis (central idea) includes TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER.
- My sentence structure matches the prompt type.
- My word choice is precise, not just longer.

Additional Writing Opportunity: Revise and Edit

Revise

Read your thesis (central idea) aloud. Improve sentence structure and word choice so the thinking is precise. Match a complex sentence to a WHY prompt and a preposition to a relational HOW prompt.

Edit

Run the Conventions Sweep: complete simple sentence with subject-verb agreement, correct spelling of high-frequency words, and proper nouns (Parliament, Boston, Nyla) capitalized.

Module 2 - Auditory Engagement (Active Participation)

Approach: Listen and Label.

Purpose: Students listen to thesis (central idea) parts and label each one orally or with hand signals as TOPIC, CHARGE, or ANSWER before assembling the full sentence.

Listening Target: Listen for the job each phrase performs in the thesis (central idea).

Student Materials: interactive notebook; TOPIC / CHARGE / ANSWER label cards or three hand signals.



Teacher Script

"I will read one piece of a thesis (central idea) at a time. Label what you hear as TOPIC, CHARGE, or ANSWER. Be ready to tell how that piece helps build the complete thesis (central idea)."

Round	What the Teacher Reads	Answer / Look-For
1	"the colonists"	TOPIC - the important subject.
2	"explain why they protested British laws"	CHARGE - what the writer must do.
3	"because they were taxed without representation and believed the treatment was unfair"	ANSWER - the writer's direct thinking.
4	"through instinct in turtles and learned behavior in orcas"	ANSWER - the relationship that completes a HOW thesis (central idea).

Transfer: Students hear a new prompt and orally name a possible TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER before drafting the thesis (central idea).

Fresh Recall: Close the notebook. Point to your head for TOPIC, your hands for CHARGE, and your heart for ANSWER as a partner names the three parts from memory.

Pause Points

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

|| Pause Point - Find the Missing Piece

Stop and think: Which piece is missing from this answer - TOPIC, CHARGE, or ANSWER?

|| Pause Point - Name the Prompt Type

Stop and think: Is this a WHAT, WHY, or HOW prompt, and what sentence structure does it need?

|| Pause Point - Add Your Thinking

Stop and think: What is my own ANSWER, and how can I say it clearly?

|| Pause Point - Connect to Setting

Stop and think: How does the historical, cultural, or environmental setting shape my ANSWER?

Module 2 - My Progress Tracker

Teacher Script

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

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

I Can...	Not yet	Getting set	I can do it
Name the three pieces of a strong thesis (central idea).			
Find a missing thesis (central idea) part.			
Match a simple sentence to a WHAT prompt.			
Match a complex sentence with because to a WHY prompt.			
Match a preposition to a relational HOW prompt.			

One thing I am proud of:

One thing I want to get better at:

Module 2 - Teacher Closure and Reflection

Teacher Closure Script

Teacher Script

"At the beginning of this module, we asked how TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER work together to build a strong thesis (central idea). Now we can answer it: TOPIC names the subject, CHARGE names the task, and ANSWER supplies the writer's thinking, while the prompt type guides the sentence structure."

✓ Module Overarching Question - Answered

How do TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER work together to build a strong thesis (central idea) for WHAT, WHY, and HOW SCR prompts? TOPIC identifies the important subject, CHARGE names what the prompt requires the writer to do, and ANSWER supplies the writer's thinking. Together, the three pieces create a complete thesis (central idea), while the WHAT, WHY, or HOW prompt type guides the sentence structure.

Teacher Reflection - Module 2

Which students can build a complete thesis (central idea) with all three pieces?

Which students match the sentence structure to the prompt type?

Which students still restate the prompt instead of adding their own ANSWER?

Who is ready for Module 3, choosing and introducing evidence with CSI?

Teacher Notes

Module 2 - Remote Learning



Virtual Classroom Adjustment for Remote Learners

Use these adjustments to run Module 2 fully online without losing rigor or participation. For Listen and Label, read one thesis (central idea) piece at a time and have students type TOPIC, CHARGE, or ANSWER in the chat or use three hand signals, then call on one student to explain how that piece helps build the thesis (central idea). For the What's Missing Gather activity, display the incomplete answer on a slide and ask students to type one word in the chat that names what is missing. Put the Thinking Levels Chart and the prompt-type chart on slides for students to see throughout the lesson, and create drag-and-drop TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER pieces so students can build thesis (central idea) statements digitally. For Thesis (Central Idea) Builder Showdown, use a shared slide deck with the prompt cards and a digital spinner set to 1 for WHAT, 2 for WHY, and 3 for HOW; students build a thesis (central idea) and type it in the chat or annotate directly on the slides. Display both passages in view-only form and provide separate digital copies for TRACKS highlighting. For Discuss, post one question at a time and have students answer using hand signals, chat, or partner talk in breakout rooms. For the independent WHAT, WHY, and relational HOW practice, students may complete the work in their notebooks, on a slide, or in a shared document, then hold the notebook up to the camera or paste their thesis (central idea) in the chat. For Award, students post their best thesis (central idea) in the chat and highlight the three pieces. For Target, students may type their next goal in the chat, hold up fingers for the prompt type they want to strengthen, or respond verbally to one curiosity question. For Intervention, use draggable strips and word-bank text boxes on slides; students assemble the thesis (central idea) one piece at a time and then rebuild it as you remove supports. For Enrichment, students submit their upgraded thesis (central idea) statements on a shared slide or read them aloud, highlighting the stronger verbs. For Explain to Others, use breakout rooms or paired unmuting so each student teaches the three pieces aloud and demonstrates them in one original thesis (central idea).

MODULE

3

Using Evidence to Support
Thinking

Week 3 • High Stamina

Module 3: Using Evidence to Support Thinking

Week 3 - High Stamina - Cluster 1 (Short Constructed Response)

When Students Level Up Their Language, They Level Up Their Thinking

Teacher Script

"Students become stronger writers when they can spot the proof, name the proof, and explain the proof. Evidence gives their thinking a backbone."

Module Overarching Question

How does CSI help a writer choose and introduce evidence that truly supports an SCR thesis (central idea)?

Today We Will Look For

- evidence that CONNECTS to the prompt
- evidence that SUPPORTS the thesis (central idea)
- evidence that helps us INFER additional ideas
- a signal marker and correct punctuation that introduce quoted evidence

Student reminder: Strong evidence connects, supports, and helps you infer.

Why This Module Matters

Students often believe that any sentence copied from the passage counts as strong evidence. In this module, students learn what evidence is and is not, how to judge whether evidence is strong or weak, and how to test it with CSI - Connect, Support, Infer. Students also learn to introduce a quote with a signal marker and to punctuate it correctly. Using two Cluster 1 passages, students choose precise proof that truly supports a thesis (central idea).

Module Passage Set - High Stamina

Required stamina level for Module 3: High Stamina. The same two Grade 5 Cluster 1 passages increase in length, detail, evidence distance, and conceptual demand across the four modules.

Passage	Reading Genre	Scope & Sequence Passage Reference	Student-Facing Word Count
From Tension to Revolution	Nonfiction	1	1,173
The Ocean Lesson	Fiction	2	1,219

Teacher Passage Use Note: Use the stamina versions printed in this module. The lesson's passage-dependent prompts, models, games, examples, intervention, enrichment, and

answer guidance should be completed with these assigned versions.

Module Independent Product

Independently take a thesis (central idea), locate one strong quote that passes CSI, introduce it with a signal marker and correct punctuation, and explain which CSI checks it passes.

Teacher Inspiration

Teacher Script

“Students become stronger writers when they can spot the proof, name the proof, and explain the proof. Evidence gives their thinking a backbone.”

Module 3 - Family Communication

Purpose: Families are partners in this work. This page explains the week's learning, offers one question to ask at home, and gives one simple way to help.

This Week at a Glance

- The big skill: choosing and introducing strong evidence with CSI - Connect, Support, Infer.
- The catch phrase: Strong evidence connects, supports, and helps you infer.
- The two reading passages: "From Tension to Revolution" (about how new taxes and events like the Boston Tea Party pushed the American colonies toward revolution) and "The Ocean Lesson" (about how sea turtles rely on instinct while orcas rely on learned behavior and teamwork).

One Question to Ask at Home



Teacher Script

"What proof from the text shows that, and how do you know it fits?"

One Way to Help

When your child makes a claim, ask them to back it up with a short, exact quote and then check it three ways: Does it connect to the question? Does it support the point? Does it help you figure out something more? Choosing strong proof is exactly this week's work.

Family Letter

Dear Families,

This week your child continues Cluster 1 of our fifth-grade writing curriculum, the Short Constructed Response. Your child will learn that not every sentence copied from a text is strong evidence. Strong evidence must pass CSI - it must Connect to the question, Support the thesis (central idea), and help the writer Infer additional ideas. Your child will also learn to introduce a quote with a signal marker, such as "The text states," and to punctuate the quote correctly.

We are reading two texts: "From Tension to Revolution," about how new taxes, the Stamp Act, the Boston Massacre, and the Boston Tea Party pushed the American colonies toward revolution, and "The Ocean Lesson," about a girl named Nyla who learns that sea turtles rely on instinct while orcas rely on learned behavior and teamwork. Your child will choose exact quotes from these texts and test each one with CSI.

Please try this at home: When your child shares an idea about something they read or watched, ask them for the proof and then ask, "Does that proof connect, support, and help you infer more?" Talk about why a short, exact quote can be stronger than a long one.

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

Carta para las Familias

Estimadas familias:

Esta semana su hijo o hija continúa el Grupo 1 de nuestro currículo de escritura de quinto grado, la Respuesta Construida Corta (SCR). Su hijo o hija aprenderá que no toda oración copiada de un texto es evidencia fuerte. La evidencia fuerte debe pasar la prueba CSI - debe Conectar con la pregunta, Apoyar la tesis y ayudar al escritor a Inferir ideas adicionales. Su hijo o hija también aprenderá a presentar una cita con un marcador de señal, como "The text states," y a usar la puntuación correcta.

Leemos dos textos: "From Tension to Revolution," sobre cómo los nuevos impuestos, la Ley del Timbre, la Masacre de Boston y el Motín del Té de Boston llevaron a las colonias americanas hacia la revolución, y "The Ocean Lesson," sobre una niña llamada Nyla que aprende que las tortugas marinas dependen del instinto mientras que las orcas dependen del comportamiento aprendido y del trabajo en equipo. Su hijo o hija elegirá citas exactas de estos textos y probará cada una con CSI.

Por favor, intente esto en casa: Cuando su hijo o hija comparta una idea sobre algo que leyó o vio, pídale la prueba y luego pregunte, "¿Esa prueba conecta, apoya y te ayuda a inferir algo más?" Conversen sobre por qué una cita corta y exacta puede ser más fuerte que una larga.

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

Module 3 - Family Conversation Starters

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

- What is the difference between evidence and a personal opinion?
- Why is not every accurate quote strong evidence?
- In "From Tension to Revolution," which quote best shows why the colonists protested?
- In "The Ocean Lesson," which quote best shows how orcas learn to survive?

Simple Family Activities

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

Family Activity - Prove It with CSI

Make a claim about a show, a game, or a book. Take turns finding one piece of proof and checking it three ways: Does it Connect? Does it Support? Does it help you Infer more?

Family Activity - Signal the Quote

Practice introducing proof with a signal marker. Say, "The text states," or "The author says," before you give the exact words. Notice how the signal tells the listener that proof is coming.

Module 3 - Lesson Overview and Standards

Lesson Overview

Module 3 continues Cluster 1. Students learn what evidence is and is not, how to judge whether evidence is strong or weak, and how to test evidence with CSI - Connect, Support, Infer. Using "From Tension to Revolution" and "The Ocean Lesson," students distinguish proof from opinion, introduce quotes with signal markers, and punctuate quoted evidence correctly.

BIG Goal: Students will choose, test, and introduce evidence that connects to the prompt and supports their thesis (central idea).

Writing TEKS for This Module

The Student Expectation column below is the exact, full wording of each Grade 5 TEKS breakout - quoted verbatim from the Cluster 1 scope and sequence, not paraphrased or abbreviated. This module claims only the breakouts students directly demonstrate or intentionally practice.

Writing Process TEKS

TEKS	Student Expectation (verbatim TEKS breakout)
5.11(B)(i)	develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction

Writing Genre TEKS

TEKS	Student Expectation (verbatim TEKS breakout)
5.12(B)(i)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea
5.12(B)(ii)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using genre characteristics
5.12(B)(iii)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using craft

Revising TEKS

TEKS	Student Expectation (verbatim TEKS breakout)
5.11(C)(ii)	revise drafts to improve word choice

Editing TEKS

TEKS	Student Expectation (verbatim TEKS breakout)
5.11(D)(xxvii)	edit drafts using standard English conventions, including correct spelling of words with grade-appropriate orthographic patterns
5.11(D)(xxix)	edit drafts using standard English conventions, including correct spelling of high-frequency words

Where the Standards Are Visible in This Module

- Students compose brief informational SCR components with a clear central idea and relevant quoted evidence.
- Students revise word choice in signal markers and evidence statements so the proof is precise and connected.
- Students explain evidence choices orally and in writing using the CSI test.

Module 3 - TEKS and ELPS (Cluster 1 · from the Scope & Sequence)

These are the standards listed for Cluster 1 in the Teach BIG Scope and Sequence, written in full rather than listed only by code, and grouped by category.

TEKS - Cluster 1 (from the Scope & Sequence)

Writing Process (Composition)

- 5.11(A)(i) plan a first draft by selecting a genre for a particular topic, purpose, and audience using a range of strategies
- 5.11(B)(i) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction

Writing Genre

- 5.12(B)(i) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea
- 5.12(B)(ii) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using genre characteristics
- 5.12(B)(iii) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using craft

Revising

- 5.11(C)(i) revise drafts to improve sentence structure
- 5.11(C)(ii) revise drafts to improve word choice

Editing

- 5.11(D)(i) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including complete simple sentences with subject-verb agreement
- 5.11(D)(vi) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including past tense of irregular verbs
- 5.11(D)(vii) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including collective nouns
- 5.11(D)(viii) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including adjectives, including their comparative forms
- 5.11(D)(ix) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including adjectives, including their superlative forms
- 5.11(D)(xxvii) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including correct spelling of words with grade-appropriate orthographic patterns
- 5.11(D)(xxix) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including correct spelling of high-frequency words

ELPS - Cluster 1 (breakouts this module addresses)

Listening

- 1(E)(i) demonstrate listening comprehension from information presented orally during formal classroom interactions by restating, responding, paraphrasing, summarizing, or asking for clarification or additional details

Speaking

- 2(B)(i) speak using content-area vocabulary during formal classroom interactions to demonstrate acquisition of new words
- 2(E)(i) narrate, describe, explain, justify, discuss, elaborate, or evaluate orally with increasing specificity in academic context or discourse

Writing

- 4(C)(i) write using a combination of both high-frequency words and content-area vocabulary
- 4(D)(ii) write content-area texts using a variety of sentence types
- 4(F)(ix) write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting evidence using appropriate content for [a] specific purpose
- 4(F)(xiii) write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting evidence using appropriate content for [a] specific audience

Language Domains

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

Domain	How this module builds it
Listening	In Catch and Correct the Mistake, students listen for near-miss statements about evidence and signal when they hear an error.
Speaking	Students repair the statement and name the evidence rule they used.
Reading	Students reread both passages like evidence detectives, marking short, precise proof.
Writing	Students add quoted evidence to a thesis (central idea) with a signal marker, correct punctuation, and a CSI check.

Module 3 - Learning Destination

I Can Statements

- I can choose, test, and introduce evidence that connects to the prompt and supports my thesis (central idea).
- I can tell the difference between evidence and explanation, and between evidence and opinion.
- I can test evidence with CSI - Connect, Support, Infer.
- I can introduce a quote with a signal marker and punctuate it correctly.

I Will Statements

- I will read closely, listen actively, discuss my reasoning, write independently, reflect on my growth, and explain my thinking to others.
- I will choose short, precise quotes instead of the longest quote.
- I will check every quote with CSI before I use it.
- I will introduce each quote with a signal marker and correct punctuation.

Success Criteria

- I can decide whether a quote is strong or weak for a given prompt.
- I can name which CSI checks a quote passes.
- I can add a signal marker and a comma before a quotation.
- I can explain what a quote helps me infer.

Evidence That Will Demonstrate Mastery

- The Catch and Correct the Mistake responses from the auditory engagement.
- The CSI Evidence Quest answers recorded in the Interactive Notebook.
- The independent Thesis (Central Idea) + Evidence page, with a signal marker and a CSI explanation.

Module 3 - Rigor and Misconceptions

Rigor Safeguard

You may read both passages aloud, reread them, and let students use the Thinking Levels Chart, the CSI chart, the signal-marker chart, and the passages. You may model CSI aloud and provide oral rehearsal. You may not choose a student's quote, decide the CSI result for them, or write their evidence sentence. The student must still select the proof, test it with CSI, and present it with a signal marker and correct punctuation.

Rigor and Cognitive Demand

Level of Thinking	What Students Must Do	Expected Degree of Independence	Evidence of the Thinking
Literal	Tell the difference between evidence and non-evidence.	Supported. The teacher may reread the prompt and quote.	The student sorts proof from opinion.
Inferential	Test a quote with CSI and introduce it with a signal marker.	Guided early, independent by Use Again.	The student names the CSI checks a quote passes and quotes it correctly.
Evaluative	Judge whether a quote is strong or weak for a prompt and choose the stronger one.	Independent by the game and the auditory task.	The student defends why one quote is stronger for the prompt.

Educator Insight

Students often believe that any sentence copied from the passage counts as strong evidence. Many also confuse evidence with explanation and may write their own ideas instead of quoting proof from the text. Another common misconception is that the longest quote is always the best quote. Watch for evidence that is copied accurately but does not connect to the prompt or support the thesis (central idea). Students may also forget to introduce evidence with a signal marker, making their writing sound abrupt or unclear. Some students use quotations without understanding what the quote proves. Fix this by modeling short, precise quotes, applying CSI aloud, and repeatedly asking, "What does this evidence prove?"

Module 3 - Thinking Levels

These charts support building rigor. Use them in every module to name the level of thinking a task and a student response require. Color-code the five levels to match the student Thinking Levels Chart.

The Five Thinking Levels

Level	Color	Thinking Stage	What the Language Shows
Level 1	Red	Foundational	Uses basic words like says, shows, or tells; restates the text.
Level 2	Orange	Emergent	Begins to use words like suggests or means and adds a little explanation.
Level 3	Yellow	Visible	Uses words like indicates or demonstrates and connects the evidence to an idea.
Level 4	Green	Independent	Uses words like establishes and shows a pattern that strengthens an inference.
Level 5	Blue	Reflective	Synthesizes ideas, reframes the meaning, and connects to a bigger idea or setting.

Words = Thinking Level

Upgrade your signal marker and wording using the Thinking Levels Chart. Move from says / shows toward suggests, indicates, demonstrates, and establishes only when the evidence and reasoning truly support the stronger wording.

Level	Stage	Sample Citation and Explanation Language
Level 1	Foundational	The text says... This shows...
Level 2	Emergent	According to the text... This suggests...
Level 3	Visible	The text indicates that... This demonstrates that...
Level 4	Independent	The text establishes that... This pattern strengthens the inference that...
Level 5	Reflective	The evidence converges on the idea that... Ultimately, this reframes...

Challenge: Choose a stronger signal marker only when the quote genuinely connects, supports, and helps you infer more.



Teacher Script

"A quote is stronger when it is precise and when the signal marker and explanation match what the proof can support."

Module 3 - Vocabulary

Vocabulary - Teacher Script

Teacher Script

"Before we begin, let's preview the words we will use to talk about evidence, CSI, signal markers, and punctuation - everyday words, academic words, and words from our two texts."

Tier 1 Vocabulary - Everyday Words

Word	Student-Friendly Definition	Oral Rehearsal Frame
proof	something that shows an idea is true	My proof is ____.
choose	to pick one option over another	I choose the quote that ____.
check	to look closely to make sure something is right	I check my evidence by ____.
strong	powerful and clear	This evidence is strong because ____.
weak	not powerful or not clear	This evidence is weak because ____.
match	to pair things that go together	This quote matches the prompt because ____.
exact	correct in every detail	My exact quote is ____.
quote	the exact words copied from a text	My quote is ____.
find	to locate something you are looking for	I can find evidence by ____.
show	to make something clear to see	This quote shows ____.

Tier 2 Vocabulary - Academic Words

Word	Student-Friendly Definition	Oral Rehearsal Frame
evidence	specific proof taken from the passage	My evidence is ____.
support	to strengthen an idea with relevant proof	This proof supports ____.
infer	to form a supported idea from evidence and reasoning	I can infer that ____.
connect	to show how evidence relates to the prompt or thesis (central idea)	This quote connects to ____.
signal	a word or phrase that alerts the reader that evidence is coming	My signal marker is ____.
thesis (central idea)	the sentence that gives the writer's direct answer	My thesis (central idea) is ____.
quote	exact words copied from a source and marked as source language	My quote is ____.
punctuation	marks that organize written language and clarify how quoted words are presented	The punctuation I need is ____.
explanation	the writer's interpretation of what the evidence proves	My explanation shows ____.
relevant	directly connected to the prompt, thesis (central idea), or idea being proved	This evidence is relevant because ____.

Tier 3 Vocabulary - Passage-Specific Words

Word	Pronunciation	Student-Friendly Definition	Oral Rehearsal Frame
Parliament	PAR-luh-ment	the group in Great Britain that made laws and taxes for the colonies	Parliament decided to ____.
representation	rep-ri-zen-TAY-shun	having someone speak for you in government	The colonists wanted representation because ____.
boycott	BOY-kot	refusing to buy or use products as a form of protest	The colonists used a boycott to ____.
repealed	ri-PEELD	officially canceled a law	Parliament repealed the law because ____.
resistance	ri-ZIS-tuns	the act of fighting against or opposing something	The resistance grew when ____.
instinct	IN-stinkt	a behavior an animal is born with and does not learn	The turtles used instinct to ____.
survival	sur-VY-vul	staying alive through a danger	Survival depended on ____.
orcas	OR-kuhz	large ocean animals, also called killer whales	The orcas showed that ____.
pod	pod	a group of orcas that lives and travels together	A young orca learns from its pod by ____.
coordinated	koh-OR-di-nay-tid	working together in an organized way	The orcas swam in coordinated ____.



Teacher Resource

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

Module 3 - Background Knowledge and Teacher Context

This module uses two Cluster 1 passages that support evidence work. In "From Tension to Revolution," students can find quoted proof about how new taxes, the Stamp Act, boycotts, the Boston Massacre, the Boston Tea Party, and the Intolerable Acts pushed the colonies from loyalty toward revolution - a historical and cultural setting. In "The Ocean Lesson," students can find quoted proof about how sea turtles rely on instinct while orcas rely on learned behavior and teamwork within their pod - an environmental setting. Both passages give students precise details to test with CSI.

More Background for the Teacher

Both passages stay the same across the four Cluster 1 modules; each grows in length, detail, evidence distance, and conceptual demand from module to module. In Module 3 (High Stamina), the passages are longer and hold more possible quotes, so students must choose precise proof and test it with CSI. Students will continue to notice how setting - especially historical, cultural, and environmental setting - shapes the evidence they choose.

Module 3 - Materials and Teacher Preparation

This module teaches students what evidence is, what evidence is not, how to judge whether evidence is strong or weak, how to apply CSI to evidence, how to introduce quoted evidence with a signal marker, and how to punctuate quoted evidence correctly.

Anchor Charts to Create

- What Evidence IS / What Evidence is NOT.
- CSI for Evidence: C = Connects to the prompt; S = Supports my thesis (central idea); I = Infers additional ideas.
- Signal Markers for Evidence: The text states, "..."; The author says, "..."; The passage explains, "..."; The text shows, "..."
- Quoting Evidence Punctuation: signal marker + comma + quotation marks.
- Strong Evidence / Weak Evidence.
- "Hey! Hey! Hey! Evidence is on the way!" chant with motions.

Materials

- Printed copies of both Cluster 1 passages
- Interactive notebooks
- Scissors and glue
- Highlighters or colored pencils
- Game cards
- Spinner and a simple gameboard
- Student "Pencil Guy" markers if using a board game
- Sentence strips and sticky notes
- Prepared thesis (central idea) statements from Module 2
- Teacher-created slides for virtual students

For the In-Person Teacher

- Prepare anchor charts before the lesson.
- Copy and cut the CSI game cards.
- Set out notebook supplies.
- Display both passages where all students can refer to quoted lines.

For the Virtual Teacher

- Turn all cards into digital slides.
- Use draggable text boxes for matching evidence.
- Have students hold up fingers for CSI checks.
- Have students type signal markers in the chat.
- Ask students to make quote fingers on camera during the chant.

- Use breakout rooms for turn-and-teach moments when possible.

Module 3 - The DOT Reading Habit

The DOT Reading Habit



Teacher Script

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

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

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

Apply DOT to passage words such as boycott, repealed, resistance, instinct, and coordinated without interrupting the first read for lengthy definitions.

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

Module 3 - The Evidence Framework: CSI

Teacher Script

"Writers do not just make claims. Writers prove them. Today, we are going to become evidence experts. Evidence is what the text says. Explanation is what you say about what the text means. Today our HABIT is learning how to find and use strong evidence."

Content Anchor

Strong evidence is clear, relevant, and connected to the thesis (central idea).

Evidence and Explanation

- Evidence = text proof.
- Explanation = my thinking about the proof.
- If I say, "The colonists were angry," that may be my idea. If I write, "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice," now I have proof from the text.

CSI for Evidence

Test every quote three ways.

- C - Connects to the prompt.
- S - Supports my thesis (central idea).
- I - Infers additional ideas.

Signal Markers and Punctuation

A signal marker announces that evidence is coming. Use a signal marker, then a comma, then quotation marks.

- The text states, "..."
- The author says, "..."
- The passage explains, "..."
- The text shows, "..."

Setting Shapes the Evidence

Historical, cultural, and environmental setting shapes the evidence students choose. In "From Tension to Revolution," the historical and cultural setting shapes which quotes prove why the colonists resisted. In "The Ocean Lesson," the environmental setting shapes which quotes prove how the turtles and orcas survive.

 Teacher Script

“Anytime you hear me say, 'Hey! Hey! Hey!' you will respond, 'Evidence is on the way!' with the motions. Every time you add a quote correctly, you are proving your thinking.”

Module 3 - TRACKS: Reading Both Passages for Evidence

Before students choose and test evidence, they read "From Tension to Revolution" and "The Ocean Lesson" and TAP the TRACKS to find the six kinds of measurable evidence. Reading for TRACKS gives students the exact quotes they will test with CSI and use to support a thesis (central idea).

The Six Types of Measurable Evidence: TRACKS

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

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

How to Use TRACKS

Teacher Script

"As we read BOTH passages, we hunt for all six kinds of evidence and highlight each one in its TRACKS color. Time is green, Reactions are purple, Actions are yellow, Character/Concept/Creature is yellow, Key Knowledge is orange, and Scenery/Setting is green. The exact words we highlight become the quoted evidence we test with CSI."

Before Students Read

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

The Six Types of Measurable Evidence: TRACKS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PASSAGE 1 — From Tension to Revolution

[1] Before the American Revolution, the thirteen colonies were part of Great Britain, a superpower at the time. Great Britain had a strong army, a powerful navy, and a large empire that reached across many parts of the world. Many colonists considered themselves loyal to the king. They followed British laws, traded with British merchants, and depended on Great Britain for protection. Some colonists were proud to be British subjects because they believed Great Britain was strong and successful. At first, many people in the colonies did not want to separate from Great Britain. They simply wanted to be treated fairly.

[2] However, this began to change after the French and Indian War. This war was fought between Great Britain and France, with Native American groups joining on different sides. Great Britain won the war and gained a large amount of land in North America. Many colonists were happy that France had lost power in the region because it seemed to make the colonies safer. Although Great Britain gained land, it also gained significant debt. War was expensive. Soldiers had to be paid, supplies had to be bought, and forts had to be protected. To recover money, Parliament placed new taxes on the colonies.

[3] One of these laws was the Stamp Act. It required colonists to pay taxes on printed materials such as newspapers, legal documents, licenses, pamphlets, and even playing cards. Colonists strongly opposed this law because they had no representatives in Parliament. They believed that only their own colonial governments should have the power to tax them. They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice, which led to the phrase “taxation without representation.” This phrase became one of the most important ideas during the time before the American Revolution.

[4] Many colonists began to protest the Stamp Act. Some refused to buy stamped paper. Others wrote letters, gave speeches, and printed articles explaining why the law was unfair. Groups such as the Sons of Liberty helped organize protests in cities like Boston and New York. Sometimes colonists gathered in large crowds to show their anger. They wanted Parliament to understand that the colonies would not accept unfair taxes without a fight. These protests helped unite colonists who had once thought of themselves mostly as people from separate colonies. Now they began to see that they shared the same problem.

[5] Great Britain eventually repealed, or canceled, the Stamp Act. Many colonists celebrated because they believed their protests had worked. However, Parliament still believed it had the right to tax the colonies. Soon, more laws and taxes followed. Colonists were taxed on goods such as glass, paper, paint, lead, and tea. These taxes continued to anger many people. Some colonists began to boycott British goods. A boycott means refusing to buy or use certain products as a form of protest. By refusing to buy British goods, colonists hoped to hurt British businesses and pressure Parliament to change its laws.

[6] Tensions continued to rise. British soldiers were sent to the colonies to keep order and enforce the laws. Many colonists did not like seeing soldiers in their towns. They felt as if they were being watched and controlled. In 1770, the Boston Massacre occurred when British soldiers fired into a crowd of colonists, killing several people. Before the shooting,

colonists had gathered near the soldiers and shouted angrily. Some threw snowballs, sticks, and other objects. The situation quickly became dangerous and confusing. When the soldiers fired, several colonists were killed or wounded.

[7] The Boston Massacre shocked many people. News of the event spread through the colonies. Some colonists saw it as proof that British soldiers were a threat to their rights and safety. Leaders such as Samuel Adams used the event to increase anger toward British authority. Paul Revere created an engraving that showed the soldiers firing at colonists. The picture was used to influence public opinion. Although the event was more complicated than the picture showed, it helped many colonists believe that Great Britain was becoming too forceful.

[8] A few years later, another conflict grew over tea. Tea was a popular drink in the colonies, and many colonists bought it regularly. Parliament passed the Tea Act, which allowed one British company to sell tea directly to the colonies. This made the tea cheaper, but many colonists still saw the law as a problem. They believed Parliament was trying to make them accept its power to tax. To them, buying the tea would mean accepting British control. After the Tea Act was passed, trouble was brewing in the colonies.

[9] This conflict led to the Boston Tea Party. During this protest, colonists dumped tea into Boston Harbor. Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty helped organize resistance and spread ideas. Some colonists dressed as Native Americans to hide their identities. They boarded British ships and threw hundreds of chests of tea into the water. The protest was bold and costly. The destroyed tea was worth a large amount of money. To many colonists, the Boston Tea Party was a strong message against unfair taxation. To Great Britain, it was an act of rebellion.

[10] In response, Great Britain passed the Intolerable Acts, which punished the colonies and limited their rights. One part of these acts closed Boston Harbor until the ruined tea was paid for. This hurt many people in Boston because the harbor was important for trade and jobs. Another part of the laws gave British officials more control over Massachusetts. The laws also allowed British soldiers to stay in colonists' homes and buildings when needed. Many colonists believed these acts were harsh and unfair.

[11] Instead of ending the conflict, these actions brought the colonies closer together. Colonists in different places sent food, supplies, and support to Boston. They began to understand that one colony's problem could become every colony's problem. Leaders from different colonies met to discuss what they should do next. They shared ideas, debated solutions, and talked about their rights. The colonists learned that there is strength in numbers. Working together made them more powerful than acting alone.

[12] As the conflict grew, many colonists still hoped for peace. They wanted Great Britain to listen to their concerns and respect their rights. However, others began to believe that the colonies needed to break away completely. They argued that a government across the ocean could not understand or protect the needs of the colonists. More people began to question the king's power and Parliament's control. The idea of independence slowly became stronger.

[13] Over time, many colonists wanted to remove British control. They believed they should have a government that protected their rights and listened to their voices. The

American Revolution became a fight for independence, leading to the Declaration of Independence and the creation of a new nation. What began as anger over taxes grew into a larger struggle for freedom, self-government, and independence. The colonists' protests, boycotts, meetings, and acts of resistance helped prepare them for the difficult fight ahead. Their choices changed history and helped create the United States of America.

Student Annotation Guide — From Tension to Revolution

T — Time

Before the American Revolution; In 1770

R — Reactions

Colonists strongly opposed this law; British soldiers were a threat to their rights and safety

A — Actions

Parliament placed new taxes on the colonies; British soldiers fired into a crowd of colonists

C — Character/Concept/Creature

Parliament; the Stamp Act; Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty

K — Key Knowledge

taxation without representation; The colonists learned that there is strength in numbers

S — Scenery/Setting

the thirteen colonies were part of Great Britain

TRACKS EVIDENCE HIGHLIGHTING — From Tension to Revolution

[1] Before the American Revolution, the thirteen colonies were part of Great Britain, a superpower at the time. Great Britain had a strong army, a powerful navy, and a large empire that reached across many parts of the world. Many colonists considered themselves loyal to the king. They followed British laws, traded with British merchants, and depended on Great Britain for protection. Some colonists were proud to be British subjects because they believed Great Britain was strong and successful. At first, many people in the colonies did not want to separate from Great Britain. They simply wanted to be treated fairly.

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[12] As the conflict grew, many colonists still hoped for peace. They wanted Great Britain to listen to their concerns and respect their rights. However, others began to believe that the colonies needed to break away completely. They argued that a government across the ocean could not understand or protect the needs of the colonists. More people began to question the king's power and Parliament's control. The idea of independence slowly became stronger.

[13] Over time, many colonists wanted to remove British control. They believed they should have a government that protected their rights and listened to their voices. The

American Revolution became a fight for independence, leading to the Declaration of Independence and the creation of a new nation. What began as anger over taxes grew into a larger struggle for freedom, self-government, and independence. The colonists' protests, boycotts, meetings, and acts of resistance helped prepare them for the difficult fight ahead. Their choices changed history and helped create the United States of America.

PASSAGE 2 — The Ocean Lesson

[1] Nyla stood quietly on the beach as dozens of sea turtles began to hatch from the sand. The morning air was cool, and the sky was just starting to brighten. Small waves rolled gently onto the shore and then slid back into the ocean. At first, the sand looked still. Then Nyla noticed tiny movements near the nest. Little cracks appeared in the shells, and bits of sand shifted as the hatchlings pushed upward. One by one, they broke through their shells and started moving toward the ocean.

[2] Nyla leaned closer, careful not to step too near the nest. The turtles were very small, but they seemed to know exactly what they needed to do. Their tiny flippers pressed into the sand as they moved forward. Some crawled in a straight line, while others had to move around small shells, seaweed, and footprints left by people walking along the beach.

[3] “How do they know where to go?” Nyla asked.

[4] “They don’t need to be taught,” her guide explained. “It’s an instinct. They are born with that behavior.”

[5] Nyla watched closely. The turtles moved slowly but with determination. Each movement seemed small, but together those movements helped the turtles get closer to the water. The beach was not an easy place for them. The sand was soft in some places and packed down in others. A few turtles slipped into shallow dips in the sand and had to push themselves out. Others paused for a moment, then continued forward.

[6] Even though birds circled above and the sand was uneven, most continued toward the water. Their instinct guided them through the transition from sand to ocean, increasing their chances of survival during a dangerous moment. Nyla could see why the first journey was so important. The longer the turtles stayed on the beach, the more danger they faced. Birds, crabs, and other animals could catch them before they reached the sea.

[7] The guide smiled and said, “Slow and steady wins the race.”

[8] Nyla understood what the guide meant. The turtles were not moving quickly, and they were not strong compared with many animals around them. Still, they did not give up. They kept crawling toward the waves. They did not need an older turtle to show them the way. They did not wait for someone to teach them how to move toward the ocean. Their bodies and brains already knew what to do.

[9] As the first turtles reached the edge of the water, a small wave washed over them. For a moment, they disappeared in the foam. Then Nyla saw them floating and paddling in the shallow water. Their flippers moved in a new way now that they were no longer on land. The guide explained that reaching the ocean was only the first step. The turtles would still face many challenges, but their instinct had helped them begin the journey.

[10] Nyla thought about how amazing that was. The turtles had just hatched, but they already had a behavior that helped them survive. They did not have to practice it first. They did not have to watch another turtle do it. They were born ready to respond to their environment in a way that gave them a better chance of living.

[11] Later that day, Nyla visited a marine biology exhibit at an aquarium. The building was cool and quiet compared with the bright beach. Large signs showed pictures of ocean

animals and explained how different species survive. Nyla walked past tanks filled with colorful fish, sea stars, and jellyfish. Then she stopped in front of a large tank where a group of orcas swam together in coordinated patterns.

[12] The orcas moved through the water with power and control. They glided past the glass, turned smoothly, and stayed close to one another. Nyla noticed that they did not swim randomly. Their movements seemed connected, almost like they were following a plan.

[13] A trainer stood nearby and explained how orcas hunt in the wild. Nyla listened carefully because the orcas seemed very different from the tiny turtles she had seen that morning.

[14] “Orcas rely on learned behavior,” he said. “Young orcas observe older members of their group. Over time, they learn strategies and practice working together.”

[15] The trainer smiled and said, “These orcas are a whale of a team.”

[16] Nyla smiled at the joke, but she also understood the meaning behind it. The orcas survived by working together. Their teamwork was not something they were born knowing how to do perfectly. Instead, young orcas had to watch, listen, and practice.

[17] Nyla noticed how the orcas stayed close and moved as a team. Their actions seemed planned and purposeful. One orca turned, and the others followed. Another slowed down, and the group changed direction together. They seemed to communicate through their movements. The trainer explained that, in the wild, orcas use sounds and signals to stay connected. These signals can help them hunt, travel, and protect one another.

[18] “So they have to learn how to survive?” Nyla asked.

[19] “Yes,” the trainer replied. “Their success depends on learning and cooperation.”

[20] The trainer explained that young orcas learn from the older members of their group, called a pod. A young orca may watch how adults find food or work together during a hunt. At first, the young orca may not know exactly what to do. Over time, it learns by observing and practicing. The more it practices, the better it becomes at using the skills that help the pod survive.

[21] Nyla looked back at the tank. She imagined a young orca swimming beside its mother and watching every move. The young orca would learn when to turn, when to stay close, and how to follow the group. Unlike the turtles, the orcas did not depend only on instinct. They depended on learning from others.

[22] Nyla thought about what she had seen. The turtles relied on instinct to act quickly without guidance. The orcas relied on learning and teamwork over time. Both types of behavior helped animals survive in their environments, even though they developed in different ways.

[23] As Nyla left the aquarium, she compared the two examples in her mind. The turtles had been born with a behavior that helped them move toward the ocean right away. That instinct helped them during a dangerous time when there was no chance to stop and learn. The orcas, however, survived by gaining knowledge from their pod. Their learned behaviors helped them hunt in groups and respond to different situations in the ocean.

[24] Nyla realized that survival could look different for different animals. Some behaviors are present from birth, like turtle hatchlings moving toward the sea. Other behaviors develop through practice, like orcas hunting in a group. Instinct helps an animal act right away, while learning helps an animal improve over time. Both are important because both increase an animal's chances of survival.

[25] By the end of the day, Nyla had learned that animal behavior is not always the same. A tiny turtle and a giant orca may live in the ocean, but they use different behaviors to survive. The turtle's instinct gives it a quick start in life. The orca's learned behavior helps it become a strong member of its pod. Nyla smiled because both examples showed how animals are equipped to meet the challenges of their environments.

Student Annotation Guide — The Ocean Lesson

T — Time

Later that day

R — Reactions

The turtles moved slowly but with determination; Nyla noticed how the orcas stayed close and moved as a team

A — Actions

broke through their shells and started moving toward the ocean; Their instinct guided them through the transition from sand to ocean

C — Character/Concept/Creature

Nyla; orcas

K — Key Knowledge

They are born with that behavior; Orcas rely on learned behavior; Their success depends on learning and cooperation

S — Scenery/Setting

on the beach; a marine biology exhibit at an aquarium

TRACKS EVIDENCE HIGHLIGHTING — The Ocean Lesson

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Day 1 - Gather and Reveal



TEKS and ELPS for Today

Standard	Student Expectation (verbatim breakout)
TEKS 5.12(B)(i)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea
TEKS 5.11(B)(i)	develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction
ELPS 1(E)(i)	demonstrate listening comprehension from information presented orally during formal classroom interactions by restating, responding, paraphrasing, summarizing, or asking for clarification or additional details
ELPS 2(B)(i)	speak using content-area vocabulary during formal classroom interactions to demonstrate acquisition of new words

Day 1 Purpose

Students gather the difference between real proof and a general statement, then reveal the CSI test and the signal marker that introduces quoted evidence.

Reading Purpose

Read like an evidence detective. Mark short, precise details that connect directly to a prompt, support a thesis (central idea), and help you infer something more. Be ready to test each choice with CSI.

G - Gather: Mystery Proof Reveal

Decide which option is actual text evidence and explain why source proof is different from a general statement or personal reaction.

Teacher Script

"Today, I am going to show you three things on the board. Only one of them is real evidence that could support a response. Your job is to figure out which one is the strongest proof."

★ Daily Deck Slide

- The colonists were upset.
- "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..."
- I think the colonists were mad because taxes are annoying.

Teacher Script

"Point to the sentence you think is the strongest evidence."

Possible Student Responses:

- "Number 2."
- "The one with the quote."
- "The second one because it came from the text."

Teacher Script

"Yes. Today we will learn how to find strong evidence, how to introduce it, and how to make sure it actually proves our thinking. Writers do not just make claims. Writers prove them."

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-04 - Gather)

Write on the board: Mystery Proof Reveal. Decide which option is actual text evidence and explain why source proof is different from a general statement or personal reaction.

R - Reveal: CSI for Evidence

Teacher Script

"As I say the Auditory Engagement, you will listen carefully and fill in the missing key words in your Interactive Notebook. Only write the key words you hear."

Auditory Engagement Script (read aloud): "Evidence is the PROOF from the passage that helps support your thinking. Evidence is not just any sentence. It must CONNECT to the prompt. Strong evidence must SUPPORT your thesis (central idea) statement. Strong evidence can also help you INFER additional ideas. We use CSI to test our evidence. C means CONNECT. S means SUPPORT. I means INFER. When we use quoted evidence, we need a SIGNAL marker first. A signal marker helps announce that evidence is coming. We can say, 'The text states,' or 'The author says,' before the quote. We also need correct PUNCTUATION when we quote evidence. We use a comma before the quotation marks after the signal marker. Today we will learn that strong evidence is clear, relevant, and

connected to our thesis (central idea)."

Interactive Notebook Fill-In:

- Evidence is the PROOF from the passage.
- Strong evidence must CONNECT to the prompt.
- Strong evidence must SUPPORT the thesis (central idea).
- Strong evidence can help us INFER more ideas.
- CSI stands for CONNECT, SUPPORT, and INFER.
- A SIGNAL marker announces evidence.
- Quoted evidence needs correct PUNCTUATION.
- Evidence should be clear and RELEVANT.

Board text: Evidence = text proof. Explanation = my thinking about the proof.



Teacher Script

"If I say, 'The colonists were angry,' that may be my idea. But if I write, 'They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice,' now I have proof from the text."



Daily Deck Slide (M3-05 - Reveal)

Write on the board: Reveal CSI for Evidence: Connect to the prompt, Support the thesis (central idea), Infer more. Add a signal marker so the reader knows proof is coming.

Day 1 Closing

Partner completion: "CSI stands for ___, ___, and ___, and a signal marker tells the reader that ___."

Day 2 - Attempt

A

TEKS and ELPS for Today

Standard	Student Expectation (verbatim breakout)
TEKS 5.11(C)(ii)	revise drafts to improve word choice
TEKS 5.12(B)(iii)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using craft
ELPS 4(D)(ii)	write content-area texts using a variety of sentence types
ELPS 4(F)(ix)	write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting evidence using appropriate content for [a] specific purpose

Day 2 Purpose

Students attempt evidence work through the CSI Evidence Quest: they move through prompt checks, thesis (central idea) matches, strong or weak decisions, signal markers, quote presentation, and CSI checks.

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-06 - Attempt)

Write on the board: CSI Evidence Quest. Move through prompt checks, thesis (central idea) matches, strong/weak evidence decisions, signal markers, quote presentation, and CSI checks.

Game: CSI Evidence Quest

Teacher Script

"You will work with your group to move around the board and complete evidence challenges. Every time you land on a space, one person will draw a game card and your group will solve it together. Remember to use the passages, your Thinking Charts, and your Interactive Notebooks to help you."

Create a simple gameboard with spaces labeled Prompt Check, Thesis (Central Idea) Match, Strong or Weak, Signal Marker, Quote It, CSI Check, Move Ahead 1, and Move Back 1. Use a spinner (1 = Prompt Check, 2 = Thesis (Central Idea) Match, 3 = Strong or Weak, 4 = Signal Marker, 5 = Quote It, 6 = CSI Check). Students may choose the "Pencil Guy" of their choice as their game marker.

 Teacher Script

"Anytime you hear me say, 'Hey! Hey! Hey!' you will respond, 'Evidence is on the way!' with the motions." Practice the chant before beginning the game. Students wave both hands in the air and make quote fingers on the word "evidence."

Prompt Check Cards

- Prompt: Why did colonists protest British laws? Quote: "It required colonists to pay taxes on printed materials..." Does this connect to the prompt? Why?

Answer: Yes. It connects because the taxes were one reason colonists protested British laws.

- Prompt: How does setting influence behavior in both passages? Quote: "They are born with that behavior." Does this connect to the prompt? Why?

Answer: Yes. It connects because it shows how the turtles' environment and natural setting influence instinctive behavior.

Thesis (Central Idea) Match Cards

Use thesis (central idea) statements from Module 2.

- Thesis (Central Idea): The colonists protested British laws because they were taxed without representation and felt it was unfair. Choices: A. "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..." B. "Nyla visited an aquarium."

Answer: A

- Thesis (Central Idea): Setting influences survival in both passages through instinct in sea turtles and learned behavior in orcas. Choices: A. "Young orcas observe older members of their group." B. "Great Britain gained land..."

Answer: A

Strong or Weak Cards

- Quote: "Great Britain gained land..." Prompt: Why did colonists protest British laws?

Answer: Weak. It may be true information, but it does not directly prove why colonists protested.

- Quote: "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..." Prompt: Why did colonists protest British laws?

Answer: Strong. It directly supports the reason for protest.

- Quote: "Their instinct guided them in the right direction..." Prompt: How does setting influence survival?

Answer: Strong. It shows how the turtles' setting requires instinctive behavior for survival.

Signal Marker Cards

- Quote: "Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty helped organize resistance..." Best answer: The text states, "Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty helped organize resistance..."
- Quote: "Young orcas observe older members of their group." Best answer: The author says, "Young orcas observe older members of their group."

Quote It Cards

Students must write the sentence correctly with punctuation.

- the text states they argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice

Answer: The text states, "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice."

- the passage explains young orcas observe older members of their group

Answer: The passage explains, "Young orcas observe older members of their group."

CSI Check Cards

- Quote: "The Boston Massacre occurred when British soldiers fired into a crowd..." Prompt: Why did colonists protest British laws? Which parts of CSI does this evidence meet?

Answer: It connects to the growing tension and may support a thesis (central idea) about colonists resisting British control. It could help a reader infer that violence increased distrust. A strong student answer may say it meets C, S, and I if the thesis (central idea) is about rising tension and resistance.

- Quote: "The turtles moved slowly but with determination." Prompt: How does setting influence behavior in both passages? Which parts of CSI does this evidence meet?

Answer: It connects to the prompt, supports a thesis (central idea) about survival behavior, and helps infer that instinct helps the turtles continue even in danger.

Notebook Connection

Teacher Script

"In your Interactive Notebook, create a section titled 'Strong Evidence / Weak Evidence.' Write down one example of strong evidence and one example of weak evidence from today's game. Then explain why each one belongs in that category. Keep your game cards and notebook activities ready for review whenever you have free time in the classroom. These review HABITS help your brain hold on to the important ECR concepts."

Day 2 Closing

 Teacher Script

“Record one strong quote and one weak quote from the game. Remember: strong evidence connects, supports, and helps you infer.”

Day 3 - Discuss and Use Again



TEKS and ELPS for Today

Standard	Student Expectation (verbatim breakout)
TEKS 5.12(B)(i)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea
TEKS 5.11(C)(ii)	revise drafts to improve word choice
ELPS 4(F)(ix)	write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting evidence using appropriate content for [a] specific purpose
ELPS 4(F)(xiii)	write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting evidence using appropriate content for [a] specific audience

Day 3 Purpose

Students discuss why not every accurate quote is strong evidence, then independently take a thesis (central idea) from Module 2, locate one strong quote, introduce it with a signal marker, and explain which CSI checks it passes.

D - Discuss

Teacher Script

"Now let's talk about what we noticed about evidence."

Discussion Questions with Possible Responses:

- Teacher asks: "What is the difference between evidence and explanation?" Possible Student Response: "Evidence is from the passage, and explanation is what we think about it." Teacher Response: "Yes. Evidence is the proof. Explanation is your thinking about what the proof means."
- Teacher asks: "Why is not every quote strong evidence?" Possible Student Response: "Because some quotes do not match the prompt." Teacher Response: "Exactly. A quote may be true, but if it does not connect to the prompt or support the thesis (central idea), it is weak for that response."
- Teacher asks: "How does CSI help us choose better evidence?" Possible Student Response: "It helps us check if the evidence connects, supports, and helps us infer." Teacher Response: "That is correct. CSI keeps us from choosing random details."

- Teacher asks: "Why do we need a signal marker before a quote?" Possible Student Response: "So the reader knows evidence is coming." Teacher Response: "Yes. The signal marker introduces the proof clearly and smoothly."
- Teacher asks: "What makes quoted evidence look correct in writing?" Possible Student Response: "Quotation marks and a comma after the signal marker." Teacher Response: "Correct. Punctuation helps the evidence look polished and clear."

Possible Student Questions:

- Student Question: "Can I use a whole sentence from the passage?" Teacher Response: "Yes, but only if the whole sentence is the best proof. Often, a shorter and more precise quote is even stronger."
- Student Question: "What if I have evidence but do not know what it proves?" Teacher Response: "Ask yourself: What is this quote showing me about the prompt? If you cannot answer that, you may need a stronger quote."
- Student Question: "Can I use more than one quote?" Teacher Response: "Yes, but each quote should have a clear purpose. Strong writers use evidence that is helpful, not just extra."

Teacher Script

"Connect to the Overarching Question: How does CSI help a writer choose and introduce evidence that truly supports an SCR thesis (central idea)?"

U - Use Again: Thesis (Central Idea) + Evidence Builder

Teacher Script

"Now you are going to use evidence in a new way. You will take a thesis (central idea) statement from Module 2 and add a clear piece of quoted evidence that supports it."

Student Directions:

- Title the page: Thesis (Central Idea) + Evidence.
- Copy the thesis (central idea) statement your teacher assigns.
- Find one strong quote from the passage that supports the thesis (central idea).
- Add a signal marker before the quote, and underline it.
- Write the quote with correct punctuation and quotation marks.
- Use your Thinking Levels Chart to upgrade your signal marker or wording if possible.

Practice Set 1

Thesis (Central Idea): The colonists protested British laws because they were taxed without representation and felt it was unfair. Teacher Answer Example: The text states, "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..."

Practice Set 2

Thesis (Central Idea): Setting influences survival in both passages through instinct in sea turtles and learned behavior in orcas. Teacher Answer Example: The author says, "Young orcas observe older members of their group."

Practice Set 3

Thesis (Central Idea): The Boston Massacre increased anger and distrust toward British authority. Teacher Answer Example: The passage explains, "This event increased anger and distrust toward British authority."

Practice Set 4

Thesis (Central Idea): Sea turtles survive dangerous moments because instinct guides them quickly toward the ocean. Teacher Answer Example: The text states, "Their instinct guided them in the right direction..."

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-07 and M3-08 - Discuss and Use Again)

Write on the board: Why is not every accurate quote strong evidence? How does CSI prevent random or weak proof? Then take a thesis (central idea) from Module 2, locate one strong quote, introduce it with a signal marker, and explain which CSI checks it passes.

Day 3 Closing

Teacher Script

"After you write each sentence, we pause for the chant: 'Hey! Hey! Hey! Evidence is on the way!' Every time you add a quote correctly, you are proving your thinking."

Day 4 - Award and Target



TEKS and ELPS for Today

Standard	Student Expectation (verbatim breakout)
TEKS 5.11(C)(ii)	revise drafts to improve word choice
TEKS 5.11(D)(xxix)	edit drafts using standard English conventions, including correct spelling of high-frequency words
ELPS 2(E)(i)	narrate, describe, explain, justify, discuss, elaborate, or evaluate orally with increasing specificity in academic context or discourse

Day 4 Purpose

Students recognize the evidence habits they used well, then set a precise next goal for choosing and presenting evidence.

A - Award

Teacher Script

"Today you learned how to prove your thinking with evidence. That is a big writing step."

Award Options:

- Evidence Expert Strip: Students complete on a strip glued into their notebook: "One strong HABIT I used today was ____." (choosing relevant evidence; using CSI; introducing evidence with a signal marker; using quotation marks correctly)
- Partner Praise: "One thing you did well was ____."
- Self-Recognition Box: Students check all that apply: I can tell what evidence is; I can tell what evidence is not; I can use CSI; I can use a signal marker; I can punctuate a quote correctly.

Teacher Script

"Recognizing your own growth helps your brain notice success and build confidence for the next step."

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-09 - Award)

Write on the board: Name one evidence habit you used well - relevance, CSI, signal marker, or accurate quotation presentation.

T - Target

Teacher Script

"Strong learners do not stop after one success. They set a target for what they will improve next."

Student Reflection in Interactive Notebook:

- One thing I can already do well with evidence is _____.
- One thing I still want to improve is _____.
- My next evidence goal is _____.

Target Choices:

- I want to choose stronger evidence.
- I want to connect evidence more clearly to my thesis (central idea).
- I want to use better signal markers.
- I want to punctuate quotes correctly every time.
- I want to infer more from the evidence I choose.
- I want to use stronger vocabulary from my Thinking Charts.

Curiosity Questions:

- How would the meaning of a response change if the evidence did not match the thesis (central idea)?
- Why might a short quote sometimes be stronger than a long quote?
- Which passage in this cluster gives easier evidence to find, and why?
- How does setting help us decide what evidence matters most?
- If Nyla had to explain the turtles' behavior using evidence, which quote would she choose?

Teacher Script

"Refer to your Thinking Levels Charts to help you upgrade your evidence and signal markers."

★ Daily Deck Slide (M3-10 - Target)

Write on the board: Choose the next evidence habit you will strengthen and state how you will check yourself next time.

Day 4 Closing

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

Day 5 - Explain to Others

E

TEKS and ELPS for Today

Standard	Student Expectation (verbatim breakout)
TEKS 5.12(B)(ii)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using genre characteristics
TEKS 5.11(D)(xxvii)	edit drafts using standard English conventions, including correct spelling of words with grade-appropriate orthographic patterns
ELPS 2(E)(i)	narrate, describe, explain, justify, discuss, elaborate, or evaluate orally with increasing specificity in academic context or discourse

Day 5 Purpose

Students become Evidence Coaches and teach a partner how to match evidence to a thesis (central idea) and check it with CSI.

E - Turn and Teach: Evidence Coach

Teacher Script

"Now you are going to become an evidence coach. You will teach someone else how to choose and present evidence correctly."

Turn and Teach Directions:

- Partner A: Read a thesis (central idea) statement aloud, explain how to find evidence that matches it, choose a signal marker, and say the evidence sentence aloud with correct punctuation language.
- Partner B: Listen carefully, check for CSI, tell whether the quote is strong or weak, and suggest one way to improve the sentence if needed.
- Then switch roles.

Sample Thesis (Central Idea) Statements for Partners:

- The colonists protested British laws because they were treated unfairly.
- Sea turtles rely on instinct because they must survive danger immediately.
- Setting influences behavior in both passages through conflict, instinct, and learning.

Sentence Stems for Students:

- "This evidence is strong because ____."
- "This quote connects to the prompt by ____."
- "A good signal marker would be ____."
- "This evidence helps us infer ____."

Teacher Monitoring - Listen for students who:

- name the difference between evidence and explanation accurately
- use signal markers correctly
- use correct quotation punctuation language
- refer to CSI
- use stronger vocabulary from the Thinking Charts

✓ **Module Overarching Question - Answer**

How does CSI help a writer choose and introduce evidence that truly supports an SCR thesis (central idea)?

CSI helps a writer test whether evidence connects to the prompt, supports the thesis (central idea), and helps the writer infer more. A clear signal marker and correct presentation of the quotation then help the reader recognize exactly where the proof begins.

★ **Daily Deck Slide (M3-11 and M3-14 - Explain and Answer)**

Write on the board: Become an Evidence Coach. Teach a partner how to match evidence to a thesis (central idea) and check it with CSI. Then answer: Use CSI - evidence must Connect, Support, and help Infer. Introduce the chosen proof with a clear signal marker.

Teacher Closing Encouragement

Teacher Script

"Today you learned that writers do more than answer questions. Writers prove their thinking. Every time you choose a strong quote, introduce it clearly, and connect it to your thesis (central idea), you are building stronger habits as a reader and writer. Be proud of the work you did today. Your thinking is growing, your writing is getting sharper, and your evidence is making your voice stronger."

Module 3 - Low, Medium, and High Exemplars

Prompt: Why did colonists protest British laws? Choose one strong quote, introduce it with a signal marker, and check it with CSI.

Low Exemplar

- Student Response: I think the colonists were mad because taxes are annoying.
- What Is Working: The response is on the topic of the colonists and taxes.
- Teacher Notes: This is a personal opinion, not quoted proof from the text, so it does not pass CSI.
- What Needs Improvement: Replace the opinion with an exact quote introduced by a signal marker, such as: The text states, "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..."

Medium Exemplar

- Student Response: The passage says, "Great Britain gained land..."
- What Is Working: The response uses a signal marker and an exact quote with quotation marks.
- Teacher Notes: The quote is accurate but weak for this prompt; it does not connect to why the colonists protested, so it fails the Connect check.
- What Needs Improvement: Choose a quote that connects to the prompt, such as: The text states, "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..."

High Exemplar

- Student Response: The text states, "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..." This quote connects to the prompt about protest, supports a thesis (central idea) about unfair treatment, and helps the reader infer that the colonists wanted representation.
- What Is Working: A signal marker and correct punctuation introduce a precise quote that passes all three CSI checks - Connect, Support, and Infer - and links to the historical setting.
- Teacher Notes: The quote is short and exact, and the explanation names what the proof helps the reader infer, which is ready to grow into a full explanation sentence in Module 4.

Module 3 - Assessment Opportunities

Field	Detail
Purpose	Determine whether students can choose evidence that passes CSI and introduce it with a signal marker and correct punctuation.
Who Administers It	The classroom teacher during the lesson.
Materials Needed	Both passages, the Thinking Levels Chart, the CSI chart, the signal-marker chart, CSI Evidence Quest cards, and student notebooks.
Related TEKS Breakout	5.12(B)(i) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea; 5.11(C)(ii) revise drafts to improve word choice
Task	Students play the CSI Evidence Quest and complete the Thesis (Central Idea) + Evidence page, adding a quote with a signal marker and a CSI explanation.
Expected Response	Students choose a strong quote, test it with CSI, introduce it with a signal marker, and punctuate it correctly.

Informal Assessment

During the lesson, observe Catch and Correct the Mistake and the CSI Evidence Quest. Note whether students can sort proof from opinion and judge strong versus weak evidence.

Formative Assessment

The Day 3 Thesis (Central Idea) + Evidence page serves as the formative check.

Formative Check Rubric/Scaffolding

Component	Student Requirement
Connect	The quote must connect to the prompt.
Support	The quote must support the thesis (central idea).
Signal Marker	Must introduce the quote with a signal marker.
Punctuation	Must use a comma after the signal marker and quotation marks around the quote.

🔑 Answer Key - Sample Evidence

Thesis (Central Idea): The colonists protested British laws because they were taxed without representation and felt it was unfair. Evidence: The text states, "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..."

Check the Learning

✓ Check the Learning

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

- Verbal - Gather/Reveal - Catch and Correct: Students signal "Catch It," repair the statement, and name the evidence rule they used.
- Visual/Physical - Attempt - CSI Finger Check: Students hold up one finger for Connect, two for Support, and three for Infer to show which checks a quote passes.
- Written - Discuss/Use - Thesis (Central Idea) + Evidence: Students add a quoted evidence sentence with a signal marker and correct punctuation.

Assessment Option

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

- Listen - assess through Catch and Correct the Mistake and discussion.
- Look - observe a CSI finger check or a strong-or-weak decision.
- Collect - have students produce a "Strong Evidence / Weak Evidence" notebook page you can examine.

Intervention - Module 3

Evidence or Not? Guided Small-Group Build

For students who need extra help telling the difference between evidence and non-evidence, matching evidence to a thesis (central idea), and using a signal marker correctly. Slow it down and build the thinking step by step.

Teacher Script

"We are going to slow it down and build this one step at a time. First, we will decide what counts as evidence. Then we will decide whether it is strong enough. Then we will practice saying it the right way."

Step 1: Sort Evidence vs. Not Evidence. Give students sentence strips and sort into two categories.

- Evidence: "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..."; "Young orcas observe older members of their group."; "Their instinct guided them in the right direction..."
- Not Evidence: "I think the colonists were upset."; "Orcas are cool animals."; "The turtles were probably scared."

Step 2: Match Evidence to Thesis (Central Idea). Give one thesis (central idea) at a time. Thesis (Central Idea): Sea turtles survive dangerous moments because instinct helps them move toward safety. Choices: "Their instinct guided them in the right direction..." or "A trainer explained how they hunt in the wild." Answer: "Their instinct guided them in the right direction..." Teacher says: "This is stronger because it directly proves the thesis (central idea)."

Step 3: Add a Signal Marker. Students practice saying and writing: The text states, "Their instinct guided them in the right direction..." Teacher models announcing the evidence first.

Step 4: CSI Finger Check. Teacher says: "Put up one finger if it connects to the prompt, two fingers if it supports the thesis (central idea), and three fingers if it helps you infer more." Students respond for each quote.

Step 5: Guided Notebook Practice. Students write a thesis (central idea), a signal marker, and the quote. The teacher gives immediate feedback and circles strong choices.

Goal: Students can sort proof from opinion, match a quote to a thesis (central idea), and introduce it correctly.

Module 3 - Embedded Checks and Student Support

Embedded Checks for Understanding

Teacher Move	Expected Response	Common Misconception	Teacher Response
Ask whether a statement is evidence or opinion.	Students identify quoted proof versus a personal idea.	Students think any copied sentence is strong evidence.	Point out: strong evidence must connect to the prompt and support the thesis (central idea).
Ask students to test a quote with CSI.	Students name Connect, Support, Infer.	Students choose the longest quote.	Ask, "Does this quote connect, support, and help you infer? A shorter quote can be stronger."
Ask students to introduce a quote.	Students add a signal marker and a comma before the quotation.	Students drop the quote in with no signal marker.	Ask, "How will the reader know proof is coming? Add a signal marker."

Student Support Quick Reference

If a student...	Support to Provide
Writes an opinion instead of a quote	Use the Evidence / Not Evidence sort and find an exact quote together.
Chooses a quote that does not fit	Apply CSI aloud and ask what the quote proves.
Forgets the signal marker or punctuation	Use the signal-marker chart: signal marker + comma + quotation marks.
Masters quickly	Route to Module 3 enrichment (Evidence Upgrade Lab).

Enrichment - Module 3

Evidence Upgrade Lab

Students who master the concept compare two possible quotes, rank them with CSI, introduce the stronger quote, and explain what it helps the reader infer.



Teacher Script

"You already know how to find evidence. Now you are going to compare, judge, and improve evidence like an expert writer."

Directions:

- Choose one thesis (central idea) from Module 2.
- Find two possible quotes from the passage.
- Decide which quote is stronger and explain why using CSI.
- Write the stronger quote using a signal marker.
- Add one sentence that tells what the evidence helps you infer.
- Use stronger vocabulary from your Thinking Levels Chart to upgrade your wording.

Sample Enrichment Thesis (Central Idea): Setting influences behavior in both passages through the colonists' resistance and the animals' survival habits.

Possible Evidence Choices:

- A. "Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty helped organize resistance..."
- B. "Their instinct guided them in the right direction..."
- C. "Young orcas observe older members of their group."
- D. "Many colonists considered themselves loyal to the king."

Challenge Questions:

- Which quote best shows historical setting shaping behavior?
- Which quote best shows environmental setting shaping behavior?
- Which two quotes would work best if you had to prove both parts of the thesis (central idea)?

Sample Strong Student Response: The passage explains, "Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty helped organize resistance..." This evidence supports the idea that the historical setting pushed colonists toward action. It also helps us infer that resistance grew stronger as tensions increased.

Extension: Students create one "strong evidence" card and one "weak evidence" card for future class games. On the back, they explain why.

Module 3 - Additional Writing Opportunity: Prove It with Evidence

Prompt Bank (WHAT, WHY, and HOW)

Each prompt asks for a thesis (central idea) you can support with a strong quote:

- Why did colonists protest British laws?
- How did British actions push the colonies toward revolution?
- Why do sea turtles rely on instinct?
- How do orcas learn to survive in their group?
- How does setting influence behavior in both passages?

Writing Prompt

Choose one prompt from the bank. Write a thesis (central idea), then add one strong quote that passes CSI, introduced with a signal marker and correct punctuation.

Connection to This Module

This week you learned that strong evidence connects, supports, and helps you infer. Now choose a precise quote, test it with CSI, and present it clearly.

Planning Support

1. Write a thesis (central idea) that answers the prompt.
2. Find one short, exact quote from the passage.
3. Test it with CSI - Connect, Support, Infer.
4. Introduce it with a signal marker and a comma.
5. Add quotation marks around the exact words.

Step	Planning Guide
Step 1: Thesis (Central Idea)	Answer the prompt in one clear sentence.
Step 2: Evidence	Choose a short, exact quote that passes CSI.
Step 3: Present It	Add a signal marker, a comma, and quotation marks.

Drafting Space

Success Criteria

- My quote connects to the prompt and supports my thesis (central idea).
- My quote is introduced with a signal marker and correct punctuation.
- My quote is short and exact, not just long.

Additional Writing Opportunity: Revise and Edit

Revise

Read your evidence aloud. Improve the word choice in your signal marker and check that the quote is the most precise proof for your thesis (central idea).

Edit

Run the Conventions Sweep: signal marker + comma + quotation marks, correct spelling of high-frequency words, and proper nouns (Parliament, Boston, Nyla) capitalized.

Module 3 - Auditory Engagement (Active Participation)

Approach: Catch and Correct the Mistake.

Purpose: Students listen for deliberate near-misses about evidence, signal markers, and relevance, signal when they hear the error, and repair the statement.

Listening Target: Listen for evidence that does not connect, does not support the thesis (central idea), or is mislabeled as explanation.

Student Materials: interactive notebook; a "Catch It" hand signal.



Teacher Script

"I may try to trick your ears with a close-but-not-correct statement about evidence. When you hear a mistake, signal CATCH IT, repair the statement, and explain the evidence rule you used."

Round	What the Teacher Reads	Answer / Look-For
1	"Any sentence copied from the passage is automatically strong evidence."	Incorrect - strong evidence must connect to the prompt and support the thesis (central idea).
2	"I think the colonists were angry" is quoted evidence.	Incorrect - that is the writer's idea, not source proof.
3	"The text states, 'They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice.'" uses a signal marker to introduce evidence.	Correct.
4	"Young orcas observe older members of their group" is relevant evidence for a thesis (central idea) about learned behavior.	Correct - it directly supports learning through observation.

Transfer: Students hear a new quote and prompt, then state which CSI check is strongest and which check still needs proof.

Fresh Recall: With notes covered, say the three CSI words in order and explain what one of them checks.

Pause Points

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

|| Pause Point - Evidence or Opinion

Stop and think: Is this quoted proof from the text, or is it my own idea?

|| Pause Point - Run the CSI Test

Stop and think: Does this quote Connect, Support, and help me Infer?

|| Pause Point - Signal the Quote

Stop and think: Which signal marker will announce that proof is coming?

|| Pause Point - Connect to Setting

Stop and think: How does the historical, cultural, or environmental setting make this evidence matter?

Module 3 - My Progress Tracker

Teacher Script

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

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

I Can...	Not yet	Getting set	I can do it
Tell the difference between evidence and opinion.			
Test a quote with CSI - Connect, Support, Infer.			
Decide whether a quote is strong or weak for a prompt.			
Introduce a quote with a signal marker.			
Punctuate a quote correctly.			

One thing I am proud of:

One thing I want to get better at:

Module 3 - Teacher Closure and Reflection

Teacher Closure Script

Teacher Script

"At the beginning of this module, we asked how CSI helps a writer choose and introduce evidence. Now we can answer it: CSI tests whether evidence connects to the prompt, supports the thesis (central idea), and helps the writer infer more, and a signal marker with correct punctuation shows the reader where the proof begins."

Module Overarching Question - Answered

How does CSI help a writer choose and introduce evidence that truly supports an SCR thesis (central idea)? CSI helps a writer test whether evidence connects to the prompt, supports the thesis (central idea), and helps the writer infer more. A clear signal marker and correct presentation of the quotation then help the reader recognize exactly where the proof begins.

Teacher Reflection - Module 3

Which students can sort proof from opinion and choose a strong quote?

Which students introduce evidence with a signal marker and correct punctuation?

Which students still copy the longest quote instead of the most precise one?

Who is ready for Module 4, writing the explanation sentence that gives evidence meaning?

Teacher Notes

Module 3 - Remote Learning

Virtual Classroom Adjustment for Remote Learners

Use these adjustments to run Module 3 fully online without losing rigor or participation. For Catch and Correct the Mistake, read each near-miss statement aloud and have students give a "Catch It" hand signal or type CATCH in the chat, then call on one student to repair the statement and name the evidence rule. For the Mystery Proof Reveal Gather activity, display the three examples on a slide and ask students to type 1, 2, or 3 in the chat, then have one or two students explain their choice verbally. Put the CSI chart and the signal-marker chart on slides for students to see throughout the lesson. For the CSI Evidence Quest, use a digital spinner and slides with clickable cards; students type answers in the chat, hold up fingers for strong or weak, or unmute to explain CSI, and make quote fingers on camera during the chant. Display both passages in view-only form and provide separate digital copies for TRACKS highlighting. For Discuss, post one question at a time and have students answer using hand signals, chat, or partner talk in breakout rooms. For the independent Thesis (Central Idea) + Evidence page, students type their evidence sentence in the chat, hold notebooks up to the camera, or complete the work on a digital slide, using keyboard symbols for quotation marks and underlining the signal marker digitally. For Award, students type one proud moment in the chat. For Target, students hold up one finger for the first target choice, two for the second, and so on, or type their next goal in the chat. For Intervention, use a two-column slide for sorting, drag-and-drop quote matching, and chat practice for signal markers, with finger checks for CSI. For Enrichment, use a shared slide with two or three evidence options; students annotate the slide, rank quotes in the chat, or explain orally why one quote is stronger. For the Evidence Coach turn-and-teach, assign partners in breakout rooms or call on pairs, and place sample thesis (central idea) statements on slides so students can explain their evidence choices verbally or in the chat.

MODULE

4

Writing the Explanation
Sentence

Week 4 • Very High Stamina

Module 4: Writing the Explanation Sentence

Week 4 - Very High Stamina - Cluster 1 (Short Constructed Response)

When Students Level Up Their Language, They Level Up Their Thinking



Teacher Script

"When students learn to explain their thinking, they stop being answer finders and become meaning makers."

Module Overarching Question

How does a strong explanation turn evidence into clear meaning for the reader?

Today We Will Look For

- an explanation that tells what the evidence MEANS
- an explanation that shows why the evidence MATTERS
- the two starter bookends: Definition (this means / this shows) and Story (this reminds me of / this makes me think of)
- the word THIS, a demonstrative pronoun that points back to nearby evidence

Student reminder: An explanation tells what the evidence means and why it matters.

Why This Module Matters

Students often think explanation means repeating the evidence in slightly different words. In this module, students learn that an explanation tells what the evidence means and why it matters, and that it is the writer's thinking, not another quote. Students practice two starter bookends - Definition and Story - and connect each explanation to the evidence and the thesis (central idea). By returning to the same passages and terms from earlier modules, students interrupt forgetting, which is metacognition.

Module Passage Set - Very High Stamina

Required stamina level for Module 4: Very High Stamina. The same two Grade 5 Cluster 1 passages increase in length, detail, evidence distance, and conceptual demand across the four modules.

Passage	Reading Genre	Scope & Sequence Passage Reference	Student-Facing Word Count
From Tension to Revolution	Nonfiction	1	1,911
The Ocean Lesson	Fiction	2	1,963

Teacher Passage Use Note: Use the stamina versions printed in this module. The lesson's passage-dependent prompts, models, games, examples, intervention, enrichment, and

answer guidance should be completed with these assigned versions.

Module Independent Product

Independently write explanation sentences for selected evidence from both passages, using either the Definition or the Story bookend, and check that each one connects back to the thesis (central idea).

Teacher Inspiration

Teacher Script

“When students learn to explain their thinking, they stop being answer finders and become meaning makers.”

Module 4 - Family Communication

Purpose: Families are partners in this work. This page explains the week's learning, offers one question to ask at home, and gives one simple way to help.

This Week at a Glance

- The big skill: writing an explanation sentence that tells what the evidence means and why it matters.
- The catch phrase: An explanation tells what the evidence means and why it matters.
- The two reading passages: "From Tension to Revolution" (about how new taxes and events like the Boston Tea Party pushed the American colonies toward revolution) and "The Ocean Lesson" (about how sea turtles rely on instinct while orcas rely on learned behavior and teamwork).

One Question to Ask at Home



Teacher Script

"What does that mean, and why does it matter?"

One Way to Help

When your child shares a fact or a quote, ask them to explain it in their own words using "this means" or "this shows," and to say why it matters. Turning proof into meaning is exactly this week's work.

Family Letter

Dear Families,

This week your child finishes Cluster 1 of our fifth-grade writing curriculum, the Short Constructed Response. Your child will learn that an explanation sentence tells what the evidence means and why it matters. An explanation is the writer's own thinking, not another quote. Your child will practice two starter explanation bookends: Definition, which begins with "this means" or "this shows," and Story, which begins with "this reminds me of" or "this makes me think of."

We are reading two texts: "From Tension to Revolution," about how new taxes, the Stamp Act, the Boston Massacre, and the Boston Tea Party pushed the American colonies toward revolution, and "The Ocean Lesson," about a girl named Nyla who learns that sea turtles rely on instinct while orcas rely on learned behavior and teamwork. Your child will write explanation sentences that connect quotes from these texts back to a thesis (central idea).

Please try this at home: When your child tells you a fact, ask them to explain it with "this means" or "this shows" and then say why it matters. Talk about how the explanation adds meaning instead of just repeating the fact.

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

Carta para las Familias

Estimadas familias:

Esta semana su hijo o hija termina el Grupo 1 de nuestro currículo de escritura de quinto grado, la Respuesta Construida Corta (SCR). Su hijo o hija aprenderá que una oración de explicación dice lo que significa la evidencia y por qué importa. Una explicación es el pensamiento propio del escritor, no otra cita. Su hijo o hija practicará dos marcadores iniciales de explicación: la Definición, que comienza con "this means" o "this shows," y la Historia, que comienza con "this reminds me of" o "this makes me think of."

Leemos dos textos: "From Tension to Revolution," sobre cómo los nuevos impuestos, la Ley del Timbre, la Masacre de Boston y el Motín del Té de Boston llevaron a las colonias americanas hacia la revolución, y "The Ocean Lesson," sobre una niña llamada Nyla que aprende que las tortugas marinas dependen del instinto mientras que las orcas dependen del comportamiento aprendido y del trabajo en equipo. Su hijo o hija escribirá oraciones de explicación que conectan las citas de estos textos con una tesis.

Por favor, intente esto en casa: Cuando su hijo o hija le diga un hecho, pídale que lo explique con "this means" o "this shows" y luego diga por qué importa. Conversen sobre cómo la explicación agrega significado en lugar de solo repetir el hecho.

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

Module 4 - Family Conversation Starters

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

- What is the difference between repeating a fact and explaining what it means?
- Why does a strong explanation say why the evidence matters?
- In "From Tension to Revolution," what does the phrase "taxation without representation" mean, and why does it matter?
- In "The Ocean Lesson," what does it mean that orcas learn from older members of their group?

Simple Family Activities

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

Family Activity - This Means...



Teacher Script

"a simple fact aloud. Take turns explaining it with "this means" or "this shows," and then add why it matters."

Family Activity - This Reminds Me Of...

Share a short story or memory that a fact reminds you of. Use "this reminds me of" or "this makes me think of," and explain how the story helps make the idea clearer.

Module 4 - Lesson Overview and Standards

Lesson Overview

Module 4 completes Cluster 1. Students learn that the explanation sentence tells what the evidence means and why it matters, using two starter bookends - Definition and Story. Using "From Tension to Revolution" and "The Ocean Lesson," students sort evidence from explanation, build explanation sentences from a thesis (central idea) and evidence, and connect each explanation back to the thesis (central idea).

BIG Goal: Students will explain evidence so the reader understands what the proof means and how it supports the thesis (central idea).

Writing TEKS for This Module

The Student Expectation column below is the exact, full wording of each Grade 5 TEKS breakout - quoted verbatim from the Cluster 1 scope and sequence, not paraphrased or abbreviated. This module claims only the breakouts students directly demonstrate or intentionally practice.

Writing Process TEKS

TEKS	Student Expectation (verbatim TEKS breakout)
5.11(B)(i)	develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction

Writing Genre TEKS

TEKS	Student Expectation (verbatim TEKS breakout)
5.12(B)(i)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea
5.12(B)(ii)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using genre characteristics
5.12(B)(iii)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using craft

Revising TEKS

TEKS	Student Expectation (verbatim TEKS breakout)
5.11(C)(i)	revise drafts to improve sentence structure
5.11(C)(ii)	revise drafts to improve word choice

Editing TEKS

TEKS	Student Expectation (verbatim TEKS breakout)
5.11(D)(i)	edit drafts using standard English conventions, including complete simple sentences with subject-verb agreement

Where the Standards Are Visible in This Module

- Students develop a coherent SCR by linking thesis (central idea), evidence, and explanation in a purposeful order.
- Students revise sentence structure and word choice so explanations clarify meaning instead of repeating evidence.
- Students write and orally explain supporting details and evidence for a specific purpose.

Module 4 - TEKS and ELPS (Cluster 1 · from the Scope & Sequence)

These are the standards listed for Cluster 1 in the Teach BIG Scope and Sequence, written in full rather than listed only by code, and grouped by category.

TEKS - Cluster 1 (from the Scope & Sequence)

Writing Process (Composition)

- 5.11(A)(i) plan a first draft by selecting a genre for a particular topic, purpose, and audience using a range of strategies
- 5.11(B)(i) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction

Writing Genre

- 5.12(B)(i) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea
- 5.12(B)(ii) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using genre characteristics
- 5.12(B)(iii) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using craft

Revising

- 5.11(C)(i) revise drafts to improve sentence structure
- 5.11(C)(ii) revise drafts to improve word choice

Editing

- 5.11(D)(i) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including complete simple sentences with subject-verb agreement
- 5.11(D)(vi) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including past tense of irregular verbs
- 5.11(D)(vii) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including collective nouns
- 5.11(D)(viii) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including adjectives, including their comparative forms
- 5.11(D)(ix) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including adjectives, including their superlative forms
- 5.11(D)(xxvii) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including correct spelling of words with grade-appropriate orthographic patterns
- 5.11(D)(xxix) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including correct spelling of high-frequency words

ELPS - Cluster 1 (breakouts this module addresses)

Listening

- 1(E)(i) demonstrate listening comprehension from information presented orally during formal classroom interactions by restating, responding, paraphrasing, summarizing, or asking for clarification or additional details

Speaking

- 2(E)(i) narrate, describe, explain, justify, discuss, elaborate, or evaluate orally with increasing specificity in academic context or discourse
- 2(F)(i) restate, ask questions about, or respond to information during formal classroom interactions

Writing

- 4(C)(i) write using a combination of both high-frequency words and content-area vocabulary
- 4(D)(ii) write content-area texts using a variety of sentence types
- 4(E)(ii) write content-area specific text using grammatical structures
- 4(F)(i) write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting details using appropriate content for [a] specific purpose
- 4(F)(ix) write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting evidence using appropriate content for [a] specific purpose

Language Domains

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

Domain	How this module builds it
Listening	In Listen for What Is Missing, students hear an incomplete explanation and identify the missing reasoning move.
Speaking	Students add language that connects evidence to meaning or to the thesis (central idea).
Reading	Students read for meaning beyond the quote, pausing to state what a detail means and why it matters.
Writing	Students write explanation sentences using the Definition or Story bookend and connect each one to the thesis (central idea).

Module 4 - Learning Destination

I Can Statements

- I can explain evidence so the reader understands what the proof means and how it supports my thesis (central idea).
- I can tell the difference between evidence and explanation.
- I can use the Definition bookend (this means / this shows) and the Story bookend (this reminds me of / this makes me think of).
- I can use the word this to point back to nearby evidence.

I Will Statements

- I will read closely, listen actively, discuss my reasoning, write independently, reflect on my growth, and explain my thinking to others.
- I will write an explanation that adds meaning instead of repeating the quote.
- I will connect each explanation back to the thesis (central idea).
- I will capitalize the first word and punctuate the last word of every sentence.

Success Criteria

- I can write an explanation sentence that tells what the evidence means.
- I can say why the evidence matters.
- I can choose the Definition or the Story bookend and use it correctly.
- I can keep my explanation connected to the evidence and the thesis (central idea).

Evidence That Will Demonstrate Mastery

- The Listen for What Is Missing responses from the auditory engagement.
- The Explanation Relay Race matches recorded in the Interactive Notebook.
- The independent Thesis (Central Idea) + Evidence + Explanation page for both passages.

Module 4 - Rigor and Misconceptions

Rigor Safeguard

You may read both passages aloud, reread them, and let students use the Thinking Levels Chart, the explanation bookends, the thesis (central idea) and evidence charts, and the passages. You may model an explanation sentence aloud and provide oral rehearsal. You may not choose a student's meaning, write their explanation, or supply their reasoning. The student must still tell what the evidence means, choose a bookend, and connect the explanation to the thesis (central idea).

Rigor and Cognitive Demand

Level of Thinking	What Students Must Do	Expected Degree of Independence	Evidence of the Thinking
Literal	Sort evidence from explanation.	Supported. The teacher may reread the quote.	The student labels each sentence as evidence or explanation.
Inferential	Write an explanation that tells what the evidence means.	Guided early, independent by Use Again.	The student writes a Definition or Story explanation that adds meaning.
Evaluative	Judge which explanation is stronger and revise a weak one.	Independent by the game and the auditory task.	The student explains why one explanation connects more clearly to the thesis (central idea).

Educator Insight

Students often think explanation means repeating the evidence in slightly different words. Some students also confuse explanation with a second piece of evidence and keep quoting instead of telling what the quote means. Another misconception is that explanation must always be long to be strong. Watch for students who write a quote and then stop, or who begin a new sentence that does not connect back to the evidence. Students may also overuse vague statements such as "This is important" without saying why. Fix this by modeling short, clear explanation sentences that begin with "this means" or "this shows" and directly connect to the quote. Repeatedly ask, "What does this evidence tell us?" and "How does this prove the thesis (central idea)?"

Module 4 - Thinking Levels

These charts support building rigor. Use them in every module to name the level of thinking a task and a student response require. Color-code the five levels to match the student Thinking Levels Chart.

The Five Thinking Levels

Level	Color	Thinking Stage	What the Language Shows
Level 1	Red	Foundational	Uses basic words like says, shows, or tells; restates the text.
Level 2	Orange	Emergent	Begins to use words like suggests or means and adds a little explanation.
Level 3	Yellow	Visible	Uses words like indicates or demonstrates and connects the evidence to an idea.
Level 4	Green	Independent	Uses words like establishes and shows a pattern that strengthens an inference.
Level 5	Blue	Reflective	Synthesizes ideas, reframes the meaning, and connects to a bigger idea or setting.

Words = Thinking Level

Use stronger vocabulary from your Thinking Levels Chart to upgrade your explanation. Move from says / shows toward suggests, indicates, demonstrates, and establishes only when the meaning you add truly supports the stronger wording.

Level	Stage	Sample Citation and Explanation Language
Level 1	Foundational	The text says... This shows...
Level 2	Emergent	According to the text... This suggests...
Level 3	Visible	The text indicates that... This demonstrates that...
Level 4	Independent	The text establishes that... This pattern strengthens the inference that...
Level 5	Reflective	The evidence converges on the idea that... Ultimately, this reframes...

Challenge: Strengthen an explanation by making the meaning more precise and the connection to the thesis (central idea) clearer - not by making it longer.



Teacher Script

"A strong explanation can be short if it clearly tells what the evidence means and why it matters."

Module 4 - Vocabulary

Vocabulary - Teacher Script

Teacher Script

"Before we begin, let's preview the words we will use to talk about explanation, meaning, and the two bookends - everyday words, academic words, and words from our two texts."

Tier 1 Vocabulary - Everyday Words

Word	Student-Friendly Definition	Oral Rehearsal Frame
explain	to tell what something means and why	I explain the quote by ____.
mean	to stand for a certain idea	This quote means ____.
matter	to be important	This matters because ____.
show	to make something clear	This shows that ____.
think	to form an idea in your mind	I think this proves ____.
story	a short example that helps make an idea clear	This reminds me of the story of ____.
repeat	to say the same thing again	An explanation does not just repeat ____.
add	to put in something more	My explanation adds ____.
clear	easy to understand	My explanation is clear because ____.
point	to show where something is	The word this points back to ____.

Tier 2 Vocabulary - Academic Words

Word	Student-Friendly Definition	Oral Rehearsal Frame
explanation	the sentence or sentences that tell what evidence means	My explanation tells ____.
clarify	to make an idea easier for the reader to understand	This explanation clarifies ____.
demonstrate	to show an idea clearly with proof or reasoning	This demonstrates that ____.
meaning	the idea or understanding communicated by evidence and explanation	The meaning of this quote is ____.
support	to strengthen an answer with proof and reasoning	My explanation supports ____.
analyze	to examine evidence closely and explain its significance	When I analyze this quote, I see ____.
anecdote	a brief story or example used to make an idea more understandable	My anecdote is ____.
illustrate	to make an idea clear by giving an example or showing a connection	This illustrates ____.
connection	a meaningful relationship between evidence, explanation, and the thesis (central idea)	The connection here is ____.
metacognition	thinking about how your own thinking and writing choices work	I use metacognition when I ____.

Tier 3 Vocabulary - Passage-Specific Words

Word	Pronunciation	Student-Friendly Definition	Oral Rehearsal Frame
Parliament	PAR-luh-ment	the group in Great Britain that made laws and taxes for the colonies	Parliament decided to ____.
representation	rep-ri-zen-TAY-shun	having someone speak for you in government	The colonists wanted representation because ____.
boycott	BOY-kot	refusing to buy or use products as a form of protest	The colonists used a boycott to ____.
resistance	ri-ZIS-tuns	the act of fighting against or opposing something	The resistance grew when ____.
revolution	rev-uh-LOO-shun	a fight to change who holds power	The revolution began because ____.
instinct	IN-stinkt	a behavior an animal is born with and does not learn	The turtles used instinct to ____.
predators	PRED-uh-terz	animals that hunt and eat other animals	The turtles had to avoid predators by ____.
orcas	OR-kuhz	large ocean animals, also called killer whales	The orcas showed that ____.
pod	pod	a group of orcas that lives and travels together	A young orca learns from its pod by ____.
cooperation	koh-op-uh-RAY-shun	working together toward the same goal	The orcas showed cooperation when ____.



Teacher Resource

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

Module 4 - Background Knowledge and Teacher Context

This module uses two Cluster 1 passages that support explanation work. In "From Tension to Revolution," students can explain what quotes about new taxes, boycotts, the Boston Massacre, and the Boston Tea Party mean and why they matter - a historical and cultural setting. In "The Ocean Lesson," students can explain what quotes about instinct, learned behavior, and the orca pod mean and why they matter - an environmental setting. Both passages give students rich evidence to turn into meaning.

More Background for the Teacher

Both passages stay the same across the four Cluster 1 modules; each grows in length, detail, evidence distance, and conceptual demand from module to module. In Module 4 (Very High Stamina), the passages are the longest, so students explain evidence that sits farther from the main idea. Reusing the same passages, thesis (central idea) statements, and evidence from earlier modules interrupts the forgetting process - this is metacognition, thinking about our own thinking so learning sticks.

Module 4 - Materials and Teacher Preparation

This module teaches students that the explanation sentence tells what the evidence means and why it matters. In this lesson, students practice only two starter explanation approaches: Definition and Story.



Anchor Charts to Create

- Explanation = What the evidence means.
- What Explaining IS / What Explaining is NOT.
- Bookends for Explanation: Definition (this means / this shows); Story or Anecdote (this reminds me of / this makes me think of).
- Evidence and Explanation Work Together: Thesis (Central Idea), Evidence, Explanation.
- Capitalize the first word. Punctuate the last word.
- THIS points back to nearby evidence: a demonstrative pronoun that refers back to something close by.
- "Wow! Wow! Wow! I'm explaining now!" chant with motions.

Materials

- Printed copies of both Cluster 1 passages
- Interactive notebooks
- Highlighters or colored pencils
- Glue and scissors
- Game cards for the race
- Spinner or timer
- Sentence strips
- Pocket chart or whiteboard space for sorting
- Recording sheet for the race game
- Teacher-made slides for virtual learners

For the In-Person Teacher

- Prepare a wall or board space for whole-group sorting.
- Pre-cut explanation and evidence cards if possible.
- Set out notebook supplies before the lesson begins.

For the Virtual Teacher

- Turn the sorting cards into draggable slides.
- Use breakout rooms for partner explanation practice.
- Ask students to hold up fingers, type in chat, or respond verbally.

- Create one slide with color-coded sentence pieces: thesis (central idea), evidence, explanation.
- Ask students to hold notebooks up to the screen when they complete notebook tasks.

Module 4 - The DOT Reading Habit

The DOT Reading Habit



Teacher Script

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

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

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

Apply DOT to passage words such as boycott, resistance, instinct, predators, and cooperation without interrupting the first read for lengthy definitions.

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

Module 4 - The Explanation Framework: Definition and Story

Teacher Script

"An explanation is your voice. It tells the reader what the evidence shows. It does not copy more from the passage. It does not wander away from the thesis (central idea). It stays close to the evidence and explains it."

Content Anchor

Evidence is the proof. Explanation is where your thinking shines.

Evidence vs. Explanation

- Evidence = proof from the text.
- Explanation = what the proof means.
- What Explaining IS: tells what the quote means; tells how the quote supports the thesis (central idea); helps the reader understand.
- What Explaining is NOT: another quote; a random opinion; a sentence that repeats the quote with no meaning added.

Two Explanation Bookends

Today we use two bookends from our larger explanation family.

- Definition - this means / this shows.
- Story (Anecdote) - this reminds me of / this makes me think of.

The Word THIS

The word THIS is important because it points back to the evidence sentence that is close by. THIS is a demonstrative pronoun. It refers back to something nearby. Remember to capitalize the first word of each sentence and punctuate the last word of each sentence.

Setting Shapes the Explanation

Historical, cultural, and environmental setting shapes the explanations students write. In "From Tension to Revolution," a Definition explanation can clarify the historical meaning of a quote. In "The Ocean Lesson," a Story explanation can connect an animal behavior to a familiar real-life example.

Teacher Script

"When we return to the same passages and the same terms, we interrupt forgetting. That is called metacognition, which means we think about our own thinking. Anytime you hear me say, 'Wow! Wow! Wow!' you respond, 'I'm explaining now!' with the motions."

Module 4 - TRACKS: Reading Both Passages for Evidence

Before students explain evidence, they read "From Tension to Revolution" and "The Ocean Lesson" and TAP the TRACKS to find the six kinds of measurable evidence. Reading for TRACKS gives students the exact quotes they will turn into meaning with a Definition or Story explanation.

The Six Types of Measurable Evidence: TRACKS

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

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

How to Use TRACKS

Teacher Script

“As we read BOTH passages, we hunt for all six kinds of evidence and highlight each one in its TRACKS color. Time is green, Reactions are purple, Actions are yellow, Character/Concept/Creature is yellow, Key Knowledge is orange, and Scenery/Setting is green. The exact words we highlight become the evidence we turn into meaning with our explanation sentences.”

Before Students Read

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

The Six Types of Measurable Evidence: TRACKS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PASSAGE 1 — From Tension to Revolution

[1] Before the American Revolution, the thirteen colonies were part of Great Britain, a superpower at the time. Great Britain had a strong army, a powerful navy, and a large empire that reached across many parts of the world. The king ruled from far across the Atlantic Ocean, but British laws still affected daily life in the colonies. Many colonists considered themselves loyal to the king. They followed British laws, traded with British merchants, and depended on Great Britain for protection. Some colonists were proud to be British subjects because they believed Great Britain was strong and successful.

[2] At first, many people in the colonies did not want to separate from Great Britain. They thought of themselves as both colonists and British citizens. They enjoyed some freedoms in the colonies and had their own local governments. These local governments helped make decisions about roads, trade, taxes, and other needs. However, the colonists still had to follow many laws made by Parliament, the lawmaking group in Great Britain. Over time, colonists began to feel that Parliament was making decisions without understanding life in the colonies.

[3] This began to change even more after the French and Indian War. This war was fought between Great Britain and France, with Native American groups joining on different sides. Both Great Britain and France wanted control of land in North America. The war lasted for several years and affected many people living in the colonies. Colonists helped British soldiers fight because they believed a British victory would protect them from French power. Great Britain won the war and gained a large amount of land in North America. Many colonists were happy that France had lost power in the region because it seemed to make the colonies safer.

[4] Although Great Britain gained land, it also gained significant debt. War was expensive. Soldiers had to be paid, supplies had to be bought, and forts had to be protected. Great Britain believed the colonies should help pay for the cost of the war because the war had helped protect them. To recover money, Parliament placed new taxes on the colonies. British leaders also wanted to keep soldiers in North America to protect the new land. This meant Great Britain needed even more money. Many colonists did not agree with this plan. They believed they had already helped during the war and should not be forced to pay taxes decided by leaders far away.

[5] One of these laws was the Stamp Act. It required colonists to pay taxes on printed materials such as newspapers, legal documents, licenses, pamphlets, and even playing cards. These items were used by many people, so the tax affected lawyers, business owners, newspaper printers, and ordinary colonists. Colonists strongly opposed this law because they had no representatives in Parliament. They believed that only their own colonial governments should have the power to tax them. They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice, which led to the phrase “taxation without representation.” This phrase became one of the most important ideas during the time before the American Revolution.

[6] Many colonists began to protest the Stamp Act. Some refused to buy stamped paper. Others wrote letters, gave speeches, and printed articles explaining why the law was unfair. Groups such as the Sons of Liberty helped organize protests in cities like Boston

and New York. Sometimes colonists gathered in large crowds to show their anger. They wanted Parliament to understand that the colonies would not accept unfair taxes without a fight. These protests helped unite colonists who had once thought of themselves mostly as people from separate colonies. Now they began to see that they shared the same problem.

[7] The protests against the Stamp Act showed that the colonists could work together. Merchants agreed not to buy certain British goods. Printers shared information about the protests. Colonial leaders met to discuss how to respond. These actions made it difficult for Great Britain to enforce the law. Great Britain eventually repealed, or canceled, the Stamp Act. Many colonists celebrated because they believed their protests had worked. They had spoken out, worked together, and caused Parliament to change its decision.

[8] However, the conflict was not over. Parliament still believed it had the right to tax the colonies. British leaders wanted to remind the colonists that Parliament was in control. Soon, more laws and taxes followed. Colonists were taxed on goods such as glass, paper, paint, lead, and tea. These taxes continued to anger many people. Some colonists began to boycott British goods. A boycott means refusing to buy or use certain products as a form of protest. By refusing to buy British goods, colonists hoped to hurt British businesses and pressure Parliament to change its laws.

[9] Boycotts became an important way for colonists to resist British control. Some families chose to make their own goods instead of buying British products. Women often helped by spinning thread, making cloth, and encouraging others to use homemade items. This showed that resistance was not only led by famous leaders. Ordinary people also played an important role. Every time colonists refused to buy British goods, they were sending a message that they wanted their rights to be respected.

[10] Tensions continued to rise. British soldiers were sent to the colonies to keep order and enforce the laws. Many colonists did not like seeing soldiers in their towns. They felt as if they were being watched and controlled. Soldiers and colonists often argued with one another. Colonists were upset that soldiers sometimes took jobs or stayed in their communities. British leaders believed the soldiers were needed to keep peace, but many colonists believed the soldiers made the situation worse.

[11] In 1770, the Boston Massacre occurred when British soldiers fired into a crowd of colonists, killing several people. Before the shooting, colonists had gathered near the soldiers and shouted angrily. Some threw snowballs, sticks, and other objects. The situation quickly became dangerous and confusing. The soldiers felt threatened, and the crowd grew louder. When the soldiers fired, several colonists were killed or wounded. The event shocked people in Boston and across the colonies.

[12] The Boston Massacre increased anger and distrust toward British authority. News of the event spread quickly. Some colonists saw it as proof that British soldiers were a threat to their rights and safety. Leaders such as Samuel Adams used the event to increase anger toward British authority. Paul Revere created an engraving that showed the soldiers firing at colonists. The picture was used to influence public opinion. Although the event was more complicated than the picture showed, it helped many colonists believe that Great Britain was becoming too forceful. The Boston Massacre became a symbol of the growing conflict between the colonies and Great Britain.

[13] A few years later, another conflict grew over tea. Tea was a popular drink in the colonies, and many colonists bought it regularly. Parliament passed the Tea Act, which allowed one British company to sell tea directly to the colonies. This made the tea cheaper, but many colonists still saw the law as a problem. They believed Parliament was trying to make them accept its power to tax. To them, buying the tea would mean accepting British control. After the Tea Act was passed, trouble was brewing in the colonies.

[14] This conflict led to the Boston Tea Party. During this protest, colonists dumped tea into Boston Harbor. Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty helped organize resistance and spread ideas. Some colonists dressed as Native Americans to hide their identities. They boarded British ships and threw hundreds of chests of tea into the water. The protest was bold and costly. The destroyed tea was worth a large amount of money. To many colonists, the Boston Tea Party was a strong message against unfair taxation. To Great Britain, it was an act of rebellion.

[15] The Boston Tea Party showed that some colonists were no longer willing to protest only with words or boycotts. They were ready to take stronger action. Some colonists supported the protest because they believed British laws were unfair. Others worried that destroying property would make the conflict worse. Even though colonists did not always agree on every action, more and more of them were beginning to question British rule. The colonies were changing. People were talking more openly about rights, government, and freedom.

[16] In response, Great Britain passed the Intolerable Acts, which punished the colonies and limited their rights. One part of these acts closed Boston Harbor until the ruined tea was paid for. This hurt many people in Boston because the harbor was important for trade and jobs. Ships could not come and go as they once had. Merchants, sailors, workers, and families all felt the effects. Another part of the laws gave British officials more control over Massachusetts. The laws also allowed British soldiers to stay in colonists' homes and buildings when needed. Many colonists believed these acts were harsh and unfair.

[17] Great Britain hoped the Intolerable Acts would make the colonists obey. Instead, the laws had the opposite effect. Instead of ending the conflict, these actions brought the colonies closer together. Colonists in different places sent food, supplies, and support to Boston. They began to understand that one colony's problem could become every colony's problem. If Great Britain could punish Massachusetts, it could punish any colony. This idea made people in other colonies pay closer attention.

[18] Leaders from different colonies met to discuss what they should do next. They shared ideas, debated solutions, and talked about their rights. Some leaders wanted to continue asking the king for help. Others believed stronger action was needed. These meetings helped the colonies become more united. The colonists learned that there is strength in numbers. Working together made them more powerful than acting alone. Even though the colonies had different economies, religions, and ways of life, they were beginning to see themselves as part of one larger cause.

[19] As the conflict grew, many colonists still hoped for peace. They wanted Great Britain to listen to their concerns and respect their rights. They did not all want independence at first. Some believed the king would protect them if he understood what was happening.

Others were afraid that separating from Great Britain would lead to war, danger, and uncertainty. Great Britain was powerful, and the colonies did not have the same kind of army or navy. Choosing independence would not be easy.

[20] However, others began to believe that the colonies needed to break away completely. They argued that a government across the ocean could not understand or protect the needs of the colonists. They believed people should have a voice in the laws they were expected to follow. More people began to question the king's power and Parliament's control. The idea of independence slowly became stronger. Colonists talked about natural rights, liberty, and self-government. These ideas helped people think differently about their relationship with Great Britain.

[21] Over time, many colonists wanted to remove British control. They believed they should have a government that protected their rights and listened to their voices. The American Revolution became a fight for independence, leading to the Declaration of Independence and the creation of a new nation. What began as anger over taxes grew into a larger struggle for freedom, self-government, and independence. The colonists' protests, boycotts, meetings, and acts of resistance helped prepare them for the difficult fight ahead. Their choices changed history and helped create the United States of America.

Student Annotation Guide — From Tension to Revolution

T — Time

Before the American Revolution; In 1770

R — Reactions

Colonists strongly opposed this law; increased anger and distrust toward British authority

A — Actions

Parliament placed new taxes on the colonies; British soldiers fired into a crowd of colonists

C — Character/Concept/Creature

Parliament; the Stamp Act; Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty

K — Key Knowledge

taxation without representation; The colonists learned that there is strength in numbers

S — Scenery/Setting

the thirteen colonies were part of Great Britain

TRACKS EVIDENCE HIGHLIGHTING — From Tension to Revolution

[1] Before the American Revolution, the thirteen colonies were part of Great Britain, a superpower at the time. Great Britain had a strong army, a powerful navy, and a large empire that reached across many parts of the world. The king ruled from far across the Atlantic Ocean, but British laws still affected daily life in the colonies. Many colonists considered themselves loyal to the king. They followed British laws, traded with British merchants, and depended on Great Britain for protection. Some colonists were proud to be British subjects because they believed Great Britain was strong and successful.

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[14] This conflict led to the Boston Tea Party. During this protest, colonists dumped tea into Boston Harbor. Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty helped organize resistance and spread ideas. Some colonists dressed as Native Americans to hide their identities. They boarded British ships and threw hundreds of chests of tea into the water. The protest was bold and costly. The destroyed tea was worth a large amount of money. To many colonists, the Boston Tea Party was a strong message against unfair taxation. To Great Britain, it was an act of rebellion.

[15] The Boston Tea Party showed that some colonists were no longer willing to protest only with words or boycotts. They were ready to take stronger action. Some colonists supported the protest because they believed British laws were unfair. Others worried that destroying property would make the conflict worse. Even though colonists did not always agree on every action, more and more of them were beginning to question British rule. The colonies were changing. People were talking more openly about rights, government, and freedom.

[16] In response, Great Britain passed the Intolerable Acts, which punished the colonies and limited their rights. One part of these acts closed Boston Harbor until the ruined tea was paid for. This hurt many people in Boston because the harbor was important for trade and jobs. Ships could not come and go as they once had. Merchants, sailors, workers, and families all felt the effects. Another part of the laws gave British officials more control over Massachusetts. The laws also allowed British soldiers to stay in colonists' homes and buildings when needed. Many colonists believed these acts were harsh and unfair.

[17] Great Britain hoped the Intolerable Acts would make the colonists obey. Instead, the laws had the opposite effect. Instead of ending the conflict, these actions brought the colonies closer together. Colonists in different places sent food, supplies, and support to Boston. They began to understand that one colony's problem could become every colony's problem. If Great Britain could punish Massachusetts, it could punish any colony. This idea made people in other colonies pay closer attention.

[18] Leaders from different colonies met to discuss what they should do next. They shared ideas, debated solutions, and talked about their rights. Some leaders wanted to continue asking the king for help. Others believed stronger action was needed. These meetings helped the colonies become more united. The colonists learned that there is strength in numbers. Working together made them more powerful than acting alone. Even though the colonies had different economies, religions, and ways of life, they were beginning to see themselves as part of one larger cause.

[19] As the conflict grew, many colonists still hoped for peace. They wanted Great Britain to listen to their concerns and respect their rights. They did not all want independence at first. Some believed the king would protect them if he understood what was happening.

Others were afraid that separating from Great Britain would lead to war, danger, and uncertainty. Great Britain was powerful, and the colonies did not have the same kind of army or navy. Choosing independence would not be easy.

[20] However, others began to believe that the colonies needed to break away completely. They argued that a government across the ocean could not understand or protect the needs of the colonists. They believed people should have a voice in the laws they were expected to follow. More people began to question the king's power and Parliament's control. The idea of independence slowly became stronger. Colonists talked about natural rights, liberty, and self-government. These ideas helped people think differently about their relationship with Great Britain.

[21] Over time, many colonists wanted to remove British control. They believed they should have a government that protected their rights and listened to their voices. The American Revolution became a fight for independence, leading to the Declaration of Independence and the creation of a new nation. What began as anger over taxes grew into a larger struggle for freedom, self-government, and independence. The colonists' protests, boycotts, meetings, and acts of resistance helped prepare them for the difficult fight ahead. Their choices changed history and helped create the United States of America.

PASSAGE 2 — The Ocean Lesson

[1] Nyla stood quietly on the beach as dozens of sea turtles began to hatch from the sand. The morning air was cool, and the sky was just starting to brighten. Small waves rolled gently onto the shore and then slid back into the ocean. The beach seemed peaceful, but Nyla knew something important was happening beneath the sand. At first, the nest looked like a small, still mound. Then tiny movements appeared. Grains of sand shifted, and little cracks formed in the shells hidden below the surface.

[2] One by one, the sea turtles broke through their shells and started moving toward the ocean. Nyla leaned forward, careful not to step too close. The hatchlings were small, but they were active. Their tiny flippers pushed against the sand again and again. Some turtles moved in a straight line, while others had to crawl around shells, seaweed, and shallow footprints. The ocean was not far away, but for such small animals, the trip looked long and difficult.

[3] “How do they know where to go?” Nyla asked.

[4] “They don’t need to be taught,” her guide explained. “It’s an instinct. They are born with that behavior.”

[5] Nyla thought about the word instinct. It meant the turtles did not have to watch another turtle first. They did not have to practice or wait for instructions. They already had the behavior inside them from the moment they hatched. Even though they were new to the world, their bodies seemed to understand that the ocean was where they needed to go.

[6] Nyla watched closely. The turtles moved slowly but with determination. Each movement seemed small, but together those movements helped them get closer to the water. The sand was not easy for them to cross. In some places it was soft, and the turtles sank down a little as they crawled. In other places, the sand was packed tight. A few turtles slipped into shallow dips and had to push themselves out. Others paused for a moment, then began moving again.

[7] Even though birds circled above and the sand was uneven, most continued toward the water. Their instinct guided them through the transition from sand to ocean, increasing their chances of survival during a dangerous moment. Nyla could see why this first journey mattered so much. The longer the turtles stayed on the beach, the more danger they faced. Birds, crabs, and other animals might catch them before they reached the sea.

[8] The guide smiled and said, “Slow and steady wins the race.”

[9] Nyla smiled too, but she kept watching the turtles. The saying made sense. The turtles were not fast, and they were not strong compared with many animals around them. Still, they did not quit. They kept moving forward, little by little. They did not stop to look for help. They did not wait for an older turtle to lead them. Their instinct gave them a chance to survive when there was no time for a lesson.

[10] As the first turtles reached the edge of the water, a small wave washed over them. For a moment, they disappeared in the white foam. Nyla held her breath. Then she saw them floating and paddling in the shallow water. Their flippers moved differently now that

they were no longer on land. On the sand, their flippers had dragged them forward. In the water, those same flippers helped them swim.

[11] The guide explained that reaching the ocean was only the beginning. The young turtles would still face many challenges in the sea. They would need to avoid predators and find food. However, their instinct had helped them survive the first dangerous part of life. Without that instinct, the hatchlings might not know to move toward the ocean right away.

[12] Nyla looked back at the nest. More turtles were still coming out. Some were just beginning the trip, while others were almost to the waves. Nyla noticed that the hatchlings did not all move at the same speed. Some seemed stronger. Some seemed slower. But most of them were moving in the same direction. Their instinct guided them, even though they had never taken this journey before.

[13] The guide told Nyla that instincts are important for many animals. Some birds know when to migrate. Some spiders know how to spin webs. Sea turtle hatchlings know to move toward the ocean. These behaviors help animals survive because they happen naturally. The animals do not have to learn every step from a parent or teacher.

[14] Nyla thought that was amazing. A baby turtle had just hatched, yet it already knew something that could save its life. It did not need a map. It did not need a warning. It did not need another turtle to explain the danger. Its instinct helped it act quickly in the environment where it lived.

[15] After watching for a while, Nyla and her guide moved away from the nest so the turtles could continue safely. Nyla kept thinking about the hatchlings. Their journey had been short compared with the size of the ocean, but it was full of danger. Instinct helped them respond at the right time.

[16] Later that day, Nyla visited a marine biology exhibit at an aquarium. The building was cool and quiet compared with the bright beach. Large signs showed pictures of ocean animals and explained how different species survive. Nyla walked slowly from one display to another. She saw tanks filled with colorful fish, sea stars, jellyfish, and rays. Some animals hid in rocks, while others swam in groups.

[17] Then Nyla stopped in front of a large tank where a group of orcas swam together in coordinated patterns. The orcas looked powerful and graceful. They moved through the water with control. Their black and white bodies glided past the glass, turned smoothly, and stayed close to one another. Nyla noticed right away that they did not seem to be swimming randomly. Their movements looked connected, almost as if they were following a plan.

[18] A trainer stood nearby and explained how orcas hunt in the wild. Nyla listened carefully because the orcas seemed very different from the tiny turtles she had seen that morning. The turtles had acted alone as they moved toward the ocean. The orcas, however, moved as a group.

[19] "Orcas rely on learned behavior," he said. "Young orcas observe older members of their group. Over time, they learn strategies and practice working together."

[20] The trainer smiled and said, "These orcas are a whale of a team."

[21] Nyla laughed softly at the joke, but she also understood the point. The orcas survived by working together. Their teamwork was not something they were born knowing how to do perfectly. Instead, young orcas learned by watching the older orcas in their pod. They practiced skills again and again until they could help the group.

[22] Nyla noticed how the orcas stayed close and moved as a team. Their actions seemed planned and purposeful. One orca turned, and the others followed. Another slowed down, and the group changed direction together. At times, they swam side by side. At other times, one orca moved ahead while the others stayed nearby. Their movements showed cooperation.

[23] The trainer explained that, in the wild, orcas often live in groups called pods. A pod may include mothers, young orcas, and other family members. The older orcas help the younger ones by showing them how to survive. Young orcas watch how adults find food, travel, and communicate. They learn what sounds and movements mean. They also learn when to stay close and when to follow the group.

[24] “So they have to learn how to survive?” Nyla asked.

[25] “Yes,” the trainer replied. “Their success depends on learning and cooperation.”

[26] The trainer explained that learned behavior develops through experience. A young orca is not born knowing every hunting strategy. It must observe the pod and practice. For example, older orcas may show younger ones how to work together to find food. A young orca may make mistakes at first, but over time it improves. The more it watches and practices, the better it becomes at using the skills that help the pod survive.

[27] Nyla looked back at the tank. She imagined a young orca swimming beside its mother in the open ocean. The young orca might listen for sounds, watch the movements of the pod, and follow the older orcas during a hunt. Each day, it would learn a little more. Over time, those lessons would help it become a stronger hunter and a better member of the group.

[28] The trainer also explained that cooperation is important because orcas often hunt animals that are difficult to catch alone. Working as a team helps them be more successful. One orca might help guide prey in a certain direction, while others move into place. Because they practice these behaviors, the pod can act together. This teamwork increases their chances of getting food.

[29] Nyla compared the orcas to the sea turtles. The turtle hatchlings did not wait for help. Their instinct told them to move toward the ocean as soon as they hatched. That behavior helped them escape danger on the beach. The orcas, however, depended on learning from others. Their survival depended on time, practice, and cooperation.

[30] Nyla thought about how both behaviors were useful, even though they were different. Instinct was helpful when an animal needed to act right away. A hatchling could not spend days learning how to reach the ocean because danger was all around. Learned behavior was helpful when an animal needed to develop more complex skills. Orcas had to learn how to communicate, hunt, and work as a team.

[31] As Nyla continued watching, the orcas changed direction again. Their large bodies moved smoothly through the water. They seemed calm, but their actions were organized.

Nyla realized that what looked simple from the outside actually took learning. The orcas had practiced these movements many times. Their behavior helped them survive in a challenging ocean environment.

[32] Nyla thought about what she had seen. The turtles relied on instinct to act quickly without guidance. The orcas relied on learning and teamwork over time. Both types of behavior helped animals survive in their environments, even though they developed in different ways.

[33] As Nyla left the aquarium, she compared the two examples in her mind. The turtles had been born with a behavior that helped them move toward the ocean right away. That instinct helped them during a dangerous time when there was no chance to stop and learn. The orcas survived by gaining knowledge from their pod. Their learned behaviors helped them hunt in groups and respond to different situations in the ocean.

[34] Nyla realized that survival could look different for different animals. Some behaviors are present from birth, like turtle hatchlings moving toward the sea. Other behaviors develop through practice, like orcas hunting in a group. Instinct helps an animal act right away, while learning helps an animal improve over time. Both are important because both increase an animal's chances of survival.

[35] On the ride home, Nyla looked out the window and pictured the beach again. She imagined the tiny turtles pushing across the sand, guided by instinct. Then she pictured the orcas swimming together, guided by learning and teamwork. Both animals lived in or near the ocean, but they used different behaviors to meet their needs.

[36] By the end of the day, Nyla had learned that animal behavior is not always the same. A tiny turtle and a giant orca may both be connected to the ocean, but they survive in different ways. The turtle's instinct gives it a quick start in life. The orca's learned behavior helps it become a strong member of its pod. Nyla smiled because both examples showed how animals are equipped to meet the challenges of their environments.

Student Annotation Guide — The Ocean Lesson

T — Time

Later that day

R — Reactions

The turtles moved slowly but with determination; Nyla noticed how the orcas stayed close and moved as a team

A — Actions

broke through their shells and started moving toward the ocean; Their instinct guided them through the transition from sand to ocean

C — Character/Concept/Creature

Nyla; orcas

K — Key Knowledge

They are born with that behavior; Orcas rely on learned behavior; Their success depends on learning and cooperation

S — Scenery/Setting

on the beach; a marine biology exhibit at an aquarium

TRACKS EVIDENCE HIGHLIGHTING — The Ocean Lesson

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Day 1 - Gather and Reveal



TEKS and ELPS for Today

Standard	Student Expectation (verbatim breakout)
TEKS 5.11(B)(i)	develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction
TEKS 5.12(B)(i)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea
ELPS 1(E)(i)	demonstrate listening comprehension from information presented orally during formal classroom interactions by restating, responding, paraphrasing, summarizing, or asking for clarification or additional details
ELPS 2(F)(i)	restate, ask questions about, or respond to information during formal classroom interactions

Day 1 Purpose

Students gather the difference between naming something and explaining it, then reveal that an explanation tells what the evidence means, connects it to the thesis (central idea), and shows why it matters.

Reading Purpose

Read for meaning beyond the quote. Select evidence, then pause to state what the detail means, how it connects to the thesis (central idea), and why it matters to the reader.

G - Gather: Explain the Mystery Object

Compare a response that repeats evidence with one that explains what the evidence means and why it matters.



Teacher Script

"I am going to show you something simple, but you may not name it right away. Your job is to explain what it does and why it matters."

Hold up an ordinary classroom object such as a pencil, sticky note, or paperclip.

 Teacher Script

*"Do not tell me what it is yet. Tell your partner what it does." After brief partner talk:
"Now tell your partner why it matters."*

Possible Student Responses:

- "It helps you write."
- "It keeps papers together."
- "It matters because it helps organize things."

 Teacher Script

"You just did something important. You did not only name something. You explained it. Today, that is exactly what we will do with our evidence. In writing, evidence is the proof, but explanation is where your thinking shines."

 Daily Deck Slide (M4-04 - Gather)

Write on the board: Meaning Maker Warm-Up. Compare a response that repeats evidence with one that explains what the evidence means and why it matters.

R - Reveal: Meaning + Connection + Why It Matters **Teacher Script**

"As I say the Auditory Engagement, you will listen carefully and write the missing key words in your Interactive Notebook. Keep your pencil ready. You are listening for only the most important words."

 Teacher Script

"I will say the Auditory Engagement while you take notes in your own Interactive Notebook. Listen for the bold key words and write them in the blanks."

Auditory Engagement Script (read aloud): "An explanation tells what the evidence MEANS. An explanation helps the reader understand why the evidence MATTERS. An explanation is not another QUOTE from the passage. An explanation is your THINKING about the quote. Today we will use two starter explanation approaches. The first is DEFINITION. The signal markers for this are 'this means' and 'this shows.' The second is STORY. The signal markers for this are 'this reminds me of' and 'this makes me think of.' The word THIS is important because it points back to the evidence sentence that is close by. THIS is a DEMONSTRATIVE pronoun. It refers back to something nearby. Good explanations connect directly to the evidence and the THESIS (Central Idea). Remember to capitalize the first word of each SENTENCE and punctuate the last word of each SENTENCE. When we return to the same passages and the same terms, we interrupt forgetting. That is called

METACOGNITION, which means we think about our own thinking."

Interactive Notebook Fill-In:

- An explanation tells what the evidence MEANS.
- An explanation tells why the evidence MATTERS.
- An explanation is not another QUOTE.
- An explanation is your THINKING.
- One starter approach is DEFINITION.
- Another starter approach is STORY.
- The word THIS points back to nearby evidence.
- THIS is a DEMONSTRATIVE pronoun.
- Good explanations connect to the THESIS (Central Idea).
- Capitalize the first word of each SENTENCE. Punctuate the last word of each SENTENCE.
- Thinking about our own thinking is METACOGNITION.

Board text: Evidence = proof from the text. Explanation = what the proof means.

★ Daily Deck Slide (M4-05 - Reveal)

Write on the board: Reveal the job of explanation: Meaning + Connection + Why It Matters. Evidence proves; explanation interprets and connects the proof.

Day 1 Closing

Partner completion: "Evidence proves _____. Explanation tells _____ and _____."

Day 2 - Attempt

A

TEKS and ELPS for Today

Standard	Student Expectation (verbatim breakout)
TEKS 5.11(C)(ii)	revise drafts to improve word choice
TEKS 5.12(B)(iii)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using craft
ELPS 4(D)(ii)	write content-area texts using a variety of sentence types
ELPS 4(F)(ix)	write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting evidence using appropriate content for [a] specific purpose

Day 2 Purpose

Students attempt explanation through the Explanation Relay Race: they match a thesis (central idea) and evidence with the strongest explanation, then defend why it adds meaning rather than repeating the quote.

★ Daily Deck Slide (M4-06 - Attempt)

Write on the board: Explanation Race. Match thesis (central idea) + evidence with the strongest explanation, then defend why it adds meaning rather than repeating the quote.

Game: Explanation Relay Race

Teacher Script

"You are about to race to build strong SCR parts. Your team must match a thesis (central idea), an evidence sentence, and the best explanation sentence. If your explanation is strong, your team moves ahead. If you also explain why it is correct, your team moves an extra space."

Prepare game cards in three categories - Thesis (Central Idea) Cards, Evidence Cards, and Explanation Cards - and create a race path on the board, floor, or slides. If using a gameboard, students choose a "Pencil Guy" as their game marker.

 Teacher Script

"Before every round, we will do our chant. Wow! Wow! Wow!" Students hold three fingers up on either side of the face and respond, "I'm explaining now!" and roll their hands in front of their bodies. Use the chant before the game and between rounds. Race Game Directions:"

- A student draws a Thesis (Central Idea) Card.
- Another student draws the matching Evidence Card.
- The team must choose the best Explanation Card.
- If correct, the team moves one space.
- If they also explain why it is correct, the team moves an extra space.

Explanation Relay Race Cards (with Answer Key)

Thesis (Central Idea) Cards:

- The colonists protested British laws because they were treated unfairly.
- Sea turtles survive dangerous moments because instinct guides them.
- Setting influences behavior in both passages through conflict, instinct, and learning.
- Orcas succeed because they learn from older members of their group.

Evidence Cards:

- "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..."
- "Their instinct guided them in the right direction..."
- "Young orcas observe older members of their group."
- "Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty helped organize resistance..."

Explanation Cards:

- This shows that the colonists believed British rule was unfair and wanted change.
- This means the turtles do not have time to be taught because survival must happen immediately.
- This shows that orcas depend on learning and cooperation to survive in their environment.
- This reminds me of how people often work together when facing a serious challenge.
- "The text states, 'They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice...'"
- This means historical setting can push groups to resist control.
- The ocean is a place with water.
- This makes me think of a younger student learning from an older student in class.

Answer Key Guidance (possible strong matches):

- Thesis (Central Idea) 1 + Evidence 1 + Explanation 1
- Thesis (Central Idea) 2 + Evidence 2 + Explanation 2
- Thesis (Central Idea) 3 + Evidence 4 + Explanation 6
- Thesis (Central Idea) 4 + Evidence 3 + Explanation 3

Story/Anecdote explanation options that may also work when justified:

- Evidence 3 may connect with Explanation 8.
- Evidence 4 may connect with Explanation 4.

Non-examples:

- Card 5 is evidence, not explanation.
- Card 7 is weak and does not explain the quote's meaning.

Notebook Connection

 Teacher Script

"In your Interactive Notebook, make a page titled 'Explanation Bookends.' Fold the page into two flaps. Label one flap 'Definition' and the other flap 'Story.' Under each flap, write one explanation sentence from today's race game. Keep these notebook pages, cards, and activities ready for review whenever you have free time in the classroom. Every review HABIT interrupts forgetting and helps your brain remember."

Day 2 Closing **Teacher Script**

"Record one Definition explanation and one Story explanation. Remember: an explanation adds meaning, it does not repeat the quote."

Day 3 - Discuss and Use Again



TEKS and ELPS for Today

Standard	Student Expectation (verbatim breakout)
TEKS 5.11(C)(i)	revise drafts to improve sentence structure
TEKS 5.12(B)(i)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea
ELPS 4(E)(ii)	write content-area specific text using grammatical structures
ELPS 4(F)(i)	write to narrate, describe, explain, respond, or justify with supporting details using appropriate content for [a] specific purpose

Day 3 Purpose

Students discuss what makes an explanation more than a restatement, then independently write explanation sentences for selected evidence from both passages, checking that each one connects back to the thesis (central idea).

D - Discuss

Teacher Script

"Now let's talk about what explanation is really doing in a response."

Discussion Questions with Possible Responses:

- Teacher asks: "What does an explanation sentence do?" Possible Student Response: "It tells what the evidence means." Teacher Response: "Yes. It takes the proof and explains the meaning."
- Teacher asks: "How is explanation different from evidence?" Possible Student Response: "Evidence is from the passage, and explanation is my thinking about it." Teacher Response: "Exactly. Evidence is the quote. Explanation is the thinking that follows."
- Teacher asks: "Why do we keep using the word 'this' in our explanation starters?" Possible Student Response: "Because it points back to the evidence." Teacher Response: "Yes. The word 'this' connects the explanation directly to the nearby quote. It helps the writing stay clear."

- Teacher asks: "What makes a weak explanation?" Possible Student Response: "It does not really tell what the evidence means; it repeats the quote or it is too general." Teacher Response: "Correct. Weak explanations do not add understanding."
- Teacher asks: "How does explanation help the reader?" Possible Student Response: "It helps the reader see why the evidence matters." Teacher Response: "Yes. That is the purpose of explanation."

Possible Student Questions:

- Student Question: "Can my explanation be short?" Teacher Response: "Yes. A strong explanation can be short if it clearly tells what the evidence means."
- Student Question: "What if I want to use a story sentence?" Teacher Response: "That works if the story helps clarify the point and still connects to the evidence and thesis (central idea)."
- Student Question: "Can I use both 'this shows' and 'this reminds me of'?" Teacher Response: "Yes, but make sure each sentence has a job. One should explain, and the next can add a story connection if it helps."
- Student Question: "What if I forget to explain?" Teacher Response: "Ask yourself, 'What does this quote prove?' That question will help you begin."

Teacher Script

"Connect to the Overarching Question: How does a strong explanation turn evidence into clear meaning for the reader?"

U - Use Again: Build the Explanation

Teacher Script

"Now you will use what you learned in a new way. You will take a thesis (central idea) and evidence sentence from our previous lessons and add a strong explanation."

Student Directions:

- Title the page: Thesis (Central Idea) + Evidence + Explanation.
- Copy the thesis (central idea) statement and the matching evidence sentence.
- Add one explanation sentence using either Definition (this means / this shows) or Story (this reminds me of / this makes me think of).
- Check that the first word of each sentence is capitalized and the last word has punctuation.
- Use stronger vocabulary from your Thinking Levels Chart if possible.

Practice Set 1

Thesis (Central Idea): The colonists protested British laws because they were treated unfairly. Evidence: The text states, "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..." Student Task: Write one explanation sentence. Teacher Answer Example: This shows that the colonists believed British rule was unfair and wanted their rights respected.

Practice Set 2

Thesis (Central Idea): Sea turtles survive dangerous moments because instinct guides them. Evidence: The passage explains, "Their instinct guided them in the right direction..." Student Task: Write one explanation sentence. Teacher Answer Example: This means the turtles must act quickly to survive in a dangerous environment.

Practice Set 3 (Story approach)

Thesis (Central Idea): Orcas succeed because they learn from older members of their group. Evidence: The author says, "Young orcas observe older members of their group." Student Task: Write one explanation sentence using the story approach. Teacher Answer Example: This makes me think of a younger student learning from an older classmate during partner work.

Practice Set 4

Thesis (Central Idea): Setting influences behavior in both passages through conflict, instinct, and learning. Evidence: The text states, "Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty helped organize resistance..." Student Task: Write one explanation sentence. Teacher Answer Example: This means the historical setting pushed colonists to work together against British control.

★ Daily Deck Slide (M4-07 and M4-08 - Discuss and Use Again)

Write on the board: What makes an explanation more than a restatement? How does the word this point back to nearby evidence? Then independently write explanation sentences for selected evidence from both passages, checking that each one connects back to the thesis (central idea).

Day 3 Closing

Teacher Script

"Read your explanation aloud. By building on the same passages and words from earlier lessons, we interrupt the forgetting process. That is metacognition."

Day 4 - Award and Target



TEKS and ELPS for Today

Standard	Student Expectation (verbatim breakout)
TEKS 5.11(C)(ii)	revise drafts to improve word choice
TEKS 5.11(D)(i)	edit drafts using standard English conventions, including complete simple sentences with subject-verb agreement
ELPS 2(E)(i)	narrate, describe, explain, justify, discuss, elaborate, or evaluate orally with increasing specificity in academic context or discourse

Day 4 Purpose

Students recognize the explanation sentences that made their thinking visible, then set a precise next goal for explaining evidence.

A - Award



Teacher Script

"Today you did important writer's work. You moved from proof to meaning."

Award Options:

- Explanation Glow Line: Students finish in their notebook: "One explanation HABIT I used well today was ____." (connecting my explanation to the quote; using "this shows"; using "this reminds me of"; capitalizing and punctuating each sentence)
- Bookend Badge: Students draw a small badge and label it with the explanation type they used best today - Definition or Story - then write, "I used this explanation type well because ____."
- Partner Praise: "You explained clearly when you ____."



Teacher Script

"When you notice what you did well, you train your brain to keep doing it."



Daily Deck Slide (M4-09 - Award)

Write on the board: Identify one explanation sentence that made your thinking visible to the reader.

T - Target**Teacher Script***"Strong writers always set a next target."*

Interactive Notebook Reflection:

- One explanation skill I am getting stronger at is _____.
- One explanation skill I still need to improve is _____.
- My next target is to _____.

Target Choices:

- explain more clearly what the quote means
- use "this shows" correctly
- use "this reminds me of" correctly
- connect my explanation to my thesis (central idea)
- capitalize the first word of every sentence
- punctuate the last word of every sentence
- use stronger words from my Thinking Level Chart

Curiosity Questions:

- Why is a quote not enough by itself?
- How does the word "this" make explanation stronger?
- When would a story explanation help a reader most?
- How does setting affect the kind of explanation we give in these passages?
- Why does building on earlier lessons help our brains remember more?

★ Daily Deck Slide (M4-10 - Target)

Write on the board: Choose one explanation habit to strengthen - clarity, connection, deeper meaning, or avoiding repetition.

Day 4 Closing

Complete the sentence: "My next goal is to strengthen my explanation by _____."

Day 5 - Explain to Others

E

TEKS and ELPS for Today

Standard	Student Expectation (verbatim breakout)
TEKS 5.12(B)(ii)	compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using genre characteristics
TEKS 5.11(D)(i)	edit drafts using standard English conventions, including complete simple sentences with subject-verb agreement
ELPS 2(E)(i)	narrate, describe, explain, justify, discuss, elaborate, or evaluate orally with increasing specificity in academic context or discourse

Day 5 Purpose

Students become Explanation Coaches and teach a partner the difference between evidence and explanation, modeling one complete evidence-to-explanation connection.

E - Turn and Teach: Explanation Coach

Teacher Script

"Now you are going to teach someone else how explanation works."

Turn and Teach Directions:

- Partner A: Read the thesis (central idea) and the evidence, explain what the quote means using one starter, and tell whether the explanation used Definition or Story.
- Partner B: Listen carefully, check whether the explanation connects back to the evidence, say one thing that is strong, and suggest one way to make it clearer.
- Then switch roles.

Sample Sets for Turn and Teach:

- Set 1 - Thesis (Central Idea): The colonists protested British laws because they were treated unfairly. Evidence: The text states, "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..." Possible Explanation: This shows that the colonists believed they deserved a say in decisions that affected them.
- Set 2 - Thesis (Central Idea): Sea turtles survive dangerous moments because instinct guides them. Evidence: The passage explains, "Their instinct guided them in the right direction..." Possible Explanation: This means the turtles do not need to stop and learn because survival must happen right away.

- Set 3 - Thesis (Central Idea): Orcas succeed because they learn from older members of their group. Evidence: The author says, "Young orcas observe older members of their group." Possible Explanation: This makes me think of a new player learning from an experienced teammate.

Sentence Stems for Students:

- "This explanation is strong because ____."
- "The word 'this' points back to ____."
- "A clearer explanation would say ____."
- "This explanation type is ____."

Teacher Monitoring - Listen for students who:

- give an explanation instead of a repeated quote
- make a clear connection to the evidence
- use the starter phrases correctly
- mention Definition or Story
- use stronger vocabulary from the Thinking Level Charts

✓ **Module Overarching Question - Answer**

How does a strong explanation turn evidence into clear meaning for the reader? A strong explanation tells what the evidence means, connects that meaning back to the thesis (central idea), and shows why the proof matters. It adds interpretation and reasoning instead of simply repeating the quotation.

★ **Daily Deck Slide (M4-11 and M4-14 - Explain and Answer)**

Write on the board: Teach a partner the difference between evidence and explanation and model one complete evidence-to-explanation connection. Then answer: Explanation tells what the evidence means, connects it to the thesis (central idea), and shows why the proof matters rather than repeating it.

Teacher Closing Encouragement

Teacher Script

"Today you did more than find proof. You gave that proof meaning. That is what strong writers do. Every time you explain your evidence, you make your thinking clearer, stronger, and more powerful. Be proud of the way you built on what you already learned. You are not starting over each day. You are growing layer by layer, and that growth matters."

Module 4 - Low, Medium, and High Exemplars

Prompt: Why did colonists protest British laws? Add an explanation sentence that tells what the evidence means and why it matters. Evidence for all three: The text states, "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..."

Low Exemplar

- Student Response: This shows they were taxed without a voice.
- What Is Working: The explanation begins with the Definition starter "this shows" and points back to the quote.
- Teacher Notes: The sentence repeats the evidence in slightly different words and does not add meaning.
- What Needs Improvement: Add what the quote means, such as: This shows that the colonists believed the system was unfair because they had no representation.

Medium Exemplar

- Student Response: This shows the colonists were unhappy.
- What Is Working: The explanation adds a small piece of meaning beyond the quote and stays connected to it.
- Teacher Notes: The meaning is general; it names a feeling instead of the larger idea the evidence points toward.
- What Needs Improvement: Sharpen the meaning and connect it to the thesis (central idea), such as: This shows that the colonists believed they should have a voice in decisions that affected them.

High Exemplar

- Student Response: This shows that the colonists believed they should have a voice in decisions that affected them, which is why unfair taxation pushed them to protest.
- What Is Working: The Definition explanation tells what the quote means, connects the meaning back to the thesis (central idea) about protest, and shows why the evidence matters.
- Teacher Notes: The word this points clearly back to the nearby quote, the sentence adds interpretation instead of repeating the proof, and it links the meaning to the historical setting.

Module 4 - Assessment Opportunities

Field	Detail
Purpose	Determine whether students can write an explanation sentence that tells what the evidence means, connects to the thesis (central idea), and shows why it matters.
Who Administers It	The classroom teacher during the lesson.
Materials Needed	Both passages, the Thinking Levels Chart, the explanation bookends chart, Explanation Relay Race cards, and student notebooks.
Related TEKS Breakout	5.12(B)(iii) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using craft; 5.11(C)(i) revise drafts to improve sentence structure
Task	Students play the Explanation Relay Race and complete the Thesis (Central Idea) + Evidence + Explanation page for both passages.
Expected Response	Students write an explanation that adds meaning, uses a Definition or Story bookend, and connects back to the thesis (central idea).

Informal Assessment

During the lesson, observe Listen for What Is Missing and the Explanation Relay Race. Note whether students can sort evidence from explanation and add meaning instead of repeating the quote.

Formative Assessment

The Day 3 Thesis (Central Idea) + Evidence + Explanation page serves as the formative check.

Formative Check Rubric/Scaffolding

Component	Student Requirement
Meaning	The explanation must tell what the evidence means.
Connection	The explanation must connect back to the thesis (central idea).
Bookend	Must use a Definition (this means / this shows) or Story (this reminds me of / this makes me think of) starter.
Conventions	Must capitalize the first word and punctuate the last word of each sentence.

🔑 Answer Key - Sample Explanation

Evidence: The text states, "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..." Explanation: This shows that the colonists believed British rule was unfair and wanted their rights respected.

Check the Learning

✓ Check the Learning

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

- Verbal - Gather/Reveal - Listen for What Is Missing: Students name the missing reasoning move and add it aloud.
- Visual/Physical - Attempt - Explanation Relay Race: Students hold up one, two, or three fingers to vote on the strongest explanation, then move ahead when their match is correct.
- Written - Discuss/Use - Build the Explanation: Students write a Definition or Story explanation that connects back to the thesis (central idea).

Assessment Option

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

- Listen - assess through Listen for What Is Missing and discussion.
- Look - observe a fingers 1-3 vote or an evidence/explanation sort.
- Collect - have students produce an "Explanation Bookends" notebook page you can examine.

Intervention - Module 4

Say It, Sort It, Build It

For students who need extra practice telling the difference between evidence and explanation and writing explanation sentences that connect back to the quote. Slow it down and build it in three small parts.

Teacher Script

"We are going to slow this down and build it in three small parts. First, we will say what evidence is. Then we will sort explanation from evidence. Then we will build one explanation sentence together."

Step 1: Say It. Teacher shows a quote: "Their instinct guided them in the right direction..." Teacher asks, "Is this evidence or explanation?" Students answer, "Evidence." Teacher models an explanation: "This means the turtles need to move toward safety quickly." Repeat with: "Young orcas observe older members of their group." - "This shows that orcas learn survival habits from others."

Step 2: Sort It. Give students sentence strips to sort under two labels, Evidence and Explanation.

- Evidence: "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..."; "Young orcas observe older members of their group."; "Their instinct guided them in the right direction..."; "Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty helped organize resistance..."
- Explanation: This shows that colonists wanted fairness.; This means learning helps orcas survive.; This makes me think of doing something quickly without stopping to ask for help.; This shows the colonists worked together.

Step 3: Build It. Give students one thesis (central idea) and one evidence sentence. Thesis (Central Idea): Sea turtles survive dangerous moments because instinct guides them. Evidence: The passage explains, "Their instinct guided them in the right direction..." Choices: A. This means the turtles must move quickly to survive. B. "Their instinct guided them in the right direction..." C. The beach has sand. Answer: A

Step 4: Write It. Students write a thesis (central idea), evidence, and explanation. The teacher checks for a correct explanation starter, a connection to the quote, a capital letter at the beginning, and punctuation at the end.

Step 5: Say It Again. Students read their explanation aloud to the teacher or a partner. Teacher says: "Reading it aloud helps you hear whether it makes sense."

Goal: Students can sort evidence from explanation and write an explanation that connects to the quote.

Module 4 - Embedded Checks and Student Support

Embedded Checks for Understanding

Teacher Move	Expected Response	Common Misconception	Teacher Response
Ask whether a sentence is evidence or explanation.	Students identify the quote as evidence and the thinking as explanation.	Students think explanation repeats the quote in new words.	Point out: an explanation tells what the quote means and why it matters.
Ask students to add meaning to a quote.	Students use "this means" or "this shows" and add an idea.	Students write a second quote instead of an explanation.	Ask, "What does this quote tell us? Say it in your own words."
Ask why an explanation is strong.	Students name the meaning and the connection to the thesis (central idea).	Students say "This is important" with no reason.	Ask, "Why does it matter? Connect it to the thesis (central idea)."

Student Support Quick Reference

If a student...	Support to Provide
Repeats the quote as an explanation	Ask, "What does this quote mean?" and provide the "this means" frame.
Writes a second quote	Use the Evidence / Explanation sort and label each sentence.
Writes a vague explanation	Ask why it matters and connect it to the thesis (central idea).
Masters quickly	Route to Module 4 enrichment (Explanation Upgrade Lab).

Enrichment - Module 4

Explanation Upgrade Lab

Students who master the concept write two different valid explanations for the same evidence and evaluate which creates a stronger connection to the thesis (central idea).



Teacher Script

"You already know how to write an explanation. Now you are going to improve one and decide which explanation is strongest."

Part 1: Choose the Stronger Explanation. Thesis (Central Idea): The colonists protested British laws because they were treated unfairly. Evidence: The text states, "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..."

- Explanation A: This shows the colonists were unhappy.
- Explanation B: This shows that the colonists believed they should have a voice in decisions that affected them.

Answer: B is stronger because it is more precise and more clearly connected to the evidence and thesis (central idea).

Part 2: Improve a Weak Explanation. Thesis (Central Idea): Orcas succeed because they learn from older members of their group. Evidence: The author says, "Young orcas observe older members of their group." Weak Explanation: This shows something about orcas. Sample Answer: This shows that orcas depend on learning from experienced group members to survive successfully.

Part 3: Add a Story Bookend. Sample Answer: This makes me think of a new student learning classroom habits by watching others.

Part 4: Higher-Level Reflection. Which explanation type is more effective for historical setting in Passage 1, and which is more effective for environmental setting in Passage 2? Explain your thinking. Possible Strong Response: Definition may work best for Passage 1 because the history needs to be clarified directly. Story may work well for Passage 2 because the animal behavior can be connected to familiar real-life examples.

Extension: Students create one weak explanation card and one strong explanation card for future class games. On the back, they explain why one is stronger.

Module 4 - Additional Writing Opportunity: Explain the Evidence

Prompt Bank (WHAT, WHY, and HOW)

Each prompt asks for a thesis (central idea), evidence, and an explanation:

- Why did colonists protest British laws?
- How did British actions push the colonies toward revolution?
- Why do sea turtles rely on instinct?
- How do orcas learn to survive in their group?
- How does setting influence behavior in both passages?

Writing Prompt

Choose one prompt from the bank. Write a thesis (central idea) and evidence sentence, then add an explanation that tells what the evidence means and why it matters, using the Definition or Story bookend.

Connection to This Module

This week you learned that an explanation turns evidence into meaning. Now write an explanation that adds your thinking and connects back to your thesis (central idea).

Planning Support

1. Write a thesis (central idea) that answers the prompt.
2. Add one quoted evidence sentence with a signal marker.
3. Add an explanation using "this means/this shows" or "this reminds me of/this makes me think of."
4. Connect the explanation back to the thesis (central idea).
5. Capitalize the first word and punctuate the last word of each sentence.

Step	Planning Guide
Step 1: Thesis (Central Idea) and Evidence	Answer the prompt and add a quote with a signal marker.
Step 2: Explanation	Tell what the evidence means using a Definition or Story bookend.
Step 3: Connect	Show why the evidence matters and how it supports the thesis (central idea).

Drafting Space

Success Criteria

- My explanation tells what the evidence means, not just what it says.
- My explanation connects back to my thesis (central idea).
- My sentences are capitalized and punctuated correctly.

Additional Writing Opportunity: Revise and Edit

Revise

Read your explanation aloud. Improve sentence structure and word choice so the explanation clarifies meaning instead of repeating evidence. Make sure the word this points back to the nearby quote.

Edit

Run the Conventions Sweep: complete simple sentence with subject-verb agreement, a capital letter at the beginning, end punctuation, and proper nouns (Parliament, Boston, Nyla) capitalized.

Module 4 - Auditory Engagement (Active Participation)

Approach: Listen for What Is Missing.

Purpose: Students hear an incomplete explanation, identify the missing reasoning move, and add language that connects evidence to meaning or to the thesis (central idea).

Listening Target: Listen for whether the explanation tells what the evidence means, connects it to the answer, and shows why it matters.

Student Materials: interactive notebook; a hand signal for "something is missing."



Teacher Script

"I will read an explanation that may be incomplete. Listen for what is missing, then add the reasoning that helps the reader understand the evidence."

Round	What the Teacher Reads	Answer / Look-For
1	"The text states that colonists were taxed without a voice. This shows they were taxed without a voice."	Missing deeper meaning - add that the colonists believed the system was unfair because they had no representation.
2	"Young orcas observe older members of their group. This demonstrates learned behavior."	Missing why it matters - add that observation gives young orcas survival strategies they are not born knowing.
3	"The turtles are born with the behavior. This means instinct allows them to act immediately when danger is present."	Complete enough - it states the meaning and connects instinct to immediate survival.
4	"The Boston Massacre increased distrust. This shows..."	Missing a completed connection - add how growing distrust pushed colonists closer to resistance or independence.

Transfer: Students hear one new evidence sentence and orally create an explanation that adds meaning without repeating the quote.

Fresh Recall: Cover the notes. Finish aloud: "Evidence proves _____. Explanation tells _____ and _____."

Pause Points

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

|| Pause Point - Evidence or Explanation

Stop and think: Is this sentence a quote (evidence) or my own thinking (explanation)?

|| Pause Point - Say What It Means

Stop and think: What does this quote mean, and how can I say it with "this means" or "this shows"?

|| Pause Point - Say Why It Matters

Stop and think: Why does this evidence matter, and how does it support the thesis (central idea)?

|| Pause Point - Check the Word This

Stop and think: Does the word this point clearly back to the nearby evidence?

Module 4 - My Progress Tracker

Teacher Script

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

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

I Can...	Not yet	Getting set	I can do it
Tell the difference between evidence and explanation.			
Write an explanation that tells what the evidence means.			
Use the Definition bookend (this means / this shows).			
Use the Story bookend (this reminds me of / this makes me think of).			
Connect my explanation back to the thesis (central idea).			

One thing I am proud of:

One thing I want to get better at:

Module 4 - Teacher Closure and Reflection

Teacher Closure Script

Teacher Script

"At the beginning of this module, we asked how a strong explanation turns evidence into clear meaning. Now we can answer it: a strong explanation tells what the evidence means, connects that meaning back to the thesis (central idea), and shows why the proof matters, instead of simply repeating the quotation."

Module Overarching Question - Answered

How does a strong explanation turn evidence into clear meaning for the reader? A strong explanation tells what the evidence means, connects that meaning back to the thesis (central idea), and shows why the proof matters. It adds interpretation and reasoning instead of simply repeating the quotation.

Teacher Reflection - Module 4

Which students can write an explanation that adds meaning instead of repeating the quote?

Which students connect the explanation back to the thesis (central idea)?

Which students still repeat the evidence or stop after the quote?

Who has completed the full SCR habit across Cluster 1 - thesis (central idea), evidence, and explanation - and is ready to move on?

Teacher Notes

Module 4 - Remote Learning

Virtual Classroom Adjustment for Remote Learners

Use these adjustments to run Module 4 fully online without losing rigor or participation. For Listen for What Is Missing, read each incomplete explanation aloud and have students give a hand signal or type MISSING in the chat, then call on one student to add the reasoning that completes the explanation. For the Explain the Mystery Object Gather activity, hold the object up to the camera or show it on a slide and ask students to unmute, type in the chat, or use hand signals to tell what it does and why it matters. Put the explanation bookends chart on a slide - Definition (this means / this shows) and Story (this reminds me of / this makes me think of) - for students to see throughout the lesson. For the Explanation Relay Race, use a race-track slide and digital game pieces; teams respond in breakout rooms or whole group, type the matching explanation card number in the chat, or hold up one, two, or three fingers to vote on the strongest explanation, and do the "Wow! Wow! Wow! I'm explaining now!" chant on camera. Display both passages in view-only form and provide separate digital copies for TRACKS highlighting. For Discuss, post one question at a time and have students answer using chat, verbal responses, or hand signals, with breakout rooms for brief partner talks. For the independent Thesis (Central Idea) + Evidence + Explanation page, students complete the work on a slide, in the chat, or in notebooks shown on camera, then read their explanation aloud and name whether they used Definition or Story. For Award, students type one proud explanation in the chat and label it Definition or Story. For Target, students type one next target and one curiosity-question response, or use polls and hand signals. For Intervention, put the sorting cards on slides so students can drag them or respond with E for Evidence and X for Explanation in the chat, then say one explanation sentence aloud. For Enrichment, display explanation choices on slides; students vote in the chat for the stronger explanation, revise weak explanations in a shared document, and orally justify their choices. For the Explanation Coach turn-and-teach, assign breakout partners or call on students to explain to the class, and let students record a short verbal response or type an explanation in the chat and identify whether it is Definition or Story.