

THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC.

Student Interactive Workbook

Grade 3

Cluster 1 - Modules 1 to 4

Module 1: Shaping the Prompt

Module 2: Writing a Thesis (central idea)

Module 3: Understanding and Selecting Strong Evidence

Module 4: Explaining Evidence / Build the Full SCR Ladder



Name: _____



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THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC.

Student Interactive Workbook

Grade 3

Cluster 1 - Module 1

Shaping the Prompt



Name: _____



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Grade 3 • Cluster 1 • Module 1

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How to Use My Workbook

This book holds my reading, thinking, writing, and reflection for this module.

My Name and My Goal for This Module

Pocket Practice

Attach a sheet of paper along the left, right, and bottom sides of this box to make a pocket. Store your game cards here throughout each module.



Meet My Week

Shaping the Prompt



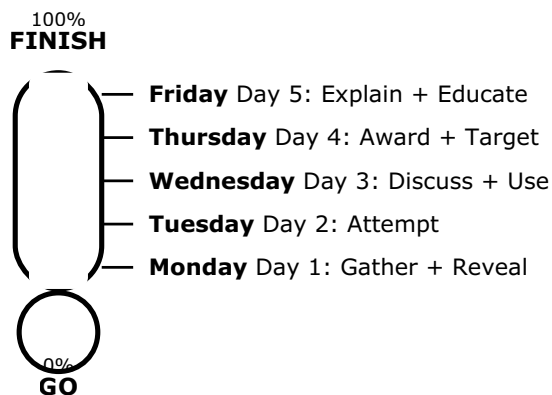
Why This Matters to Me

Many students miss a question because they read it wrong before they ever begin writing. When I find the noun, verb, and clue word, I know exactly what the prompt wants. WHAT, WHY, and HOW help me understand questions in every subject.

Essential Question

How can a writer tell exactly what a short constructed response prompt is asking before writing a single sentence?

My Week Tracker



Color in one part at the END of each day, after I finish that day's work. Watch my week rise from GO to FINISH!

My First Thinking

I Can

- I can find the noun of importance and circle it in red.
- I can find the verb of importance and box it in yellow.
- I can find the clue word that signals WHAT, WHY, or HOW and triangle it in green.
- I can explain the prompt's demand to a partner.

I Will

- I will mark the noun, verb, and clue word before I answer.
- I will decide WHAT, WHY, or HOW.
- I will use my marks to plan a three-sentence SCR.

The I Can I want to reach first, and why

My Week at a Glance

What I learn	What I read	What I make
The three shapes and WHAT, WHY, or HOW.	Two passages: Pilgrims and the Nile.	Marked prompts and a three-sentence SCR.

Where We Are Going

I will mark three prompts on my own and teach a partner the three shapes.

I'll Know I've Got It When...

- ☐ Each of my three marks is on the correct word.
- ☐ I name WHAT, WHY, or HOW accurately.
- ☐ I give the clue word as the reason for my choice.
- ☐ My SCR has exactly three sentences: thesis (central idea), one piece of text evidence, and an explanation.

Check Myself

- ☐ I circle the main noun in red, box the verb in yellow, and triangle the clue word in green.
- ☐ I name WHAT, WHY, or HOW and tell which clue word shows it.
- ☐ I write exactly three sentences: thesis (central idea), evidence, and explanation.

How I Will Show What I Know

I will show what I know with marked prompts, the exit ticket, and a three-sentence SCR.

My GRADUATE Learning Path

Stage	Day	What I do
Gather	Day 1	I become a question detective and DOT unfamiliar words.
Reveal	Day 1	I learn the three shapes and WHAT, WHY, and HOW.
Attempt	Day 2	I play Shape Detectives and mark the Nile prompt with a partner.
Discuss	Day 3	I explain why the Nile prompt is a HOW question.
Use Again	Day 3	I mark three prompts on my own.
Award	Day 4	I show one thing I did well.
Target	Day 4	I name my next step and a curiosity question.
Explain/Educate	Day 5	I teach the three shapes to a partner.

Say It Together!

These are the exact TEKS this module teaches. Read the code, then say the job in your own words.

3.11A(i):

TEKS says: 3.11A(i) plan a first draft by selecting a genre for a particular topic, purpose, and audience using a range of strategies.

How I say it: I mark the noun, verb, and clue before planning a response.

3.12B(i):

TEKS says: 3.12B(i) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea.

How I say it: I state a clear thesis (central idea) that answers the prompt.

Call and Response

Read this together as a class before we start.

Teacher asks: "What do we do with a question before we answer it?"

Class answers: "Circle the noun, box the verb, triangle the clue!"

One TEKS I want to practice today



Get Ready

Before I begin



Before We Begin: What Do I Already Know?

I can read a short informational passage. I know a prompt is a question or task to answer. I can find a noun and an action verb.

A connection I can make

Remember It!

- ☐ A noun is a person, place, or thing.
- ☐ A verb is an action word.
- ☐ Evidence is information from the passage.

One idea I remember

Ready Check

- ☐ I can tell my partner one noun and one action word.
- ☐ I can explain how I know which is which.
- ☐ I can use DOT to mark a word I do not know.

Watch Out! Common Mix-Up

Watch out! Not every noun is the topic. Circle only the noun the question is about.
WHY and HOW are not the same: WHY asks for a reason, HOW asks for a process.

Where This Fits in My Writing

After I decide WHAT, WHY, or HOW, I write exactly three sentences on the SCR ladder: thesis (central idea), one piece of text evidence, and an explanation.

What I want to remember before I start

Where I Am Starting

This shows my teacher what I already know. It is not for a grade. Work on your own. You may reread the passages in Read and Interact as often as you want.

Part 1: Shape the Prompt

Read the prompt. Circle the main noun in red. Box the verb in yellow. Triangle the clue word in green.

Why did the Pilgrims need to build shelters quickly?

Part 2: Question Type

Is this a WHAT, WHY, or HOW question? Write the type and the clue word that tells you.

My thesis (central idea)

Part 3: SCR Order

Three of these sentences make a strong SCR. Number them 1 for the thesis (central idea), 2 for evidence, 3 for the explanation. Cross out the one that does not answer WHY.

Number	Sentence
_____	The passage says winter was coming and they needed to begin building shelters.
_____	The Pilgrims needed to build shelters quickly because winter was coming.
_____	Without shelter, the Pilgrims could not survive the cold, so building quickly kept them safe.
_____	They built houses.

Part 4: Thesis (Central Idea)

Write one complete sentence that answers the prompt.

My first sentence

Part 5: Evidence and Explanation

Reason: The Pilgrims chose Plymouth because it had what they needed. Copy one sentence from the passage that proves this reason. Then explain in one sentence why it proves the reason.

A detail from the passage

How the detail answers the prompt

Part 6: My Three Sentences

Write exactly three sentences: a thesis (central idea), one piece of text evidence, and an explanation.

My paragraph



Words I Need

Tier 1, everyday words



Preview words you will see in the lesson and passages. Say each word. Then finish the sentence.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
build	BILD	to make something by putting parts together	The Pilgrims had to _____ homes before winter.
water	WAW-ter	the clear liquid people, plants, and animals need to live	The river gave the people fresh _____ to drink.
river	RIV-er	a long body of moving water that flows across the land	The Nile is a long _____ that flows through Egypt.
trees	TREEZ	tall plants with a trunk that give wood and shade	The Pilgrims used tall _____ to build their homes.
homes	HOHMZ	the places where people live	The settlers built small _____ near the harbor.
land	LAND	the solid ground that is not covered by water	The Pilgrims looked for _____ where crops could grow.
people	PEE-pul	people of all ages	Boats carried _____ and goods up and down the Nile.
winter	WIN-ter	the coldest season of the year	_____ was coming, so the Pilgrims worked quickly.
crops	KROPS	plants that farmers grow for food	Farmers planted _____ such as wheat and barley.
fish	FISH	animals that live in water and can be caught for food	The river gave the people _____ to eat.
towns	TOWNZ	places where people live, work, and shop	Over time, _____ grew along the riverbanks.
help	HELP	to make something easier for someone	The Nile River would _____ farmers grow crops.
choose	CHOOZ	to pick one thing out of many	The Pilgrims had to _____ a place to settle.
grow	GROH	to get bigger or to raise plants	Rich soil helped the plants _____.

Use one Tier 1 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 2, academic words

Use these academic thinking words to understand questions and explain your answers. Say each word, then use it with a partner.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
noun	NOWN	a person, place, or thing	The _____ I circle is what the question is about.
verb	VURB	an action word that tells what to do	I box the _____ in yellow.
clue	KLOO	a hint that helps someone figure something out	I triangle the _____ word in green.
prompt	PROMPT	the question or task to answer	I read the whole _____ before I answer.
question type	KWES-chun tipe	whether a question asks WHAT, WHY, or HOW	The clue word shows the _____.
identify	eye-DEN-tuh-fye	to name or point out something	A WHAT question asks me to _____ information.
explain	ik-SPLAYN	to tell why or how in your own words	A WHY question asks me to _____ a reason.
describe	dih-SKRIBE	to tell what something is like	A WHAT question may ask me to _____ something.
process	PROS-es	the steps that make something happen	A HOW question asks about a _____.
cause	KAWZ	the reason something happens	A WHY question asks about a _____.
evidence	EV-uh-dens	a fact from the passage that supports an answer	My _____ comes from the passage.
response	ri-SPONS	the written answer	My _____ is the answer that matches the prompt.
analyze	AN-uh-lyze	to look closely at the parts of something	I _____ the prompt by marking its three parts.
determine	dih-TUR-min	to decide or figure out	I _____ whether the prompt asks WHAT, WHY, or HOW.

Use one Tier 2 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 3, passage words

You will meet these words in the historical passages. Knowing their meanings will help you understand what you read.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
Pilgrims	PIL-grims	a group of travelers who sailed to America in 1620	The _____ sailed across the Atlantic Ocean.
Plymouth	PLIM-uth	the place where the Pilgrims settled	The Pilgrims found an area called _____.
Atlantic Ocean	at-LAN-tik OH-shun	the large ocean the Pilgrims crossed	The Pilgrims crossed the _____ to reach America.
harbor	HAR-ber	a safe place near land where ships can anchor	The _____ made it possible for their ship to anchor safely.
colony	KOL-uh-nee	a new community of people who settle in a faraway place	Plymouth became their new _____.
shelter	SHEL-ter	something built to protect people from weather	The Pilgrims needed to begin building _____ quickly.
settlers	SET-lerz	people who move to a new place to live	The _____ moved to a new place to live.
ancient Egypt	AYN-shunt EE-jipt	a land long ago along the Nile River	_____ was mostly covered by hot, dry desert.
Nile River	NYL RIV-er	a long river that flows from south to north through Egypt	The _____ flows through Egypt.
desert	DEZ-ert	dry land with little water or rain	The Nile ran through the _____.
floodwaters	FLUHD-waw-terz	water that spills over a river's banks when it rises	Farmers planted crops in the soil left by the _____.
soil	SOYL	the top layer of earth where plants grow	The flood left dark, rich _____.
wheat	HWEET	a grain farmers grow to make bread	Farmers planted _____ and barley.
barley	BAR-lee	a grain farmers grow for food	Farmers planted wheat and _____.
riverbanks	RIV-er-banks	the land along the sides of a river	Towns grew along the _____.

Use one Tier 3 word in a sentence



My Strategy Tools

Cracking the SCR Question Code



Before I write, I shape the prompt. Then I climb the SCR ladder: exactly three sentences.

RED CIRCLE

Noun (topic)

YELLOW BOX

Verb (action)

GREEN TRIANGLE

Clue word

WHAT, WHY, or HOW?

The clue word decides

DOT unfamiliar words • Read the whole prompt

The noun names the topic. The verb names the action. The clue word decides the type of thinking.

The SCR Ladder

Mark	What it means
Step 1: Thesis (central idea)	One sentence that answers the exact prompt.
Step 2: Evidence	One sentence giving text evidence that supports the answer.
Step 3: Explanation	One sentence explaining how the evidence answers the prompt.

An SCR is exactly three sentences. No introduction or conclusion is added.

How I shape a prompt before I write

Thinking Type and Clue Words

Thinking Type	Clue Words	What I Explain
WHAT	What; identify; describe information	Identify or describe information from the passage.
WHY	Why; reason; cause	Explain a reason or cause, often using because.
HOW	How; process; method	Explain a process, method, or way something happened.

WHY gives a reason. HOW explains a process. Read the clue word before you choose.

How I Say the Standard!

3.11A(i):

TEKS says: 3.11A(i) plan a first draft by selecting a genre for a particular topic, purpose, and audience using a range of strategies.

How I say it: I mark the noun, verb, and clue before planning a response.

3.12B(i):

TEKS says: 3.12B(i) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea.

How I say it: I state a clear thesis (central idea) that answers the prompt.

Check My Writing

- ☐ My sentence has a subject and a verb that agree.
- ☐ I use a capital letter for Plymouth and the Nile River.
- ☐ I spell high-frequency words correctly.

A question type I can explain

The Five Thinking Levels

Use the progression to describe the level of thinking a prompt and response require. Color labels and symbols preserve access in black and white.

Level	Symbol	Color Label	Thinking Stage	Description
Level 1	○	Red	Foundational	Student follows directions or repeats information exactly as taught with little independent thinking.
Level 2	◻	Orange	Emergent	Student begins trying ideas independently but may be uncertain or inconsistent.
Level 3	▽	Yellow	Visible	Student connects ideas directly to textual evidence or proof from the passage.
Level 4	△	Green	Independent	Student combines evidence with personal inference, applying understanding to self or deeper meaning.
Level 5	◊	Blue	Reflective	Student connects evidence to the world, morals, lessons, themes, or broader life understanding.

Each level has a color label: Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue.

A level of thinking I want to try

The Progression of Thinking

Read from Level 1 to Level 5. Notice how the thinking grows.

Level	Symbol	Hidden Question	Student Thinking	Thinking Focus
Foundational (Red)	○	Why did it happen?	The student explains the cause.	Cause and Effect
Emergent (Orange)	◻	Why was it done?	The student explains the purpose.	Purpose and Motivation
Visible (Yellow)	▽	Why is it important in the passage?	The student explains why it matters in the text.	Importance and Contribution
Independent (Green)	△	Why is it important to the reader?	The student explains a personal application.	Personal Meaning and Application
Reflective (Blue)	◊	Why is it important to everyone?	The student explains a broader lesson.	Universal Meaning and Life Lessons

The Difference Between WHY and HOW

Prompt type	What it asks me to do	Example
WHY	Explain a reason, a purpose, or why something matters.	Why did the Pilgrims choose Plymouth as their settlement?
HOW	Analyze how parts work together or how something happens.	How did the Nile River help farmers grow crops?

WHY explains a reason or cause. HOW explains a process, method, or way something happened.

A WHY thinking level I understand



Read & Interact

Read with a purpose



Dot, Discover, Drop

DOT: Place a small dot above any unfamiliar word. DISCOVER: Find the pronunciation or the meaning. DROP: Erase the dot once the word is understood.

TRACKS Legend

Letter	Category	Definition and Examples	Required Pastel Color
T	Time	Age, era, dates, cultural details, or historical details. Often adjectives.	Pastel Green
R	Reactions	Reactions, solutions, resolutions, or effects. Often verbs/adverbs.	Pastel Purple
A	Actions	Actions, problems, conflicts, or causes. Often verbs/adverbs.	Pastel Yellow
C	Character, Concept, Creature	Names of characters/people/animals, or major concepts as the central idea. Often nouns/proper nouns.	Pastel Yellow
K	Key Knowledge	All other important info needed for the passage's meaning not in another TRACKS category (background knowledge).	Pastel Orange
S	Scenery / Setting	Setting characteristics acknowledged/measured through the five senses.	Pastel Green

TRACKS marks evidence in the passage. Highlight the smallest meaningful phrase. The shapes Circle, Box, and Triangle are used only to analyze the prompt.

Connect It to Our World

As you read, notice how people used water, land, and shelter. How do you use these resources in your own community?

Background I Need

The Pilgrims sailed to America in 1620 and settled at Plymouth, near forests, fresh water, land for crops, and a safe harbor. In ancient Egypt, the Nile River flooded each year and left rich soil for farming.

Words I dotted while reading

The Pilgrims Chose Plymouth

Informational passages. Low Stamina. Place a small dot above any word you are unsure about. Erase the dot when you learn the word.

1 In 1620, a group of travelers called the Pilgrims sailed across the Atlantic Ocean looking for a place where many of them could live and practice their beliefs freely. After many weeks at sea, they reached the coast of North America.

2 The Pilgrims explored the land and found an area called Plymouth. Nearby were forests filled with tall trees that could be used to build homes and ships. There was also fresh water and land where crops could be planted. The harbor made it possible for their ship to anchor safely.

3 Winter was coming, and the Pilgrims needed to begin building shelters quickly. They started constructing small homes and gathering wood for fires. Soon, Plymouth became the place where they settled and built their new colony.

My
marks

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Life Along the Nile River

Informational passages. Low Stamina. Place a small dot above any word you are unsure about. Erase the dot when you learn the word.

- 1 Ancient Egypt was mostly covered by hot, dry desert. In many places, the land was too dry to grow crops or raise animals.
- 2 Running through this desert was the Nile River, a long river that flowed from south to north. Each year, the river would rise and spill over its banks. When the water went back down, it left behind dark, rich soil that was good for growing plants.
- 3 Farmers planted crops such as wheat and barley in the soil left by the floodwaters. The river also provided fish to eat and water for drinking and farming. Boats traveled up and down the Nile carrying people and goods.
- 4 Over time, towns and cities grew along the riverbanks, and the Nile became the center of daily life for the people of ancient Egypt.

My
marks

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Annotate: The Pilgrims Chose Plymouth

T Time: In 1620; Winter was coming. A Actions: sailed across the Atlantic Ocean. S
Scenery: forests filled with tall trees.

TRACKS mark	Color label	What I found (paragraph number and words)
T: Time	Pastel Green	
R: Reactions	Pastel Purple	
A: Actions	Pastel Yellow	
C: Character, Concept, Creature	Pastel Yellow	
K: Key Knowledge	Pastel Orange	
S: Scenery / Setting	Pastel Green	

Highlight the smallest meaningful phrase. If I cannot say why I highlighted it, I should not highlight it.

My best TRACKS phrase and why I chose it

Annotate: Life Along the Nile River

T Time: Ancient Egypt; Each year. A Actions: rise and spill over its banks. S Scenery: hot, dry desert; dark, rich soil.

TRACKS mark	Color label	What I found (paragraph number and words)
T: Time	Pastel Green	
R: Reactions	Pastel Purple	
A: Actions	Pastel Yellow	
C: Character, Concept, Creature	Pastel Yellow	
K: Key Knowledge	Pastel Orange	
S: Scenery / Setting	Pastel Green	

? STOP & THINK

Which detail from the passage would help you answer a WHY question?

My thinking

My Prompt Marking Notes

Every prompt has three parts. Use these shapes to see each part.

Shape	Word	Question I ask myself
Red circle	Noun (topic)	Who or what is the question about?
Yellow box	Verb (action)	What action does the question ask about?
Green triangle	Clue word	Does it ask WHAT, WHY, or HOW?

Circle the main noun in red. Box the verb in yellow. Triangle the clue word in green.

Why did the Pilgrims choose Plymouth as their settlement?

My three marks in words

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 1: Gather + Reveal



I become a question detective

Our Question for Today

How can I tell what a question is asking before I answer it?

1. Gather: Would You Rather?

Would you rather eat an apple or broccoli? Would you rather answer a why or a how question? Tell your partner and explain your choice.

My choice and why

2. Gather: DOT the Passage

Read "The Pilgrims Chose Plymouth." Place a small dot above any word you are unsure about. Write two of your dotted words below.

Words I dotted

STOP & THINK

Why should a writer study the question before answering it?

My answer

3. Reveal: The Three Shapes

Shape	Marks the	Tells me
Red circle	Main noun	The topic
Yellow box	Verb	The action
Green triangle	Clue word	WHAT, WHY, or HOW

4. Watch the Model

Mark the model prompt the way your teacher does: circle Pilgrims, box choose, triangle Why.

Circle the main noun in red. Box the verb in yellow. Triangle the clue word in green.

Why did the Pilgrims choose Plymouth as their settlement?

Part	The model shows
Red circle, noun	Pilgrims
Yellow box, verb	choose
Green triangle, clue word	Why
Question type	WHY: explain a reason

This prompt wants me to _____ because the clue word is _____.

5. Reveal: The SCR Ladder

After I shape the prompt, I write exactly three sentences.

Step	SCR Part	What It Means
1	Thesis (central idea)	A complete sentence that answers the prompt.
2	Evidence	One text detail.
3	Explanation	How that detail answers the question.

6. Check: Hear the Shapes

Listen to each prompt. Write the noun, verb, and clue word you hear.

Prompt	Noun	Verb	Clue word
Why did the Nile flood every year?			
What did the Pilgrims eat during the first winter?			
How did the Nile help farmers?			
Why did the Pilgrims travel to a new land?			

? STOP & THINK

What is the difference between a WHY question and a HOW question?

My answer

STUDENT WORKBOOK



SHAPE DETECTIVES

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards (sheet 1 of 2)

Cut on the dashed lines. Stack the 16 word cards face down. Mark each card with a red circle, yellow box, or green triangle shape token. Store all cards in your Pocket Practice.

Pilgrims	Plymouth
harbor	farmers
Nile River	flood
crops	choose

Self-Check (back of cards) (sheet 1 of 2)

This page prints on the back of the card page. Each answer sits behind its own card, so flip a card over to check yourself. Keep the cards in Pocket Practice when you finish.

Plymouth (Red circle: noun)

Pilgrims (Red circle: noun)

farmers (Red circle: noun)

harbor (Red circle: noun)

flood (Red circle: noun)

Nile River (Red circle: noun)

choose (Yellow box: verb)

crops (Red circle: noun)

STUDENT WORKBOOK



SHAPE DETECTIVES

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards (sheet 2 of 2)

Cut on the dashed lines. Stack the 16 word cards face down. Mark each card with a red circle, yellow box, or green triangle shape token. Store all cards in your Pocket Practice.

explain	describe
tell	help
grow	what
why	how

Self-Check (back of cards) (sheet 2 of 2)

This page prints on the back of the card page. Each answer sits behind its own card, so flip a card over to check yourself. Keep the cards in Pocket Practice when you finish.

describe (Yellow box: verb)

explain (Yellow box: verb)

help (Yellow box: verb)

tell (Yellow box: verb)

what (Green triangle: clue word)

grow (Yellow box: verb)

how (Green triangle: clue word)

why (Green triangle: clue word)

Day 2: Attempt, continued

Our Question for Today: Can I match each word to the right shape?

1. Play It

- Sit with your group. Spread the 16 word cards face up.
- Your teacher calls out noun, verb, or question clue.
- Place a red circle, yellow box, or green triangle token on a matching card.
- Explain your choice to your group.
- Check each answer against the Self-Check key on the back of the cards.

2. Talk About It

Flood can be a noun on a card, but in "Why did the Nile flood?" it is a verb. Tell how you decided.

My reason

3. Mark the Nile Prompt with a Partner

Circle Nile River, box help, and triangle How. Explain how you know it is a HOW question.

Circle the main noun in red. Box the verb in yellow. Triangle the clue word in green.

How did the Nile River help farmers grow crops?

It is a HOW question because _____

4. Lightning Round

Your teacher will call a word from the word cards. Say its shape fast, then show it with your tokens.

The words I named in the Lightning Round

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 3: Discuss + Use

I explain my thinking



Our Question for Today

How did the Nile River help farmers grow crops?

1. Discuss

Explain your reasoning, not just your answer.

Question	My thinking
What noun did you circle?	
What verb did you box?	
What clue word did you triangle?	
What does HOW tell you to explain?	
What details from the passage might help you answer?	

My discussion notes

2. Retell the Process

Put the Nile steps in order: the river flooded, the flood left rich soil, farmers planted crops in the soil.

Step	What happened
First	
Next	
Then	

3. My Personal Connection

How do you use water or shelter in your own life?

My connection

Compare the resources near Plymouth with the resources along the Nile.

My comparison



4. Use: Try It On Your Own!

Mark each prompt with a red circle, yellow box, and green triangle. Then label it **WHAT**, **WHY**, or **HOW** and name the clue.

Circle the main noun in red. Box the verb in yellow. Triangle the clue word in green.

What natural resources did the Pilgrims find near Plymouth?

Type and clue

Circle the main noun in red. Box the verb in yellow. Triangle the clue word in green.

Why did the Pilgrims need to build shelters quickly?

Type and clue

Circle the main noun in red. Box the verb in yellow. Triangle the clue word in green.

How did the Nile River affect where towns and cities were built?

Type and clue



Embedded Check

Did I mark each prompt correctly?

- ☐ Each prompt has a red circle on the main noun.
- ☐ Each prompt has a yellow box on the verb.
- ☐ Each prompt has a green triangle on the clue word.
- ☐ I labeled each prompt WHAT, WHY, or HOW.
- ☐ I reread the clue word before naming the type.

? STOP & THINK

Use a new vocabulary word to explain one prompt type.

My explanation

One prompt I want to check again, and why

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 4: Award + Target



I notice evidence of my growth

Our Question for Today

What did I do well when I marked my prompts?

1. Award the Best Parts

Look at your Day 3 prompts. Point to a noun, verb, or clue word you marked correctly. Explain one strength.

My Award (write it here)

The prompt where I did it

Something I did well, and where I did it

2. Target My Next Step

Which question type felt easiest? Which felt most challenging?

My target: Next time I will...

3. Record a Curiosity Question

Talk with your class: Why do test writers ask WHAT, WHY, and HOW questions? How could knowing the question type strengthen a response?

My curiosity question about how WHAT, WHY, or HOW helps a writer

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 5: Explain/Educate



I teach someone else

Our Question for Today

How would I teach someone to read a prompt with the three shapes?

1. Explain to Others

Teach a partner what you learned. Use your notebook to demonstrate. Use the frames below.

- I circle the _____ in red.
- I box the _____ in yellow.
- I triangle the _____ in green.
- A WHY question asks for a _____.
- A HOW question asks for a _____.
- The SCR ladder is thesis (central idea), _____, and _____.

My partner taught me...

? STOP & THINK

How do water and shelter support the daily life of a community?

My thinking

2. Transfer: Day 5 Exit Ticket

Complete each part on your own.

Circle the main noun in red. Box the verb in yellow. Triangle the clue word in green.

How does the Nile River help farmers grow their crops?

- ☐ WHY, a reason
- ☐ HOW, a process

What kind of answer does this prompt require?

Check My Exit Ticket

- ☐ I circled the main noun in red.
- ☐ I boxed the verb in yellow.
- ☐ I triangled the clue word in green.
- ☐ I labeled the question type.
- ☐ I explained what kind of answer the prompt requires.

STOP & THINK

Compare your Monday thinking with your Friday thinking about the essential question.

My final Day 5 thought



Write More

Plan, draft, revise, edit, and share



My Writing Assignment

Write a short response to this prompt:

Circle the main noun in red. Box the verb in yellow. Triangle the clue word in green.

Why did the Pilgrims need to build shelters quickly?

My Plan

- DOT unfamiliar words. Mark the noun, verb, and clue word.
- Name WHY and explain that it calls for a reason.
- Plan a thesis (central idea) that answers why shelter was needed quickly.
- Select one supporting detail from paragraph [3].
- Plan how to explain the connection between winter, shelter, and safety.
- Draft the three SCR sentences, then reread to check that all three answer the prompt.

Two possible reasons from the passage

The stronger reason is...

Color Words I Can Use

My Draft



Use my shaped prompt and my plan. Write a clear response.

Draft, page 1

A sentence I want to keep

Revise, Edit, and Share

Revise

- ☐ My response answers the clue word of the prompt.
- ☐ I improved one sentence for structure and clarity.
- ☐ Every sentence is complete with a subject and a verb that agree.

Edit

- ☐ Every sentence is complete.
- ☐ Plymouth, Egypt, and the Nile River begin with capital letters.
- ☐ Harbor, shelter, and soil are common nouns unless they begin a sentence.
- ☐ Singular nouns are spelled correctly.
- ☐ High-frequency words are spelled correctly.

My improved sentence

Share

Choose one: read to a partner, share in author's chair, join a gallery walk, or add your prompt to a class booklet.

My sharing plan

Before I Turn It In

Read each line. Check it when I can show it in my work.

Part	I can show...	Check
Prompt shapes and thinking type	I marked the noun, verb, and Why, and I explained WHY asks for a reason.	
Thesis (central idea)	My first sentence answers why the Pilgrims needed shelters quickly.	
Evidence	One detail from the passage supports my thesis (central idea).	
Explanation	I explain how the evidence answers the prompt.	
Sentences and conventions	I wrote exactly three clear sentences.	

Study the Samples

Read the three responses to this prompt. Notice what improves from Low to Medium to High.

Why did the Pilgrims need to build shelters quickly?

Low

They built houses.

What is missing: a thesis (central idea) answering WHY, evidence, and explanation are missing. It tells what the Pilgrims did without explaining why they needed to work quickly.

Medium

The Pilgrims built shelters quickly because winter was coming.

What is missing: a separate evidence sentence from the passage and an explanation. Add one piece of passage evidence and explain how it answers the prompt.

High

The Pilgrims needed to build shelters quickly because winter was coming. The passage says winter was coming and they needed to begin building shelters. Without shelter, the Pilgrims could not survive the cold, so building quickly kept them safe.

Why it works: three sentences supply a thesis (central idea), one piece of evidence, and an explanation, all answering WHY.

What improves from Low to High?



Look Back & Look Forward

I own my learning



My Progress Tracker

I can...	Not yet	Growing	Got it
Circle the main noun in red.	☐	☐	☐
Box the important verb in yellow.	☐	☐	☐
Triangle the clue word in green.	☐	☐	☐
Identify WHAT as a request to name or describe.	☐	☐	☐
Identify WHY as a request for a reason.	☐	☐	☐
Identify HOW as a request for a process or steps.	☐	☐	☐
Restate the prompt without changing its demand.	☐	☐	☐
Write the answer in a complete sentence.	☐	☐	☐
Explain the three-shape routine to a partner.	☐	☐	☐

Something I Did Well...

What I did well, and where I did it

My Next Step...

Why this is my next step

Essential Question Answered

How can a writer tell exactly what a short constructed response prompt is asking before writing a single sentence?

The answer

A writer marks the main noun with a red circle, the verb with a yellow box, and the clue word with a green triangle, then decides whether the question asks WHAT, WHY, or HOW before beginning to write.

My Final Thinking (in my own words)

What Changed in My Thinking?

At first I thought...

Now I think...

Try It Another Way

Use a new prompt. Circle the noun, box the verb, triangle the clue word, and name WHAT, WHY, or HOW.

My new prompt

Take It Further! Question Surgeons Challenge

Rebuild, diagnose, and transform one prompt: Explain the reason the Pilgrims chose Plymouth.

- Mark the noun, verb, and clue word in the prompt above.
- Write its question type.
- Transform it into a WHAT prompt.
- Transform it into a WHY prompt.
- Transform it into a HOW prompt.
- Explain how each change changes the answer required.

My WHAT, WHY, and HOW prompts

My Question Surgeons Prompt

Write an original SCR prompt about either passage. Mark it with the three shapes and label its type. Trade with a partner.

At-Home Connection

Choose one card to talk about with someone at home. End with a conversation, not a worksheet.

Mark the Question

Ask someone at home two everyday questions, such as why the family went to the store. Name the noun, verb, and clue word using the three shapes. Then say if each question is WHAT, WHY, or HOW.

Ask them: which part of understanding a question feels hardest?

Family member signature: _____

Question Detective at Dinner

At dinner, ask WHAT, WHY, and HOW questions. Name each clue word.

Ask them: why did the Pilgrims choose Plymouth?

Family member signature: _____

Three-Part Question Builder

Write one WHAT, one WHY, and one HOW question about your day.

Ask them: how did the Nile River help farmers grow crops?

Family member signature: _____

My Family Conversation Notes

What did I teach? What did my family member remember?

Notes

Track My Progress

Every time I get a score or a grade on my work in this module, I write it here. This can be an exit ticket, a short answer, or a rubric score from my teacher.

Date	What I did (for example exit ticket, short answer, rubric)	My score	My next goal

Why This Helps Me

This chart shows how my scores change over the whole module, not just on one day.

- ☐ I keep this chart up to date.
- ☐ I can tell if my scores are growing.
- ☐ I ask for help when I need it.
- ☐ I show this chart to my teacher or a family member.

Add a new row every time I get feedback, a score, or a grade on my work.

My Module 1 Snapshot

I can keep this page with my other work. It shows how my thinking grew.

The most useful word I learned

The prompt part I can find fastest

My Strong Roots

I read a question like a detective. I know what it asks before I write.

A note to my future writer self

My Proud Moment This Week

THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC.

Student Interactive Workbook

Grade 3

Cluster 1 - Module 2

Writing a Thesis (central idea)



Name: _____



The Writing Academy®, LLC

Grade 3 • Cluster 1 • Module 2

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How to Use My Workbook

This book holds my reading, thinking, writing, and reflection for this module.

My Name and My Goal for This Module

Pocket Practice

Attach a sheet of paper along the left, right, and bottom sides of this box to make a pocket. Store your game cards here throughout each module.



Meet My Week

Writing a Thesis (central idea)



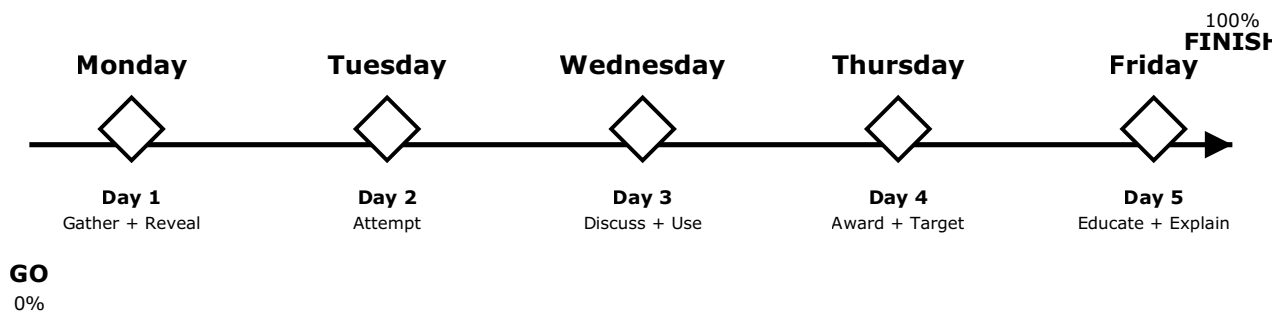
Why This Matters to Me

A strong response begins with a thesis (central idea) that directly answers the prompt. I will learn to pull the TOPIC and CHARGE from the prompt, supply an ANSWER from my reading, and match my sentence structure to the prompt type.

Essential Question

How can a writer build a thesis (central idea) statement that answers a WHAT, WHY, or Relational HOW short constructed response prompt?

My Week Tracker



Mark each day on the timeline after you finish that day's work. Watch your week move from GO to FINISH!

My First Thinking

I Can

- I can name the TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER.
- I can tell which pieces come from the prompt and which one comes from the writer.
- I can write a thesis (central idea) that fits the job of the prompt.
- I can explain to a partner why my thesis (central idea) structure fits the prompt type.

I Will

- I will find the TOPIC and CHARGE in a prompt.
- I will think of an ANSWER from the passage.
- I will write a WHAT thesis (central idea) with facts or details.
- I will write a WHY thesis (central idea) with because and reasons.
- I will write a Relational HOW thesis (central idea) with a preposition and connections.

The I Can I want to reach first, and why

My Week at a Glance

What I learn	What I read	What I make
How to build a thesis (central idea) using three pieces: TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER.	Two nonfiction passages about the Pilgrims at Plymouth and life along the Nile River.	Labeled prompts, matching theses, game work, a writing response, and a next step.

Where We Are Going

I will move from seeing the three pieces to building a thesis (central idea) that matches the prompt type. I will finish by teaching someone else how the three structures work.

I'll Know I've Got It When...

- ☐ My thesis (central idea) directly answers the prompt.
- ☐ The TOPIC and CHARGE match the prompt.
- ☐ The ANSWER comes from the passages.
- ☐ My sentence structure fits WHAT, WHY, or Relational HOW.

Check Myself

- ☐ I read the whole prompt.
- ☐ I can point to proof for my thinking.
- ☐ I can explain my choice to a partner.

How I Will Show What I Know

I will show what I know with labeled prompt pieces, matching theses from the game, four independent responses, a Relational HOW exit ticket, and a partner explanation.

My GRADUATE Learning Path

Stage	Day	What I do
Gather	Day 1	I sort prompts by type and preview the passages.
Reveal	Day 1	I learn the three pieces and the three sentence structures.
Attempt	Day 2	I practice with Spin, Build, and Move!
Discuss	Day 3	I explain where each piece comes from.
Use Again	Day 3	I build four theses on my own.
Award	Day 4	I name evidence of my growth.
Target	Day 4	I choose my next step.
Explain/Educate	Day 5	I teach the three structures to a partner.

Say It Together!

These are the exact TEKS this module teaches. Read the code, then say the job in your own words.

3.11A(i):

TEKS says: 3.11A(i) plan a first draft by selecting a genre for a particular topic, purpose, and audience using a range of strategies. 3.12B(i) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea. 3.12B(ii) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using genre characteristics. 3.12B(iii) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using craft. 3.11C(i) revise drafts to improve sentence structure. 3.11D(i) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including complete simple sentences with subject-verb agreement. 3.11D(xxxii) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including correct spelling of words with grade-appropriate high-frequency words.

How I say it: I find the topic and charge, select a passage-based answer, and build a matching thesis (central idea). WHAT uses a simple sentence with facts or details. WHY uses a complex sentence with because and reasons. Relational HOW uses a simple sentence with a preposition and connections. Students then revise sentence structure and edit agreement and spelling.

3.12B:

TEKS says: 3.12B(i) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea.

How I say it: I find the topic and charge, select a passage-based answer, and build a matching thesis (central idea).

Call and Response

Read this together as a class before we start.

Teacher asks: "What three pieces build a thesis (central idea)?"

Class answers: "Topic, charge, answer!"

One TEKS I want to practice today



Get Ready

Before I begin



Before We Begin: What Do I Already Know?

I already know how to circle the important noun, box the important verb, and triangle the clue word. I can decide whether a prompt asks WHAT, WHY, or HOW.

A connection I can make

Remember It!

- ☐ A thesis (central idea) answers the prompt.
- ☐ The TOPIC and CHARGE come from the prompt.
- ☐ The ANSWER comes from reading.

One idea I remember

Ready Check

- ☐ I can name the important noun in a prompt.
- ☐ I can name the important verb in a prompt.
- ☐ I can tell whether the prompt asks WHAT, WHY, or HOW.

Watch Out! Common Mix-Up

Watch out! The ANSWER is not in the prompt. The prompt gives the TOPIC and CHARGE, but the writer supplies the ANSWER from reading.

Where This Fits in My Writing

The thesis (central idea) is the first rung of the SCR ladder. Evidence and explanation come later.

What I want to remember before I start

Where I Am Starting

This shows my teacher what I already know. It is not for a grade. Work on your own. You may reread the passages in Read and Interact as often as you want.

Part 1: Prompt Analysis

Read the prompt. Circle the topic in red. Draw a yellow box around the charge. Draw a green triangle around the clue word.

Why did the Pilgrims choose Plymouth?

Part 2: Thesis (Central Idea)

Write one sentence that answers the prompt above. Use the topic, use the charge, and add your own answer.

My thesis (central idea)

Part 3: Informative Organization

Number these four sentences 1, 2, 3, 4 to show the order they belong in an informative response.

Number	Sentence
_____	The Pilgrims chose Plymouth because it had fresh water.
_____	Plymouth had forests, land for crops, and a safe harbor.
_____	The Pilgrims chose Plymouth.
_____	Fresh water, land, trees, and a harbor made Plymouth a good place to settle.

Part 4: Introduction

Write the first sentence of a response to the prompt. Remember that the first sentence tells the reader what you will prove.

My first sentence

Part 5: Relevant Details and Evidence

Reason: The Pilgrims needed resources to survive. Copy one sentence from the passage that proves this reason. Then explain in one sentence why it proves the reason.

The sentence I copied from the passage

Why it proves the reason

Part 6: Passage-Based Paragraph

Write three or four sentences that answer the prompt from Part 1. Use your thesis (central idea), one reason, and one piece of evidence.

My paragraph



Words I Need

Tier 1, everyday words



Say each word. Then use one word in a sentence about our passages.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
water	WAH-ter	The clear liquid people, plants, and animals need to live.	The river gave people _____ to drink.
river	RIV-er	A long body of moving water that flows across the land.	The Nile is a long _____.
land	LAND	The solid ground that is not covered by water.	The Pilgrims found _____ for crops.
harbor	HAR-bur	A safe place near land where ships can anchor.	A _____ kept the ship safe.
soil	SOYL	The top layer of earth where plants grow.	Rich _____ helped crops grow.
farming	FAR-ming	Growing plants for food.	The river supported _____.
settlement	SET-ul-munt	A place where people begin living in a new area.	Plymouth became a _____.
transportation	trans-por-TAY-shun	A way to travel or move goods.	Boats gave people _____.
build	BILD	To make something by putting parts together.	The Pilgrims had to _____ homes before winter.
trees	TREEZ	Tall plants with a trunk that give wood and shade.	The Pilgrims used tall _____ to build their homes.
water / river: review		Water is the resource; a river carries moving water.	Water is the resource; a river carries _____ water.
soil / farming: review		Soil supports plants; farming grows plants for food.	Soil supports plants; farming grows _____ for food.

Use one Tier 1 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 2, academic words

These thinking words help me understand prompts and explain answers. Say each word, then use it with a partner.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
thesis (central idea)	THEE-sis	The sentence that directly answers the prompt.	My thesis (central idea) answers the _____.
prompt	PROMPT	The question or task that tells you what to write about.	The _____ tells me what to prove.
response	rih-SPONS	The written answer to a prompt.	My _____ matches the prompt.
topic	TOP-ik	The noun of importance from the prompt.	The _____ is _____.
charge	CHARJ	The verb of importance from the prompt.	The _____ tells me to _____.
answer	AN-sur	The writer's response to the charge, drawn from reading.	My _____ comes from the passage.
preposition	prep-oh-ZIH-shun	A word that shows a relationship, such as through.	Relational HOW uses a _____ to show connections.
evidence	EV-uh-dens	A fact from the passage that supports an answer.	My _____ comes from paragraph _____.
structure	STRUK-cher	The way a sentence is built.	Good _____ helps my reader.
short constructed response	short kun-STRUK-ted rih-SPONS	A brief written answer to a prompt.	The thesis (central idea) is the first rung of a _____.
simple sentence	SIM-pul SEN-tens	A complete sentence with one main idea.	A WHAT thesis (central idea) uses a _____ with facts or details.
complex sentence / subordinating clause	KOM-pleks SEN-tens	Complex sentence: a sentence with a main part and a dependent part; subordinating clause: a dependent part, often starting with because.	A WHY thesis (central idea) uses a _____ with because and reasons.
relational / connection	rih-LAY-shun-ul	Relational: showing how ideas, people, or things are connected; connection: a way ideas, people, or things are linked.	A _____ HOW thesis (central idea) uses a preposition to show connections.
detail / reason	DEE-tayl / REE-zun	Detail: a small fact giving more information. Reason: why something happened.	A WHAT prompt needs a _____, and a WHY prompt needs a _____.

Use one Tier 2 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 3, passage words

These words come from our passages about The Pilgrims Chose Plymouth and Life Along the Nile River.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
Mayflower	MAY-flow-er	The ship that carried the Pilgrims across the ocean.	The Pilgrims traveled on the _____.
Native Americans	NAY-tiv uh-MAIR-ih-kunz	The first peoples who lived in North America.	_____ helped the Pilgrims learn to grow crops.
New England	noo ING-glund	A region in the northeastern United States where Plymouth is located.	Plymouth became an important colony in _____.
corn	KORN	A crop the Pilgrims learned to grow in their new home.	The settlers learned to grow _____.
fishermen	FISH-er-men	People whose job is catching fish.	Many families depended on _____ to help feed the community.
merchants	MUR-chunts	People who buy, sell, or trade goods.	_____ used boats to move goods between cities.
trade	TRAYD	The exchange of goods between people or places.	The river helped _____ grow in ancient Egypt.
civilizations	siv-uh-luh-ZAY-shunz	Large groups of people with shared ways of living and organized communities.	The Nile River helped one of the world's earliest _____.
transportation	trans-por-TAY-shun	The way people or goods move from place to place.	The Nile gave people _____ by boat.
crops	KRAHPS	Plants grown by farmers for food or other useful products.	Farmers planted _____ in the rich soil.

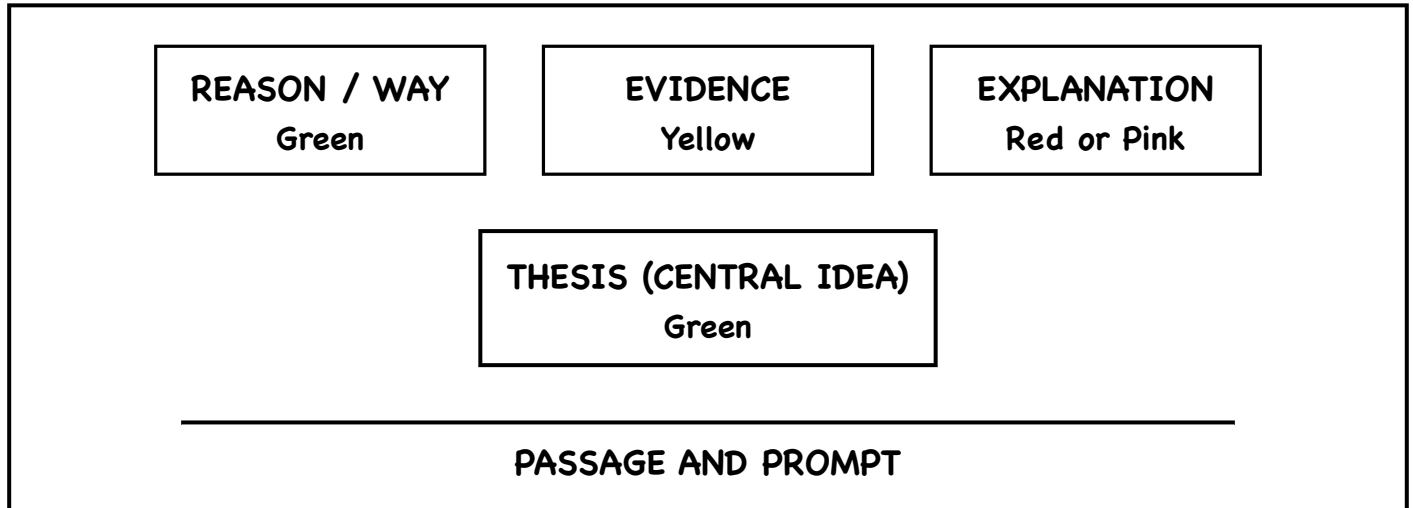
Use one Tier 3 word in a sentence



The Growing Tree



My ideas grow from the passage and prompt. The tree shows how a strong response grows.



Nothing grows until the ground is ready.

Shaping an ECR Prompt

Mark	What it means
Red circle	TOPIC, the noun of importance.
Yellow box	CHARGE, the verb of importance.
Green triangle	CLUE WORD, tells me WHY or HOW.

SCR is usually a question. ECR is usually a statement.

How this strategy works for me

WHY and HOW

WHY	HOW
asks for a reason; uses a subordinator such as because, since, when; builds a complex sentence.	asks for a way or a method; uses a preposition such as through, by, with; builds a simpler sentence.

The clue word decides the shape of my answer.

How I Say the Standard!

3.11A(i):

TEKS says: 3.11A(i) plan a first draft by selecting a genre for a particular topic, purpose, and audience using a range of strategies. 3.12B(i) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea. 3.12B(ii) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using genre characteristics. 3.12B(iii) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using craft. 3.11C(i) revise drafts to improve sentence structure. 3.11D(i) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including complete simple sentences with subject-verb agreement. 3.11D(xxxii) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including correct spelling of words with grade-appropriate high-frequency words.

How I say it: I find the topic and charge, select a passage-based answer, and build a matching thesis (central idea). WHAT uses a simple sentence with facts or details. WHY uses a complex sentence with because and reasons. Relational HOW uses a simple sentence with a preposition and connections. Students then revise sentence structure and edit agreement and spelling.

3.12B:

TEKS says: 3.12B(i) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea.

How I say it: I find the topic and charge, select a passage-based answer, and build a matching thesis (central idea).

Check My Writing

- ☐ My sentence has a subject and a verb.
- ☐ I use a capital letter for Plymouth and the Nile River.

Five Thinking Levels: WHY

Read from the bottom up. A clue word can help me choose the kind of WHY thinking I need.

Level	Symbol	Hidden Question	Student Thinking	Thinking Focus
Level 1		Red	Foundational	Student follows directions or repeats information exactly as taught with little independent thinking.
Level 2		Orange	Emergent	Student begins trying ideas independently but may be uncertain or inconsistent.
Level 3		Yellow	Visible	Student connects ideas directly to textual evidence or proof from the passage.
Level 4		Green	Independent	Student combines evidence with personal inference, applying understanding to self or deeper meaning.
Level 5		Blue	Reflective	Student connects evidence to the world, morals, lessons, themes, or broader life understanding.

Each level has a color label: Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue.

A WHY clue word I know

Five Thinking Levels

Read from the bottom up. A clue word can help me choose the kind of thinking I need.

Level	Symbol	Hidden Question	Student Thinking	Thinking Focus
Foundational (Red)	○	Why did it happen?	Student explains the cause.	Cause and Effect
Emergent (Orange)	◻	Why was it done?	Student explains the purpose.	Purpose and Motivation
Visible (Yellow)	▽	Why is it important in the passage?	Student explains why the idea matters in the passage.	Importance and Contribution
Independent (Green)	△	Why is it important to me?	Student identifies an idea to value or apply personally.	Personal Meaning and Application
Reflective (Blue)	◊	Why is it important to everyone?	Student explains a broader lesson or significance.	Universal Meaning and Life Lessons

The Difference Between WHY and HOW

Prompt type	What it asks me to do	Example
WHY	Explain a reason, a purpose, or why something matters.	What resources made Plymouth a good place to settle?
HOW	Analyze how parts work together or how something happens.	Why did ancient Egyptians depend on the Nile River?

A WHY thesis (central idea) uses because and reasons. Relational HOW uses a preposition to show connections.

A thinking level I want to try



Read & Interact

Read with a purpose



Dot, Discover, Drop

DOT: Place a small dot above any unfamiliar word. DISCOVER: Find the pronunciation or the meaning. DROP: Erase the dot once the word is understood.

TRACKS Legend

Letter	Category	Definition and Examples	Required Pastel Color
T	Time	Age, era, dates, cultural details, or historical details. Often adjectives.	Pastel Green
R	Reactions	Reactions, solutions, resolutions, or effects. Often verbs/adverbs.	Pastel Purple
A	Actions	Actions, problems, conflicts, or causes. Often verbs/adverbs.	Pastel Yellow
C	Character, Concept, Creature	Names of characters/people/animals, or major concepts as the central idea. Often nouns/proper nouns.	Pastel Yellow
K	Key Knowledge	All other important info needed for the passage's meaning not in another TRACKS category (background knowledge).	Pastel Orange
S	Scenery / Setting	Setting characteristics acknowledged/measured through the five senses.	Pastel Green

TRACKS marks evidence in the passage. Highlight the smallest meaningful phrase. The shapes Circle, Box, and Triangle are used only to analyze the prompt.

Connect It to Our World

The Pilgrims at Plymouth and ancient Egyptians along the Nile both depended on water and natural resources to build their communities.

Background I Need

The Pilgrims settled at Plymouth in 1620, where fresh water, forests, and a harbor supported their colony. Ancient Egyptians lived near the Nile because it gave them water, food, rich soil, and transportation.

Words I dotted while reading

The Pilgrims Chose Plymouth

Nonfiction passage. Medium Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

1 In 1620, a group of travelers called the Pilgrims sailed across the Atlantic Ocean. Many of them wanted to find a place where they could live and practice their beliefs freely. The trip across the ocean was long and difficult. Storms rocked the ship, and many passengers became sick during the journey.

2 The Pilgrims traveled on a ship called the Mayflower. The ship was crowded with men, women, and children. Families slept in small spaces below the deck. Food and water had to last for many weeks. Even though the trip was uncomfortable, the Pilgrims continued because they hoped to build a better life.

3 After many weeks at sea, the travelers finally reached the coast of North America. Cold weather was beginning to spread across the land, so the Pilgrims knew they needed to find a place to settle quickly.

4 Groups of settlers explored the area looking for fresh water, forests, and safe places for ships to anchor. Eventually, they found an area called Plymouth. Nearby were forests filled with tall trees that could be used to build homes and fires. There was also rich soil where crops could be planted.

5 The harbor at Plymouth helped ships stay safe while supplies were unloaded. This made it easier for the settlers to move food, tools, and building supplies from the ship to the land.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Life Along the Nile River

Nonfiction passage. Medium Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

1 Ancient Egypt was mostly covered by hot, dry desert. In many places, the land was too dry to grow crops or raise animals. Very few people lived far away from the Nile River because water was difficult to find.

2 Running through the desert was the Nile River, a long river that flowed from south to north. Each year, the river would rise and spill over its banks. When the floodwaters went back down, they left behind dark, rich soil that was good for growing plants.

3 The yearly floods were very important to the people of ancient Egypt. Without the Nile River, farmers would not have been able to grow enough food. The rich soil near the river helped crops grow well during the farming season.

4 Farmers planted crops such as wheat and barley in the soil left by the floodwaters. They also grew vegetables and fruits near the riverbanks. The Nile provided water for drinking, cooking, and farming.

5 The river also supplied fish for people to eat. Many families depended on fishing to help feed the community. The Writing Academy®, LLC Page 26 of 56 Cluster 1 • Module 2
Farmers and fishermen worked hard each day to support their families.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Pilgrims Chose Plymouth (continued)

Nonfiction passage. Medium Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

6 Winter arrived soon after the Pilgrims settled. Snow and freezing temperatures covered the colony. Many families lived in small shelters while workers hurried to build stronger homes. Some settlers became sick because of the cold weather and lack of fresh food.

7 The Pilgrims worked together each day. Some people chopped wood for fires while others cooked meals or cared for children. Everyone had an important job. The settlers knew they needed to cooperate if they wanted the colony to survive.

8 When spring arrived, Native Americans in the area helped the Pilgrims learn how to grow crops such as corn. The settlers also learned how to fish and hunt in the new environment.

9 Slowly, Plymouth began to grow stronger. Families planted crops, repaired homes, and gathered supplies for the next winter. Over time, Plymouth became an important colony in New England.

10 Today, people remember the Pilgrims because they worked hard to build one of the earliest English settlements in North America.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Life Along the Nile River (continued)

Nonfiction passage. Medium Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

6 Boats traveled up and down the Nile carrying people and goods. Some boats carried food while others carried stone, wood, and supplies. The river made travel easier because crossing the hot desert by foot was difficult.

7 Villages, towns, and cities grew along the riverbanks. Most people in ancient Egypt lived close to the Nile because it provided water, food, and transportation.

8 The Nile River also helped trade grow in ancient Egypt. Merchants used boats to move goods between cities. This helped communities exchange supplies and resources.

9 Over time, the Nile became the center of daily life for the people of ancient Egypt. Farmers depended on the floods, fishermen depended on the water, and traders depended on the river for transportation.

10 Today, people still remember how important the Nile River was to ancient Egypt. The river helped one of the world's earliest civilizations survive and grow.

My
marks

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Annotate: The Pilgrims Chose Plymouth

People, places, resources, and actions that explain why the Pilgrims chose Plymouth and how they survived.

TRACKS mark	Color label	What I found (paragraph number and words)
T: Time	Pastel Green	
R: Reactions	Pastel Purple	
A: Actions	Pastel Yellow	
C: Character, Concept, Creature	Pastel Yellow	
K: Key Knowledge	Pastel Orange	
S: Scenery / Setting	Pastel Green	

Highlight the smallest meaningful phrase. If I cannot say why I highlighted it, I should not highlight it.

My best TRACKS phrase and why I chose it

Annotate: Life Along the Nile River

People, resources, places, and effects that show how the Nile River supported life in ancient Egypt.

TRACKS mark	Color label	What I found (paragraph number and words)
T: Time	Pastel Green	
R: Reactions	Pastel Purple	
A: Actions	Pastel Yellow	
C: Character, Concept, Creature	Pastel Yellow	
K: Key Knowledge	Pastel Orange	
S: Scenery / Setting	Pastel Green	

? STOP & THINK

Which detail helps a reader understand why these everyday moments matter?

My thinking

My Prompt Marking Notes

The prompt gives me a topic, a charge, and a clue word. I can use the shapes to slow down and see the job.

Shape	Word	Question I ask myself
Red circle	Topic	What is this prompt about?
Yellow box	Charge	What does the topic do?
Green triangle	Clue word	Does the prompt ask WHY or HOW?

Circle the topic in red. Box the charge in yellow. Triangle the clue word in green.

What resources made Plymouth a good place to settle?

My three marks in words

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 1: Gather + Reveal



I prepare the ground for my ideas

Our Question for Today

What three pieces does a writer need to build a thesis (central idea)?

1. Gather: Mystery Door Prompt Sort

Listen to each prompt. Decide which door it belongs behind: WHAT, WHY, or RELATIONAL HOW.

- What resources made Plymouth a good place to settle?
- Why did people live near the Nile River?
- How did water connect life in both passages?

Which door did each prompt go behind?

2. Reveal: The Three Pieces

A thesis (central idea) has three pieces. TOPIC and CHARGE come from the prompt. ANSWER comes from your reading.

- ☐ TOPIC: the noun of importance from the prompt.
- ☐ CHARGE: the verb of importance from the prompt.
- ☐ ANSWER: the writer's response drawn from reading.

3. Reveal: Prompt Type = Thesis (central idea) Type

The prompt type tells me the sentence type I need. I match my sentence to the job of the prompt.

Prompt Type	Sentence Type	What It Needs
WHAT	Simple sentence	Facts or details
WHY	Complex sentence with because	Reasons
Relational HOW	Simple sentence with a preposition	Ways or connections

STOP & THINK

Which piece comes from the writer, not from the prompt?

My answer

4. Model the Three Pieces

Circle the topic in red. Box the charge in yellow. Triangle the clue word in green.

Why did people live near the Nile River?

Mark	The model shows
Red circle, topic	people near the Nile River
Yellow box, charge	lived
Green triangle, clue word	why
Prompt type	WHY, the answer must give a reason

5. Model Thesis (central idea) Building

WHAT model: Plymouth had fresh water, land for crops, tall trees, and a safe harbor.

WHY model: People lived near the Nile River because it provided water, food, rich soil, and transportation.

HOW model: Water connected life in both passages through survival, farming, and settlement.

6. Listen and Circle

Listen for	Circle one
The noun of importance	Topic, Charge, Answer
The verb of importance	Topic, Charge, Answer
The word that signals WHY or HOW	Topic, Charge, Clue word
The piece from reading, not the prompt	Topic, Charge, Answer

I can name the three pieces and explain where each comes from

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Spin, Build, and Move!

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards (sheet 1 of 2)

Cut on the dashed lines. Read the prompt card. Name TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER. Build a thesis (central idea) in the correct sentence type.

TOPIC	CHARGE
ANSWER	What resources made Plymouth a good place to settle?
What did the Nile River provide for ancient Egyptians?	What made Plymouth a safe harbor?
What important features were found at Plymouth?	Why did the Pilgrims choose Plymouth?

Self-Check (sheet 1 of 2)

Check: Does my thesis (central idea) have all three pieces? Does my sentence type match the prompt?

CHARGE the verb of importance from the prompt.	TOPIC the noun of importance from the prompt.
WHAT: Plymouth had fresh water, land for crops, tall trees, and a safe harbor.	ANSWER the writer's response drawn from reading.
WHAT: The Pilgrims found forests, fresh water, land for crops, and a safe harbor near Plymouth.	WHAT: The Nile River provided ancient Egyptians with water, fish, rich soil, and transportation.
WHY: The Pilgrims chose Plymouth because it had fresh water, land for crops, trees for building, and a safe harbor.	WHAT: Plymouth had forests, fresh water, land for crops, and a safe harbor.

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Spin, Build, and Move!

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards (sheet 2 of 2)

Cut on the dashed lines. Read the prompt card. Name TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER. Build a thesis (central idea) in the correct sentence type.

Why did towns and cities grow along the Nile River?	Why did farmers use the Nile River?
Why did the Pilgrims need to build shelters quickly?	How did water support life in both passages?
How did natural resources connect survival in both passages?	How did the harbor help the Pilgrims' settlement?
How did the Nile River connect farming and transportation?	

Self-Check (sheet 2 of 2)

Check: Does my thesis (central idea) have all three pieces? Does my sentence type match the prompt?

WHY: Farmers used the Nile River because the river provided rich soil and water for crops.

WHY: Towns and cities grew along the Nile River because the river supported farming, drinking water, fishing, and travel.

HOW: Water supported life in both passages through farming, drinking, and survival.

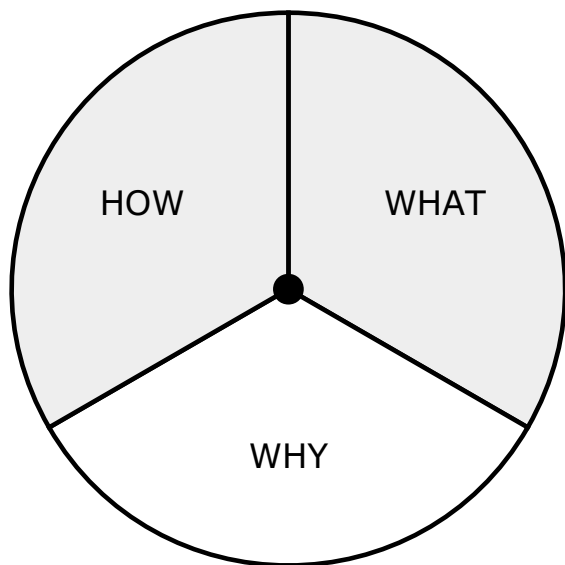
WHY: The Pilgrims needed to build shelters quickly because winter was coming.

HOW: The harbor helped the Pilgrims' settlement through safe anchoring for their ship.

HOW: Natural resources connected survival in both passages through food, water, shelter, and farming.

HOW: The Nile River connected farming and transportation through rich soil for crops and boat travel.

WHAT / WHY / HOW Spinner



Spin with a pencil and a paper clip. Take the prompt card that matches the type you spin. Name TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER, then build the correct kind of thesis (central idea). When it is correct, move your Pencil Guy forward one space.

Pencil Guy Game Board

START	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	FINISH

Day 2: Attempt

Our Question for Today: Can I build a thesis (central idea) that matches the prompt type?

1. Spin, Build, and Move!

- Spin WHAT, WHY, or HOW. Draw a matching prompt card.
- Name TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER for the prompt.
- Build a thesis (central idea) in the correct sentence type.
- If your thesis (central idea) is correct, move your Pencil Guy one space.
- Check each answer against the teacher answer key.

Round	1	2	3	4	5
My partner					
My point					

2. Mark the Partner Prompt

Circle the topic in red. Box the charge in yellow. Triangle the clue word in green.

How did water connect life in both passages?

TOPIC: _____ CHARGE: _____ ANSWER: _____

My thesis (central idea) for this prompt

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 3: Discuss + Use

I explain my thinking



Our Question for Today

Why does knowing the parts of a prompt make a writer's answer stronger?

1. Discuss

Question	My thinking
What three pieces build a thesis (central idea)?	
Which two come from the prompt, and which comes from reading?	
What does a WHAT thesis (central idea) need?	
What does a WHY thesis (central idea) need?	
What does a Relational HOW thesis (central idea) need?	

My discussion notes



2. Label It, Build It, Write It

Work alone. For each prompt, label the TOPIC and CHARGE. Choose an ANSWER from the passages. Write a thesis (central idea) in the correct sentence type.

1

Circle the topic in red. Box the charge in yellow. Triangle the clue word in green.

What resources made Plymouth a good place to settle?

TOPIC: _____ CHARGE: _____ ANSWER: _____

2

Circle the topic in red. Box the charge in yellow. Triangle the clue word in green.

Why did ancient Egyptians depend on the Nile River?

TOPIC: _____ CHARGE: _____ ANSWER: _____

My thesis (central idea) for prompt 1

My thesis (central idea) for prompt 2



Label It, Build It, Write It, continued

3

Circle the topic in red. Box the charge in yellow. Triangle the clue word in green.

How did land and water connect survival in both passages?

TOPIC: _____ CHARGE: _____ ANSWER: _____

4

Circle the topic in red. Box the charge in yellow. Triangle the clue word in green.

Why did the Pilgrims need to build shelters quickly?

TOPIC: _____ CHARGE: _____ ANSWER: _____

My thesis (central idea) for prompt 3

My thesis (central idea) for prompt 4

Embedded Check

- ☐ I labeled TOPIC and CHARGE for each prompt.
- ☐ I chose an ANSWER from the passages.
- ☐ My sentence type matches the prompt type.

3. My Personal Connection

Connect a memory or experience to one of the passages. Tell which detail made you think of it.

My connection and the detail that made me think of it

Retell how The Pilgrims Chose Plymouth and Life Along the Nile River show people depending on natural resources.

My retelling

Tell one way these two communities are alike.

My comparison

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 4: Award + Target



I notice evidence of my growth

Our Question for Today

What did my brain learn to do this week that it could not do before?

1. Award the Best Parts

Name one thesis (central idea) you built well. Point to it in your work.

Something I did well, and where I did it

2. Target My Next Step

Use the target stems to name what to keep and what to change. Revise a thesis (central idea) if it shows a sentence-type mismatch.

- ☐ One thesis (central idea)-building part I did well.
- ☐ One part that still needs practice.
- ☐ One question I still hold.
- ☐ One prompt type I want to improve.

My target: Next time I will...



3. Curiosity Prompts

Talk with a partner about one of these questions.

- Could one topic support WHAT, WHY, and HOW?
- Why must the thesis (central idea) match the exact job?
- How might my thesis (central idea) change in a longer response?
- What is missing when an answer gives no facts, reasons, or connections?

One idea from our talk I want to keep

4. My Growth Evidence

Look at your four Label It, Build It, Write It responses from Day 3. Find the one where you named all three pieces most clearly.

The prompt I answered best and why

Citizenship Connection

How did water support community life at Plymouth and along the Nile?

My connection between these communities and shared resources

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 5: Explain/Educate

I teach someone else



Our Question for Today

How would I teach someone else to build a thesis (central idea)?

1. Turn and Teach

Teach a partner the three pieces and the three sentence structures. Use an example from the passages.

- TOPIC is the noun of importance from the _____.
- CHARGE is the verb of importance from the _____.
- ANSWER comes from my _____.
- WHAT uses a simple sentence with _____.
- WHY uses a complex sentence with _____ and _____.
- Relational HOW uses a simple sentence with a _____ and _____.

My partner taught me...

2. Transfer: Relational HOW Across Both Passages

Circle the topic in red. Box the charge in yellow. Triangle the clue word in green.

How did water connect life in both passages?

Exit Ticket. Identify the TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER. Then write one complete Relational HOW thesis (central idea).

TOPIC = _____ CHARGE = _____

The ANSWER I will use from the passages

My Relational HOW thesis (central idea)



3. Revise and Edit

Revise my structure so my sentence type matches the prompt. Then edit for complete sentences, agreement, and spelling.

☐ I revised my structure so my sentence type matches the prompt.

☐ I edited for complete sentences, agreement, and spelling.

Underline the preposition in my thesis (central idea).

4. My Progress Tracker

Finding TOPIC and CHARGE, supplying ANSWER, writing all three thesis (central idea) types, and explaining the match



Write More

Plan, draft, revise, edit, and share



My Writing Assignment

Write a short response to this prompt:

Circle the topic in red. Box the charge in yellow. Triangle the clue word in green.

How did water connect life in both passages?

My Plan

- Read the prompt and circle the TOPIC.
- Box the CHARGE, the verb of importance.
- Triangle the clue word and name the relational demand.
- Choose an ANSWER from both passages.
- Choose a preposition that shows the connection.
- Combine the three pieces in one complete thesis (central idea).
- Reread for a direct answer, then revise or edit.

An ANSWER I can use from both passages

My preposition that shows the connection

Color Words I Can Use

My Draft



Use my shaped prompt and my plan. Write one complete Relational HOW thesis (central idea).

Draft, page 1

A sentence I want to keep

Revise, Edit, and Share

Revise

- ☐ My response answers the charge of the prompt.
- ☐ I replaced one plain word with a stronger word.
- ☐ Every sentence is complete with a subject and a verb.

Edit

- ☐ Every sentence is complete.
- ☐ Plymouth and the Nile River begin with capital letters.
- ☐ Water and harbor are common nouns unless they begin a sentence.
- ☐ Singular nouns are spelled correctly.
- ☐ High-frequency words are spelled correctly.

My improved sentence

Share

Choose one: read to a partner, share in author's chair, join a gallery walk, or add your prompt to a class booklet.

My sharing plan

Before I Turn It In

Read each line. Check it when I can show it in my work.

Part	I can show...	Check
Prompt parts	I marked the topic, charge, and clue word.	
Prompt type	I named WHY or HOW and used the clue word.	
Writing	My answer matches the job in the prompt.	
Conventions	I used complete sentences and capital letters.	

Study the Samples

Read the three responses to this prompt. Notice what improves from Low to Medium to High.

Why did the Pilgrims choose Plymouth?

Low

The Pilgrims chose Plymouth.

What is missing: an ANSWER to WHY is missing because no reason is supplied.

Medium

The Pilgrims chose Plymouth because it had fresh water.

What is missing: other relevant passage-based reasons can strengthen the answer.

High

The Pilgrims chose Plymouth because it had fresh water, land for crops, trees for building, and a safe harbor.

Why it works: includes TOPIC, CHARGE, and a passage-based ANSWER. The complex sentence with because and reasons matches the WHY prompt.

What improves from Low to High?



Look Back & Look Forward

I own my learning



My Progress Tracker

I can...	Not yet	Growing	Got it
Finds the TOPIC in a prompt.	☐	☐	☐
Finds the CHARGE in a prompt.	☐	☐	☐
Supplies an ANSWER from the passages.	☐	☐	☐
Writes a WHAT thesis (central idea) with facts or details.	☐	☐	☐
Writes a WHY thesis (central idea) with because and reasons.	☐	☐	☐
Writes a Relational HOW thesis (central idea) with a preposition and connections.	☐	☐	☐
Explains why the thesis (central idea) fits the prompt.	☐	☐	☐
Identifies which pieces come from the prompt and which comes from reading.	☐	☐	☐
Revises the thesis (central idea) for the matching structure and a complete answer.	☐	☐	☐

Something I Did Well...

What I did well, and where I did it

My Next Step...

[illegible]

Essential Question Answered

How can a writer build a thesis (central idea) statement that answers a WHAT, WHY, or Relational HOW short constructed response prompt?

The answer

The writer finds the TOPIC and CHARGE in the prompt, thinks of an ANSWER from the passages, and matches the sentence type to the prompt: a simple sentence with facts or details for WHAT, a complex sentence with because and reasons for WHY, and a simple sentence with a preposition and ways or connections for Relational HOW.

My Final Thinking (in my own words)

What Changed in My Thinking?

At first I thought...

Now I think...

Try It Another Way

Use a question from your day. Say the topic, charge, and clue word. Tell whether it asks WHY or HOW. Then explain the job.

My new prompt

Prompt Architect Challenge

Design your own prompts and prove your understanding: Use both passages to create three prompts and matching theses.

- Write one WHAT prompt using the two passages.
- Write one WHY prompt using the two passages.
- Write one Relational HOW prompt using the two passages.
- Build a matching thesis (central idea) for each prompt.
- Explain why each sentence structure fits its prompt type.

My three prompts, matching theses, and explanations

My Prompt Architect Work

Write your three prompts, three theses, and three explanations in the box below.

At-Home Connection

Choose one card to talk about with someone at home. End with a conversation, not a worksheet. You may use any language you speak at home.

Three Pieces to a Thesis (central idea)

Ask someone at home a question about their day. Name the TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER. Then say a thesis (central idea) that matches the question type.

Ask them: what is the hardest part of knowing what a question is really asking?

Family member signature: _____

Thesis (central idea) Type at Dinner

Take turns asking a WHAT, WHY, and Relational HOW question at dinner. For each one, explain whether the answer needs facts or details, reasons with because, or ways and connections with a preposition.

Ask them: which kind of question makes you think the hardest?

Family member signature: _____

Thesis (central idea) Builder

Use the words topic, charge, and answer. Write one WHY thesis (central idea) using the frame _____ because _____. You may talk about this card in any language you speak at home first.

Ask them: can you find a question somewhere in our home? Point to its topic.

Family member signature: _____

My Family Conversation Notes

What did I teach? What did my family member remember? Write what happened.

Notes

Track My Progress

Every time I get a score or a grade on my work in this module, I write it here. This can be an exit ticket, a short answer, or a rubric score from my teacher.

Date	What I did (for example exit ticket, short answer, rubric)	My score	My next goal

Why This Helps Me

This chart shows how my scores change over the whole module, not just on one day.

- ☐ I keep this chart up to date.
- ☐ I can tell if my scores are growing.
- ☐ I ask for help when I need it.
- ☐ I show this chart to my teacher or a family member.

Add a new row every time I get feedback, a score, or a grade on my work.

My Module 2 Snapshot

I can keep this page with my other work. It shows how my thinking grew.

The most useful word I learned

The prompt part I can find fastest

My Strong Roots

I am ready to grow the next part of my writing tree.

A note to my future writer self

My Proud Moment This Week

THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC.

Student Interactive Workbook

Grade 3

Cluster 1 - Module 3

Understanding and Selecting Strong
Evidence



Name: _____



The Writing Academy®, LLC

Grade 3 • Cluster 1 • Module 3

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How to Use My Workbook

This book holds my reading, thinking, writing, and reflection for this module.

My Name and My Goal for This Module

Pocket Practice

Attach a sheet of paper along the left, right, and bottom sides of this box to make a pocket. Store your game cards here throughout each module.



Meet My Week

Understanding and Selecting Strong Evidence



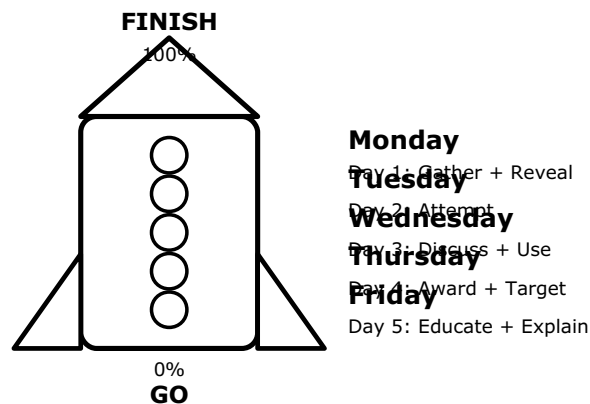
Why This Matters to Me

A thesis (central idea) needs proof. I will learn to choose evidence that connects to my prompt and supports my thesis (central idea), and I will introduce it with a signal marker and correct punctuation.

Essential Question

How can a writer choose and cite the strongest evidence from a passage to support a thesis (central idea)?

My Week Tracker



Color in one section of the rocket after you finish each day's work. Watch your rocket launch from GO to FINISH!

My First Thinking

I Can

- I can tell the difference between evidence and opinion.
- I can use CSI to check whether my evidence is strong.
- I can write a quoted-evidence sentence with a signal marker, comma, and quotation marks.

I Will

- I will choose evidence that connects to the prompt and supports my thesis (central idea).
- I will use exact words from the passage as my proof.

The I Can I want to reach first, and why

My Week at a Glance

What I learn	What I read	What I make
How to select strong evidence using CSI and introduce it correctly.	Two nonfiction passages about the Pilgrims at Plymouth and life along the Nile River (high stamina).	Evidence classifications, a quoted-evidence sentence, a CSI explanation, and a next step.

Where We Are Going

I will move from hearing evidence to choosing and writing it with purpose. I will finish by teaching a partner how CSI helps pick the strongest proof.

I'll Know I've Got It When...

- ☐ My evidence comes from the passage, not an opinion.
- ☐ My evidence connects to the prompt and supports my thesis (central idea).
- ☐ I introduce my quote with a signal marker and comma.
- ☐ I use quotation marks around the exact passage words.

Check Myself

- ☐ I read the whole prompt.
- ☐ I can point to proof for my thinking.
- ☐ I can explain my choice to a partner.

How I Will Show What I Know

I will show what I know with evidence classifications, a quoted-evidence sentence, a CSI check, and a Day 5 exit ticket.

My GRADUATE Learning Path

Stage	Day	What I do
Gather	Day 1	I listen for evidence and freeze when I hear proof.
Reveal	Day 1	I learn CSI, signal markers, and the quotation pattern.
Attempt	Day 2	I practice with CSI Evidence Quest.
Discuss	Day 3	I explain why evidence is strong or weak.
Use Again	Day 3	I write a quoted-evidence sentence on my own.
Award	Day 4	I name evidence of my growth.
Target	Day 4	I choose my next step.
Explain/Educate	Day 5	I teach a partner about CSI and signal markers.

Say It Together!

These are the exact TEKS this module teaches. Read the code, then say the job in your own words.

3.12B:

TEKS says: 3.11A plan a first draft by selecting a genre for a particular topic, purpose, and audience using a range of strategies such as brainstorming, freewriting, and mapping; 3.11B develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by: (i) organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction and a conclusion; and (ii) developing an engaging idea with relevant details; 3.11C revise drafts to improve sentence structure and word choice by adding, deleting, combining, and rearranging ideas for coherence and clarity; 3.12B compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea and genre characteristics and craft; 3.7C use text evidence to support an appropriate response; 3.11D edit drafts using standard English conventions, including: (i) complete simple and compound sentences with subject-verb agreement; (ii) past, present, and future verb tense; (iii) singular, plural, common, and proper nouns; (iv) adjectives, including their comparative and superlative forms; (v) adverbs that convey time and adverbs that convey manner; (vi) prepositions and prepositional phrases; (vii) pronouns, including subjective, objective, and possessive cases; (viii) coordinating conjunctions to form compound subjects, predicates, and sentences; (ix) capitalization of official titles of people, holidays, and geographical names and places; (x) punctuation marks, including apostrophes in contractions and possessives and commas in compound sentences and items in a series; and (xi) correct spelling of words with grade-appropriate orthographic patterns and rules and high-frequency words;

How I say it: I choose passage proof that supports the thesis (central idea), check it with CSI, and write a signal marker, comma, and quotation marks around the exact words. Official wording source: Texas Education Agency, Grade 3 TEKS, §110.5.

3.7C:

TEKS says: 3.7C use text evidence to support an appropriate response.

Call and Response

Read this together as a class before we start.

Teacher asks: "What is CSI?"



Get Ready

Before I begin



Before We Begin: What Do I Already Know?

I can shape a prompt with circle, box, and triangle. I can build a thesis (central idea) with TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER. I know the SCR ladder: thesis (central idea), evidence, explanation.

A connection I can make

Remember It!

- ☐ A thesis (central idea) answers the prompt.
- ☐ Evidence is proof from the passage.
- ☐ An explanation tells what the evidence shows.

One idea I remember

Ready Check

- ☐ I can read a passage and find useful details.
- ☐ I can tell the difference between a fact and an opinion.
- ☐ I can write a complete sentence.

Watch Out! Common Mix-Up

Watch out! A copied sentence from the passage is not automatically strong evidence. It must connect to the prompt and support the thesis (central idea).

Where This Fits in My Writing

The SCR ladder has three rungs: thesis (central idea), evidence, explanation. This module builds the second rung.

What I want to remember before I start

Where I Am Starting

This shows my teacher what I already know. It is not for a grade. Work on your own. You may reread the passages in Read and Interact as often as you want.

Part 1: Prompt Analysis

Read the prompt. Circle the topic in red. Draw a yellow box around the charge. Draw a green triangle around the clue word.

Choose one strong piece of evidence for this thesis (central idea): The Pilgrims chose Plymouth because it had fresh water, land for crops, trees for building, and a safe harbor.

Part 2: Thesis (Central Idea)

Write one sentence that answers the prompt above. Use the topic, use the charge, and add your own answer.

My thesis (central idea)

Part 3: Informative Organization

Number these four sentences 1, 2, 3, 4 to show the order they belong in an informative response.

Number	Sentence
_____	I think Plymouth was a good place.
_____	The text states, "The land also had rich soil where crops could be planted."
_____	Ancient Egypt was mostly covered by hot, dry desert.
_____	The harbor at Plymouth made it possible for ships to anchor safely.

Part 4: Introduction

Write the first sentence of a response to the prompt. Remember that the first sentence tells the reader what you will prove.

My first sentence

Part 5: Relevant Details and Evidence

Reason: The Pilgrims needed natural resources. Copy one sentence from the passage that proves this. Then explain in one sentence why it supports the thesis (central idea).

The sentence I copied from the passage

Why it proves the reason

Part 6: Passage-Based Paragraph

Write three or four sentences that answer the prompt from Part 1. Use your thesis (central idea), one reason, and one piece of evidence.

My paragraph



Words I Need

Tier 1, everyday words



Say each word. Then use one word in a sentence about evidence.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
proof	PROOF	Something that shows an idea is true.	The quote is _____ for my answer.
words	WURDZ	Letters put together to make meaning.	I use the exact _____ from the passage.
sentence	SEN-tens	A group of words that shares a complete thought.	My evidence is a _____ from the passage.
detail	DEE-tayl	A small fact that gives more information.	This _____ supports my thesis (central idea).
quote	KWOHT	Exact words taken from a text.	I put quotation marks around a _____.
match	MATCH	To fit or go together.	My evidence must _____ my thesis (central idea).
strong	STRONG	Helpful and clear.	I choose _____ evidence.
weak	WEEK	Not helpful enough for the job.	This is _____ evidence for my thesis (central idea).
build	BILD	To make something by putting parts together.	The Pilgrims had to _____ homes before winter.
water	WAW-ter	the clear liquid people, plants, and animals need to live	The river gave the people fresh _____ to drink.
proof (review)	PROOF	something that shows an idea is true	The quote about crops gives _____ for the thesis (central idea).
match (review)	MATCH	to fit or go together	Check the evidence and thesis (central idea) _____.

Use one Tier 1 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 2, academic words

These thinking words help me understand prompts and explain answers. Say each word, then use it with a partner.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
evidence	EV-uh-dens	Proof from the passage that helps support an answer.	My _____ comes from the text.
thesis (central idea)	THEE-sis	A sentence that directly answers the prompt.	My evidence supports my _____.
prompt	PROMPT	The question or task the writer is asked to answer.	My evidence connects to the _____.
quoted evidence	KWOHT-ed EV-uh-dens	Exact words from the text used as proof.	I use _____ to support my answer.
signal marker	SIG-nul MAR-ker	Words that introduce quoted evidence.	The text states, is a _____.
punctuation	punk-choo-AY-shun	marks that help readers understand writing	I use correct _____ around a quote.
support	suh-PORT	To give proof that helps an idea.	My quote will _____ my thesis (central idea).
inference	IN-fur-ens	An idea figured out from clues in the text.	The evidence helps me make an _____.
connect	kuh-NEKT	To fit with or relate to.	Strong evidence must _____ to the prompt.
quote	KWOHT	to use the exact words from a text	I can _____ a sentence correctly.
relevant	REL-uh-vunt	Closely connected to the topic or prompt.	I choose _____ evidence.
strong evidence	STRONG EV-uh-dens	text proof that connects, supports, and helps infer	I use CSI to choose _____.

Use one Tier 2 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 3, passage words

These words come from our passages about The Pilgrims Chose Plymouth and Life Along the Nile River.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
voyage	VOY-ij	A long trip by ship or boat.	The Pilgrims' _____ lasted many weeks.
passengers	PASS-en-jerz	People traveling in a vehicle or ship who are not the crew.	The Mayflower carried more than one hundred _____.
seasick	SEE-sik	Feeling sick because a boat is moving on the water.	Many passengers became _____ on the rough water.
survival skills	ser-VY-vul SKILZ	Abilities that help people stay alive in a difficult place.	Native Americans taught the Pilgrims important _____.
squash	skwahsh	a plant with a vegetable that the Pilgrims grew for food	The Pilgrims planted crops such as corn, beans, and _____.
fertile	FUR-tl	Able to grow many healthy plants well.	The _____ soil helped crops grow.
natural resources	NATCH-er-ul ree-SOR-siz	Useful things found in nature, such as forests or water.	Plymouth had many _____.
harvest season	HAR-vist SEE-zun	The time of year when farmers gather ripe crops.	Farmers gathered food during _____.
sailors	SAY-lerz	people who work or travel on boats and ships	Some people worked as fishermen, merchants, builders, or _____.
historians	his-TOR-ee-unz	People who study and write about the past.	_____ study how rivers shaped civilizations.
fertile (review)	FUR-tl	Apply the word when discussing soil near Plymouth and the Nile.	The _____ soil helped crops grow.
natural resources (review)	NATCH-er-ul ree-SOR-siz	Connect water, forests, and soil to settlement.	Plymouth had many _____.

Use one Tier 3 word in a sentence



My Strategy Tools

SCR Ladder and CSI Evidence Check



While I read, I place a small dot above any word I am unsure about. Then I use CSI to check the evidence I choose: does it connect to the prompt, support my thesis (central idea), and help me infer more?

RED CIRCLE
Noun (topic)

YELLOW BOX
Verb (action)

GREEN TRIANGLE
Clue word (WHAT /
WHY / HOW)

Prompt-Shaping Key
(Module 1 Retrieval)

DOT = an unfamiliar word · CSI = Connects, Supports, Infers

Quotation pattern: Signal marker, "quoted evidence."

SCR Ladder and CSI Evidence Check

Mark	What it means
1 Thesis (central idea)	The answer to the prompt.
2 Evidence	Passage proof for the thesis (central idea). 3.7C
3 Explanation	How the evidence proves the thesis (central idea). 3.7G
CSI: Connects / Supports / Infers	Check the prompt connection, thesis (central idea) support, and additional inference.
Quote: Signal marker and punctuation	Signal marker, "quoted evidence."

How I use CSI to check my evidence

Evidence IS and Evidence IS NOT

Evidence IS	Evidence IS NOT
Passage words or ideas; proof; a relevant detail. Proof that supports the thesis (central idea) and matches the prompt.	Opinion alone; a random detail; a purposeless copied sentence. Evidence needs a purposeful match, not merely a true sentence.

Evidence must match the prompt and support the thesis (central idea). Signal markers: The text states, The author says, The passage explains, The text shows, The author describes.

Check My Evidence With CSI

- ☐ My evidence connects to the prompt.
- ☐ My evidence supports the thesis (central idea).
- ☐ My evidence helps me infer an idea.
- ☐ I wrote a signal marker, a comma, and quotation marks around the exact words.

One piece of evidence I can check with CSI

How I Say the Standard!

3.12B:

TEKS says: 3.11A plan a first draft by selecting a genre for a particular topic, purpose, and audience using a range of strategies such as brainstorming, freewriting, and mapping; 3.11B develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by: (i) organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction and a conclusion; and (ii) developing an engaging idea with relevant details; 3.11C revise drafts to improve sentence structure and word choice by adding, deleting, combining, and rearranging ideas for coherence and clarity; 3.12B compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea and genre characteristics and craft; 3.7C use text evidence to support an appropriate response; 3.11D edit drafts using standard English conventions, including: (i) complete simple and compound sentences with subject-verb agreement; (ii) past, present, and future verb tense; (iii) singular, plural, common, and proper nouns; (iv) adjectives, including their comparative and superlative forms; (v) adverbs that convey time and adverbs that convey manner; (vi) prepositions and prepositional phrases; (vii) pronouns, including subjective, objective, and possessive cases; (viii) coordinating conjunctions to form compound subjects, predicates, and sentences; (ix) capitalization of official titles of people, holidays, and geographical names and places; (x) punctuation marks, including apostrophes in contractions and possessives and commas in compound sentences and items in a series; and (xi) correct spelling of words with grade-appropriate orthographic patterns and rules and high-frequency words;

How I say it: I choose passage proof that supports the thesis (central idea), check it with CSI, and write a signal marker, comma, and quotation marks around the exact words. Official wording source: Texas Education Agency, Grade 3 TEKS, §110.5.

3.7C:

TEKS says: 3.7C use text evidence to support an appropriate response.

Check My Writing

- ☐ My sentence has a subject and a verb.
- ☐ I use a capital letter for Plymouth and the Nile River.
- ☐ I use a period or another ending mark.

The Five Thinking Levels

Use these thinking levels to describe the independence and depth shown in evidence selection.

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

The Difference Between WHAT, WHY, and HOW

Prompt type	What it asks me to do	Example
WHY	Explain a reason, a purpose, or why something matters.	Why did the Pilgrims choose Plymouth?
HOW	Analyze how parts work together or how something happens.	How did the Nile River support daily life in ancient Egypt?
WHAT	Name or describe something from the passage.	What resources helped the Pilgrims survive at Plymouth?

A thinking level I want to try

The Progression of Thinking

Use these thinking levels to describe the independence and depth shown in evidence selection.

Level	Hidden Question	Student Thinking	Thinking Focus
Foundational (Red)	Why did it happen?	Student can explain the cause.	Cause and Effect
Emergent (Orange)	Why was it done?	Student can explain the purpose.	Purpose and Motivation
Visible (Yellow)	Why is it important in the passage?	Student can explain why it matters in the text.	Importance and Contribution
Independent (Green)	Why is it important to me?	Student can explain what I can learn, value, or apply to my own life.	Personal Meaning and Application
Reflective (Blue)	Why is it important to everyone?	Student can explain the universal lesson or significance.	Universal Meaning and Life Lessons

Primary focus: Visible and Independent, Levels 3–4. Students connect passage proof to a thesis (central idea) and infer why the selected detail matters.

A thinking level I understand



Read & Interact

Read with a purpose



Dot, Discover, Drop

DOT: Place a small dot above any unfamiliar word. DISCOVER: Find the pronunciation or the meaning. DROP: Erase the dot once the word is understood.

TRACKS Legend

Letter	Category	Definition and Examples	Required Pastel Color
T	Time	Age, era, dates, cultural details, or historical details. Often adjectives.	Pastel Green
R	Reactions	Reactions, solutions, resolutions, or effects. Often verbs/adverbs.	Pastel Purple
A	Actions	Actions, problems, conflicts, or causes. Often verbs/adverbs.	Pastel Yellow
C	Character, Concept, Creature	Names of characters/people/animals, or major concepts as the central idea. Often nouns/proper nouns.	Pastel Yellow
K	Key Knowledge	All other important info needed for the passage's meaning not in another TRACKS category (background knowledge).	Pastel Orange
S	Scenery / Setting	Setting characteristics acknowledged/measured through the five senses.	Pastel Green

TRACKS marks evidence in the passage. Highlight the smallest meaningful phrase. The shapes Circle, Box, and Triangle are used only to analyze the prompt.

Connect It to Our World

The Pilgrims at Plymouth and ancient Egyptians near the Nile both depended on natural resources. When you choose evidence, you prove that connection with exact passage words.

Background I Need

Module 2 built theses about Plymouth's resources and the Nile's support. Module 3 adds the proof: passage evidence introduced with a signal marker and checked with CSI.

Words I dotted while reading

The Pilgrims Chose Plymouth

Nonfiction passage. High Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

1 In 1620, a group of travelers called the Pilgrims sailed across the Atlantic Ocean searching for a place where many of them could live and practice their beliefs freely. They left England because they wanted more freedom. The Pilgrims hoped to build a safe community where families could live according to their own beliefs.

2 The Pilgrims traveled on a ship called the Mayflower. The voyage lasted for many weeks. The ship carried more than one hundred passengers, including men, women, and children. The ship was crowded, and families had very little space.

3 During the trip, storms caused huge waves to crash against the ship. Strong winds pushed the Mayflower off course several times. Many passengers became seasick because the ship rocked back and forth on the rough water.

4 Life on the ship was not easy. Most passengers stayed below deck for long periods of time. Meals were simple and included dried meat, bread, beans, and cheese. The travelers had to protect their food and water because they did not know how long the trip would last.

5 After many weeks at sea, the Pilgrims finally reached the coast of North America. Winter was beginning, so the settlers needed to find a place to live quickly.

6 Small groups explored the land looking for fresh water, forests, and safe harbors. Eventually, they found an area called Plymouth. Nearby forests provided wood for homes, fires, and tools. The land also had rich soil where crops could be planted.

7 The harbor at Plymouth made it possible for ships to anchor safely. Settlers unloaded tools, food, and supplies from the Mayflower. These supplies helped the colony survive during the first months.

8 Winter in Plymouth was harsh. Snow and freezing temperatures covered the land. Many settlers still lived on the Mayflower while homes were being built.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Life Along the Nile River

Nonfiction passage. High Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

1 Ancient Egypt was mostly covered by hot, dry desert. In many places, the land was too dry to grow crops or raise animals. Because of this, most people settled close to the Nile River.

2 The Nile River was one of the most important rivers in the ancient world. It flowed through the desert from south to north. Each year, the river would rise and flood nearby land.

3 When the floodwaters went back down, they left behind dark, rich soil. This soil was good for growing plants and crops. Without the floods, farming would have been much harder in ancient Egypt.

4 The yearly flooding followed a pattern. Ancient Egyptians learned when the floods would arrive and planned their farming around the river. Farmers waited for the floodwaters to go down before planting seeds.

5 Farmers planted crops such as wheat and barley in the rich soil near the riverbanks. They also grew vegetables and fruits. The Nile provided water for drinking, cooking, and farming.

6 The river also supplied fish for people to eat. Fishing became an important part of life in ancient Egypt. Many families depended on fish and crops for food.

7 Farmers worked hard throughout the year. They planted seeds, cared for crops, and gathered food during harvest season. Rich soil near the Nile helped crops grow better than crops in the dry desert.

8 The Nile River also helped people travel from place to place. Boats moved up and down the river carrying people and goods. Some boats carried food while others transported wood, stone, or tools.

9 Travel by boat was often easier than traveling across the desert. The river connected villages, towns, and cities throughout ancient Egypt.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Pilgrims Chose Plymouth (continued)

Nonfiction passage. High Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

9 Workers spent long days cutting trees and building shelters. Some people gathered firewood while others cooked meals or cared for children. Everyone in the colony had responsibilities.

10 Many Pilgrims became sick during the winter because of the cold weather and lack of fresh food. Some families lost loved ones during this difficult time. Even during hardships, the settlers continued helping one another.

11 When spring arrived, the environment became easier to manage. Native Americans in the area helped the Pilgrims learn important survival skills. The settlers learned how to grow corn in the local soil and where to fish and hunt.

12 The Pilgrims planted crops such as corn, beans, and squash. Families worked together in the fields during planting season. As crops began to grow, the colony slowly became stronger.

13 Boats traveled along the coast carrying people and goods between settlements. More settlers arrived from England hoping to begin new lives in North America.

14 Over time, Plymouth grew into an important colony. New homes, farms, and buildings were constructed. Families worked hard every day to improve the community.

15 The natural environment played an important role in the colony's success. Forests provided wood. Rivers and harbors supported travel and trade. Fertile soil helped farmers grow crops.

16 Today, Plymouth is remembered as one of the earliest English colonies in North America. The Pilgrims' story shows how teamwork, determination, and natural resources helped settlers survive in a new environment.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Life Along the Nile River (continued)

Nonfiction passage. High Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

10 Trade grew because of the Nile River. Merchants exchanged goods between communities. Cities near the river became busy centers of trade and business.

11 Many people in ancient Egypt lived close to the riverbanks. Villages and towns were built near the Nile because families depended on water and farmland.

12 The Nile also influenced jobs in ancient Egypt. Some people became farmers while others worked as fishermen, merchants, builders, or sailors.

13 The river provided important natural resources for the civilization. Water helped crops grow, fish provided food, and transportation helped trade develop.

14 Ancient Egyptians respected the Nile because they understood how important it was to survival. Without the river, living in the desert would have been much more difficult.

15 The environment shaped daily life in ancient Egypt. Farmers depended on floodwaters, merchants depended on boats, and families depended on the river for water and food.

16 Over time, large cities grew along the Nile River. Temples, homes, markets, and farms appeared throughout the region. The civilization became stronger because the Nile supported farming and trade.

17 Today, historians study the Nile River to understand how geography influenced ancient civilizations. The river helped ancient Egypt become one of the world's earliest and most successful civilizations.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Annotate: The Pilgrims Chose Plymouth

People, resources, actions, and settings that explain why Plymouth was chosen and how the Pilgrims survived.

TRACKS mark	Color label	What I found (paragraph number and words)
T: Time	Pastel Green	
R: Reactions	Pastel Purple	
A: Actions	Pastel Yellow	
C: Character, Concept, Creature	Pastel Yellow	
K: Key Knowledge	Pastel Orange	
S: Scenery / Setting	Pastel Green	

Highlight the smallest meaningful phrase. If I cannot say why I highlighted it, I should not highlight it.

My best TRACKS phrase and why I chose it

Annotate: Life Along the Nile River

People, resources, actions, and effects that show how the Nile River supported daily life and civilization.

TRACKS mark	Color label	What I found (paragraph number and words)
T: Time	Pastel Green	
R: Reactions	Pastel Purple	
A: Actions	Pastel Yellow	
C: Character, Concept, Creature	Pastel Yellow	
K: Key Knowledge	Pastel Orange	
S: Scenery / Setting	Pastel Green	

STOP & THINK

Which detail helps a reader understand why these everyday moments matter?

My thinking

My Prompt Marking Notes

The prompt gives me a topic, a charge, and a clue word. I can use the shapes to slow down and see the job.

Shape	Word	Question I ask myself
Red circle	Topic	What is this prompt about?
Yellow box	Charge	What does the topic do?
Green triangle	Clue word	Does the prompt ask WHY or HOW?

Circle the topic in red. Box the charge in yellow. Triangle the clue word in green.

Why did the Pilgrims choose Plymouth?

My three marks in words

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 1: Gather + Reveal



I prepare the ground for my ideas

Our Question for Today

What is evidence, and how is it different from an opinion?

1. Gather: Evidence Detective Freeze

If you hear real passage proof, freeze and make quote fingers. If you hear an opinion, cross your arms.

One statement I classified and why

2. Reveal: Evidence IS and IS NOT

Evidence IS	Evidence IS NOT
Passage words or ideas	Opinion alone
Proof for the thesis (central idea)	A random detail
A prompt-matching detail	A purposeless copied sentence

3. Reveal: CSI Evidence Check

- ☐ C = Connects to the prompt.
- ☐ S = Supports the thesis (central idea).
- ☐ I = helps Infer additional ideas.

STOP & THINK

What is the difference between a fact from the passage and an opinion?

My answer

4. Model: Signal Marker and Quotation Marks

Circle the topic in red. Box the charge in yellow. Triangle the clue word in green.

Why did the Pilgrims choose Plymouth?

Thesis (central idea): The Pilgrims chose Plymouth because it had fresh water, land for crops, trees for building, and a safe harbor.

Strong evidence: The text states, "The land also had rich soil where crops could be planted."

5. The Quotation Pattern

Part	Example
Signal marker	The text states,
Comma	after the signal marker
Quotation marks	around the exact passage words
Exact words	The land also had rich soil where crops could be planted.

6. Signal Marker Bank

- The text states,
- The author says,
- The passage explains,
- The text shows,
- The author describes,

I can write one evidence sentence with a signal marker, comma, and quotation marks

7. Practice: Classify and Quote

Read each statement. Write E for evidence or O for opinion. Then rewrite one evidence sentence using a signal marker.

Statement	E or O?
The land also had rich soil where crops could be planted.	
I think the Pilgrims were brave.	
The Nile provided water for drinking, cooking, and farming.	
Plymouth was probably the best place ever.	
The harbor at Plymouth made it possible for ships to anchor safely.	

Rewrite one evidence sentence with a signal marker, comma, and quotation marks

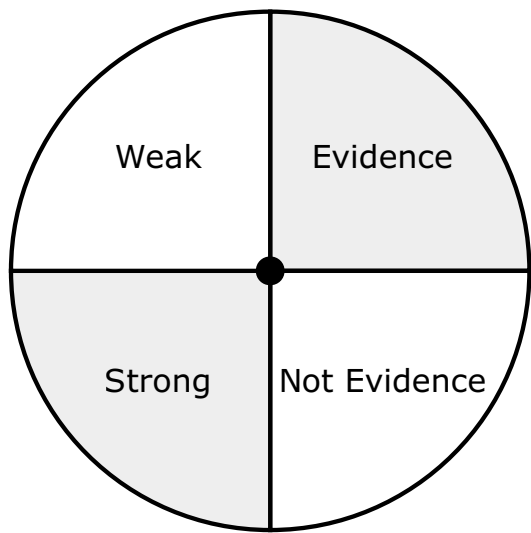
? STOP & THINK

How did I know which statements were opinions?

My answer

CSI Evidence Quest: Spinner and Game Board

Display the four spinner choices: Evidence / Not Evidence / Strong / Weak. Show the thesis (central idea) beside each quote.



Pairs or small groups use an Evidence / Not Evidence / Strong / Weak spinner, cards, a gameboard, and a chosen Pencil Guy marker. A correct classification with a CSI explanation earns one space. Alternate readers and explainers.

Game Board

START	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	FINISH

STUDENT WORKBOOK



CSI Evidence Quest

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards

Cut on the dashed lines. Spin, draw, classify, match a thesis (central idea) when needed, explain with CSI, then switch roles. Store the cards in your Practice Pocket.

The text states, "The land also had rich soil where crops could be planted."	The passage explains, "The Nile provided water for drinking, cooking, and farming."
The author says, "The harbor at Plymouth made it possible for ships to anchor safely."	I think the Pilgrims were brave.
The text states, "Ancient Egypt was mostly covered by hot, dry desert."	The passage explains, "When the floodwaters went back down, they left behind dark, rich soil."
Plymouth was probably the best place ever.	The author describes, "Boats moved up and down the river carrying people and goods."

Self-Check

Does my evidence Connect to the prompt? Support the thesis (central idea)? Help me Infer?

Evidence; strong for the Nile thesis (central idea).	Evidence; strong for the Pilgrims thesis (central idea).
Not evidence; opinion.	Evidence; strong for the Pilgrims thesis (central idea).
Evidence; strong for the rich-soil claim.	Evidence; weaker for the Nile-resource thesis (central idea).
Evidence; strong for transportation.	Not evidence; opinion.

✂ More CSI Evidence Quest Cards

Cut on the dashed lines. Add these cards to your Practice Pocket.

The text states, "Winter was beginning, so the settlers needed to find a place to live quickly."

I like learning about rivers.

Thesis (central idea) card: The Pilgrims chose Plymouth because it had fresh water, land for crops, trees for building, and a safe harbor.

Thesis (central idea) card: Ancient Egyptians depended on the Nile River because it provided water, food, rich soil, and transportation.

CSI checklist card: C Connects to the prompt. S Supports the thesis (central idea). I Infers more.

Signal marker card: The text states, The author says, The passage explains, The text shows, The author describes

Quotation mark card: Signal marker, "quoted evidence."

Pencil Guy marker

Keep the cards in your Practice Pocket. Reuse the game to remember what you learned.

Self-Check

This page prints on the back of the card page. Flip a card over to check yourself.

Not evidence; personal preference.

Strong for urgency; weak for Plymouth's resources.

Thesis (central idea) card. Also use: Water connected life in both passages through survival, farming, and settlement.

Thesis (central idea) card. Also use: Water connected life in both passages through survival, farming, and settlement.

Signal marker card. A signal marker introduces quoted evidence.

CSI checklist card. Use it to explain every classification.

Pencil Guy marker. A correct classification with a CSI explanation earns one space.

Quotation mark card. Use a comma and quotation marks around the exact words.

Keep the cards in your Practice Pocket when you finish.

Game Materials

Prepare the four-category spinner, evidence and thesis (central idea) cards, CSI checklist, gameboard, Pencil Guy marker, and Practice Pocket.

- Four-category spinner
- Evidence cards and thesis (central idea) cards
- CSI checklist
- Gameboard and Pencil Guy marker
- Practice Pocket

My CSI explanation for a partner

Day 2: Attempt

Our Question for Today: Can I classify evidence and match it to a thesis (central idea)?

1. CSI Evidence Quest

- Spin Evidence, Not Evidence, Strong, or Weak.
- Draw a card and read it aloud.
- Classify the card and match it to a thesis (central idea).
- Explain your answer using at least one CSI word.
- A correct classification earns one space on the gameboard.

Round	1	2	3	4	5
My partner					
My point					

2. My CSI Check

Choose one card you classified as strong evidence. Write the CSI check below.

The quote I chose

C: How it connects to the prompt

S: How it supports the thesis (central idea)

I: What it helps me infer

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 3: Discuss + Use

I explain my thinking



Our Question for Today

Why does knowing CSI help me choose the strongest evidence?

1. Discuss

Question	My thinking
What makes evidence different from an opinion?	
Can the same quote be strong for one thesis (central idea) and weak for another?	
What does the C in CSI mean?	
What does the S in CSI mean?	
What does the I in CSI mean?	

My discussion notes



2. Thesis (central idea) + Evidence Builder

Write one strong quoted-evidence sentence for the Pilgrims thesis (central idea). Use a signal marker, comma, and quotation marks.

Thesis (central idea): The Pilgrims chose Plymouth because it had fresh water, land for crops, trees for building, and a safe harbor.

My quoted-evidence sentence

3. Judge the Weak Evidence

Is this strong or weak for the Nile thesis (central idea)? "Ancient Egypt was mostly covered by hot, dry desert."

Strong or weak? Why?

Embedded Check

- ☐ My quote comes from the passage.
- ☐ My quote supports the thesis (central idea).
- ☐ I used a signal marker, comma, and quotation marks.

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 4: Award + Target



I notice evidence of my growth

Our Question for Today

What did my brain learn to do this week that it could not do before?

1. Award the Best Parts

Name one strong evidence choice you made. Point to it in your work and explain why it works.

One thing I did well with evidence was

I chose strong evidence when I

2. Target My Next Step

Use the Target stems to name what to keep and what to change. A strong target names an observable improvement.

- ☐ One thing I understand about choosing evidence.
- ☐ One thing I still need to practice.
- ☐ One question I still have about quoting.
- ☐ One way I will improve my evidence.

One thing I understand about evidence

One thing I still need to practice

One question I still have about quoting

One way I will improve my evidence

Possible improvement: replace an unrelated quote with “The land also had rich soil where crops could be planted.” and introduce it with “The text states,”.

My improved evidence sentence

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 5: Explain/Educate



I teach someone else

Our Question for Today

How would I teach someone else to choose and write strong evidence?

1. Turn and Teach

Teach a partner what evidence is, what it is not, how you use CSI, and how you introduce a quote.

- Evidence is _____.
- Evidence is NOT _____.
- Strong evidence supports _____.
- A signal marker helps by _____.
- CSI stands for _____, _____, _____.

My partner taught me...

2. Transfer: Day 5 Exit Ticket

Complete each part on your own.

Thesis (central idea): The Pilgrims chose Plymouth because it had fresh water, land for crops, trees for building, and a safe harbor.

Classify: "I think Plymouth was a good place."

Evidence or Opinion? Why?

My strong quoted-evidence sentence (signal marker, comma, quotation marks)

CSI: How it Connects, Supports, and helps me Infer

Check My Exit Ticket

- ☐ I classified the opinion correctly.
- ☐ My quote comes from the passage.
- ☐ I used a signal marker, comma, and quotation marks.
- ☐ I explained the CSI match.

My final Day 5 thought



Write More

Plan, draft, revise, edit, and share



My Writing Assignment

Write a short response to this prompt:

Circle the topic in red. Box the charge in yellow. Triangle the clue word in green.

Why did the Pilgrims choose Plymouth?

My Plan

- Read the thesis (central idea): The Pilgrims chose Plymouth because it had fresh water, land for crops, trees for building, and a safe harbor.
- Find a quote in the passage that supports one part of the thesis (central idea).
- Check it with CSI: Connects? Supports? Infers?
- Write the evidence with a signal marker, comma, and quotation marks.

Two possible reasons from the passage

The stronger reason is...

Color Words I Can Use

Thesis (central idea) and reasons, Green. Evidence, Yellow. Explanation, Red or Pink. Reflective thinking, Blue.

My Draft



Use my shaped prompt and my plan. Write a clear response.

Draft, page 1

A sentence I want to keep

Revise, Edit, and Share

Revise

- ☐ My response answers the charge of the prompt.
- ☐ I replaced one plain word with a stronger word.
- ☐ Every sentence is complete with a subject and a verb.

Edit

- ☐ Every sentence is complete.
- ☐ Plymouth, Pilgrims, and Nile River begin with capital letters.
- ☐ Evidence and proof are common nouns unless they begin a sentence.
- ☐ Singular nouns are spelled correctly.
- ☐ High-frequency words are spelled correctly.

My improved sentence

Share

Choose one: read to a partner, share in author's chair, join a gallery walk, or add your prompt to a class booklet.

My sharing plan

Before I Turn It In

Read each line. Check it when I can show it in my work.

Part	I can show...	Check
Prompt parts	I marked the topic, charge, and clue word.	
Prompt type	I named WHY or HOW and used the clue word.	
Writing	My answer matches the job in the prompt.	
Conventions	I used complete sentences and capital letters.	

Study the Samples

Read the three responses to this prompt. Notice what improves from Low to Medium to High.

Why did the Pilgrims choose Plymouth?

Low

I think Plymouth was a good place.

What is missing: the response supplies opinion rather than passage proof.

Medium

Ancient Egypt was mostly covered by hot, dry desert.

What is missing: the quote does not support the Pilgrims thesis (central idea) or identify Plymouth's resources.

High

Thesis (central idea): The Pilgrims chose Plymouth because it had fresh water, land for crops, trees for building, and a safe harbor. The text states, "The land also had rich soil where crops could be planted."

CSI check: Connects to why Plymouth was chosen; supports land for crops; helps infer a source of food. Why it works: Exact words from paragraph [6], a signal marker, a comma, and quotation marks make this a strong Module 3 evidence sentence.

What improves from Low to High?



Look Back & Look Forward

I own my learning



My Progress Tracker

I can...	Not yet	Growing	Got it
Tell what evidence is.	☐	☐	☐
Tell what evidence is not.	☐	☐	☐
Choose evidence that connects to the prompt.	☐	☐	☐
Choose evidence that supports the thesis (central idea).	☐	☐	☐
Use CSI to tell whether evidence is strong.	☐	☐	☐
Use a signal marker before a quote.	☐	☐	☐
Use a comma and quotation marks correctly.	☐	☐	☐
Use exact words from the passage.	☐	☐	☐
Improve an evidence sentence after checking its match.	☐	☐	☐

Something I Did Well...

What I did well, and where I did it

My Next Step...

Why this is my next step

Essential Question Answered

How can a writer choose and cite the strongest evidence from a passage to support a thesis (central idea)?

The answer

A writer rereads the prompt and thesis (central idea), then uses CSI to choose proof that Connects to the prompt, Supports the thesis (central idea), and helps the reader Infer additional ideas. The writer introduces the exact passage words with a signal marker and comma and encloses those words in quotation marks.

My Final Thinking (in my own words)

What Changed in My Thinking?

At first I thought...

Now I think...

Try It Another Way

Use a question from your day. Say the topic, charge, and clue word. Tell whether it asks WHY or HOW. Then explain the job.

My new prompt

Take It Further! Evidence Ladder Challenge

Extend mastery by comparing two pieces of evidence for a thesis (central idea) and explaining which is stronger. Choose two quotes for the Pilgrims thesis (central idea). Explain which is strongest and state one inference.

- Part 1: Choose a Thesis (central idea). Pick the Pilgrims thesis (central idea), the Nile thesis (central idea), or "Water connected life in both passages through survival, farming, and settlement."
- Part 2: Build the Evidence Ladder. Add two quoted-evidence sentences.
- Nile model: The passage explains, "The Nile provided water for drinking, cooking, and farming." The author describes, "Boats moved up and down the river carrying people and goods." The first directly supports water and farming; the second directly supports transportation.
- Part 3: Explain the Comparison. Explain which quote best supports the part of the thesis (central idea) emphasized. Compare their strength with CSI and state an inference.
- Share your evidence ladder with a partner and explain the strength of each quote.

My thesis (central idea), first quote, second quote, CSI comparison, and inference

My Evidence Ladder

Write my thesis (central idea) at the top. Write my first quote and my second quote on the rungs. Mark the stronger quote.

At-Home Connection

Choose one card to talk about with someone at home. End with a conversation, not a worksheet.

Evidence Detective

Ask someone at home to tell you one fact and one opinion about their day. Explain which could be evidence and why.

Ask them: how do you know when something is a fact and not just a feeling?

Family member signature: _____

CSI at Dinner

Ask someone at home to make a claim about their day. Then find a supporting fact. Explain how it Connects, Supports, and helps Infer.

Ask them: what proof would convince you that something is true?

Family member signature: _____

Signal Marker Builder

Use these words: The text states, The author says. Practice saying a sentence that introduces a quote with a signal marker, comma, and quotation marks.

Ask them: can you find exact words in a book or on a sign that prove something?

Family member signature: _____

My Family Conversation Notes

What did I teach? What did my family member remember? Write what happened.

Notes

Track My Progress

Every time I get a score or a grade on my work in this module, I write it here. This can be an exit ticket, a short answer, or a rubric score from my teacher.

Date	What I did (for example exit ticket, short answer, rubric)	My score	My next goal

Why This Helps Me

This chart shows how my scores change over the whole module, not just on one day.

- ☐ I keep this chart up to date.
- ☐ I can tell if my scores are growing.
- ☐ I ask for help when I need it.
- ☐ I show this chart to my teacher or a family member.

Add a new row every time I get feedback, a score, or a grade on my work.

My Module 3 Snapshot

I can keep this page with my other work. It shows how my thinking grew.

The most useful word I learned

The prompt part I can find fastest

My Strong Roots

I am ready to grow the next part of my writing tree.

A note to my future writer self

My Proud Moment This Week

THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC.

Student Interactive Workbook

Grade 3

Cluster 1 - Module 4

Explaining Evidence / Build the Full SCR
Ladder



Name: _____



The Writing Academy®, LLC

Grade 3 • Cluster 1 • Module 4

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How to Use My Workbook

This book holds my reading, thinking, writing, and reflection for this module.

My Name and My Goal for This Module

Pocket Practice

Attach a sheet of paper along the left, right, and bottom sides of this box to make a pocket. Store your game cards here throughout each module.



Meet My Week

Explaining Evidence / Build the Full SCR Ladder



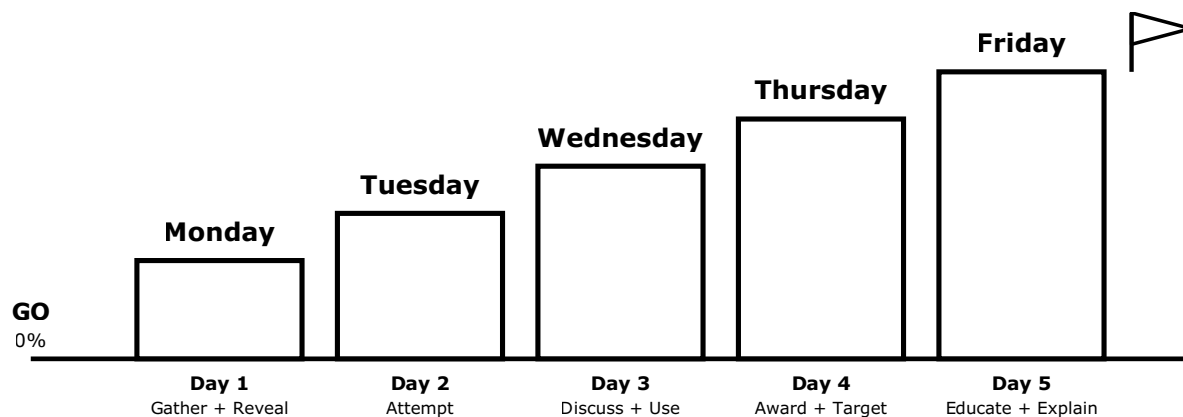
Why This Matters to Me

A thesis (central idea) and evidence are not enough. I need to explain what my evidence means and how it proves my answer. This week I will build the full SCR ladder.

Essential Question

How can a writer explain how their evidence proves the thesis (central idea) in a short constructed response?

My Week Tracker



Color in one bar at the END of each day, after I finish that day's work. Watch my week grow from GO to FINISH!

My First Thinking

I Can

- I can tell the difference between evidence and explanation.
- I can use Definition or Story/Anecdote to explain my evidence.
- I can build a full SCR with thesis (central idea), evidence, and explanation.

I Will

- I will explain what my evidence means in my own words.
- I will connect my explanation to the thesis (central idea).

The I Can I want to reach first, and why

[illegible]

My Week at a Glance

What I learn	What I read	What I make
How to explain evidence using Definition and Story/Anecdote signal markers.	Two nonfiction passages about the Pilgrims at Plymouth and life along the Nile River (very high stamina).	Evidence/explanation sorts, explanation bookends, a full SCR, and a next step.

Where We Are Going

I will move from naming evidence to explaining what it means. I will finish by building a full SCR ladder and teaching a partner how explanation works.

I'll Know I've Got It When...

- ☐ My explanation follows my evidence sentence.
- ☐ My explanation uses my own words, not a copied quote.
- ☐ My explanation uses a Definition or Story/Anecdote signal marker.
- ☐ The word this points back to my evidence.

Check Myself

- ☐ I read the whole prompt.
- ☐ I can point to proof for my thinking.
- ☐ I can explain my choice to a partner.

How I Will Show What I Know

I will show what I know with evidence/explanation sorts, explanation bookends, a full SCR exit ticket, and a partner explanation.

My GRADUATE Learning Path

Stage	Day	What I do
Gather	Day 1	I explain a mystery object without naming it.
Reveal	Day 1	I learn Definition and Story/Anecdote and the SCR ladder.
Attempt	Day 2	I practice with Evidence or Explanation Relay Race.
Discuss	Day 3	I explain why the two bookends help differently.
Use Again	Day 3	I write Bookends of Explanation on my own.
Award	Day 4	I name evidence of my growth.
Target	Day 4	I choose my next step.
Explain/Educate	Day 5	I build a full SCR and teach a partner.

Say It Together!

These are the exact TEKS this module teaches. Read the code, then say the job in your own words.

3.11A:

TEKS says: 3.11A: plan a first draft by selecting a genre for a particular topic, purpose, and audience using a range of strategies such as brainstorming, freewriting, and mapping; 3.12B: compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea and genre characteristics and craft; 3.11C: revise drafts to improve sentence structure and word choice by adding, deleting, combining, and rearranging ideas for coherence and clarity; 3.11D(i): edit drafts using standard English conventions, including: complete simple and compound sentences with subject-verb agreement; 3.11D(xi): edit drafts using standard English conventions, including: correct spelling of words with grade-appropriate orthographic patterns and rules and high-frequency words. How I say it: Plan a response, state a clear thesis (central idea), provide evidence, and explain its meaning using one of the two bookends. Revise for clarity and edit sentences and spelling. Source: Texas Education Agency, Grade 3 TEKS.

3.12B:

TEKS says: 3.12B: compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea and genre characteristics and craft.

How I say it: Plan a response, state a clear thesis (central idea), provide evidence, and explain its meaning using one of the two bookends. Revise for clarity and edit sentences and spelling.

Call and Response

Read this together as a class before we start.

Teacher asks: "What does an explanation do?"

Class answers: "It tells what the evidence means!"

One TEKS I want to practice today



Get Ready

Before I begin



Before We Begin: What Do I Already Know?

I can shape a prompt with circle, box, and triangle. I can build a thesis (central idea) with TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER. I can select strong evidence and introduce it with a signal marker.

A connection I can make

Remember It!

- ☐ A thesis (central idea) answers the prompt.
- ☐ Evidence is proof from the passage.
- ☐ An explanation tells what the evidence means.

One idea I remember

Ready Check

- ☐ I can write a thesis (central idea) that matches the prompt type.
- ☐ I can choose evidence that supports my thesis (central idea).
- ☐ I can use a signal marker, comma, and quotation marks.

Watch Out! Common Mix-Up

Watch out! Copying the evidence is not explaining it. Explanation tells what the evidence means in your own words.

Where This Fits in My Writing

The SCR ladder has three rungs: thesis (central idea), evidence, explanation. This module builds the third and final rung.

What I want to remember before I start

Where I Am Starting

This shows my teacher what I already know. It is not for a grade. Work on your own. You may reread the passages in Read and Interact as often as you want.

Part 1: Prompt Analysis

Read the prompt. Circle the topic in red. Draw a yellow box around the charge. Draw a green triangle around the clue word.

Write a full SCR: thesis (central idea), evidence, and explanation for this prompt: Why did people settle in places with helpful natural resources?

Part 2: Thesis (Central Idea)

Write one sentence that answers the prompt above. Use the topic, use the charge, and add your own answer.

My thesis (central idea)

Part 3: Informative Organization

Number these four sentences 1, 2, 3, 4 to show the order they belong in an informative response.

Number	Sentence
_____	People settled in places with helpful natural resources because those places provided what they needed to survive.
_____	The text states, "There was also fresh water and land where crops could be planted."
_____	This means people chose places where they could find water and grow food.
_____	There was fresh water and land.

Part 4: Introduction

Write the first sentence of a response to the prompt. Remember that the first sentence tells the reader what you will prove.

My first sentence

Part 5: Relevant Details and Evidence

Reason: People needed natural resources to survive. Copy one sentence from the passage that proves this. Then explain in one sentence what the evidence means.

The sentence I copied from the passage

Why it proves the reason

Part 6: Passage-Based Paragraph

Write three or four sentences that answer the prompt from Part 1. Use your thesis (central idea), one reason, and one piece of evidence.

My paragraph



Words I Need

Tier 1, everyday words



Say each word. Then use one word in a sentence about explaining evidence.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
tell	TEL	to say or explain something	I can _____ what the evidence means.
means	MEENZ	shows the idea something has	This _____ the Pilgrims had resources.
matters	MAT-erz	is important	The evidence _____ because it supports the thesis (central idea).
quote	KWOHT	the exact words from a text	The evidence sentence can use a _____.
copy	KOP-ee	to write the same words again	I do not _____ the evidence for my explanation.
thought	THAWT	an idea in the mind	My explanation is not a random _____.
story	STOR-ee	an account of something that happened	A _____ explanation helps connect an idea to life.
explain	ik-SPLAYN	to tell what something means or why it matters	I can _____ my evidence.
build	BILD	to make something by putting parts together	The Pilgrims had to _____ homes before winter.
water	WAW-ter	the clear liquid people, plants, and animals need to live	The river gave people fresh _____ to drink.
tell / means	TEL / MEENZ	Rehearse the difference between stating a detail and explaining it.	This means _____.
quote / copy	KWOHT / KOP-ee	Contrast quoting evidence with copying it as explanation.	The quote means _____.

Use one Tier 1 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 2, academic words

These thinking words help me understand prompts and explain answers. Say each word, then use it with a partner.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
explanation	ek-spluh-NAY-shun	A sentence that tells what evidence means or why it matters.	My _____ comes after my evidence.
evidence	EV-uh-dens	A quote or detail supporting the thesis (central idea).	My _____ gives proof from the passage.
thesis (central idea)	THEE-sis	The central idea that answers the prompt.	My _____ is supported by evidence.
signal marker	SIG-nul MAR-ker	Words showing the kind of explanation.	"This means" is a _____.
definition	def-uh-NISH-un	An explanation telling what evidence means.	A _____ explanation can start with "This shows."
anecdote / story	AN-ek-doh / STOR-ee	anecdote: a short story or connection; story: a connection explaining an idea	An _____ helps a reader understand more. A _____ explanation can start with "This reminds me of."
demonstrative pronoun	deh-MON-struh-tiv	A word pointing to something already named and close by.	The word _____ points back to the evidence.
metacognition	met-uh-kog-NIH-shun	Thinking about one's own thinking.	Using the same passages helps with _____.
clarify / elaborate	KLAIR-uh-fy / ee-LAB-uh-rayt	clarify: make an idea easier to understand; elaborate: add more information	An explanation can _____ evidence. Writers _____ by telling what it means.
support	suh-PORT	To give proof for an idea.	Evidence and explanation _____ the thesis (central idea).
response	rih-SPONS	the answer a writer gives	My _____ has a thesis (central idea), evidence, and explanation.
punctuation / capitalize	punk-choo-AY-shun / KAP-ih-tuh-lyz	punctuation: marks showing where a sentence ends; capitalize: use a capital letter at the beginning	Check the last _____. _____ the first word.

Use one Tier 2 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 3, passage words

These words come from our passages about The Pilgrims Chose Plymouth and Life Along the Nile River.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
Mediterranean Sea	med-ih-tuh-RAY-nee-un SEE	The sea where the Nile River empties.	The Nile flows north into the _____.
flood cycle	FLUHD SY-kul	The regular pattern of a river rising and then going back down.	Farmers planned around the _____.
flax	FLAKS	A plant used in ancient Egypt to make cloth and clothing.	Egyptians grew _____ near the Nile.
nets	nets	woven ropes used by fishermen to catch fish	Fishermen used _____ to catch fish in the Nile.
pyramids	PIR-uh-midz	Huge stone buildings made in ancient Egypt.	Builders created _____ from stone.
mud bricks	MUHD BRIKS	Blocks made from mud used to build homes.	Families lived in homes made from _____.
river valley civilizations	RIV-er VAL-ee	Early large communities that grew beside rivers.	Ancient Egypt was one of the world's earliest _____.
geography	jee-OG-ruh-fee	The study of Earth's land, water, and places.	_____ influenced where people settled.
construction projects	kun-STRUHK-shun PROJ-ekts	Planned jobs for building something large.	Boats helped transport materials for _____.
temples	TEM-pulz	Buildings used for worship in ancient Egypt.	Builders created _____ from stone.
flood cycle / flax	fluhd SY-kul / flaks	Review how the flood cycle supported farming and how flax supplied clothing.	The _____ helped farmers plan.
geography / river valley civilizations	jee-OG-ruh-fee / RIV-er VAL-ee siv-uh-luh-ZAY-shunz	Review how land and water influenced where communities grew.	_____ influenced where people settled.

Use one Tier 3 word in a sentence

My Strategy Tools

The Full SCR Ladder



While I read the passages, I place a small dot above any word I am unsure about. I circle the noun, box the verb, and triangle the clue word in the prompt. Then I decide whether it asks WHAT, WHY, or HOW.

RED CIRCLE
Noun (topic)

YELLOW BOX
Verb (action)

GREEN TRIANGLE
Clue word (WHAT /
WHY / HOW)

Prompt-Shaping Key

**DOT = a word not yet understood · Shapes on the prompt,
TRACKS in the passage**

I help my brain keep track of new words when I notice what I am still learning.

The Full SCR Ladder and Explanation Check

Mark	What it means
1 Thesis (central idea)	Answers the prompt.
2 Evidence	Provides proof from the passage. 3.7C
3 Explanation	Explains what the proof means and how it supports the thesis (central idea). 3.7G
Check: THIS	Points back to the preceding evidence sentence.
Check: Own words	Explanation is not another quote, copied evidence, or a random thought.

How I build the full SCR ladder

Definition and Story/Anecdote

Definition	Story/Anecdote
Signal markers: This means; This shows	Signal markers: This reminds me of; This makes me think of
Tells what evidence means or why it matters.	Connects evidence to an idea that helps the reader understand more.

The Two Explanation Bookends: the word this points back to the evidence.

How I Say the Standard!

3.11A:

TEKS says: 3.11A: plan a first draft by selecting a genre for a particular topic, purpose, and audience using a range of strategies such as brainstorming, freewriting, and mapping; 3.12B: compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea and genre characteristics and craft; 3.11C: revise drafts to improve sentence structure and word choice by adding, deleting, combining, and rearranging ideas for coherence and clarity; 3.11D(i): edit drafts using standard English conventions, including: complete simple and compound sentences with subject-verb agreement; 3.11D(xi): edit drafts using standard English conventions, including: correct spelling of words with grade-appropriate orthographic patterns and rules and high-frequency words. How I say it: Plan a response, state a clear thesis (central idea), provide evidence, and explain its meaning using one of the two bookends. Revise for clarity and edit sentences and spelling. Source: Texas Education Agency, Grade 3 TEKS.

3.12B:

TEKS says: 3.12B: compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea and genre characteristics and craft.

How I say it: Plan a response, state a clear thesis (central idea), provide evidence, and explain its meaning using one of the two bookends. Revise for clarity and edit sentences and spelling.

Check My Writing

- ☐ My sentence has a subject and a verb.
- ☐ I use a capital letter for Plymouth and the Nile River.

The Progression of Thinking

Read from Level 1 to Level 5. Notice how the thinking grows.

Level	Symbol	Hidden Question	Student Thinking	Thinking Focus
Level 1		Red	Foundational	Student follows directions or repeats information exactly as taught with little independent thinking.
Level 2		Orange	Emergent	Student begins trying ideas independently but may be uncertain or inconsistent.
Level 3		Yellow	Visible	Student connects ideas directly to textual evidence or proof from the passage.
Level 4		Green	Independent	Student combines evidence with personal inference, applying understanding to self or deeper meaning.
Level 5		Blue	Reflective	Student connects evidence to the world, morals, lessons, themes, or broader life understanding.

Each level has a color label: Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue. This module works mostly at Visible and Independent, Levels 3–4.

A thinking level I understand

Five Thinking Levels

Use the same five levels when I explain what my evidence means.

Level	Symbol	Hidden Question	Student Thinking	Thinking Focus
Foundational (Red)	○	Why did it happen?	The student can explain the cause.	Cause and Effect
Emergent (Orange)	◻	Why was it done?	The student can explain the purpose.	Purpose and Motivation
Visible (Yellow)	▽	Why is it important in the passage?	The student can explain why it matters in the text.	Importance and Contribution
Independent (Green)	△	Why is it important to me?	The student can explain what the student can learn, value, or apply to the student's own life.	Personal Meaning and Application
Reflective (Blue)	◊	Why is it important to everyone?	The student can explain the universal lesson or significance.	Universal Meaning and Life Lessons

The Difference Between WHY and HOW

Prompt type	What it asks me to do	Example
WHY	Explain a reason, a purpose, or why something matters.	Why did people settle in places with helpful natural resources?
HOW	Analyze how parts work together or how something happens.	How did natural resources support daily life in both passages?

An explanation tells what evidence means, why it matters, or what the reader can understand from it. Use Definition or Story/Anecdote signal markers to keep the explanation connected.

A thinking level I want to try



Read & Interact

Read with a purpose



Dot, Discover, Drop

DOT: Place a small dot above any unfamiliar word. DISCOVER: Find the pronunciation or the meaning. DROP: Erase the dot once the word is understood.

TRACKS Legend

Letter	Category	Definition and Examples	Required Pastel Color
T	Time	Age, era, dates, cultural details, or historical details. Often adjectives.	Pastel Green
R	Reactions	Reactions, solutions, resolutions, or effects. Often verbs/adverbs.	Pastel Purple
A	Actions	Actions, problems, conflicts, or causes. Often verbs/adverbs.	Pastel Yellow
C	Character, Concept, Creature	Names of characters/people/animals, or major concepts as the central idea. Often nouns/proper nouns.	Pastel Yellow
K	Key Knowledge	All other important info needed for the passage's meaning not in another TRACKS category (background knowledge).	Pastel Orange
S	Scenery / Setting	Setting characteristics acknowledged/measured through the five senses.	Pastel Green

TRACKS marks evidence in the passage. Highlight the smallest meaningful phrase. The shapes Circle, Box, and Triangle are used only to analyze the prompt.

Connect It to Our World

The Pilgrims at Plymouth and ancient Egyptians near the Nile both depended on natural resources. When you explain your evidence, you help readers understand why those resources mattered.

Background I Need

Module 2 built theses. Module 3 added evidence. Module 4 adds the explanation: telling what the evidence means in your own words and how it proves the thesis (central idea).

Words I dotted while reading

The Pilgrims Chose Plymouth

Nonfiction passage. Very High Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

- 1 In 1620, a group of travelers called the Pilgrims sailed across the Atlantic Ocean searching for a place where many of them could live and practice their beliefs freely. The Pilgrims hoped to build a new community where families could worship the way they wanted.
- 2 The Pilgrims traveled on a ship called the Mayflower. More than one hundred passengers crowded onto the ship. Men, women, and children traveled together during the long voyage.
- 3 The trip across the ocean lasted for many weeks. Storms caused the ship to rock back and forth on rough water. Huge waves crashed against the sides of the Mayflower. Many passengers became seasick during the difficult journey.
- 4 Life on the ship was crowded and uncomfortable. Families slept in small spaces below deck. Meals were simple and often included dried meat, bread, beans, and cheese. Fresh water had to last for the entire trip.
- 5 Even though conditions were difficult, the Pilgrims continued traveling because they hoped to build a better future in North America.
- 6 After many weeks at sea, the travelers finally saw land. The Pilgrims reached the coast near present-day Massachusetts. Winter was beginning, so the settlers needed to find a place to settle quickly.
- 7 Small groups explored the area looking for forests, fresh water, rich soil, and safe harbors. These natural resources would help the settlers survive.
- 8 Eventually, the Pilgrims selected an area called Plymouth. Nearby forests provided wood for homes, fires, and tools. The harbor allowed ships to anchor safely while supplies were unloaded.
- 9 The land around Plymouth also had rich soil where crops could be planted. Streams provided fresh water for drinking and farming.
- 10 Soon after arriving, the settlers began building shelters. Workers chopped trees and carried wood to construction sites. Families hurried to finish homes before the cold weather became worse.
- 11 Winter in Plymouth was harsh. Snow and freezing temperatures covered the colony. Many settlers became sick because of the cold weather and lack of fresh food.
- 12 Some families still lived aboard the Mayflower while homes were being built. Crowded living spaces caused diseases to spread quickly.

[illegible]

Life Along the Nile River

Nonfiction passage. Very High Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

- 1 Ancient Egypt was mostly covered by hot, dry desert. In many places, the land was too dry to grow crops or raise animals. Because water was difficult to find in the desert, most people settled near the Nile River.
- 2 The Nile River was one of the longest rivers in the world. It flowed through the desert from south to north before emptying into the Mediterranean Sea.
- 3 The Nile was very important to ancient Egypt because it provided water in a dry environment. Each year, the river would rise and flood nearby land.
- 4 When the floodwaters moved back down, they left behind dark, rich soil along the riverbanks. This soil was fertile and helped farmers grow crops.
- 5 The yearly floods followed a regular pattern. Ancient Egyptians learned when the river would rise and when the floods would end. Farmers planned their planting seasons around the flood cycle.
- 6 Without the Nile River, farming would have been very difficult in ancient Egypt. Most of the desert land was too dry for crops to survive.
- 7 Farmers planted crops such as wheat and barley in the rich soil near the Nile. They also grew vegetables, fruits, and flax. Flax was used to make cloth and clothing.
- 8 The Nile also supplied water for drinking, cooking, and farming. Families depended on the river every day.
- 9 Fishing became another important activity along the Nile. Fishermen used nets and boats to catch fish from the river. Fish provided food for many families.
- 10 Farmers and fishermen worked hard throughout the year. During planting season, farmers prepared fields and planted seeds. During harvest season, workers gathered crops before they spoiled.
- 11 The Nile River also helped transportation and trade grow in ancient Egypt. Boats traveled up and down the river carrying people and goods.
- 12 Some boats carried food while others carried wood, tools, stone, or building supplies. Merchants traded goods between villages and cities.
- 13 Traveling by river was much easier than crossing the hot desert. The Nile connected communities throughout ancient Egypt.
- 14 Villages, towns, and cities were built near the riverbanks because families depended on water and farmland. Large populations gathered along the Nile.
- 15 The environment influenced many jobs in ancient Egypt. Some people became farmers while others worked as fishermen, merchants, builders, or sailors.

The Pilgrims Chose Plymouth (continued)

Nonfiction passage. Very High Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

13 Even during these hardships, the Pilgrims worked together every day. Some people gathered wood while others cooked meals or cared for children. Everyone had responsibilities that helped the colony survive.

14 The settlers depended heavily on natural resources. Forests provided lumber and firewood. Rivers and harbors supported travel and trade. Rich soil helped farmers grow crops.

15 When spring arrived, Native Americans in the region helped the Pilgrims learn important survival skills. The settlers learned how to grow corn in the local soil. They also learned where to fish and hunt.

16 Farmers planted corn, beans, and squash, and also tried English crops such as wheat and barley. Families worked together during planting and harvesting seasons.

17 As the weather became warmer, the colony slowly improved. Homes were repaired, gardens were planted, and more supplies were gathered for the next winter.

18 Boats traveled along the coast carrying people and goods between settlements. Trade helped colonies exchange supplies and food.

19 Over time, more settlers arrived from England hoping to build new lives in North America. Plymouth continued growing as new homes, farms, and buildings were constructed.

20 Religion remained an important part of daily life in the colony. Families attended church services together and worked closely with neighbors.

21 Although life in Plymouth improved over time, the settlers still faced challenges. Harsh winters, poor harvests, and sickness sometimes created problems for the colony.

22 Despite these hardships, the Pilgrims continued working together. Their determination helped Plymouth become one of the earliest successful English colonies in North America.

23 Today, Plymouth remains an important part of American history. The story of the Pilgrims shows how people adapted to a new environment using teamwork, natural resources, and hard work.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Life Along the Nile River (continued)

Nonfiction passage. Very High Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

16 Builders used stone from nearby areas to create temples, statues, and pyramids. Boats on the Nile helped transport heavy materials used in construction projects.

17 The Nile River also supported trade with nearby regions. Merchants exchanged food, tools, cloth, and other supplies with different communities.

18 Religion was also connected to the Nile. Ancient Egyptians believed the river was a gift that helped life continue in the desert.

19 The river influenced daily routines throughout the civilization. Farmers depended on floodwaters. Fishermen depended on the river for food. Merchants depended on boats for transportation and trade.

20 Families often lived in homes made from mud bricks near the riverbanks. Communities worked together during planting and harvest seasons.

21 Children in ancient Egypt helped families with daily chores. Some gathered water while others helped care for crops or animals.

22 As trade and farming improved, cities along the Nile became larger and stronger. Markets, temples, and homes appeared throughout the region.

23 The Nile helped ancient Egypt become one of the world's earliest river valley civilizations. Access to water, fertile soil, transportation, and food allowed the civilization to grow.

24 Historians study the Nile River because it shows how geography can influence where people settle and how civilizations develop.

25 The environment around the Nile shaped nearly every part of life in ancient Egypt. The river provided natural resources, transportation, and fertile farmland.

26 Today, people still recognize the importance of the Nile River in ancient history. The river helped ancient Egypt survive and become one of the most successful civilizations of the ancient world.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Annotate: The Pilgrims Chose Plymouth

People, resources, actions, and settings that explain how natural resources helped the Pilgrims build a colony.

TRACKS mark	Color label	What I found (paragraph number and words)
T: Time	Pastel Green	
R: Reactions	Pastel Purple	
A: Actions	Pastel Yellow	
C: Character, Concept, Creature	Pastel Yellow	
K: Key Knowledge	Pastel Orange	
S: Scenery / Setting	Pastel Green	

Highlight the smallest meaningful phrase. If I cannot say why I highlighted it, I should not highlight it.

My best TRACKS phrase and why I chose it

Annotate: Life Along the Nile River

People, resources, actions, and effects that show how the Nile River supported civilization and daily life.

TRACKS mark	Color label	What I found (paragraph number and words)
T: Time	Pastel Green	
R: Reactions	Pastel Purple	
A: Actions	Pastel Yellow	
C: Character, Concept, Creature	Pastel Yellow	
K: Key Knowledge	Pastel Orange	
S: Scenery / Setting	Pastel Green	

? STOP & THINK

Which detail helps a reader understand why these everyday moments matter?

My thinking

My Prompt Marking Notes

The prompt gives me a topic, a charge, and a clue word. I can use the shapes to slow down and see the job.

Shape	Word	Question I ask myself
Red circle	Topic	What is this prompt about?
Yellow box	Charge	What does the topic do?
Green triangle	Clue word	Does the prompt ask WHY or HOW?

Circle the topic in red. Box the charge in yellow. Triangle the clue word in green.

Why did people settle in places with helpful natural resources?

My three marks in words

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 1: Gather + Reveal



I prepare the ground for my ideas

Our Question for Today

What does it mean to explain evidence? How is explaining different from quoting?

1. Gather: Mystery Object Explain-It

Explain an object without naming it. Tell what it does or why it matters.

What I explained and how

2. Reveal: Explaining IS and IS NOT

Explaining IS	Explaining IS NOT
Telling what evidence means	Copying the quote
Showing why it matters	Giving another quote
Helping the reader understand more	A random thought

3. Reveal: Two Bookends for Explaining

Bookend	Signal Markers	What It Does
Definition	This means, This shows	Tells what the evidence means or why it matters
Story/ Anecdote	This reminds me of, This makes me think of	Connects the evidence to a relevant life idea

? STOP & THINK

What does the word this point back to in an explanation?

My answer

4. Model: The Full SCR Ladder

Circle the topic in red. Box the charge in yellow. Triangle the clue word in green.

Why did people settle in places with helpful natural resources?

Thesis (central idea): People settled in places with helpful natural resources because those places provided what they needed to survive.

Evidence: The text states, "There was also fresh water and land where crops could be planted."

Definition: This means Plymouth had resources the Pilgrims needed to live and grow food.

Story/Anecdote: This reminds me of how people need stores, water, and roads near their homes so daily life is easier.

5. The SCR Ladder

- ☐ Thesis (central idea): answers the prompt.
- ☐ Evidence: passage proof for the thesis (central idea).
- ☐ Explanation: what the evidence means in my own words.

6. Flip-Flap Explanation Notes

Flap	What I Write Under It
What explaining does	
What explaining is not	
Definition starters	
Story starters	

I can explain what this points back to

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Evidence or Explanation Relay Race

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards

Cut on the dashed lines. Read a card and decide whether it is evidence or explanation. Set aside a random opinion. Store the cards in your Practice Pocket.

EVIDENCE	EXPLANATION
NEITHER	The text states, "There was also fresh water and land where crops could be planted."
This means Plymouth had important resources for survival.	The passage explains, "The river also provided fish to eat and water for drinking and farming."
This shows the Nile helped people meet daily needs.	The author says, "The harbor made it possible for their ship to anchor safely."

Self-Check

Evidence = passage proof. Explanation = what the proof means in my own words. Neither = opinion.

EXPLANATION the writer's own words telling what the evidence means.	EVIDENCE passage proof that supports the thesis (central idea).
Evidence	NEITHER an opinion or unrelated thought.
Evidence	Explanation
Evidence	Explanation

✂ More Relay Race Cards

Cut on the dashed lines. Add these cards to your Practice Pocket.

This means ships could stop there safely.	The text states, "When the water went back down, it left behind dark, rich soil that was good for growing plants."
This reminds me of gardens growing better in rich dirt.	The author describes, "Boats traveled up and down the Nile carrying people and goods."
This makes me think of how travel routes help communities grow.	I like the Pilgrims.
The Nile River was cool.	Pencil Guy marker

Keep the cards in your Practice Pocket. Reuse the game to remember what you learned.

Self-Check

This page prints on the back of the card page. Flip a card over to check yourself.

Evidence	Explanation
Evidence	Explanation
Neither strong evidence nor explanation	Explanation
Pencil Guy marker. Your team moves after an accurate sort and a clear reason.	Neither strong evidence nor explanation

Keep the cards in your Practice Pocket when you finish.

Day 2: Attempt

Our Question for Today: Can I tell evidence and explanation apart and add my own explanation?

1. Evidence or Explanation Relay Race

- Choose a Pencil Guy marker for your team.
- Read a card and decide: Evidence, Explanation, or Neither.
- Set opinions aside.
- Explain your choice to your partner.
- Accurate thinking wins.

Round	1	2	3	4	5
My partner					
My point					

2. Add an Explanation

Thesis (central idea): The Pilgrims chose Plymouth because it had fresh water, land for crops, trees for building, and a safe harbor.

Evidence: The author says, "The harbor made it possible for their ship to anchor safely."

My explanation for this evidence

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 3: Discuss + Use

I explain my thinking



Our Question for Today

How do the two bookends help differently? Why does an explanation follow evidence?

1. Discuss

Question	My thinking
What is an explanation's job?	
How does it differ from evidence?	
What does This means tell the reader?	
What does This reminds me of tell the reader?	
What does this point back to?	

My discussion notes



2. Bookends of Explanation

For each item, keep the thesis (central idea) and evidence. Write one Definition and one Story/Anecdote explanation.

Item 1: Thesis (central idea): The Pilgrims chose Plymouth because it had fresh water, land for crops, trees for building, and a safe harbor. **Evidence:** The text states, "There was also fresh water and land where crops could be planted."

Definition explanation (This means or This shows...)

Story/Anecdote explanation (This reminds me of or This makes me think of...)

Embedded Check

- ☐ My explanation uses my own words.
- ☐ My explanation connects to the thesis (central idea).
- ☐ The word this points back to the evidence.



Bookends of Explanation, continued

Item 2: Thesis (central idea): Ancient Egyptians depended on the Nile River because it provided water, food, rich soil, and transportation. Evidence: The passage explains, "The river also provided fish to eat and water for drinking and farming."

Definition explanation

Story/Anecdote explanation

My Personal Connection

When have you needed to explain why something matters, not just name it?

My connection and what I learned

Bookends of Explanation, continued

Item 3: Thesis (central idea): Water connected life in both passages through survival, farming, and settlement. Evidence: The author describes, "Boats traveled up and down the Nile carrying people and goods."

Definition explanation

Story/Anecdote explanation

Reflection

Compare your Definition and Story/Anecdote explanations. Which helps the reader understand more? Why?

My comparison

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 4: Award + Target



I notice what I did well and choose one next step

1. Award the Best Parts

Point to one explanation you wrote well and tell what makes it work.

Something I explained well, and where I did it

2. Target My Next Step

- ☐ One thing I understood about explanation.
- ☐ One area that still needs practice.
- ☐ One signal marker I used well.
- ☐ One question I still hold.

Revise one explanation you wrote. Check: my revision says what the evidence means and connects to the thesis (central idea). A new quote or an unrelated story does not meet the target.

My revised explanation

3. Curiosity Prompts

- How does explanation differ from summary?
- Why does it build reader trust?
- How do the two bookends help differently?
- What might other parts of DEEP FACTS teach later?

One idea from our talk I want to keep

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 5: Explain/Educate



I teach someone else

Our Question for Today

How would I teach someone else to explain evidence and build a full SCR?

1. Turn and Teach

Teach a partner what an explanation does, how it differs from evidence, and what the two bookends sound like.

- An explanation helps the reader understand _____.
- Evidence is _____, but explanation is _____.
- A Definition explanation starts with _____.
- A Story/Anecdote explanation starts with _____.
- This points back to _____.

My partner taught me...

2. Transfer: Build the Full SCR Ladder

Complete each part on your own.

Circle the topic in red. Box the charge in yellow. Triangle the clue word in green.

Why did people settle in places with helpful natural resources?

My thesis (central idea)

My evidence (signal marker, comma, quotation marks)

My explanation (Definition or Story/Anecdote)

Check My Full SCR

- ☐ My thesis (central idea) answers the prompt.
- ☐ My evidence comes from the passage with correct punctuation.
- ☐ My explanation tells what the evidence means in my own words.
- ☐ The word this points back to my evidence.
- ☐ All three parts support one central idea.

My final Day 5 thought



Write More

Plan, draft, revise, edit, and share



My Writing Assignment

Write a short response to this prompt:

Circle the topic in red. Box the charge in yellow. Triangle the clue word in green.

Why did people settle in places with helpful natural resources?

My Plan

- Write a thesis (central idea) answering the prompt.
- Choose one strong piece of evidence from the passage.
- Write the evidence with a signal marker, comma, and quotation marks.
- Explain what the evidence means using Definition or Story/Anecdote.

Two possible reasons from the passage

The stronger reason is...

Color Words I Can Use

Thesis (central idea) and reasons, Green. Evidence, Yellow. Explanation, Red or Pink.
Reflective thinking, Blue.

My Draft



Use my shaped prompt and my plan. Write a clear response.

Draft, page 1

A sentence I want to keep

Revise, Edit, and Share

Revise

- ☐ My response answers the charge of the prompt.
- ☐ I replaced one plain word with a stronger word.
- ☐ Every sentence is complete with a subject and a verb.

Edit

- ☐ Every sentence is complete.
- ☐ Plymouth, Pilgrims, and Nile River begin with capital letters.
- ☐ Evidence and explanation are common nouns unless they begin a sentence.
- ☐ Singular nouns are spelled correctly.
- ☐ High-frequency words are spelled correctly.

My improved sentence

Share

Choose one: read to a partner, share in author's chair, join a gallery walk, or add your prompt to a class booklet.

My sharing plan

Before I Turn It In

Read each line. Check it when I can show it in my work.

Part	I can show...	Check
Prompt parts	I marked the topic, charge, and clue word.	
Prompt type	I named WHY or HOW and used the clue word.	
Writing	My answer matches the job in the prompt.	
Conventions	I used complete sentences and capital letters.	

Study the Samples

Read the three responses to this prompt. Notice what improves from Low to Medium to High.

Why did people settle in places with helpful natural resources?

Low

There was fresh water and land.

What is missing: a thesis (central idea), an evidence sentence, and an explanation.

Medium

People settled in places with helpful natural resources because those places provided what they needed to survive. The text states, "There was also fresh water and land where crops could be planted."

What is missing: an explanation in the writer's own words.

High

People settled in places with helpful natural resources because those places provided what they needed to survive. The text states, "There was also fresh water and land where crops could be planted." This means people chose places where they could find water and grow food.

Why it works: all three parts connect. The original explanation clarifies the evidence and supports the thesis (central idea).

What improves from Low to High?



Look Back & Look Forward

I own my learning



My Progress Tracker

I can...	Not yet	Growing	Got it
Tell what evidence is.	☐	☐	☐
Tell what an explanation does.	☐	☐	☐
Distinguish evidence from explanation.	☐	☐	☐
Use This means or This shows.	☐	☐	☐
Use This reminds me of or This makes me think of.	☐	☐	☐
Identify what this points back to.	☐	☐	☐
Build a full SCR with thesis (central idea), evidence, and explanation.	☐	☐	☐
Keep an explanation in original words and connected to proof.	☐	☐	☐
Revise and edit the completed response.	☐	☐	☐

Something I Did Well...

What I did well, and where I did it

My Next Step...

Why this is my next step

Essential Question Answered

How can a writer explain how their evidence proves the thesis (central idea) in a short constructed response?

The answer

The writer places an explanation after the evidence and uses their own words to tell what the evidence means, why it matters, or what the reader can understand from it. Definition and Story/Anecdote signal markers help the writer keep the explanation connected to the evidence and show how it supports the thesis (central idea).

My Final Thinking (in my own words)

What Changed in My Thinking?

At first I thought...

Now I think...

Try It Another Way

Use a question from your day. Say the topic, charge, and clue word. Tell whether it asks WHY or HOW. Then explain the job.

My new prompt

Take It Further! Build the Full SCR Ladder

Extend mastery by writing and comparing both explanation types. Why did people settle in places with helpful natural resources?

- Step 1: Climb the Ladder. Write a thesis (central idea), evidence, a Definition explanation, and a Story/Anecdote explanation.
- Sample response: People settled in places with helpful natural resources because those places provided what they needed to survive. The text states, "There was also fresh water and land where crops could be planted." This means people chose places where they could find water and grow food. Story/Anecdote: This reminds me of how communities are often built near resources that make life easier.
- Step 2: Compare the Bookends. Identify each signal marker and explain how Definition is more direct while Story/Anecdote connects to life.
- Step 3: Expert Reflection. Name the stronger explanation for the chosen evidence and justify your judgment.

My thesis (central idea), evidence, Definition explanation, and Story/Anecdote explanation

My SCR Ladder

Build an SCR ladder using everything I have practiced. Which bookend helps my reader most, and why?

At-Home Connection

Choose one card to talk about with someone at home. End with a conversation, not a worksheet.

Explain It

Share one fact with someone at home and explain its meaning using "This means" or "This shows." Write what you said.

Ask them: how do you know when someone really understands what they are talking about?

Family member signature: _____

Evidence or Explanation at Dinner

Share a passage detail and explain it in your own words. Ask your family member to tell which part is evidence and which is explanation.

Ask them: what proof would you use to explain something important about your day?

Family member signature: _____

Full SCR Ladder

Share your thesis (central idea), evidence, and explanation. Use the word bank: thesis (central idea), evidence, explanation, This means, This shows.

Ask them: can you explain one thing that happened today using proof and meaning?

Family member signature: _____

My Family Conversation Notes

What did I teach? What did my family member remember? Write what happened.

Notes

Track My Progress

Every time I get a score or a grade on my work in this module, I write it here. This can be an exit ticket, a short answer, or a rubric score from my teacher.

Date	What I did (for example exit ticket, short answer, rubric)	My score	My next goal

Why This Helps Me

This chart shows how my scores change over the whole module, not just on one day.

- ☐ I keep this chart up to date.
- ☐ I can tell if my scores are growing.
- ☐ I ask for help when I need it.
- ☐ I show this chart to my teacher or a family member.

Add a new row every time I get feedback, a score, or a grade on my work.

My Module 4 Snapshot

I can keep this page with my other work. It shows how my thinking grew.

The most useful word I learned

The prompt part I can find fastest

My Strong Roots

I am ready to grow the next part of my writing tree.

A note to my future writer self

My Proud Moment This Week
