

THE WRITING ACADEMY®

Assessment Companion

Grade 5 · Cluster 1

Short Constructed Response (SCR)



Passage: From Tension to Revolution

Grade 5 Assessment Companion: Cluster 1

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Module 1 · Understanding Thinking Levels

WHY and HOW responses reveal thinking depth

C L U S T E R 1 · M O D U L E 1 · M O D U L E A S S E S S M E N T M A P

What to Assess This Week

ASSESSMENT TARGET	Identify thinking levels in WHY and HOW responses and upgrade language to show deeper thinking.
STANDARDS	5.12B(i) central idea 5.11A(i) plan a draft 5.11C(i) word choice 5.11C(ii) develop ideas
RPLD STAGE THIS WEEK	Emergent to Visible: students NOTICE the thinking level their words reveal.
EVIDENCE TYPE	Daily Learning Artifact: a one-sentence thesis (central idea) for the passage.

Three Ways to Gather the Evidence

Path A : Quick Check

The 5-question Multiple-Choice Check: a fast grade of thesis (central idea) recognition.

Path A : Application Artifact

Student writes a thesis (central idea) for the passage and underlines the detail that best proves it.

Path C : Choice Demonstration

Student may map, say, or write the thesis (central idea): same target, same scoring.

Grade the target, not everything. Collect the thesis (central idea) + one supporting detail. In an SCR, check the thesis (central idea) directly answers the prompt.

Multiple-Choice Check

Five questions on this module's target: noticing the thesis (central idea) of the response.

From Tension to Revolution

"From Tension to Revolution." 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. (Paired with "The Ocean Lesson," about sea turtles that rely on instinct and orcas that rely on learned behavior.)

Grade 5, Cluster 1 (Scope & Sequence). The genre is the Short Constructed Response (SCR): a clear thesis (central idea), strong evidence, and an explanation that proves the idea. The cluster's signature is understanding and upgrading thinking levels in WHY and HOW responses.

1. What is the central idea of "From Tension to Revolution"?

- A. Great Britain had a strong army.
- B. Colonists drank tea.
- C. Growing tensions over unfair taxes and lack of representation led the colonies to fight for independence.
- D. Parliament passed many laws.

2. Which detail BEST supports the central idea?

- A. Colonists opposed the Stamp Act because they had no representatives in Parliament.
- B. Great Britain won the French and Indian War.
- C. The colonies were on the east coast.
- D. Soldiers wore red coats.

3. Which sentence would be the BEST thesis (central idea) for an SCR?

- A. I think the revolution is interesting.
- B. A war happened in history.
- C. Taxes started a conflict.
- D. Unfair taxes and the loss of representation pushed the colonies from loyalty to revolution.

4. Which sentence does NOT belong in a response about this passage?

- A. The Stamp Act angered colonists.
- B. My cousin visited Boston last summer.
- C. The Boston Tea Party was a protest.
- D. The Intolerable Acts united the colonies.

5. Which sentence has correct subject-verb agreement?

- A. The colonies fights for independence.
- B. The colonies fought for independence.
- C. The colonies fighting for independence.
- D. The colonies was fight for independence.

Purpose: a quick, gradeable check of 5.12B(i) central idea. Administration: ~10 minutes, independent. Scoring: 5 points (1 each); Answer Key & Error Analysis on the next page.

Answer Key & Error Analysis

Not just the right answer : what a wrong choice reveals, and what to do about it.

1. Central idea

Correct: C

The central idea connects taxes, representation, and the path to revolution. The others are single facts. Picking a single fact shows detail/thesis (central idea) confusion: reteach "what does the whole passage argue?"

2. Best supporting detail

Correct: A

The correct detail names the key grievance (no representation). The others are trivial or off-topic. Choosing a trivial detail: practice "Best Evidence Wins."

3. Best thesis (central idea)

Correct: D

A thesis (central idea) states a controlling idea a response can prove. The distractors are an opinion, a vague statement, and a fragment. Picking the opinion: contrast "I think..." with "Unfair taxes pushed..."

4. Does not belong

Correct: B

A personal trip is not about the passage. The others all inform. Missing it: model the "does it belong?" check.

5. Subject-verb agreement

Correct: B

"fought" is the correct past tense with the plural subject "colonies." The others use wrong forms. Wrong verb: past-tense agreement practice.

If several students miss the same question, Questions 1 or 3 missed widely: more work stating a thesis (central idea) that answers the prompt before drafting the SCR.

Exemplars & Rubric

Prompt: "Write a clear thesis (central idea) for a Short Constructed Response about "From Tension to Revolution."" 5.12B(i)

4 *"Unfair taxes and a lack of representation pushed the thirteen colonies from loyalty to Great Britain toward a fight for independence."*

SECURE: a precise thesis (central idea) that answers the prompt · RPLD: Independent

3 *"The colonies fought for independence because of unfair taxes."*

DEMONSTRATES: clear thesis (central idea), slightly general · RPLD: Visible

2 *"The passage is about the American Revolution."*

DEVELOPING: names the topic; no controlling idea · RPLD: Emergent · Next: "topic to thesis (central idea)" frame

1 *"The Revolution."*

BEGINNING: topic only · RPLD: Foundational · Next: model turning the topic into a thesis (central idea)

Which rubric applies? This four-point Targeted Evidence Scale scores every written thesis (central idea) in Cluster 1. The Multiple-Choice Check uses its own 5-point key.

TEACHER SCRIPT : EXPLAINING THIS TASK TO STUDENTS

SAY

"In an SCR, your thesis (central idea) is the ONE idea you'll prove. What is this passage really saying about the colonies and independence?"

SAY

"'The Revolution' is a topic. 'Unfair taxes pushed the colonies toward independence' is a thesis (central idea)."

► Point to the topic, then to the idea; give 60 seconds of think time before students write.

" " = say word-for-word · ► = teacher direction (do not read aloud)

Module 2 · Writing a Strong Thesis

TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER build the thesis (central idea)

C L U S T E R 1 · M O D U L E 2 · M O D U L E A S S E S S M E N T M A P

What to Assess This Week

ASSESSMENT TARGET	Write a thesis (central idea) using TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER so the reader knows the controlling idea immediately.
STANDARDS	5.11B(i) structure 5.11C(i) word choice 5.11C(ii) develop ideas 5.12B(i) central idea 5.12B(ii) evidence 5.12B(iii) explanation
RPLD STAGE THIS WEEK	Visible: students CHOOSE a thesis (central idea) structure that names the topic, the charge, and the answer.
EVIDENCE TYPE	Daily Learning Artifact: one thesis (central idea) written with TOPIC + CHARGE + ANSWER.

Three Ways to Gather the Evidence

Path A : Quick Check

The 5-question Multiple-Choice Check on thesis (central idea) structure and precise language.

Path A : Application Artifact

Student writes a thesis (central idea) using TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER.

Path C : Choice Demonstration

Student may map, say, or write the thesis (central idea): same target, same scoring.

Grade the target, not everything. Grade whether the thesis (central idea) names TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER, not whether the rest of the response is complete.

Multiple-Choice Check

Five questions on this module's target: writing a strong thesis (central idea) with TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER.

From Tension to Revolution

"From Tension to Revolution." 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. (Paired with "The Ocean Lesson," about sea turtles that rely on instinct and orcas that rely on learned behavior.)

Grade 5, Cluster 1 (Scope & Sequence). The genre is the Short Constructed Response (SCR): a clear thesis (central idea), strong evidence, and an explanation that proves the idea. The cluster's signature is understanding and upgrading thinking levels in WHY and HOW responses.

1. Which word most precisely completes: "The passage ____ that unfair taxes led to revolution"?

- A. says
- B. explains
- C. does
- D. goes

2. Which thesis (central idea) names the TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER?

- A. The passage is about the American Revolution.
- B. Unfair British taxes and a refusal to grant representation pushed loyal colonists to demand independence.
- C. I think the revolution was important.
- D. History has many wars.

3. Which sentence shows the STRONGEST thinking with precise words?

- A. The colonies fought because Great Britain imposed taxes without granting them a voice in Parliament.
- B. The colonies did a thing about taxes.
- C. It was a war about some stuff.
- D. The old thing said stuff about freedom.

4. Which revision UPGRADES the language in "It says colonists were mad"?

- A. It says colonists were really mad.
- B. It says colonists got angry.
- C. The passage explains that colonists protested because they were taxed without representation.
- D. It talks about colonists and being mad.

5. Which sentence correctly uses a comma after an introductory phrase?

- A. After the French and Indian War Great Britain raised taxes.
- B. After the French and Indian War, Great Britain raised taxes.
- C. After, the French and Indian War Great Britain raised taxes.
- D. After the French, and Indian War Great Britain raised taxes.

Purpose: a quick, gradeable check of 5.11B(i) structure. Administration: ~10 minutes, independent. Scoring: 5 points (1 each); Answer Key & Error Analysis on the next page.

Answer Key & Error Analysis

Not just the right answer : what a wrong choice reveals, and what to do about it.

1. Precise verb

Correct: B

"explains" names exactly what the passage does; "says/does/goes" are flat. Choosing a flat verb: trade for a precise academic verb (explains, states, argues).

2. TOPIC + CHARGE + ANSWER

Correct: B

The correct thesis (central idea) names the topic (taxes), the charge (unfair, no representation), and the answer (independence). The others are vague or opinions.

3. Strongest thinking

Correct: A

The correct sentence names a precise grievance (taxes without a voice). The others use "stuff/thing." Tolerating "stuff/thing": replace vague words with exact ideas.

4. Upgraded language

Correct: C

"The passage explains that colonists protested because..." is precise. The others stay flat or vaguer. Choosing a flat option: read both aloud; the upgrade shows stronger thinking.

5. Comma after introductory phrase

Correct: B

A comma follows the introductory phrase "After the French and Indian War." Misplacing the comma: identify the end of the introductory phrase before placing the comma.

If several students miss the same question, Questions 1 or 4 missed widely: practice upgrading language (5.11C(ii)); Questions 2 or 3: thesis (central idea) structure practice.

Exemplars & Rubric

Prompt: "Write a thesis (central idea) for an SCR about "From Tension to Revolution" using TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER." 5.12B(i)

4 *"Unfair British taxes and the refusal to let colonists vote on those taxes pushed the thirteen colonies from loyalty toward a revolution for independence."*

SECURE: precise TOPIC + CHARGE + ANSWER; stronger thinking, not longer · RPLD: Independent

3 *"The colonies fought for independence because of unfair taxes and no representation."*

DEMONSTRATES: clear thesis (central idea), slightly general · RPLD: Visible

2 *"It says colonists were mad about taxes."*

DEVELOPING: vague, flat language · RPLD: Emergent · Next: upgrade one word at a time

1 *"Taxes."*

BEGINNING: no precise language · RPLD: Foundational · Next: model naming exactly what the passage explains

Which rubric applies? The four-point Targeted Evidence Scale scores this thesis (central idea). The MC Check keeps its 5-point key. The target: TOPIC + CHARGE + ANSWER, not a longer answer.

TEACHER SCRIPT : EXPLAINING THIS TASK TO STUDENTS

SAY

"A strong thesis (central idea) names three things: the TOPIC, the CHARGE, and the ANSWER. What is the topic? What is the charge? What answer does the passage give?"

SAY

"'The Revolution' is a topic. 'Unfair taxes pushed the colonies to fight for independence' is a thesis (central idea) with all three parts."

► Model one upgrade ("It says stuff about taxes" becomes "The passage explains that unfair taxes..."); then students upgrade one sentence of their own.

" " = say word-for-word · ► = teacher direction (do not read aloud)

Module 3 · Using Evidence to Support Thinking

Prove the thesis (central idea), then explain it

C L U S T E R 1 · M O D U L E 3 · M O D U L E A S S E S S M E N T M A P

What to Assess This Week

ASSESSMENT TARGET	Support the thesis (central idea) with text evidence AND an explanation that proves it.
STANDARDS	5.12B(i) central idea 5.12B(ii) evidence + explanation 5.11C(ii) develop ideas 5.11D(xxvii) commas 5.11D(xxix) spelling
RPLD STAGE THIS WEEK	Independent: students SHOW evidence and OWN the explanation.
EVIDENCE TYPE	Daily Learning Artifact: one evidence sentence + one explanation sentence that proves the thesis (central idea).

Three Ways to Gather the Evidence

Path A : Quick Check

The 5-question Multiple-Choice Check on evidence, explanation, and conventions.

Path A : Application Artifact

Student adds one piece of evidence and writes an explanation that proves the thesis (central idea).

Path C : Choice Demonstration

Student may chart, say, or write the evidence + explanation: same target, same scoring.

Grade the target, not everything. Grade whether the evidence supports the thesis (central idea) and the explanation proves it. Evidence without explanation is unfinished.

Multiple-Choice Check

Five questions on this module's target: proving the thesis (central idea) with evidence + explanation.

From Tension to Revolution

"From Tension to Revolution." 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. (Paired with "The Ocean Lesson," about sea turtles that rely on instinct and orcas that rely on learned behavior.)

Grade 5, Cluster 1 (Scope & Sequence). The genre is the Short Constructed Response (SCR): a clear thesis (central idea), strong evidence, and an explanation that proves the idea. The cluster's signature is understanding and upgrading thinking levels in WHY and HOW responses.

1. Which sentence uses EVIDENCE to support the thesis (central idea)?

- A. The passage states that colonists opposed the Stamp Act because they had no representatives in Parliament.
- B. The American Revolution is famous.
- C. I think taxes are unfair.
- D. History is interesting.

2. Which sentence is an EXPLANATION that proves the thesis (central idea)?

- A. The passage has many sentences.
- B. This shows that being taxed without a voice made colonists believe they needed to govern themselves.
- C. The document was very old.
- D. Leaders lived in big houses.

3. Which sentence correctly combines two ideas?

- A. Colonists protested they dumped tea.
- B. Colonists. Protested. Tea. Dumped.
- C. Because colonists felt their rights were ignored, they protested by dumping tea into Boston Harbor.
- D. No change is needed.

4. Which word is spelled correctly?

- A. independance
- B. independense
- C. independence
- D. independince

5. In "the Stamp Act angered many colonists," which word is a proper noun?

- A. angered
- B. many
- C. colonists
- D. Stamp Act

Purpose: a quick, gradeable check of 5.12B(i) central idea. Administration: ~10 minutes, independent. Scoring: 5 points (1 each); Answer Key & Error Analysis on the next page.

Answer Key & Error Analysis

Not just the right answer : what a wrong choice reveals, and what to do about it.

1. Evidence**Correct: A**

The correct sentence uses a text detail (no representatives) as proof. The others are general or opinions. Choosing a general statement: point back to the text for evidence.

2. Explanation**Correct: B**

The correct sentence explains WHY the evidence proves the thesis (central idea) (taxation without a voice demanded self-governance). The others do not explain. Choosing a non-explanation: require a sentence after evidence: "This shows..."

3. Combining**Correct: C**

The correct answer joins the two ideas and stays correct. The others are a run-on, fragments, or unchanged. Choosing "no change": model "combine + keep correct."

4. Spelling**Correct: C**

"independence" is spelled correctly. The others misspell it. Repeated misses: a spelling sweep (5.11D(xxix)).

5. Proper noun**Correct: D**

"Stamp Act" names a specific law: a proper noun. The others are common words. Choosing a common word: specific names are proper.

If several students miss the same question, Questions 1 or 2 missed widely: reteach evidence vs. explanation (an SCR needs both); Questions 3 to 5: combining and conventions.

Exemplars & Rubric

Prompt: “Add one piece of evidence and one explanation that proves your thesis (central idea).” 5.12B(ii)

4 *“The passage states that colonists opposed the Stamp Act because they had no representatives in Parliament. This shows that being taxed without a voice made them believe they had to fight for the right to govern themselves.”*

SECURE: evidence + an explanation that proves the thesis (central idea) · RPLD: Independent

3 *“The passage says colonists were taxed without representation, which shows it was unfair.”*

DEMONSTRATES: evidence + a light explanation · RPLD: Visible

2 *“Colonists did not like taxes.”*

DEVELOPING: evidence, no explanation · RPLD: Emergent · Next: add “This shows...”

1 *“Taxes.”*

BEGINNING: no evidence or explanation · RPLD: Foundational · Next: find one text detail that proves the thesis (central idea)

Which rubric applies? The four-point Targeted Evidence Scale scores the evidence + explanation. Spelling is scored on the Standards Sweep tracking sheet.

TEACHER SCRIPT : EXPLAINING THIS TASK TO STUDENTS

SAY

“Prove it from the text, then EXPLAIN it. Evidence alone is not finished thinking.”

SAY

“After your evidence, write ‘This shows...’ and say why it proves your thesis (central idea).”

► Have students box the evidence, then write one “This shows...” sentence before combining.

“ ” = say word-for-word · ► = teacher direction (do not read aloud)

Module 4 · Own and Defend: Full SCR

The independent Short Constructed Response

C L U S T E R 1 · M O D U L E 4 · M O D U L E A S S E S S M E N T M A P

What to Assess This Week

ASSESSMENT TARGET	Write a complete SCR: thesis (central idea), evidence, and explanation, with precise language, then check spelling.
STANDARDS	5.12B(i-iii) SCR 5.11B structure 5.11D(xxix) spelling
RPLD STAGE THIS WEEK	Independent to Reflective: students OWN and DEFEND a complete SCR.
EVIDENCE TYPE	Monthly-facing Module Evidence: the culminating SCR (thesis (central idea) to evidence to explanation, in precise language).

Three Ways to Gather the Evidence

Path A : Quick Check

The 5-question Multiple-Choice Check on organizing and finishing an SCR.

Path A : Application Artifact

Student writes the full SCR: thesis (central idea), evidence, and explanation, using precise language.

Path C : Choice Demonstration

Student may plan-then-write or dictate-then-write: same target, same scoring.

Grade the target, not everything. This is the cluster's anchor evidence. Score the full SCR on the four-point scale; reward precise thinking, not length.

Multiple-Choice Check

Five questions on this module's target: organizing and finishing an SCR.

From Tension to Revolution

"From Tension to Revolution." 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. (Paired with "The Ocean Lesson," about sea turtles that rely on instinct and orcas that rely on learned behavior.)

Grade 5, Cluster 1 (Scope & Sequence). The genre is the Short Constructed Response (SCR): a clear thesis (central idea), strong evidence, and an explanation that proves the idea. The cluster's signature is understanding and upgrading thinking levels in WHY and HOW responses.

1. Which is the BEST concluding sentence for this SCR?

- A. That is the end of my SCR.
- B. I hope you agree with me.
- C. The revolution was in the 1700s.
- D. Because the colonists refused to accept taxation without representation, their fight for independence shaped the freedoms Americans have today.

2. Which sentence does NOT belong in an SCR about the American Revolution?

- A. The Stamp Act angered colonists.
- B. My dog learned a new trick this weekend.
- C. The Boston Tea Party was a protest against unfair taxes.
- D. The Intolerable Acts united the colonies.

3. Which sentence is spelled correctly?

- A. The colonists protested unfair representashun.
- B. The colonists protested unfair representaion.
- C. The colonists protested unfair representation.
- D. The colonists protested unfair representashion.

4. Which sentence has correct subject-verb agreement?

- A. The colonies fights for their rights.
- B. The colonies was fighting for their rights.
- C. The colonies fight for their rights.
- D. The colonies fighting for their rights.

5. Which order BEST organizes an SCR?

- A. Just a list of facts.
- B. A thesis (central idea), evidence from the text, and an explanation that proves it.
- C. One sentence with no evidence.
- D. The explanation first, then random facts.

Purpose: a quick, gradeable check of 5.12B(i-iii) SCR. Administration: ~10 minutes, independent. Scoring: 5 points (1 each); Answer Key & Error Analysis on the next page.

Answer Key & Error Analysis

Not just the right answer : what a wrong choice reveals, and what to do about it.

1. Best conclusion

Correct: D

The correct conclusion restates the thesis (central idea) and its significance. The others just stop, plead, or state a date. Choosing "the end": model conclusions that prove the idea's importance.

2. Does not belong

Correct: B

A comment about a dog is not part of the argument. The other three are thesis (central idea)/evidence. Missing it: keep only thesis (central idea), evidence, and explanation in an SCR.

3. Correct spelling

Correct: C

This sentence spells "representation" correctly. The others misspell it. Repeated misses: a spelling sweep (5.11D(xxix)).

4. Subject-verb agreement

Correct: C

"fight" agrees with the plural subject "colonies." The others use wrong forms. Wrong verb: agreement practice.

5. Best organization

Correct: B

The SCR shape is thesis (central idea), then evidence, then explanation. The distractors are a list, a fragment, or backwards. Choosing a list: require a thesis-first plan before drafting.

If several students miss the same question, this is the anchor check. Widespread misses on 1 or 5: reteach SCR structure; miss on 3: a spelling sweep.

Exemplars & Rubric

Prompt: "In a Short Constructed Response, explain what "From Tension to Revolution" shows about how unfair treatment can lead to major change. Use evidence and explanation." 5.12B(i-iii)

4 *"Unfair taxes and a refusal to give colonists a voice in Parliament pushed the thirteen colonies from loyalty to revolution. The passage explains that colonists opposed the Stamp Act because they had no representatives. This shows that people will fight for their rights when they are ignored. Because the colonists demanded fairness, their struggle created the freedoms Americans have today."*

SECURE: thesis (central idea) + evidence + explanation, precise language · RPLD: Independent

3 *"The colonies fought for independence because taxes were unfair. The Stamp Act made them angry, which shows they wanted fairness. That idea still matters."*

DEMONSTRATES: thesis (central idea) + evidence + explanation, lighter precision · RPLD: Visible

2 *"The passage is about colonists and taxes."*

DEVELOPING: a general statement; no evidence/explanation · RPLD: Emergent · Next: add evidence + "This shows..."

1 *"Revolution."*

BEGINNING: does not answer the prompt · RPLD: Foundational · Next: plan thesis (central idea) + evidence + explanation

Which rubric applies? The four-point Targeted Evidence Scale scores this anchor SCR, the cluster's strongest single piece of evidence, and the score to record if you take a Cluster 1 grade. Reward precise thinking, not length.

TEACHER SCRIPT : EXPLAINING THIS TASK TO STUDENTS

SAY

"This is your SCR. State your thesis (central idea), give evidence from the text, and explain how it proves your idea, in precise words."

SAY

"Level up, do not lengthen. Make each sentence show stronger thinking."

► Give a plan box (thesis (central idea) / evidence / explanation). Independent write; conference after the draft is complete.

" " = say word-for-word · ► = teacher direction (do not read aloud)