

THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC.

Student Interactive Workbook

Grade 4

Cluster 1 - Modules 1 to 4

Module 1: Level Up Your Thinking

Module 2: Build a Strong Thesis (Central Idea)

Module 3: Prove It with Strong Evidence

Module 4: Make the Evidence Mean Something



Name: _____



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Student Interactive Workbook

Grade 4

Cluster 1 - Module 1

Level Up Your Thinking



Name: _____



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Grade 4 • 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

Level Up Your Thinking



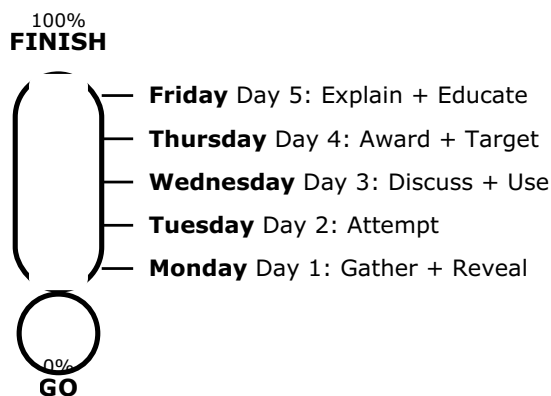
Why This Matters to Me

I learn that a Short Constructed Response (SCR) is built from a thesis (central idea), evidence, and explanation, and that the precision of the words I choose reveals the depth of my thinking. Using two Cluster 1 passages, I learn to recognize thinking levels, tell evidence from explanation, apply WHY and HOW thesis (central idea) habits, and upgrade a response with stronger, purposeful language.

Essential Question

How can the words we choose make a Short Constructed Response show stronger thinking?

My Week Tracker



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

My First Thinking

I Can

- I can tell the difference between evidence and explanation in a response.
- I can identify the thinking level of a response from its words.
- I can upgrade a response one level higher by choosing more precise words.
- I can write a Short Constructed Response with a thesis (central idea), evidence, and explanation.

I Will

- I will read, decide, defend, plan, write, revise, edit, and explain my decisions.
- I will choose precise words that show stronger thinking, not just longer answers.
- I will prove an idea with the author's exact words.
- I will make the relationships among my ideas clearer.

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 word choice reveals thinking level in a Short Constructed Response.	"A Promise Written Long Ago" and "Morning in the Village."	Upgraded WHY and HOW responses and a Turn-and-Teach explanation.

Where We Are Going

I will move from deciding which response shows stronger thinking to upgrading my own responses on purpose. I will finish by teaching a partner.

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

- ☐ I can name the thinking level of a response and point to the words that reveal it.
- ☐ I can upgrade a response so the thinking is clearer, not just harder-sounding.
- ☐ I can build a thesis (central idea), add evidence, and explain what it proves.
- ☐ I can check my sentence for conventions.

Check Myself

- ☐ I can name a thinking level.
- ☐ I can upgrade a signal phrase.
- ☐ I can explain why the upgrade matters.

How I Will Show What I Know

I will show what I know with upgraded responses, the Level Up Showdown, and the Turn-and-Teach explanation.

My GRADUATE Learning Path

Stage	Day	What I do
Gather	Day 1	I listen to two responses and decide which shows stronger thinking.
Reveal	Day 1	I learn that word choice reveals a thinking level.
Attempt	Day 2	I play Level Up Showdown and upgrade responses.
Discuss	Day 3	I explain what changed when I leveled up.
Use Again	Day 3	I upgrade a WHY response and a HOW response on my own.
Award	Day 4	I name the evidence of my leveled-up thinking.
Target	Day 4	I choose a precise next goal for my thinking level.
Explain/Educate	Day 5	I teach a partner how to level up a response.

Say It Together!

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

4.12B(i):

TEKS says: 4.12B(i) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea.

How I say it: I can write a Short Constructed Response with a thesis (central idea), evidence, and explanation.

4.11C(ii):

TEKS says: 4.11C(ii) revise drafts to improve word choice.

How I say it: I can upgrade my evidence signal words and explanation words so my thinking is clearer.

Call and Response

Read this together as a class before we start.

Teacher asks: "Words ="

Class answers: "Thinking Level."

One TEKS I want to practice today



Get Ready

Before I begin



Before We Begin: What Do I Already Know?

I already know that a response has a thesis (central idea), evidence, and explanation. I can find details in a passage and tell the difference between proof and what proof shows.

A connection I can make

Remember It!

- ☐ A thesis (central idea) is the clear main idea a response will prove.
- ☐ Evidence is the author's exact words used as proof from the passage.
- ☐ Explanation is the writer's thinking about what evidence means and why it matters.

One idea I remember

Ready Check

- ☐ I can tell the difference between evidence and explanation.
- ☐ I can find a detail in a passage and explain what it means.
- ☐ I can explain why one word choice is more precise than another.

Watch Out! Common Mix-Up

Watch out! A longer response is not automatically a stronger response. Students often think writing more equals better thinking. If the words do not make the thinking clearer, the response has not leveled up. Another common mix-up: replacing a word with a harder word does not count as an upgrade unless the new word adds meaning.

Where This Fits in My Writing

Recognizing thinking levels and choosing precise words is the foundation for every Short Constructed Response you will write this year. The habit that words reveal thinking carries through every cluster.

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 as often as you want.

Part 1: Prompt Analysis

Read the prompt. Circle the topic in red. Draw a yellow box around the charge. Underline the task in green.

Why do people in Tayanita's village work together?

Part 2: Thesis (Central Idea)

Write one clear thesis (central idea) that directly answers the prompt.

My thesis (central idea)

Part 3: Informative Organization

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

Number	Sentence
_____	This suggests cooperation supports the community.
_____	The text says, "Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows." This shows they need food.
_____	Even though each person has a role, the village works together due to shared responsibility.
_____	The text indicates that "Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows".

Part 4: Reason

Write one reason that explains why your thesis (central idea) makes sense.

My first sentence

Part 5: Evidence and Explanation

Reason: The people work together because they need food.

The sentence I copied from the passage as evidence

This evidence proves my reason because...

Part 6: SCR Foundation

Write one clear thesis (central idea), one reason, and one strong piece of evidence.
Label each part.

My paragraph



Words I Need

Tier 1, everyday words



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

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
work	WURK	To do a job or effort.	The people work together to ____.
use	YOOZ	To put something to a purpose.	I use evidence to ____.
show	SHO	To make something known.	The text shows that ____.
tell	TEL	To share information in words.	The text tells us ____.
help	HELP	To make things easier for someone.	The neighbors help by ____.
grow	GRO	To develop or increase.	The crops grow because ____.
share	SHAIR	To give part of what you have.	They share ____ with ____.
prove	PROOV	To show something is true.	I can prove my idea by ____.
choose	CHOOZ	To pick on purpose.	I choose the word ____ because ____.
upgrade	UP-grayd	To make something stronger or better.	I upgrade my answer by ____.

Use one Tier 1 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 2, academic words

These thinking words help you build stronger responses. Say each word, then use it with a partner.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
evidence	EV-uh-duns	Proof from the text (often exact words).	My evidence is ____.
explanation	eks-pluh-NAY-shun	The writer's thinking about what evidence means.	My explanation shows ____.
thesis (central idea)	THEE-sis	The clear main idea a response will prove.	My thesis (central idea) is ____.
implies	im-PLYZ	Suggests without saying directly.	The text implies ____.
suggests	sug-JESTS	Points toward an idea.	This suggests ____.
demonstrates	DEM-un-strayts	Shows clearly.	This demonstrates ____.
compare	kum-PAIR	To show how two things are alike or different.	I compare ____ and ____.
infer	in-FUR	To figure out using clues and thinking.	I infer that ____.
precise	preh-SYS	Exact and clear.	A precise word here is ____.
indicates	IN-duh-kayts	Points to or shows.	The text indicates ____.

Use one Tier 2 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 3, passage words

These words come from our two passages, "A Promise Written Long Ago" and "Morning in the Village." Say each word, read its meaning, and use it in the frame sentence.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
Magna Carta	MAG-nuh KAR-tuh	A document from 1215 that limited the king's power.	The Magna Carta ____.
Runnymede	RUN-ee-meed	The place in England where the Magna Carta was sealed.	At Runnymede, ____.
barons	BAIR-uhnz	Powerful landowners who wanted the king to follow rules.	The barons ____.
rights	rytes	Freedoms and protections that belong to people.	One right the document protected was ____.
Caddo	KAD-oh	A Native American people of the Piney Woods.	The Caddo village ____.
Three Sisters	three SIS-terz	Corn, beans, and squash grown together to help each other.	The Three Sisters ____.
mound	mownd	A tall built-up hill used for important events.	The mound ____.
trade	trayd	To exchange goods with others.	They trade ____ for ____.
constitution	kon-stih-TOO-shun	A written plan of a government's rules and powers.	The U.S. Constitution ____.
justice	JUS-tis	Fairness and equal treatment under the law.	Justice means ____.

Use one Tier 3 word in a sentence

My Strategy Tools

Words Reveal Thinking



The words I choose in my Short Constructed Response reveal how deeply I understand the text. Stronger words make the thinking clearer, not just harder.

Level 1
says / shows

Level 3
indicates /
demonstrates

Level 5
converges / reveals

**WORDS = THINKING
LEVEL**

Upgrade the thinking, not just the vocabulary

A longer response is not automatically a stronger response. Upgrade the thinking, not just the vocabulary.

The SCR Structure

Mark	What it means
Thesis (Central Idea)	The clear idea you will prove.
Evidence	The author's exact words.
Explanation	What the evidence means and why it matters.

A Short Constructed Response has three parts: thesis (central idea) + evidence + explanation.

How this strategy works for me

WHY and HOW

WHY	HOW
A WHY response uses a complex sentence with a subordinating conjunction (because, since, even though, due to) to show a reason.	A HOW response often uses a simple sentence that names the method or relationship (by, through, based on).

WHY calls for a reason. HOW calls for a way or method.

How I Say the Standard!

4.12B(i):

TEKS says: 4.12B(i) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea.

How I say it: I can write a Short Constructed Response with a thesis (central idea), evidence, and explanation.

4.11C(ii):

TEKS says: 4.11C(ii) revise drafts to improve word choice.

How I say it: I can upgrade my evidence signal words and explanation words so my thinking is clearer.

Check My Writing

- ☐ My sentence has a subject and a verb.
- ☐ I use a capital letter for Magna Carta, Runnymede, and Tayanita.
- ☐ I use a period or another ending mark.

A WHY or HOW thesis (central idea) I can write

The Five Thinking Levels

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

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

Challenge: Move one response up one level. Change the thinking, not just the vocabulary.

A thinking level I understand

The Level-Up Language Ladder

This ladder shows the evidence signal and explanation language for each level.

Level	Symbol	Evidence Signal + Explanation Language
Level 1	○	The text says... / This shows...
Level 2	□	According to the text... / This suggests...
Level 3	▽	The text indicates... / This demonstrates...
Level 4	△	The text establishes... / This strengthens the inference...
Level 5	◇	The evidence converges on the idea... / Ultimately, this reveals...

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 do people in Tayanita's village work together?
HOW	Analyze how parts work together or how something happens.	How does the author show that ideas from the Magna Carta influenced later governments?

Naming a detail is not the same as explaining why it matters. Cluster 1 prompts are WHY or HOW. A WHY response uses a complex sentence with a subordinating conjunction. A HOW response names the method or relationship.

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 Magna Carta limited unfair power, and the Caddo village showed how cooperation keeps a community strong. Both passages show that people working together can make life fairer and better.

Background I Need

In one passage, the Magna Carta (1215, Runnymede, England) limited the king's power and protected rights. In the other passage, a Caddo village in the Piney Woods shows cooperation through the "Three Sisters" crops, shared work, and trade.

Words I dotted while reading

A Promise Written Long Ago

Nonfiction and historical fiction. Low Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

1 In the year 1215, a very important document called the Magna Carta was created in a place called Runnymede, England. At that time, King John ruled England. Many people, especially powerful landowners called barons, were unhappy with how he treated them. The king collected heavy taxes and made unfair decisions.

2 The barons wanted the king to follow rules. They believed even the king should not have complete power. So, they forced King John to meet them at Runnymede. There, the Magna Carta was agreed to and sealed.

3 The Magna Carta was important because it limited the king's power. It said that the king had to follow the law, just like everyone else. It also protected certain rights of the people. For example, it said that free men could not be punished without a lawful judgment.

4 The circumstances at the time helped shape the Magna Carta. People were tired of unfair treatment and wanted change. Because of this, the document shows that people long ago cared about fairness and justice.

5 Hundreds of years later, the ideas from the Magna Carta influenced other governments. Leaders in the United States used similar ideas when creating the U.S. Constitution. Like the Magna Carta, the Constitution limits government power and protects the rights of citizens.

6 Even today, the Magna Carta reminds us that rules should apply to everyone and that people deserve to be treated fairly.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Morning in the Village

Nonfiction and historical fiction. Low Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

1 The sun was just starting to come up when Tayanita stepped outside. The tall pine trees were still dark, but she could hear people moving around the village.

2 Her family lived in a Caddo village near a river in the Piney Woods. Their homes were built close together, and everyone knew each other. Some people were already cooking, while others were heading out to work.

3 Tayanita walked with her mother to the fields. Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows. Her mother always called them the "Three Sisters" because they helped each other grow. Tayanita didn't understand all of it, but she knew they needed all three to have enough food.

4 Nearby, her uncle was talking about planting something different in one part of the field next season. He said it helped the soil stay strong. Tayanita just nodded and kept pulling weeds.

5 Later, she went with her grandfather to the large mound in the middle of the village. It was tall, and it had taken many years to build. People gathered there for important events. From the top, she could see trees stretching far in every direction.

6 That afternoon, visitors came from another village. They brought pottery and tools to trade. In return, her people shared food. Tayanita liked watching the trades. It felt like everyone was connected somehow.

7 As the day ended, she looked around her village. It was busy, but it also felt like home.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Annotate: A Promise Written Long Ago

Details about fairness, rights, and the relationship between the Magna Carta and later governments.

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: Morning in the Village

Details about cooperation, shared work, trade, and community 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 from the passage would make the strongest evidence for a thesis (central idea)?

My thinking

My Prompt Marking Notes

A Short Constructed Response prompt asks you to explain or prove an idea. Mark the parts that tell you what to do.

Shape	Word	Question I ask myself
Red circle	Topic	What am I writing about?
Yellow box	Charge	What job must my answer do?
Green underline	Task	What must I explain or prove?

Circle the topic in red. Box the charge in yellow. Underline the task in green.

Why do people in Tayanita's village work together?

My three marks in words

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 1: Gather + Reveal



I discover that words reveal thinking

Our Question for Today

Which response shows stronger thinking, and what makes it stronger?

1. Gather: Listen, Decide, and Defend

Pencils down while you listen. Your teacher will read two responses. When your teacher says "decide," show A or B. Then defend your choice with a word, phrase, or evidence detail you heard. Listen for which response shows deeper thinking. Do not choose based on which response is longer.

Round 1: A Promise Written Long Ago

Response A	Response B
"The king made unfair decisions. This shows people were upset."	"Because the text states that 'The king collected heavy taxes and made unfair decisions,' this suggests the barons wanted limits on the king's power."

I chose ____ because...

Round 2: Morning in the Village

Response A	Response B
"They traded things. This means they helped."	"The text indicates that 'They brought pottery and tools to trade.' This demonstrates that cooperation connected neighboring communities."

I chose ____ because...

Day 1: Reveal, continued

2. Reveal: Words = Thinking Level

The words you choose reveal your thinking level. Basic language tells the reader less. Stronger language makes the thinking clearer.

Basic Language	Stronger Language
says	indicates
shows	suggests
this means	demonstrates; establishes; strengthens the inference; ultimately reveals

STOP & THINK

What does your word choice show about the depth of your thinking?

My answer

3. Fresh Recall

Cover your notes and tell a partner one feature that makes a response show stronger thinking.

Stronger thinking sounds like...



Day 1 Closing

Complete: Stronger thinking sounds like ____ because ____.

My closing thought

Thinking Detectives

Which response shows stronger thinking? What makes it stronger? Circle or name the words that reveal stronger thinking. What changed besides the length?

Response A	Response B
"The people work together because they need food. The text says, 'Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows.' This means they need to survive."	"Even though each person has a role, the village works together due to shared responsibility. The text indicates that 'Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows' and 'They brought pottery and tools to trade.' This suggests cooperation supports the community."

Response ____ shows stronger thinking because...

Ⓢ STOP & THINK

Ask yourself: What does my word choice show about the depth of my thinking?

My answer

STUDENT WORKBOOK



LEVEL UP SHOWDOWN

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards (sheet 1 of 2)

Cut on the dashed lines. Shuffle the 10 task cards and keep them in a stack. Draw one, identify its thinking level, then upgrade it one level higher. Store all cards in your Pocket Practice.

"The text says, 'Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows.' This shows they need food." : Level 1	"The text says, 'The barons wanted the king to follow rules.' This means they were unhappy." : Level 1
"According to the text, 'They brought pottery and tools to trade.' This suggests they work together." : Level 2	"According to the text, 'The king collected heavy taxes and made unfair decisions.' This supports the idea that people wanted change." : Level 2
"The text indicates that 'Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows.' This suggests cooperation." : Level 3	"The text indicates that 'They believed even the king should not have complete power.' This demonstrates the barons wanted limits." : Level 3

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

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

According to the text, "The barons wanted the king to follow rules." This suggests they wanted limits on the king's power.

According to the text, "Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows." This suggests they depend on farming.

The text indicates that "The king collected heavy taxes and made unfair decisions." This demonstrates why the barons wanted limits on his power.

The text indicates that "They brought pottery and tools to trade." This demonstrates cooperation.

The text establishes that "They believed even the king should not have complete power." This strengthens the inference that the barons believed rulers should be limited by law.

The text establishes that "Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows." This pattern strengthens the inference that cooperation is essential.

STUDENT WORKBOOK



LEVEL UP SHOWDOWN

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards (sheet 2 of 2)

Cut on the dashed lines. Shuffle the 10 task cards and keep them in a stack. Draw one, identify its thinking level, then upgrade it one level higher. Store all cards in your Pocket Practice.

"The text establishes that 'They brought pottery and tools to trade.' This strengthens the inference that they cooperate." : Level 4	"The text establishes that 'People were tired of unfair treatment and wanted change.' This strengthens the inference that fairness mattered." : Level 4
"The evidence converges on the idea that people 'shared food.' This shows cooperation." : Level 5	"The evidence converges on the idea that the Magna Carta influenced later governments because 'Hundreds of years later, the ideas from the Magna Carta influenced other governments' and 'Like the Magna Carta, the Constitution limits government power and protects the rights of citizens.'" : Level 5

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

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

The evidence converges on the idea that people "were tired of unfair treatment and wanted change." Ultimately, this reveals that demands for fairness helped drive limits on the king's power.

The evidence converges on the idea that people "brought pottery and tools to trade." Ultimately, this reveals cooperation builds community.

Challenge downgrade: The text indicates that the Magna Carta influenced later governments and compares it with the Constitution. This demonstrates a connection across time.

Challenge downgrade: The text indicates that "shared food." This suggests cooperation.

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 2: Attempt

I level up a response



Our Question for Today

Can I upgrade a response one level higher by changing the thinking, not just the vocabulary?

Level Up Showdown: How to Play

- Spin to land on a thinking level.
- Draw and read a task card.
- Identify the current thinking level.
- Upgrade the response one level higher.
- Explain what you changed and why.
- Move your Pencil Guy marker.
- Record at least two upgraded responses.
- Success Check: Did your revision add stronger thinking, or only a harder word?

My Upgraded Responses

Upgraded Response 1: Original level ____ to level ____

Upgraded Response 2: Original level ____ to level ____



Day 2: Attempt, continued

Sample Round (Modeled)

Original: According to the text, "They brought pottery and tools to trade." This suggests they work together. (Level 2)

Upgrade: The text indicates that "They brought pottery and tools to trade." This demonstrates cooperation. (Level 3)

The signal phrase and explanation both become more precise. Be able to explain the meaning of "demonstrates," not merely substitute it.

STOP & THINK

Did your revision add stronger thinking, or only a harder word?

My answer

My Level Up Record

Record at least two more upgraded responses. These become tools you can use anytime.

Upgraded Response 3: Original level ____ to level ____

What I changed and why

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 3: Discuss + Use



I explain and apply my thinking

Our Question for Today

What changed when I leveled up, and can I do it on my own?

1. Discuss: What Changed When We Leveled Up?

Question	My thinking
What words showed the original level?	
What did you change?	
Did the evidence become clearer?	
Did the explanation become deeper?	

How are the words we choose changing the strength of the response?

2. Use Again: WHY Practice

Prompt: Why do people in Tayanita's village work together?

Given Response: The people work together because they need to share resources. The text says, "Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows" and "They brought pottery and tools to trade." This means they help each other.

Task: Rewrite the response at a higher thinking level. Keep the answer accurate. Upgrade the evidence signal phrase. Upgrade the explanation. Make the relationship among ideas clearer.

My WHY upgrade

3. Use Again: HOW Practice

Prompt: How does the author show that ideas from the Magna Carta influenced later governments?

Given Response: The author explains the connection by giving information. The text says, "Hundreds of years later, the ideas from the Magna Carta influenced other governments" and "Like the Magna Carta, the Constitution limits government power and protects the rights of citizens." This means the documents are connected.

Task: Rewrite at a higher thinking level. Think: What relationship is the author showing?

My HOW upgrade



4. Conventions Sweep

Choose one simple sentence from your response. Underline the subject once. Underline the verb twice. Circle one singular noun. Box one common noun. Check the spelling of your high-frequency words. Read the sentence aloud. Does the subject agree with the verb?

My checked sentence

STOP & THINK

Underline one sentence that shows your strongest thinking and star one word you upgraded on purpose.

My strongest sentence

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 4: Award + Target



I notice evidence of my growth

Our Question for Today

What have I learned about how word choice changes thinking?

1. Award

Give yourself credit for leveling up your thinking today.

- ☐ I upgraded a signal phrase.
- ☐ I made my explanation more precise.
- ☐ I connected evidence to a bigger idea.
- ☐ I used a word from my Thinking Level Chart correctly.

Something I did well today

2. Target

Choose a precise next goal.

- ☐ Move from one thinking level to the next (for example, Level 2 to Level 3).
- ☐ Use stronger explanation words.

My next thinking-level goal is ____ because ____

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 5: Explain/Educate



I teach someone else

Our Question for Today

How would I teach someone else to level up a response?

1. Turn and Teach

Teach your partner how to level up a response. You must: name the original thinking level; point to the words that revealed the level; give an upgraded version; explain why the new version shows stronger thinking; and connect your explanation to the Overarching Question.

Sentence Frame: "The words ____ show a Level ____ response. I upgraded it by ____.
This makes the thinking stronger because ____."

My partner taught me...

2. Overarching Question Answer

How can the words we choose make a Short Constructed Response show stronger thinking?

My answer

3. Transfer: Day 5 Exit Ticket

Complete each part on your own.

Circle the topic in red. Box the charge in yellow. Underline the task in green.

Why do people in Tayanita's village work together?

My thesis (central idea)

My evidence (the author's exact words)

My explanation (what it proves)

Upgrade Check

Upgrade one signal phrase or explanation word. Circle the word you changed.

My upgraded sentence

☐ My thesis (central idea) is clear.



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. Underline the task in green.

Why do people in Tayanita's village work together? Rewrite the response so it shows stronger thinking.

My Plan

- Read the prompt. Underline the task.
- Write a clear thesis (central idea).
- Choose the author's exact words as evidence.
- Explain what the evidence proves.

Two possible reasons from the passage

The stronger reason is...

Writing Color Coding

Thesis (central idea) and reasons, Green. Evidence, Yellow. Explanation, Red or Pink. Significance (Bluebird Moment), 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.
- ☐ Magna Carta, Runnymede, King John, England, Caddo, Piney Woods, and Tayanita begin with capital letters.
- ☐ Barons, document, village, taxes, rights, and crops 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
Thesis (Central Idea)	I wrote a clear thesis (central idea) that answers the prompt.	
Evidence	I used the author's exact words in quotation marks.	
Explanation	I explained what the evidence proves, not just what it says.	
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 do people in Tayanita's village work together?

Low

They work together. The text says they grew crops. This means they help.

What is missing: a thesis (central idea) with a subordinating conjunction, exact evidence in quotation marks, and an explanation that proves the idea rather than restating it.

Medium

The people work together because they need to share resources. According to the text, "Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows." This suggests they depend on farming.

What is working: A WHY thesis (central idea) with a subordinating conjunction, an exact quote, and a "suggests" explanation. What needs improvement: Connect a second quote and deepen the explanation to reach the larger idea of shared responsibility.

High

Even though each person has a role, the village works together due to shared responsibility. The text indicates that "Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows" and "They brought pottery and tools to trade." This suggests cooperation is necessary for the community to thrive.

Why it works: A precise thesis (central idea), two connected pieces of exact evidence, and an explanation that reaches the larger idea rather than restating the quotes.

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 evidence apart from explanation.	☐	☐	☐
Name a response's thinking level from its words.	☐	☐	☐
Upgrade a response one level higher on purpose.	☐	☐	☐
Prove an idea with the author's exact words.	☐	☐	☐
Check my sentence for conventions.	☐	☐	☐

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 the words we choose make a Short Constructed Response show stronger thinking?

The answer

The words we choose reveal the depth and precision of our thinking. Stronger responses use accurate, purposeful vocabulary to introduce evidence, explain relationships, make inferences, and connect ideas. Leveling up does not mean making a response longer or using difficult words just to sound advanced; it means choosing words that make the thinking clearer, more precise, and more meaningful.

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 about the other passage. Write a thesis (central idea), choose exact evidence, and explain what it proves. Then upgrade one word on purpose.

My new prompt

Take It Further! Level Up Challenge

Rewrite a WHY response and a HOW response at a higher thinking level. Keep the answer accurate, upgrade the evidence signal phrase and the explanation, and make the relationships among ideas clearer.

- Rewrite the WHY response at a higher thinking level.
- Rewrite the HOW response at a higher thinking level.
- Keep the answer accurate.
- Upgrade the evidence signal phrase.
- Upgrade the explanation.
- Make the relationships among ideas clearer.
- Check your sentence for conventions.

My plan: my upgraded WHY response and HOW response

My Level Up Challenge

Write your upgraded responses in the box below. Underline the words you upgraded on purpose.

At-Home Connection

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

Prove It

Make a simple claim about your day ("Today was busy"). Then prove it with one exact detail. Ask your family member to do the same.

Ask: What exact words prove the idea?

Family member signature: _____

Level It Up

Start with a plain sentence, then say it again with a more precise word. Talk about how the stronger word changed the meaning, not just the sound.

Ask: How did changing one word make the answer show stronger thinking?

Family member signature: _____

Teach Evidence vs. Explanation

Teach someone at home the difference between evidence (the author's exact words) and explanation (your thinking about what the words mean). Give one example from our passages.

Ask: Which of our two passages did you find more interesting, and what proved your idea?

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 Thinking Growth

I proved that the words I choose reveal the depth of my thinking.

A note to my future writer self

My Proud Moment This Week

THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC.

Student Interactive Workbook

Grade 4

Cluster 1 - Module 2

Build a Strong Thesis (Central Idea)



Name: _____



The Writing Academy®, LLC

Grade 4 • 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

Build a Strong Thesis (Central Idea)



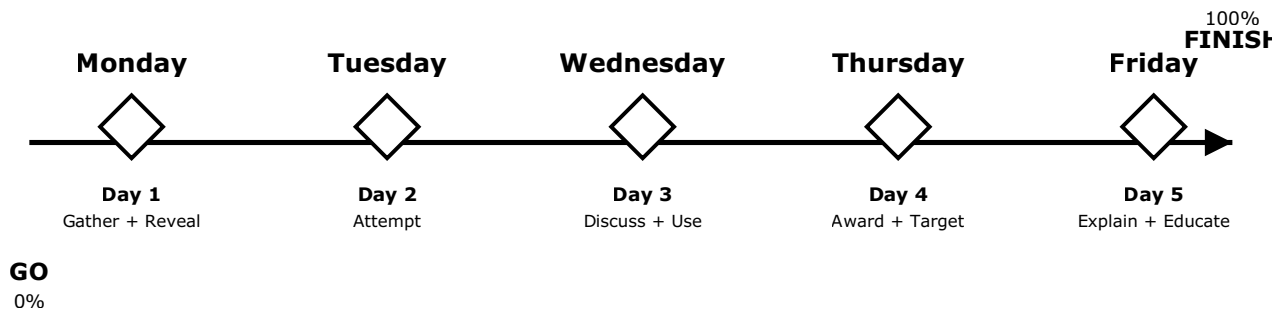
Why This Matters to Me

I learn that a prompt gives clues in its wording. It names the TOPIC (the important noun), states the CHARGE (what to do), and signals whether the answer should be WHAT, WHY, or HOW. Using the two Cluster 1 passages at Medium Stamina, I build strong thesis (central idea) statements from three pieces, TOPIC + CHARGE + ANSWER, and I match the sentence structure to the prompt type. The literary focus this module is setting.

Essential Question

How can the wording of a prompt help us build a strong thesis (central idea) for WHAT, WHY, and HOW responses?

My Week Tracker



Color in one flag at the **END** of each day, after I finish that day's work. Watch my timeline travel from **GO** to **FINISH**!

My First Thinking

I Can

- I can find the TOPIC and the CHARGE in a prompt.
- I can write a thesis (central idea) with all three pieces: TOPIC + CHARGE + ANSWER.
- I can match my sentence structure to a WHAT, WHY, or HOW prompt.
- I can describe the setting of a passage using time, place, environment, and community.

I Will

- I will read the prompt for clues before I begin writing.
- I will speak about my thinking, record my work, and explain how the prompt shapes my thesis (central idea).
- I will keep evidence out of the thesis (central idea) unless the task calls for it.
- I will check my thesis (central idea) for all three pieces before I move on.

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 the wording of a prompt reveals the sentence structure of a strong thesis (central idea).	"A Promise Written Long Ago" and "Morning in the Village" (Medium Stamina).	WHAT, WHY, and HOW thesis (central idea) statements and a Build-A-Thesis (Central Idea) Race record.

Where We Are Going

I will move from labeling thesis (central idea) statements to building my own thesis (central idea) with all three pieces, matching the sentence structure to the prompt. I will finish by teaching a partner.

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

- ☐ I can point to the TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER in my thesis (central idea).
- ☐ I can tell WHAT, WHY, and HOW prompts apart and use the right sentence type.
- ☐ I can write a clear thesis (central idea) about the setting.
- ☐ I can run the conventions sweep on my sentence.

Check Myself

- ☐ I can find the topic and charge.
- ☐ I can label a prompt WHAT, WHY, or HOW.
- ☐ I can build a complete thesis (central idea).

How I Will Show What I Know

I will show what I know with the Build-A-Thesis (Central Idea) Race, the Independent Thesis (Central Idea) Builder, and teaching a partner the thesis (central idea) formula.

My GRADUATE Learning Path

Stage	Day	What I do
Gather	Day 1	I listen and label thesis (central idea) statements as WHAT, WHY, or HOW.
Reveal	Day 1	I learn the three pieces of a thesis (central idea).
Attempt	Day 2	I play Build-A-Thesis (Central Idea) Race.
Discuss	Day 3	I discuss the pattern that builds a thesis (central idea).
Use Again	Day 3	I build WHAT, WHY, and HOW thesis (central idea) statements on my own.
Award	Day 4	I circle the thesis (central idea) I built best today.
Target	Day 4	I choose a precise next goal.
Explain/Educate	Day 5	I teach a partner the thesis (central idea) formula.

Say It Together!

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

4.12B(i):

TEKS says: 4.12B(i) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea.

How I say it: I can write a thesis (central idea) with all three pieces, TOPIC + CHARGE + ANSWER, so my answer stays on the topic.

4.11C(ii):

TEKS says: 4.11C(ii) revise drafts to improve word choice.

How I say it: I can choose better words so my sentence structure and my thinking match the WHAT, WHY, or HOW prompt.

Call and Response

Read this together as a class before we start.

Teacher asks: "Student reminder:"

Class answers: "The question tells you how to begin your answer."

One TEKS I want to practice today



Get Ready

Before I begin



Before We Begin: What Do I Already Know?

I already know that a thesis (central idea) is the clear main idea a response will prove, and that a response also has evidence and explanation.

A connection I can make

Remember It!

- ☐ A thesis (central idea) is the clear main idea a response will prove.
- ☐ A prompt names a TOPIC (the important noun) and a CHARGE (what to do).
- ☐ WHAT, WHY, and HOW clue words signal how a thesis (central idea) should be built.

One idea I remember

Ready Check

- ☐ I can find the topic and charge in a question.
- ☐ I can tell a WHAT statement from a WHY reason and a HOW method.
- ☐ I can build a complete sentence, not a fragment.

Watch Out! Common Mix-Up

Watch out! Copying part of the question is not the same as building a complete thesis (central idea). Students often confuse WHY and HOW: WHY uses a reason with because, since, although, even though, or due to; HOW uses a method with by, through, with, during, or based on. Another mix-up: putting evidence inside the thesis (central idea) instead of saving it for later.

Where This Fits in My Writing

Building a thesis (central idea) from TOPIC + CHARGE + ANSWER is the foundation for every Short Constructed Response you will write this year. Matching sentence structure to WHAT, WHY, and HOW carries through every cluster.

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 as often as you want.

Part 1: Prompt Analysis

Read the prompt. Box the topic in red. Underline the charge in yellow. Circle the WHAT, WHY, or HOW clue in green.

Why is the setting important to the people in Tayanita's village?

Part 2: Thesis (Central Idea)

Write one clear thesis (central idea) that directly answers the prompt with TOPIC + CHARGE + 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 informational response.

Number	Sentence
_____	The text says, "Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows."
_____	The setting is important because it shows how people work together to grow food and trade goods.
_____	Families worked together to plant, water, and harvest the crops.
_____	The setting is a Caddo village near a river where people live and work together.

Part 4: Reason

Write one reason that explains why your thesis (central idea) makes sense.

My first sentence

Part 5: Evidence and Explanation

Reason: The setting shapes how the village works together to grow food. 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 as evidence

This evidence proves my reason because...

Part 6: SCR Foundation

Write one clear thesis (central idea), one reason, and one strong piece of evidence. Label each part.

My paragraph



Words I Need

Tier 1, everyday words



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

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
topic	TAH-pik	What something is about.	The topic is ____.
answer	AN-sur	Your response to a question.	My answer is ____.
ask	ask	To put a question.	The prompt asks me to ____.
begin	bih-GIN	To start.	I begin my response by ____.
build	bild	To make part by part.	I build my thesis (central idea) by ____.
reason	REE-zun	Why something is true.	One reason is ____.
clue	kloo	A hint that helps you decide.	The clue word is ____.
word	wurd	A unit of language.	A stronger word here is ____.
strong	strawng	Powerful and clear.	A strong thesis (central idea) ____.
match	mach	To go together correctly.	My sentence matches the prompt because ____.

Use one Tier 1 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 2, academic words

These thinking words help you build a strong thesis (central idea). Say each word, then use it with a partner.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
thesis (central idea)	THEE-sis	The clear main idea a response will prove.	My thesis (central idea) is ____.
charge	charj	What the prompt is asking you to do.	The charge is to ____.
evidence	EV-uh-duns	Proof from the text.	My evidence is ____.
explanation	eks-pluh-NAY-shun	Thinking about what the evidence means.	My explanation shows ____.
response	rih-SPAHNS	The writing you build to answer the prompt.	My response begins with ____.
complex sentence	KOM-pleks SEN-tuns	A sentence with a subordinating conjunction.	A complex sentence uses ____.
simple sentence	SIM-pul SEN-tuns	A sentence with one complete thought.	A simple sentence states ____.
subordinating conjunction	suh-BOR-dih-nay-ting kun-JUNK-shun	A word like because or since that adds a reason.	I use ____ to show a reason.
preposition	prep-uh-ZIH-shun	A word like through or by that names a method.	I use ____ to name the method.
inference	IN-fur-uns	An idea built from clues and thinking.	I infer that ____.

Use one Tier 2 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 3, passage words

These words come from our two passages, "A Promise Written Long Ago" and "Morning in the Village." Say each word, read its meaning, and use it in the frame sentence.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
Magna Carta	MAG-nuh KAR-tuh	A 1215 document that limited the king's power.	The Magna Carta ____.
Runnymede	RUN-ee-meed	The place in England where the Magna Carta was sealed.	At Runnymede, ____.
barons	BAIR-uhnz	Powerful landowners who wanted the king to follow rules.	The barons ____.
Caddo	KAD-oh	A Native American people of the Piney Woods.	The Caddo village ____.
Piney Woods	PY-nee woodz	A forested region of East Texas.	In the Piney Woods, ____.
mound	mownd	A tall built-up hill used for important events.	The mound ____.
Three Sisters	three SIS-terz	Corn, beans, and squash grown together.	The Three Sisters ____.
harvest	HAR-vist	The gathering of ripe crops.	A successful harvest meant ____.
trade	trayd	To exchange goods with others.	They trade ____ for ____.
constitution	kon-stih-TOO-shun	A written plan of a government's rules and powers.	The U.S. Constitution ____.

Use one Tier 3 word in a sentence



My Strategy Tools

The Three Pieces to a Thesis (Central Idea)



A prompt gives clues. It names the TOPIC (the important noun), states the CHARGE (what to do), and signals whether my answer should be WHAT, WHY, or HOW. The question tells me how to begin.

WHAT
simple sentence

WHY
complex sentence

HOW
simple + preposition

**TOPIC + CHARGE +
ANSWER**

The question tells you how to begin

A stronger word is only stronger when it is used accurately. Upgrade vocabulary to match your thinking, not to sound harder.

The Three Pieces to a Thesis (Central Idea)

Part	What it means
TOPIC	The important noun the prompt is about.
CHARGE	What the prompt is asking you to do.
ANSWER	Your clear response to that charge.

TOPIC = the important noun. CHARGE = what the prompt asks you to do. ANSWER = your clear response.

How this strategy works for me

WHY and HOW

WHY	HOW
A WHY thesis (central idea) uses a complex sentence with a subordinating conjunction (because, since, although, even though, due to) to show a reason.	A HOW thesis (central idea) uses a simple sentence with a preposition (by, through, with, during, based on) that names the method or connection.

WHY calls for a reason. HOW calls for a way or method.

How I Say the Standard!

4.12B(i):

TEKS says: 4.12B(i) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea.

How I say it: I can write a thesis (central idea) with all three pieces, TOPIC + CHARGE + ANSWER, so my answer stays on the topic.

4.11C(ii):

TEKS says: 4.11C(ii) revise drafts to improve word choice.

How I say it: I can choose better words so my sentence structure and my thinking match the WHAT, WHY, or HOW prompt.

Check My Writing

- ☐ My sentence has a subject and a verb.
- ☐ I use a capital letter for Magna Carta, Runnymede, and Tayanita.
- ☐ I use a period or another ending mark.

A WHY or HOW thesis (central idea) I can write

The Five Thinking Levels

Read from the bottom up. Each level shows how deep my thinking goes.

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

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

A thinking level I want to try

Thesis (Central Idea) Types Chart

Thesis (Central Idea) Types: WHAT, WHY, HOW

Prompt Type	Sentence Habit	Helpful Clue
WHAT	Simple sentence	facts / details
WHY	Complex sentence	subordinating conjunction + reason (because, since, although, even though, due to)
HOW	Simple sentence	preposition + method / connection (by, through, with, during, based on)

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 is the setting important to the people in Tayanita's village?
HOW	Analyze how parts work together or how something happens.	How does the author show the setting of the village?

WHY calls for a reason. HOW calls for a way or method.

A WHY or HOW sentence I can 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 Magna Carta shows how limiting unfair power made a kingdom fairer, and the Caddo village shows how the setting of a river and the Piney Woods shapes daily life. Both passages show that where and how people live changes what they can do.

Background I Need

In one passage, the Magna Carta (1215, Runnymede, England) limited the king's power and protected rights. In the other passage, the setting of a Caddo village in the Piney Woods, near a river, shapes farming, trade, and community life. Both passages return every module of Cluster 1, growing longer and richer at each stamina level.

Words I dotted while reading

A Promise Written Long Ago

Nonfiction and historical fiction. Medium Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

1 In the year 1215, a very important document called the Magna Carta was created in a place called Runnymede, England. At that time, King John ruled England. Many people, especially powerful landowners called barons, were unhappy with how he treated them. The king collected heavy taxes and made unfair decisions.

2 England was very different in the early 1200s. Most people worked on farms and lived in small villages. Kings held a great deal of power and made many decisions for the country. People were expected to follow the king's orders, even if they did not agree with them. Because kings had so much authority, many people worried about what could happen if a ruler made poor choices.

3 King John faced many challenges during his time as ruler. He spent large amounts of money fighting wars, and those wars were often unsuccessful. To pay for them, he demanded more taxes from the people. Many barons believed the taxes were too high. They felt the king was asking for money without listening to their concerns. As time passed, their frustration continued to grow.

4 The barons wanted the king to follow rules. They believed even the king should not have complete power. So, they forced King John to meet them at Runnymede. There, the Magna Carta was agreed to and sealed.

5 The meeting at Runnymede was important because it gave the barons an opportunity to express their concerns. They wanted clear limits on the king's authority. They believed leaders should be responsible for their actions and should not be allowed to make decisions without considering the people they governed. Although King John did not like the agreement, he sealed the document because he faced strong pressure from the barons.

6 The Magna Carta was important because it limited the king's power. It said that the king had to follow the law, just like everyone else. It also protected certain rights of the people. For example, it said that free men could not be punished without a lawful judgment.

7 This idea was very unusual at the time. Before the Magna Carta, kings often had the ability to make decisions without being questioned. The Magna Carta introduced the idea that even rulers must obey laws. This helped create a system that was more fair and balanced. It also gave people greater confidence that they would be treated justly.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Morning in the Village

Nonfiction and historical fiction. Medium Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

1 The sun was just starting to come up when Tayanita stepped outside. The tall pine trees were still dark, but she could hear people moving around the village.

2 Her family lived in a Caddo village near a river in the Piney Woods. Their homes were built close together, and everyone knew each other. Some people were already cooking, while others were heading out to work.

3 Tayanita liked the early morning hours. The village felt peaceful before the day became busy. Smoke drifted from cooking fires, and the smell of food filled the air. Birds called from the trees, and the river moved quietly nearby.

4 Tayanita walked with her mother to the fields. Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows. Her mother always called them the "Three Sisters" because they helped each other grow. Tayanita didn't understand all of it, but she knew they needed all three to have enough food.

5 The fields were important to the village. Families worked together to plant, water, and harvest the crops. Everyone understood that a successful harvest meant there would be enough food for the coming months. Tayanita often helped by pulling weeds or carrying baskets filled with vegetables.

6 Nearby, her uncle was talking about planting something different in one part of the field next season. He said it helped the soil stay strong. Tayanita just nodded and kept pulling weeds.

7 Although she did not understand everything her uncle was saying, she enjoyed listening to the adults talk about farming. They seemed to know exactly what the land needed. Tayanita hoped that one day she would learn those things too.

8 As the morning continued, the sun climbed higher into the sky. The workers moved steadily through the fields. Some people carried tools, while others checked on the growing crops. Children helped where they could, learning important skills from their families.

9 Later, she went with her grandfather to the large mound in the middle of the village. It was tall, and it had taken many years to build. People gathered there for important events. From the top, she could see trees stretching far in every direction.

10 Her grandfather told her that many generations of Caddo people had helped build the mound. It was a place where leaders met, ceremonies were held, and community decisions were discussed. Tayanita liked standing at the top because it allowed her to see almost the entire village.

[illegible]

A Promise Written Long Ago (continued)

Nonfiction and historical fiction. Medium Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

8 The circumstances at the time helped shape the Magna Carta. People were tired of unfair treatment and wanted change. Because of this, the document shows that people long ago cared about fairness and justice.

9 The Magna Carta addressed several concerns that people had about government. It encouraged the idea that leaders should listen to others and follow established laws. While the document did not solve every problem in England, it represented an important step toward limiting government power and protecting individual rights.

10 Over time, the Magna Carta became known as one of the most influential documents in history. Many leaders and governments studied its ideas. They recognized that laws should apply to everyone and that governments should respect the rights of citizens. These ideas spread beyond England and influenced countries around the world.

11 Hundreds of years later, the ideas from the Magna Carta influenced other governments. Leaders in the United States used similar ideas when creating the U.S. Constitution. Like the Magna Carta, the Constitution limits government power and protects the rights of citizens.

12 When American leaders met to create a new government, they wanted to avoid giving too much power to one person or group. They believed government officials should follow laws and be held accountable for their actions. Some of these beliefs can be traced back to ideas found in the Magna Carta. Although the documents were written hundreds of years apart, they share important principles about fairness, rights, and government power.

13 The influence of the Magna Carta can still be seen today. Courts, lawmakers, and government leaders continue to support ideas such as equal treatment under the law and the protection of individual rights. These principles help guide decisions and remind leaders that their authority has limits.

14 Even today, the Magna Carta reminds us that rules should apply to everyone and that people deserve to be treated fairly. Its message has lasted for more than 800 years because it teaches an important lesson: good governments protect the rights of people and follow the law. The Magna Carta began as an agreement between a king and a group of barons, but its ideas eventually influenced millions of people around the world. Because of its lasting impact, it remains one of the most important documents in history.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Morning in the Village (continued)

Nonfiction and historical fiction. Medium Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

11 From there, she could spot people working near the fields, children playing near their homes, and smoke rising from cooking fires. Beyond the village, the thick Piney Woods seemed to stretch forever. The forests provided wood, food, and protection for the people who lived there.

12 As they climbed down from the mound, Tayanita's grandfather pointed toward the river. Several people were gathering water while others prepared canoes. The river was an important part of daily life. It provided water for cooking and cleaning, and it helped people travel to nearby communities.

13 That afternoon, visitors came from another village. They brought pottery and tools to trade. In return, her people shared food. Tayanita liked watching the trades. It felt like everyone was connected somehow.

14 The visitors displayed carefully made pottery decorated with patterns. Some carried stone tools, while others brought items their village was known for making. The Caddo people exchanged food and other goods. The trade helped both villages get things they needed.

15 Tayanita listened as adults talked with one another. Some discussed hunting, while others shared news about nearby communities. The visitors told stories about places they had traveled and people they had met. Tayanita enjoyed hearing about areas beyond her own village.

16 She noticed that the visitors were treated with respect. Even though they came from another village, they were welcomed warmly. Her family believed that trade and cooperation helped communities stay strong.

17 As the afternoon turned to evening, families began preparing meals. Children returned home, and workers finished their tasks for the day. The sounds of conversation filled the village as people gathered together.

18 Tayanita helped carry food while her mother prepared dinner. She thought about everything she had seen that day. She had helped in the fields, visited the mound, watched traders arrive, and learned more about her community.

19 As the day ended, she looked around her village. It was busy, but it also felt like home.

20 The glowing light from the evening fires spread across the village. Families shared meals, told stories, and laughed together. Tayanita felt proud to be part of a community where people worked together and helped one another.

21 Before going inside, she looked one last time at the homes, the fields, and the trees surrounding the village. Tomorrow would bring another busy day, but she knew she would be ready. Surrounded by family, friends, and traditions that had been passed down for generations, Tayanita felt thankful for the place she called home.

Annotate: A Promise Written Long Ago

Details about setting, fairness, rights, and the relationship between the Magna Carta and later governments.

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: Morning in the Village

Details about the setting: the river, the fields, the mound, and the Piney Woods that surround the community.

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 about the setting would make the strongest evidence for a thesis (central idea) about this passage?

My thinking

My Prompt Marking Notes

A Short Constructed Response prompt gives clues. Mark the parts that tell you what to do.

Shape	Word	Question I ask myself
Red box	Topic	What is the important noun?
Yellow underline	Charge	What does the prompt ask me to do?
Green circle	WHAT / WHY / HOW	What clue word tells me the sentence type?

Box the TOPIC in red. Underline the CHARGE in yellow. Circle the WHAT, WHY, or HOW clue in green.

Why is the setting important to the people in Tayanita's village?

My three marks in words

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 1: Gather + Reveal



I discover the three pieces of a thesis (central idea)

Our Question for Today

What clue words tell me whether a thesis (central idea) should be WHAT, WHY, or HOW?

1. Gather: Listen and Label

Pencils down. Listen to the whole thesis (central idea). Then hold up WHAT, WHY, or HOW. Be ready to name the clue that helped you decide. Challenge: identify the TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER.

Thesis (Central Idea)	Answer
"The Magna Carta is a document that limited the king's power."	WHAT
"The Magna Carta was important because it limited the king's power and protected rights."	WHY
"The author shows the Magna Carta's influence through a comparison with the U.S. Constitution."	HOW
"Tayanita's village is a Caddo community near a river in the Piney Woods."	WHAT
"The setting matters because the land, river, and community support daily life."	WHY
"The author shows the setting through details about farming, trade, and the river."	HOW

The clue that helped me decide

Day 1: Reveal, continued

2. Reveal: The Three Pieces to a Thesis (Central Idea)

TOPIC + CHARGE + ANSWER. TOPIC is the important noun. CHARGE is what the prompt asks you to do. ANSWER is your clear response.

Prompt Type	Sentence Habit	Clue Words
WHAT	Simple sentence	facts / details
WHY	Complex sentence	because, since, although, even though, due to
HOW	Simple sentence	by, through, with, during, based on

Model WHY (prompt "Why is the setting important in Tayanita's village?"): TOPIC = setting; CHARGE = explain why it is important; ANSWER = it shows how people work together to grow food and trade goods. Thesis (Central Idea): "The setting is important because it shows how people work together to grow food and trade goods."

STOP & THINK

What is the TOPIC and CHARGE in your own words?

My answer



Day 1 Closing

Complete: The three pieces of a thesis (central idea) are ____, and a WHY thesis (central idea) uses ____.

My closing thought

Thesis (Central Idea) Detectives

Write on the board: (1) The setting is important. (2) The setting is important because it shows how the village works together. (3) The author shows the setting through details about farming and trading. Which is WHAT? WHY? HOW? What word helped you decide?

Sentence 1 is ____, Sentence 2 is ____, Sentence 3 is ____, because...

Ⓢ STOP & THINK

Ask yourself: Does my sentence structure match WHAT, WHY, or HOW?

My answer

STUDENT WORKBOOK



BUILD-A-THESIS (CENTRAL IDEA) RACE

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards (sheet 1 of 2)

Cut on the dashed lines. Keep the 3 label cards (TOPIC, CHARGE, ANSWER) in the middle and the 6 task cards in a stack. Spin WHAT, WHY, or HOW, draw a task card, and build the matching sentence. Store all cards in your Pocket Practice.

TOPIC	CHARGE
ANSWER	What is the setting of Tayanita's village?
Why is the setting important in the village?	How does the author show the setting of the village?

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.

CHARGE

What the prompt asks you to do.

TOPIC

The important noun the prompt is about.

The setting is a Caddo village near a river
where people live and work together.
(WHAT)

ANSWER

Your clear response to the charge.

The author shows the setting through
details like "Corn, beans, and squash grew
in long rows" and "They brought pottery
and tools to trade." (HOW)

The setting is important because "Corn,
beans, and squash grew in long rows,"
which shows how people depend on farming.
(WHY)

STUDENT WORKBOOK



BUILD-A-THESIS (CENTRAL IDEA) RACE

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards (sheet 2 of 2)

Cut on the dashed lines. Keep the 3 label cards (TOPIC, CHARGE, ANSWER) in the middle and the 6 task cards in a stack. Spin WHAT, WHY, or HOW, draw a task card, and build the matching sentence. Store all cards in your Pocket Practice.

What kind of environment is described in the village?

Why do visitors come to the village?

How does the author show why the Magna Carta mattered?

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

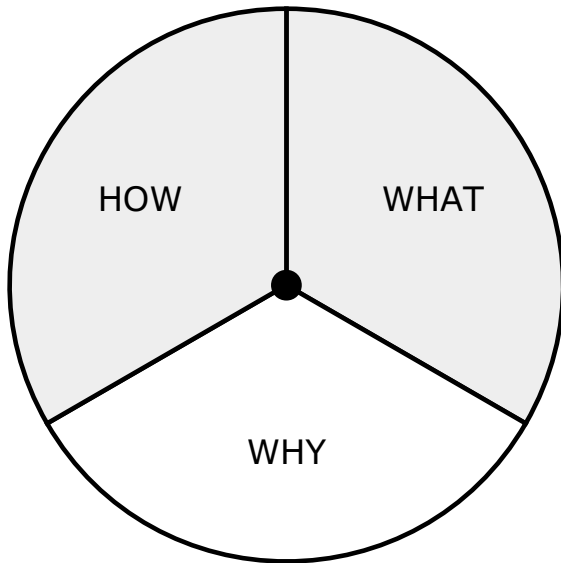
This page prints on the back of the card page. Each answer sits behind its own card, so flip a card over to check yourself. Keep the cards in Pocket Practice when you finish.

Visitors come because "They brought pottery and tools to trade," which shows the importance of sharing resources. (WHY)

The environment is a forested area near water where people farm and gather. (WHAT)

The author shows why the Magna Carta mattered through details such as "The Magna Carta was important because it limited the king's power" and "It also protected certain rights of the people." (HOW)

Spinner



Use a pencil and a paper clip to spin.

Game Board

GO	Box the TOPIC	Underline the CHARGE	Name the clue word	WHAT space: state a fact
Move 1	WHY space: add because	Move 1	HOW space: add through/by	Move 1
Check all 3 pieces	Move 1	Match sentence structure	Move 1	Explain your choice
Move 1	Save two of your strongest thesis (central idea) statements	Move 1	Bonus: upgrade a word	Move 1
FINISH				

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 2: Attempt



I build a thesis (central idea) for WHAT, WHY, and HOW

Our Question for Today

Can I identify the topic and charge, then build the matching sentence structure?

Build-A-Thesis (Central Idea) Race: How to Play

- Spin WHAT, WHY, or HOW.
- Draw a task card.
- Identify the TOPIC.
- Identify the CHARGE.
- Add an ANSWER.
- Build the correct sentence type.
- Explain why your sentence matches the prompt.
- Move your Pencil Guy marker.
- Save two of your strongest thesis (central idea) statements.

My Thesis (Central Idea) Statements

Statement 1: Prompt type ____

Statement 2: Prompt type ____



Day 2: Attempt, continued

Sample Round (Modeled)

Prompt: Why is the setting important in the village? Answer: The setting is important because "Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows," which shows how people depend on farming.

Quick Check: Did we include TOPIC + CHARGE + ANSWER? Did we answer the exact prompt? Does our sentence structure match WHAT, WHY, or HOW? Did we keep evidence out of the thesis (central idea) unless the task calls for it?

STOP & THINK

Did your thesis (central idea) match the prompt type, or only borrow words from the passage?

My answer

My Race Record

Write two of your best thesis (central idea) statements from the race. These will help you review later.

Statement 3: Prompt type ____

Statement 4: Prompt type ____

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 3: Discuss + Use



I build thesis (central idea) statements on my own

Our Question for Today

How does the wording of the prompt guide the thesis (central idea) I build?

1. Discuss the Pattern

Question	My thinking
What did the prompt tell you to do?	
Where did you find the topic?	
What words revealed the charge?	
What sentence structure matched the prompt?	

The question tells me how to begin because...

2. Use Again: Independent Thesis (Central Idea) Builder

For each prompt: box the TOPIC, underline the CHARGE, label it WHAT/WHY/HOW, write a thesis (central idea) with TOPIC + CHARGE + ANSWER, and check your sentence structure.

Box the TOPIC in red. Underline the CHARGE in yellow. Circle the WHAT, WHY, or HOW clue in green.

What is the setting of Tayanita's village?

My WHAT thesis (central idea)

Box the TOPIC in red. Underline the CHARGE in yellow. Circle the WHAT, WHY, or HOW clue in green.

Why is the setting important to the people in Tayanita's village?

My WHY thesis (central idea)

Box the TOPIC in red. Underline the CHARGE in yellow. Circle the WHAT, WHY, or HOW clue in green.

How does the author show the setting of the village?

My HOW thesis (central idea)



3. Conventions Sweep

Read: "King John made unfair decisions. The barons wanted rules." Find and label one proper noun, one past-tense irregular verb, one plural noun, and one word you can check for a grade-appropriate spelling pattern.

My labeled sentence

STOP & THINK

Underline the thesis (central idea) you built best and label its three pieces.

My strongest thesis (central idea)

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 4: Award + Target



I notice the thesis (central idea) I built best

Our Question for Today

What have I learned about building a strong thesis (central idea)?

1. Award

Circle or underline the thesis (central idea) you built best today. Tell a partner: "My thesis (central idea) is strong because it includes ____, ____, and ____."

- ☐ I identified the topic and charge.
- ☐ I used all three thesis (central idea) pieces.
- ☐ I matched my sentence structure to the prompt.
- ☐ I kept evidence out of my thesis (central idea) unless the task called for it.

Something I did well today

2. Target

Choose one next step.

- ☐ I will identify the charge more carefully.
- ☐ I will use all three thesis (central idea) pieces.
- ☐ I will match my sentence structure to the prompt.

My next thesis (central idea) goal is ____ because ____

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 5: Explain/Educate



I teach someone else the thesis (central idea) formula

Our Question for Today

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

1. Teach the Thesis (Central Idea) Formula

Teach your partner: how to find the TOPIC; how to find the CHARGE; how to add the ANSWER; and how WHAT, WHY, and HOW change the sentence structure. Give one example thesis (central idea).

Sentence Frame: "The prompt helps me build my thesis (central idea) because _____. First I find _____. Then I find _____. Finally, I _____."

My partner taught me...

2. Overarching Question Answer

How can the wording of a prompt help us build a strong thesis (central idea) for WHAT, WHY, and HOW responses?

My answer

3. Transfer: Day 5 Exit Ticket

Complete each part on your own.

Box the TOPIC in red. Underline the CHARGE in yellow. Circle the WHAT, WHY, or HOW clue in green.

Why is the setting important to the people in Tayanita's village?

My topic

My charge

My thesis (central idea)

- ☐ My thesis (central idea) includes topic, charge, and answer.
- ☐ My sentence structure matches WHAT, WHY, or HOW.
- ☐ I kept evidence out of the thesis (central idea) unless the task called for it.
- ☐ I checked my sentence for conventions.

Ⓢ STOP & THINK

The prompt gives us the information we need to begin. We identify the topic, determine the charge, and add a clear answer that matches WHAT, WHY, or HOW.

One thing I will remember about building a thesis (central idea) is ____ because



Write More

Plan, draft, revise, edit, and share



My Writing Assignment

Write a short response to this prompt:

Box the TOPIC in red. Underline the CHARGE in yellow. Circle the WHAT, WHY, or HOW clue in green.

Why is the setting important to the people in Tayanita's village? Build a thesis (central idea) with all three pieces.

My Plan

- Read the prompt. Box the topic.
- Underline the charge.
- Label the prompt WHAT, WHY, or HOW.
- Write a thesis (central idea) in the matching sentence structure.

Two possible reasons from the passage

The stronger reason is...

Writing Color Coding

Thesis (central idea) and reasons, Green. Evidence, Yellow. Explanation, Red or Pink. Significance (Bluebird Moment), 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.
- ☐ Magna Carta, King John, Runnymede, England, Caddo, and Tayanita begin with capital letters.
- ☐ Barons, document, village, taxes, rights, and crops 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
Topic	I named the important noun from the prompt.	
Charge	I stated what the prompt asks me to do.	
Answer	I gave a clear response that matches the charge.	
Sentence Structure	My sentence matches WHAT (simple), WHY (complex), or HOW (preposition).	

Study the Samples

Read the three responses to this prompt. Notice what improves from Low to Medium to High: each version adds a missing piece, moves toward the exact sentence structure for a WHY prompt, and points to more precise evidence from the passage.

Why is the setting important to the people in Tayanita's village?

Low

The setting is important.

What is missing: the thesis (central idea) is missing the charge-answer connection and the WHY reason; it is a simple statement, not a complex WHY sentence.

Medium

The setting is important because people grow food there.

What is working: A WHY thesis (central idea) with topic, charge, and a reason using "because."

What needs improvement: The answer is accurate but general; sharpen it to name how the setting supports the community.

High

The setting is important because it shows how people work together to grow food and trade goods.

Why it works: A complete WHY thesis (central idea), topic (setting), charge (why it is important), and a precise answer, written as a complex sentence with "because."

The piece that changed the most from Low to High is ____ because ____



Look Back & Look Forward

I own my learning



My Progress Tracker

I can...	Not yet	Growing	Got it
Find the TOPIC and CHARGE in a prompt.	☐	☐	☐
Label a prompt WHAT, WHY, or HOW.	☐	☐	☐
Build a thesis (central idea) with all three pieces.	☐	☐	☐
Match my sentence structure to the prompt type.	☐	☐	☐
Check my sentence for conventions.	☐	☐	☐

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 the wording of a prompt help us build a strong thesis (central idea) for WHAT, WHY, and HOW responses?

The answer

The prompt gives us the information we need to begin. We identify the topic, determine the charge, and add a clear answer. The words WHAT, WHY, and HOW also signal the kind of relationship our sentence should communicate: WHAT states information, WHY explains a reason, and HOW explains a method or connection.

At the start of this module, I only knew how to repeat part of the question. Now I know that a prompt gives clues: it names the topic, states the charge, and signals WHAT, WHY, or HOW. Building a thesis (central idea) from all three pieces, and matching the sentence structure to the prompt, will help me begin every response with control this year.

What Changed in My Thinking?

At first I thought...

Now I think...

Try It Another Way

Use a new prompt about the other passage. Box the topic, underline the charge, label it WHAT, WHY, or HOW, and build a thesis (central idea) with all three pieces. Read your new thesis (central idea) aloud to check that the sentence structure matches the prompt type before you share it with a partner.

My new prompt

Take It Further! Multi-Level Thesis (Central Idea) Challenge

Choose one prompt and write a Level 1 thesis (central idea), a Level 3 thesis (central idea), and a Level 5 thesis (central idea). Then explain: What changed in your word choice? What changed in the precision of your thinking? Which version answers the charge most clearly? Advanced: Use your strongest thesis (central idea) to begin a full response with two quotes, such as "Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows" and "They brought pottery and tools to trade."

- Box the TOPIC and underline the CHARGE.
- Label the prompt WHAT, WHY, or HOW.
- Write a Level 1 thesis (central idea) that repeats the question simply.
- Write a Level 3 thesis (central idea) that connects directly to evidence.
- Write a Level 5 thesis (central idea) that reaches a broader understanding.
- Explain what changed in your word choice and the precision of your thinking.
- Explain to a partner which version answers the charge most clearly.
- Check your sentence for conventions.

My plan: topic, charge, and three thesis (central idea) levels

My Multi-Level Thesis (Central Idea) Challenge

Write your strongest thesis (central idea) in the box below. Underline the words that show your highest thinking level. Then explain to a partner why your Level 5 thesis (central idea) shows deeper thinking than your Level 1 thesis (central idea), using the Five Thinking Levels chart to name the difference.

At-Home Connection

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

Name the Charge

Ask a simple question ("Why do we recycle?"). Have your family member name the topic, the charge, and then answer in one sentence with "because."

Ask: What are the three pieces of a strong thesis (central idea)?

Family member signature: _____

What, Why, or How

Take turns asking WHAT, WHY, and HOW questions about your day. Notice how a WHY answer uses "because" and a HOW answer uses "by" or "through."

Ask: Why does the wording of a question change how you begin your answer?

Family member signature: _____

Build It Together

Ask your family member to say a question back as one clear sentence that names the topic and gives the answer, adding a reason with "because" for a why question.

Ask: What is the setting of "Morning in the Village," and how do you know?

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 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 Thesis (Central Idea) Growth

I proved that the wording of a prompt tells me how to build a strong thesis (central idea).

A note to my future writer self

My Proud Moment This Week

THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC.

Student Interactive Workbook

Grade 4

Cluster 1 - Module 3

Prove It with Strong Evidence



Name: _____



The Writing Academy®, LLC

Grade 4 • 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

Prove It with Strong Evidence



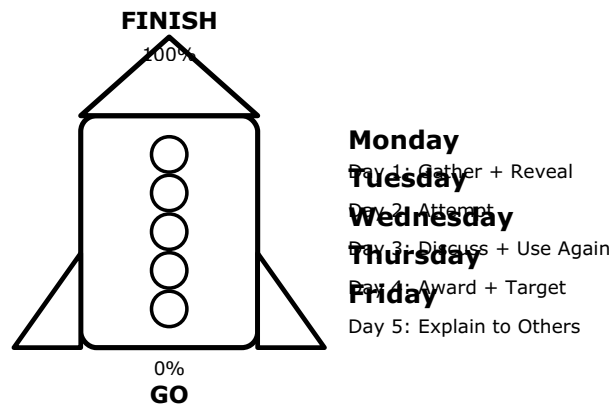
Why This Matters to Me

Quoting is not enough. The quote must be the right quote for the job. In this module I use the two High Stamina passages to run CSI (Connect, Support, Infer) on a quote and decide whether it is strong enough to prove my thesis (central idea). Then I announce my evidence with a signal phrase and quotation marks, and I add strong evidence to my thesis (central idea). Two selections anchor Cluster 1 and return across all four modules at rising stamina: "A Promise Written Long Ago" (nonfiction) and "Morning in the Village" (historical fiction); this module uses the High Stamina versions. My independent product is to take a thesis (central idea) and add strong evidence: I choose exact quotes that pass CSI, announce them with a signal phrase and quotation marks, and explain why each quote is strong.

Essential Question

How can we decide whether a piece of evidence is strong enough to prove our thesis (central idea)?

My Week Tracker



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

My First Thinking

I Can

- I can tell evidence (exact words in quotation marks) from a summary.
- I can use the CSI test to decide whether a quote is strong enough.
- I can announce a quote with a signal phrase and quotation marks.
- I can add strong evidence to a thesis (central idea) to prove it.

I Will

- I will choose short, meaningful quotes that fit the prompt.
- I will speak about my thinking, record my work, and explain why a quote is strong.
- I will check CSI before I use a quote.
- I will match my quoted words exactly to the passage.

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
What counts as evidence (exact words in quotation marks) and what does not, the CSI test: Connect to the prompt, Support the thesis (central idea), Infer additional ideas, signal phrases that announce a quote, and the difference between strong and weak evidence.	"A Promise Written Long Ago" (nonfiction, the Magna Carta) and "Morning in the Village" (historical fiction, a Caddo village), both at High Stamina.	A thesis (central idea) with strong evidence added, chosen with CSI and announced with a signal phrase and quotation marks.

Where We Are Going

By Day 5 I will teach a partner the CSI test: what evidence is, what C, S, and I mean, one quote I chose, why it is strong or weak, and how to announce it correctly.

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

- ☐ I can point to evidence and explain why it is not a summary.
- ☐ I can run CSI on a quote and decide strong or weak.
- ☐ I can write an evidence sentence with a signal phrase and quotation marks.
- ☐ I can check my evidence sentence for conventions.

Check Myself

- ☐ My evidence sentence is a complete simple sentence.
- ☐ My evidence sentence shows correct subject-verb agreement.
- ☐ My high-frequency spelling is correct.
- ☐ My quoted words match the passage exactly.
- ☐ I announced my quote with a signal phrase and quotation marks.

How I Will Show What I Know

Explain why the setting is important to the people in Tayanita's village, and prove your thesis (central idea) with strong evidence that passes CSI. I perform a formative check in CSI Evidence Sort and an independent task adding strong evidence to a thesis (central idea), using the two High Stamina passages, the CSI and signal-phrase charts, and my notebook.

My GRADUATE Learning Path

Stage	Day	What I do
Gather	Day 1	I gather by catching the strongest evidence from a set of quotes. I do not star yet. I hear all three choices first: I listen to the prompt, hear three possible quotes, star the strongest quote, and defend it with C, S, and I before I ever see the printed text. My teacher reminds me that my ears have a job: I am not listening for a quote that is merely true, I am listening for the quote that best connects to the prompt and best supports the idea. Without looking, I name the three CSI questions I should ask before choosing evidence.
Reveal	Day 1	I reveal what counts as evidence (exact words in quotation marks) and what does not, and I learn the CSI test: Connect to the prompt, Support the thesis (central idea), Infer something important, plus the signal phrase that announces a quote and the chant that goes with it: Hey! Hey! Hey! Evidence is on the way! I glue the What-is-Evidence chart, the CSI chart, and the signal-phrase chart into my interactive notebook.
Attempt	Day 2	I attempt the module skill through CSI Evidence Sort: I draw a task card, read the quote, test it with CSI, decide Strong or Weak for the task, and defend my decision using C, S, and I in a full sentence with a sentence frame. I record one strong piece of evidence in my interactive notebook and explain why it is strong.
Discuss	Day 3	I discuss why a quote my group sorted was strong: how it connected to the prompt, what part of the thesis (central idea) it supported, what a reader could infer from it, and why another quote would have been weaker. I connect my answer to the Overarching Question: how does CSI help us decide whether evidence is strong enough?
Use Again	Day 3	I use the skill again by adding strong evidence to a given thesis (central idea), announcing it with a signal phrase and quotation marks, and then running a Module 3 evidence-sentence conventions sweep to confirm my sentence is complete, my subject and verb agree, my high-frequency spelling is correct, and my quoted words match the passage exactly.
Award	Day 4	I award myself by highlighting the strongest quote I selected today, writing in my notebook that I used strong evidence today, and finishing the sentence: this quote is strong evidence because _____. I think about whether weak evidence could lower my score and how authors choose which details to include.
Target	Day 4	I set my target by choosing one goal for next time: use quotation marks correctly, choose shorter and more meaningful quotes, or check CSI before I use a quote. I finish the closing sentence: my next evidence goal is _____ because _____.
Explain to Others	Day 5	I explain to others by teaching a partner the CSI test: I state what evidence is, explain C, S, and I, share one quote, explain why it is strong or weak, and show how to announce it correctly with a signal phrase and quotation marks, using the sentence frame: this quote is strong evidence because it connects to _____, supports _____, and helps me infer _____. I remember that a quotation is evidence, but a well-chosen quotation that passes CSI is STRONG evidence.

Say It Together!

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

(12)(B)(i):

compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea

(11)(C)(i):

revise drafts to improve sentence structure

Call and Response

Read this together as a class before we start.

Teacher asks: "How does CSI help us decide whether evidence is strong enough?"

Class answers: "Connect, Support, Infer!"

One TEKS I want to practice today



Get Ready

Before I begin



Before We Begin: What Do I Already Know?

Printed passages (High Stamina), the CSI and signal-phrases charts, CSI Evidence Sort task cards, and student notebooks.

A connection I can make

Remember It!

- ☐ Evidence is exact words from the text in quotation marks.
- ☐ A quote is not automatically strong evidence.
- ☐ Strong evidence must pass CSI: Connect, Support, Infer.

One idea I remember

Ready Check

- ☐ I have my two High Stamina passages.
- ☐ I have the CSI chart glued into my notebook.
- ☐ I know the signal-phrase chant.

Watch Out! Common Mix-Up

Watch out! Evidence is not the same as explaining. I could summarize instead of using the exact words. I could pick a quote that does not connect to the prompt. I could forget to announce my evidence with a signal phrase. Before I use any quote, I check CSI, and I choose short, meaningful quotes.

Where This Fits in My Writing

Checking CSI and choosing short, meaningful quotes is the foundation for every Short Constructed Response I will write this year. This habit carries through every cluster.

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 my own. I may reread the Magna Carta passage in Read and Interact as often as I want.

Part 1: Evidence Check

Read the prompt. Underline the topic it asks about.

Why is the setting important to the people in Tayanita's village? Prove your thesis (central idea) with strong evidence that passes CSI.

Part 2: Thesis (Central Idea)

Write one sentence that answers the prompt above. Give a clear thesis (central idea).

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 text says, 'Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows.'
_____	The setting is important because people depend on farming and trade.
_____	This shows that the community depends on cooperation.
_____	The text says, 'They brought pottery and tools to trade.'

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: One reason the setting matters is farming. Copy one exact quote 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



Before we begin, let's preview the words we will use to talk about evidence, CSI, and signal phrases, everyday words, academic words, and words from our two passages.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
quote	My quote is ____.	the exact words from a text	My quote is ____.
prove	I prove my idea by ____.	to show something is true	I prove my idea by ____.
choose	I choose this quote because ____.	to pick on purpose	I choose this quote because ____.
strong	Strong evidence ____.	powerful and clear	Strong evidence ____.
weak	Weak evidence ____.	not strong or convincing	Weak evidence ____.
word	The exact words are ____.	a unit of language	The exact words are ____.
text	The text says ____.	the written passage	The text says ____.
check	I check my quote by ____.	to test or confirm	I check my quote by ____.
match	My quote matches the text because ____.	to be exactly the same	My quote matches the text because ____.
announce	I announce my evidence by ____.	to introduce clearly	I announce my evidence by ____.

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	My evidence is ____.	exact words from the text in quotation marks	My evidence is ____.
support	This quote supports ____.	to back up an idea with proof	This quote supports ____.
connect	This quote connects to ____.	to link the quote to the prompt	This quote connects to ____.
infer	From this quote I infer ____.	to figure out something using clues	From this quote I infer ____.
signal phrase	I use the signal phrase ____.	words that announce a quote	I use the signal phrase ____.
citation	I cite the text by ____.	showing where the words came from	I cite the text by ____.
explanation	My explanation shows ____.	thinking about what the evidence means	My explanation shows ____.
thesis (central idea)	My thesis (central idea) is ____.	the clear main idea a response will prove	My thesis (central idea) is ____.
prompt	The prompt asks me to ____.	the question or task you answer	The prompt asks me to ____.
relevance	This quote's relevance is ____.	how closely something fits the point	This quote's relevance is ____.

Use one Tier 2 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 3, passage words

These words come from our passages about A Promise Written Long Ago and Morning in the Village.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
Magna Carta	a 1215 document that limited the king's power	MAG-nuh KAR-tuh	The Magna Carta ____.
Runnymede	the field in England where the Magna Carta was sealed	RUN-ee-meed	At Runnymede, ____.
barons	powerful landowners who wanted the king to follow rules	BAIR-uhnz	The barons ____.
negotiation	talking to reach an agreement	nih-goh-shee-AY-shun	After months of negotiation, ____.
Caddo	a Native American people of the Piney Woods	KAD-oh	The Caddo village ____.
Three Sisters	corn, beans, and squash grown together	three SIS-terz	The Three Sisters ____.
mound	a tall built-up hill used for important events	mownd	The mound ____.
pottery	objects shaped from clay	POT-uh-ree	The visitors brought pottery to ____.
harvest	the gathering of ripe crops	HAR-vist	A successful harvest meant ____.
Constitution	a written plan of a government's rules and powers	kon-stih-TOO-shun	The U.S. Constitution ____.

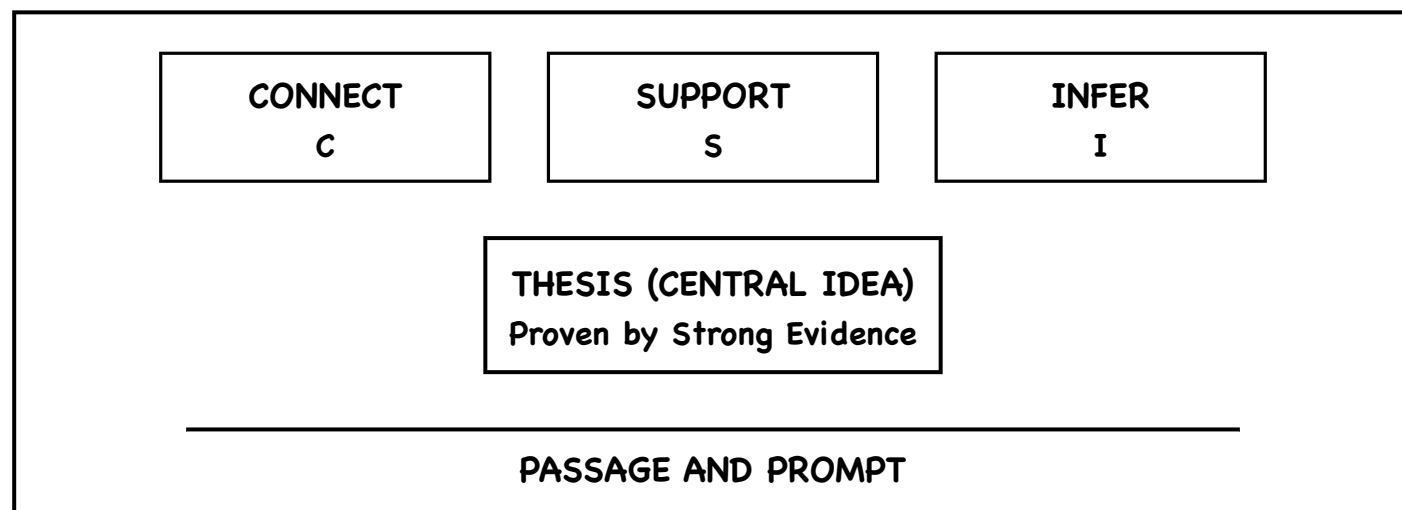
Use one Tier 3 word in a sentence

My Strategy Tools

The CSI Evidence Test



Strong evidence does not happen by accident. The CSI test shows how a quote proves an idea.



A quote is not automatically strong evidence. It must pass CSI.

The CSI Evidence Test

Mark	What it means
C, Connect	Does the quote connect to the prompt?
S, Support	Does the quote support the thesis (central idea)?
I, Infer	Can the quote help us infer something important?

Three strong YES answers to C, S, and I equal strong evidence.

How the CSI test works for me

Strong Evidence and Weak Evidence

Strong Evidence	Weak Evidence
passes all three CSI questions and is announced with a signal phrase and quotation marks.	fails one or more CSI questions or is only a summary, not exact words.

Strong evidence must pass CSI: Connect, Support, Infer.

How I Say the Standard!

(12)(B)(i):

compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea

(11)(C)(i):

revise drafts to improve sentence structure

Check My Writing

- ☐ My evidence sentence has a subject and a verb.
- ☐ I use a capital letter for proper nouns like Magna Carta.
- ☐ I use a period or another ending mark.

An evidence sentence I can try

Rigor and Cognitive Demand

Read from the bottom up. Each level shows a deeper way of working with evidence.

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

Each level moves from supported to independent evidence use.

One evidence skill I know

Five Thinking Levels

These same three levels of thinking apply whether I am connecting, supporting, or inferring with a quote.

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

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 is the setting important to the people in Tayanita's village? Prove your thesis (central idea) with strong evidence that passes CSI.
HOW	Analyze how parts work together or how something happens.	How does the passage show cooperation in Tayanita's community? Prove your thesis (central idea) with strong evidence that passes CSI.

A quote is not automatically strong evidence. Strong evidence must pass CSI: Connect to the prompt, Support the thesis (central idea), and Infer something meaningful.

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

Governments and communities still use the same idea today: leaders must follow rules, and people prove their ideas with exact facts, not just opinions.

Background I Need

In 1215 in England, powerful landowners called barons forced King John to agree to the Magna Carta at Runnymede, a document that limited a king's power for the first time. The Caddo people of the Piney Woods grew corn, beans, and squash together as the Three Sisters, built mounds for important events, and traded pottery and tools with neighboring villages.

Words I dotted while reading

A Promise Written Long Ago

Nonfiction and historical fiction. High Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

[1] In the year 1215, a very important document called the Magna Carta was created in a place called Runnymede, England. At that time, King John ruled England. Many people, especially powerful landowners called barons, were unhappy with how he treated them. The king collected heavy taxes and made unfair decisions.

[2] England in the early 1200s looked very different from the country people know today. Most people lived in small villages and worked on farms. Travel was difficult, and news spread slowly. Kings held a great deal of power over the land and the people who lived there. They made decisions about laws, taxes, and government. Many people believed that a king's authority came from God and should not be questioned.

[3] King John had been ruling England for several years when problems began to grow. He spent large amounts of money fighting wars with other countries. Many of these military campaigns were unsuccessful, which caused him to lose land and support. Because wars were expensive, King John needed more money. To raise funds, he increased taxes on landowners and demanded payments from people throughout England.

[4] The barons were especially upset. Barons were powerful landowners who controlled large areas of land and often provided support to the king. They believed the taxes were becoming unfair and that King John was making important decisions without listening to others. Many felt that the king was using his power in ways that harmed the people he was supposed to lead.

[5] As time passed, disagreements between King John and the barons became more serious. The barons wanted the king to follow rules. They believed even the king should not have complete power. They argued that leaders should be responsible for their actions and should not be allowed to do whatever they wanted. This idea was unusual because kings often had more authority than anyone else in the country.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

A Promise Written Long Ago (continued)

Nonfiction and historical fiction. High Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

[6] Eventually, the barons decided they needed to take action. They organized together and demanded changes. Their goal was not to remove the king from power. Instead, they wanted him to agree to limits on his authority. After months of conflict and negotiations, the barons forced King John to meet them at Runnymede, a grassy field near the River Thames.

[7] There, the Magna Carta was agreed to and sealed.

[8] Although the sealing of the Magna Carta happened in a single location on a single day, its impact would last for centuries. The document contained promises and rules that were designed to prevent the king from abusing his power. It represented an agreement between the king and the barons about how government should operate.

[9] The Magna Carta was important because it limited the king's power. It said that the king had to follow the law, just like everyone else. This idea may seem normal today, but it was revolutionary in 1215. Before the Magna Carta, many rulers believed they could make decisions without restrictions. The document introduced the idea that even leaders must obey the law.

[10] The Magna Carta also protected certain rights of the people. One of its most famous principles involved fair treatment under the law. For example, it stated that free men could not be punished without a lawful judgment. This meant that a person could not simply be arrested or punished because a ruler wanted it to happen. Instead, there needed to be a legal process.

[11] This idea helped establish an important principle that continues to influence legal systems today. People wanted protection from unfair treatment, and the Magna Carta provided a foundation for those protections. While the document originally focused on the rights of certain groups, many of its ideas later expanded to influence broader concepts of freedom and justice.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

A Promise Written Long Ago (continued)

Nonfiction and historical fiction. High Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

[12]The circumstances at the time helped shape the Magna Carta. People were tired of unfair treatment and wanted change. They wanted a government that followed laws rather than relying only on the decisions of one person. Because of this, the document shows that people long ago cared about fairness and justice.

[13]The Magna Carta did not solve every problem in England. In fact, conflicts continued after it was sealed. Some parts of the agreement were ignored, challenged, or revised over time. However, the ideas contained within the document continued to grow in importance. Leaders, lawmakers, and scholars studied the Magna Carta and recognized that it introduced important concepts about government and individual rights.

[14]As years passed, the Magna Carta became a symbol of the idea that government power should have limits. People increasingly believed that leaders should be accountable for their actions and that citizens should have protections under the law. These beliefs influenced political thinking throughout Europe and beyond.

[15]

Hundreds of years later, the ideas from the Magna Carta influenced other governments. Leaders in the United States used similar ideas when creating the U.S. Constitution. Like the Magna Carta, the Constitution limits government power and protects the rights of citizens.

[16]When American leaders met to create a new government after the American Revolution, they wanted to avoid some of the problems that had existed under powerful rulers in the past. They believed government officials should follow laws, respect the rights of citizens, and be held accountable for their actions. Many of these principles can be connected to ideas first expressed in the Magna Carta.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

A Promise Written Long Ago (continued)

Nonfiction and historical fiction. High Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

[17]The Constitution established a system in which power is divided among different branches of government. This helps prevent any one person or group from gaining too much control. The Magna Carta helped inspire this way of thinking because it emphasized that power should have limits.

[18]The influence of the Magna Carta can still be seen today. Courts use laws and legal procedures to help ensure fairness. Citizens have rights that governments are expected to protect. Leaders are required to follow laws just like everyone else. These ideas may seem ordinary now, but they were groundbreaking when the Magna Carta was first sealed more than 800 years ago.

[19]Students who learn about the Magna Carta are studying more than just a historical document. They are learning about the origins of ideas that continue to shape governments around the world. The document reminds people that fairness, justice, and accountability are important parts of a strong society.

[20]Even today, the Magna Carta reminds us that rules should apply to everyone and that people deserve to be treated fairly. Its message has lasted for more than eight centuries because it teaches an important lesson: governments should protect the rights of people and follow the law. What began as an agreement between a king and a group of barons eventually became one of the most influential documents in world history. Because of its lasting impact on freedom, justice, and government, the Magna Carta remains an important symbol of fairness and the rule of law.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Morning in the Village

Nonfiction and historical fiction. High Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

[1] The sun was just starting to come up when Tayanita stepped outside. The tall pine trees were still dark, but she could hear people moving around the village.

[2] Her family lived in a Caddo village near a river in the Piney Woods. Their homes were built close together, and everyone knew each other. Some people were already cooking, while others were heading out to work.

[3] Tayanita liked the early morning hours. The village felt peaceful before the day became busy. Smoke drifted from cooking fires, and the smell of food filled the air. Birds called from the trees, and the river moved quietly nearby. She could hear the sound of people talking as they began their daily chores.

[4] The Caddo people worked hard to provide for their families. Everyone had responsibilities. Some people farmed, some hunted, and others made tools, baskets, or pottery. Children learned by watching adults and helping with small tasks. Tayanita was proud when her family trusted her with important jobs.

[5] Tayanita walked with her mother to the fields. Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows. Her mother always called them the "Three Sisters" because they helped each other grow. Tayanita didn't understand all of it, but she knew they needed all three to have enough food.

[6] The fields were important to the village. Families worked together to plant, water, and harvest the crops. Everyone understood that a successful harvest meant there would be enough food for the coming months. Tayanita often helped by pulling weeds or carrying baskets filled with vegetables.

My
marks

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Morning in the Village (continued)

Nonfiction and historical fiction. High Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

[7] As they worked, her mother explained how the plants supported one another. The corn grew tall and provided a place for the bean vines to climb. The beans helped return nutrients to the soil. The squash spread across the ground and helped keep weeds from growing. Although the explanation seemed complicated, Tayanita liked learning about the plants.

[8] Nearby, her uncle was talking about planting something different in one part of the field next season. He said it helped the soil stay strong. Tayanita just nodded and kept pulling weeds.

[9] Although she did not understand everything her uncle was saying, she enjoyed listening to the adults discuss farming. They seemed to know exactly what the land needed. Her grandfather often said that people should care for the land because the land cared for them. Tayanita thought about those words whenever she worked in the fields.

[10] As the morning continued, the sun climbed higher into the sky. Workers moved steadily through the fields. Some people carried baskets, while others checked on the growing crops. Children helped where they could. The village depended on everyone working together.

[11] By midday, the weather had become warmer. Tayanita wiped sweat from her forehead and took a short break. She sat beneath a tree and looked across the fields. Rows of crops stretched in every direction. Seeing all the work made her realize how much effort it took to feed an entire village.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Morning in the Village (continued)

Nonfiction and historical fiction. High Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

[12] Later, she went with her grandfather to the large mound in the middle of the village. It was tall, and it had taken many years to build. People gathered there for important events. From the top, she could see trees stretching far in every direction.

[13] Her grandfather told her that many generations of Caddo people had helped build the mound. It was a special place where leaders met, ceremonies were held, and important decisions were discussed. People respected the mound because it connected them to their history.

[14] Tayanita enjoyed visiting the mound. From the top, she could see the layout of the entire village. Homes were arranged near one another, and smoke rose from cooking fires. Beyond the village stood the forests of the Piney Woods. The trees seemed endless.

[15] Her grandfather pointed toward different parts of the village and explained their importance. He showed her where families gathered for celebrations and where people stored food after harvests. He reminded her that every part of the village served a purpose.

[16] As they climbed down, they passed several people carrying supplies. Some were bringing wood for cooking fires, while others transported baskets of food. The village was always active. Every person contributed in some way.

My
marks

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Morning in the Village (continued)

Nonfiction and historical fiction. High Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

[17]Near the river, several people were collecting water while others prepared canoes. The river was one of the village's most valuable resources. It provided water for drinking, cooking, and cleaning. It also helped people travel to nearby villages and trade with other communities.

[18]That afternoon, visitors came from another village. They brought pottery and tools to trade. In return, her people shared food. Tayanita liked watching the trades. It felt like everyone was connected somehow.

[19]The visitors displayed carefully made pottery decorated with patterns. Some carried stone tools, while others brought items their village was known for producing. The Caddo people examined the goods and discussed what they might exchange.

[20]Trade was important because no single village could make everything it needed. By exchanging goods, communities gained access to resources and tools they might not otherwise have. Trade also helped people build friendships and maintain relationships with neighboring groups.

[21]Tayanita listened as adults talked with one another. Some discussed hunting, while others shared news about nearby communities. The visitors told stories about places they had traveled and people they had met. Tayanita enjoyed hearing about areas beyond her own village.

[22]One visitor described a river far larger than the one near their village. Another talked about meeting people who lived many days away. Tayanita listened carefully and imagined what those places might look like.

[23]She noticed that the visitors were treated with respect. Even though they came from another village, they were welcomed warmly. Her family believed that cooperation helped communities grow stronger. Working together often benefited everyone.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Morning in the Village (continued)

Nonfiction and historical fiction. High Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

[24]As the afternoon turned to evening, families began preparing meals. Children returned home, and workers finished their tasks for the day. The sounds of conversation filled the village as people gathered together.

[25]Tayanita helped carry food while her mother prepared dinner. The smell of cooking filled the air. Family members shared stories about their day while they worked. These conversations helped everyone stay connected.

[26]As they ate, her grandfather shared stories about Caddo traditions. He spoke about the importance of community, responsibility, and respect. He reminded everyone that each generation had a responsibility to preserve the customs that had been passed down.

[27]Tayanita listened closely. She enjoyed hearing stories about the past. They helped her understand why certain traditions remained important.

[28]As the day ended, she looked around her village. It was busy, but it also felt like home.

[29]The glow of evening fires spread across the village. Families shared meals, laughed together, and prepared for the next day. The sounds of conversation mixed with the gentle sounds of nature surrounding the community.

[30]Before going inside, Tayanita looked one last time at the homes, the fields, the mound, and the forests beyond the village. She thought about everything she had experienced that day. She had worked in the fields, learned from her grandfather, watched traders arrive, and spent time with her family.

[31]Tomorrow would bring another busy day. There would be more work to do and more things to learn. Tayanita smiled as she stepped inside her home. Surrounded by family, friends, and traditions that had been passed down for generations, she felt thankful to be part of the Caddo community and proud of the village she called home.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Annotate: A Promise Written Long Ago

As you read, mark TRACKS: Time, Reactions, Actions, Character/Concept, Key Knowledge, Scenery/Setting. Underline any exact words that could become evidence, then run CSI on them.

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: A Promise Written Long Ago (continued)

Underline the sentence that states the Magna Carta's central rule about the king and the law. Run CSI on it.

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 prove that the village depends on cooperation?

My thinking

My Prompt Marking Notes

The prompt gives me a topic. I can use CSI to slow down and choose my evidence.

Shape	Word	Question I ask myself
C	Connect	Does my quote connect to the prompt?
S	Support	Does my quote support the thesis (central idea)?
I	Infer	Can my quote help a reader infer something important?

Underline the topic in the prompt. Then find one exact quote from the passage that passes CSI: Connect, Support, Infer.

Why is the setting important to the people in Tayanita's village? Prove your thesis (central idea) with strong evidence that passes CSI.

My CSI notes for this prompt

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 1: Gather + Reveal



I catch the strongest evidence and learn the CSI test

Today We Will Look For

- what counts as evidence (exact words in quotation marks) and what does not
- the CSI test: Connect to the prompt, Support the thesis (central idea), Infer additional ideas
- signal phrases that announce a quote
- the difference between strong and weak evidence

Student reminder: A quote is not automatically strong evidence.

Module Passage Set, High Stamina

Two selections anchor Cluster 1 and return across all four modules at rising stamina: "A Promise Written Long Ago" (nonfiction) and "Morning in the Village" (historical fiction). This module uses the High Stamina versions.

Gather: Catch the Strongest Evidence

Do not star yet. Hear all three choices first. Listen to the prompt. Hear three possible quotes. Star the strongest quote. Defend it with C, S, and I.

Round	Prompt	Quotes	Answer
Round 1	Why did the barons want limits on King John's power?	"At that time, King John ruled England." / "The king collected heavy taxes and made unfair decisions." / "In the year 1215, a very important document called the Magna Carta was created in a place called Runnymede, England."	2, it directly supports the reason the barons wanted change.
Round 2	How does the passage show cooperation in Tayanita's community?	"The sun was just starting to come up when Tayanita stepped outside." / "They brought pottery and tools to trade." / "It was busy, but it also felt like home."	2, it gives an observable action (trade) that supports cooperation.

Your ears have a job. You are not listening for a quote that is merely true. You are listening for the quote that best connects to the prompt and best supports the idea.

The three CSI questions I should ask before choosing evidence

Fresh Recall

Without looking, I name the three CSI questions I should ask before choosing evidence.

My three CSI questions

[illegible]

Chant: Hey! Hey! Hey! Evidence is on the way!

Day 1: Reveal, continued

Which Response Proves the Idea?

Response	Text
Response A	The setting is important because people grow food. The village has crops and trades with others.
Response B	The setting is important because people depend on farming and trade. The text says, 'Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows' and 'They brought pottery and tools to trade.'

Which proves the idea better? Is every quote automatically strong evidence?

My answer and why

Reveal: What Counts as Evidence + the CSI Test

- ☐ Evidence is exact words from the text in quotation marks. NOT evidence is a summary like "People grow food."
- ☐ CSI: C, Connect to the prompt; S, Support the thesis (central idea); I, Infer something important. Three strong YES answers equal strong evidence.
- ☐ Announce evidence with a signal phrase and quotation marks.

Strong evidence must pass CSI. C: Does the quote connect to the prompt? S: Does it support the thesis (central idea)? I: Can it help us infer something important? A quote is not automatically strong evidence.

Day 1 Closing

Finish the sentence.

Evidence is ____, and it is strong when it passes ____.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

STUDENT WORKBOOK



CSI Evidence Sort

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards (sheet 1 of 2)

Cut on the dashed lines. Keep the 3 CSI letter cards in the middle of the table and the 8 quote cards in a stack. Draw a quote card, read the quote, test it with CSI, and decide Strong or Weak. Store all cards in your Pocket Practice.

C, CONNECT	S, SUPPORT
I, INFER	"Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows"
"They brought pottery and tools to trade"	"People gathered there for important events"

Self-Check: Test It With CSI (sheet 1 of 2)

C: Does the quote connect to the prompt? S: Does it support the thesis (central idea)?

I: Can it help us infer something important? Three strong YES answers equal strong evidence.

S, SUPPORT

Does the quote support the thesis (central idea)?

C, CONNECT

Does the quote connect to the prompt?

Strong (connects to farming setting)

I, INFER

Can the quote help us infer something important?

Strong (shows community setting)

Strong (supports trade and community setting)

STUDENT WORKBOOK



CSI Evidence Sort

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards (sheet 2 of 2)

Cut on the dashed lines. Keep the 3 CSI letter cards in the middle of the table and the 8 quote cards in a stack. Draw a quote card, read the quote, test it with CSI, and decide Strong or Weak. Store all cards in your Pocket Practice.

"The king collected heavy taxes and made unfair decisions"	"The barons wanted the king to follow rules"
"Like the Magna Carta, the Constitution limits government power and protects the rights of citizens"	"People moved around the village"
"The sun was just starting to come up"	

Self-Check: Test It With CSI (sheet 2 of 2)

C: Does the quote connect to the prompt? S: Does it support the thesis (central idea)?

I: Can it help us infer something important? Three strong YES answers equal strong evidence.

Strong (supports the idea that people wanted limits on royal power)

Strong (supports why the barons wanted change)

Weak (too general, lacks strong connection)

Strong (supports the Magna Carta's influence on later government)

Weak (describes time, not strong support)

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 2: Attempt



I sort quotes as strong or weak with CSI Evidence Sort

CSI Evidence Sort, How to Play

Draw a task card. Read the quote. Test it with CSI. Decide Strong or Weak for the task. Defend your decision using C, S, and I. Record one strong quote and explain why it is strong.

CSI Sample Round

Quote: "They brought pottery and tools to trade." Test it: C, connects to village setting and community? S, supports an idea about trade or cooperation? I, can we infer people depended on one another? Answer: Strong Evidence, it supports trade and community setting and can support an inference about cooperation.

This evidence is strong/weak because it ____ the prompt, ____ the thesis (central idea), and helps me infer ____.

Day 2: Attempt, continued

Card	Quote	Answer
1	"Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows"	Strong (connects to farming setting)
2	"They brought pottery and tools to trade"	Strong (supports trade and community setting)
3	"People gathered there for important events"	Strong (shows community setting)
4	"The king collected heavy taxes and made unfair decisions"	Strong (supports why the barons wanted change)
5	"The barons wanted the king to follow rules"	Strong (supports the idea that people wanted limits on royal power)
6	"Like the Magna Carta, the Constitution limits government power and protects the rights of citizens"	Strong (supports the Magna Carta's influence on later government)
7	"People moved around the village"	Weak (too general, lacks strong connection)
8	"The sun was just starting to come up"	Weak (describes time, not strong support)

Sentence Frame: This evidence is strong/weak because it ____ the prompt, ____ the thesis (central idea), and helps me infer ____.

Day 2 Closing

Record one strong piece of evidence in your interactive notebook and explain why it is strong.

My strong evidence and why

STUDENT WORKBOOK

Day 3: Discuss + Use Again



I explain why a quote was strong and add evidence to a thesis (central idea)

Warm-Up: Fresh Recall

Without looking at my notes, I explain the CSI test out loud for twenty seconds:
Connect to the prompt, Support the thesis (central idea), Infer something important.

The CSI test in my own words

Discuss: Why Was It Strong?

Choose one quote your group sorted. Explain: How did it connect to the prompt? What part of the thesis (central idea) did it support? What could a reader infer from it? Why would another quote be weaker?

Connect to the Overarching Question: How does CSI help us decide whether evidence is strong enough?

My explanation

Use Again: Add Evidence to the Thesis (Central Idea)

Given Thesis (Central Idea): The setting is important because people depend on farming and trade. Task: Add one or more strong pieces of evidence that pass CSI. Announce the evidence with a signal phrase and quotation marks.

My evidence sentence

Day 3: Use Again, continued

Answer Reveal: "The setting is important because people depend on farming and trade. The text says, 'Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows' and 'They brought pottery and tools to trade.'" First quote supports farming; second supports trade; both connect directly to the thesis (central idea).

Second Practice, Given Thesis (Central Idea): The author shows the setting through details about the environment. Add evidence that proves the environment.

My evidence sentence

Answer Reveal: "The author shows the setting through details about the environment. The text says, 'The tall pine trees were still dark' and 'Her family lived in a Caddo village near a river.'"

Module 3 Evidence-Sentence Sweep

- ☐ Confirm my evidence sentence is a complete sentence.
- ☐ Check subject-verb agreement in the sentence around the quote.
- ☐ Check my high-frequency spelling.
- ☐ Confirm the quoted words match the passage exactly.

Teacher Model: "The text shows why the barons wanted change when it states, 'The king collected heavy taxes and made unfair decisions.'"

Day 3 Closing

Highlight the strongest quote you used and label its C, S, and I.

My strongest quote and its C, S, I labels

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 4: Award + Target



I recognize strong evidence and set my next goal

Award

Highlight the strongest quote you selected today.

This quote is strong evidence because ____.

☐ I used strong evidence today

Target

Choose one goal.

- ☐ I will use quotation marks correctly.
- ☐ I will choose shorter, more meaningful quotes.
- ☐ I will check CSI before I use a quote.

Curiosity Questions

Can weak evidence lower your score? How do authors choose details to include?

[illegible]

STUDENT WORKBOOK

Day 5: Explain to Others



I teach the CSI test to a partner

Teach Someone the CSI Test

Teach a partner how to choose strong evidence. You must: state what evidence is; explain C, S, and I; share one quote; explain why the quote is strong or weak; and show how to announce the quote correctly.

This quote is strong evidence because it connects to ____, supports ____, and helps me infer ____.

Module Overarching Question, Answer

How can we decide whether a piece of evidence is strong enough to prove our thesis (central idea)? Strong evidence uses exact words from the text, but quoting alone is not enough. The evidence should pass CSI: it must Connect to the prompt, Support the thesis (central idea), and help the writer Infer or explain something meaningful. Strong writers also introduce evidence clearly with a signal phrase and quotation marks.

A quotation is evidence; a well-chosen quotation that passes CSI is STRONG evidence. Finish: "A quote is strong when it ____."

A quote is strong when it ____.

Teacher Closing Encouragement

You learned that evidence is not optional, it is essential. When you announce and prove your thinking with exact words, you write with confidence and clarity. Keep quoting, connecting, and testing with CSI, and your responses will grow stronger every day.

One way I will keep quoting, connecting, and testing with CSI



Write More

Plan, draft, revise, edit, and share



My Writing Assignment

Write a short response to this prompt:

Underline the topic in the prompt. Then find one exact quote from the passage that passes CSI: Connect, Support, Infer.

Why is the setting important to the people in Tayanita's village? Prove your thesis (central idea) with strong evidence that passes CSI.

My Plan

- Reread the passage and underline exact words that could become evidence.
- Run CSI on each quote: Connect, Support, Infer.
- Choose the quote or quotes that pass all three CSI questions.
- Announce the quote with a signal phrase 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 thesis (central idea) starter

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

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.
- ☐ Magna Carta and Runnymede begin with capital letters.
- ☐ Barons and village 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
Evidence	I quoted the author's exact words in quotation marks.	
CSI	I checked that my quote connects, supports, and helps me infer.	
Writing	I announced my quote with a signal phrase.	
Conventions	I used complete sentences and correct spelling.	

Study the Samples

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

Why is the setting important to the people in Tayanita's village? Prove your thesis (central idea) with strong evidence that passes CSI.

Low

The setting is important because people grow food. The village has crops and trades with others. (Level 1)

What Needs Improvement: There is no quoted evidence, only a summary, so the idea is not proven with the author's exact words. Add exact quotes with a signal phrase and quotation marks that pass CSI.

Medium

The setting is important because people depend on farming. The text says, 'Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows.' (Level 2-3)

What Needs Improvement: One quote proves farming, but a second quote about trade would strengthen the response and support an inference about the whole community.

High

The setting is important because people depend on farming and trade. The text says, 'Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows' and 'They brought pottery and tools to trade.' (Level 3-4)

Why it works: Both quotes pass CSI and work together, they connect to the prompt, support the thesis (central idea), and let the reader infer that the community depends on cooperation, exactly what strong evidence looks like.

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 evidence apart from a summary.	☐	☐	☐
Run CSI on a quote and decide strong or weak.	☐	☐	☐
Announce a quote with a signal phrase and quotation marks.	☐	☐	☐
Add strong evidence to a thesis (central idea).	☐	☐	☐
Check my evidence sentence for conventions.	☐	☐	☐
Choose the strongest of several quotes.	☐	☐	☐
Explain why a quote is strong using C, S, and I.	☐	☐	☐
Name my next evidence goal.	☐	☐	☐

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 we decide whether a piece of evidence is strong enough to prove our thesis (central idea)?

The answer

Strong evidence uses exact words from the text, but quoting alone is not enough. The evidence should pass CSI: it must Connect to the prompt, Support the thesis (central idea), and help the writer Infer or explain something meaningful. Strong writers also introduce evidence clearly with a signal phrase and 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 claim from your day. Choose one exact detail that proves it. Run CSI on it: does it connect, support, and help you infer? Then explain the job it does.

My new prompt

Take It Further! Tree Builder Challenge

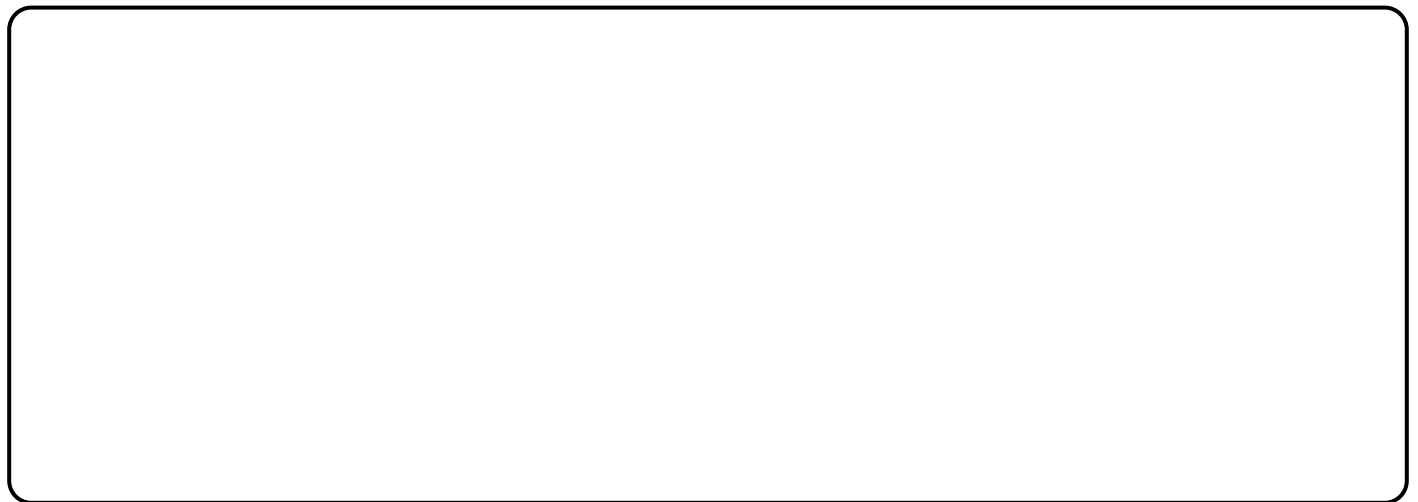
Grow the whole tree from one prompt: Choose one more quote from either passage that passes CSI. Announce it with a signal phrase and quotation marks, then explain why it is strong using C, S, and I.

- Draw a full tree in the box below.
- Trunk: write the thesis (central idea).
- Branch 1: write a reason or way.
- Branch 2: write the evidence from the passage.
- Branch 3: write the explanation.
- Leaves: write the significance, why this matters to a reader today.
- Present your tree to the class in one minute or less. Read it from the trunk up.
- Find one branch a classmate built differently from yours, and tell why theirs also works.

My plan: thesis (central idea), reason or way, evidence, explanation, significance

My Tree Builder Challenge

Draw your whole tree in the box below. Label the trunk, the three branches, and the leaves.



At-Home Connection

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

Prove It with Exact Words

Make a claim about your day ("Dinner was a team effort"). Then prove it with one exact detail. Ask your student to do the same, claim, then exact proof.

What is the difference between evidence and a summary?

Family member signature: _____

Strong or Weak?

Give a claim, then two possible proofs, one that fits and one that is off-topic. Have your student pick the stronger proof and explain why with "because."

Why is one quote sometimes stronger than another?

Family member signature: _____

What Does CSI Stand For?

Ask your student what CSI stands for and how it helps them choose a quote. Have them teach you the three questions.

What is a signal phrase, and why do writers use one?

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 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 4

Cluster 1 - Module 4

Make the Evidence Mean Something



Name: _____



The Writing Academy®, LLC

Grade 4 • 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

Make the Evidence Mean Something



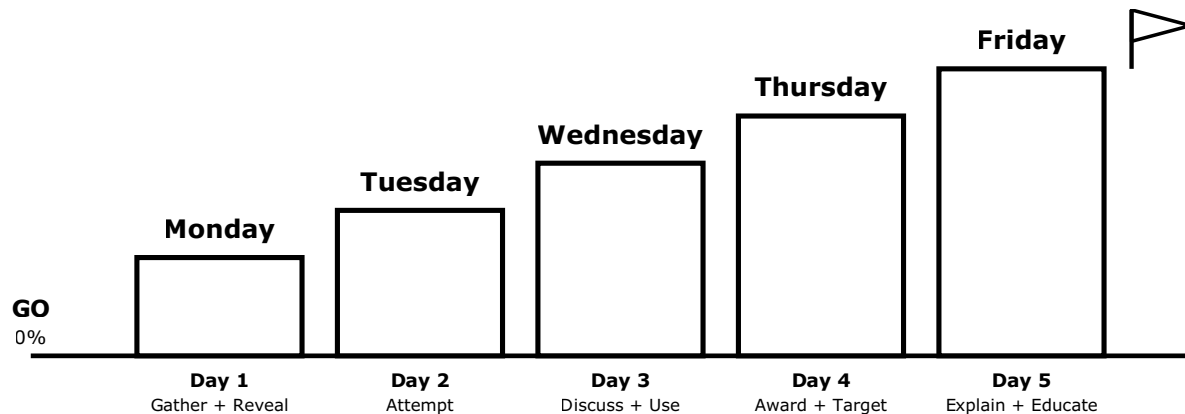
Why This Matters to Me

Explaining is not repeating. In this module I use the two Cluster 1 passages at Very High Stamina to learn that an explanation sentence is not the quote again; it tells what the evidence means and why it matters, and it connects the evidence back to the thesis (central idea). I use starter signals (This means..., This shows..., This reminds me of...) and the word THIS to point back to the evidence. My independent product is a full SCR (thesis (central idea), evidence, explanation) that finishes the three-sentence response and runs a conventions sweep.

Essential Question

How does an explanation sentence turn evidence into clear thinking for the reader?

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 what an explanation sentence does and how it differs from evidence.
- I can begin an explanation with a starter signal such as "This means" or "This shows."
- I can make the word THIS point back to my evidence.
- I can complete a full SCR with a thesis (central idea), evidence, and explanation.

I Will

- I will explain what the evidence means instead of repeating it.
- I will speak about my thinking, record my work, and explain how my explanation connects to the thesis (central idea).
- I will keep my explanation short, direct, and connected to the evidence before it.
- I will run the cumulative conventions sweep on my finished response.

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 an explanation sentence turns evidence into clear thinking for the reader.	"A Promise Written Long Ago" and "Morning in the Village," at Very High Stamina.	A full SCR (thesis (central idea), evidence, explanation) and a Turn-and-Teach explanation.

Where We Are Going

I will move from telling evidence apart from explanation to writing my own explanation sentence. I will finish by teaching a partner.

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

- ☐ I can tell an explanation sentence from an evidence sentence.
- ☐ I can write an explanation that interprets the quote and connects to the thesis (central idea).
- ☐ I can complete a Thesis (Central Idea) + Evidence + Explanation response.
- ☐ I can check my finished SCR for conventions.

Check Myself

- ☐ I can tell evidence from explanation.
- ☐ I can use a starter signal and THIS correctly.
- ☐ I can complete a full SCR.

How I Will Show What I Know

I will show what I know with the Explanation Relay Race and the Turn-and-Teach explanation.

My GRADUATE Learning Path

Stage	Day	What I do
Gather	Day 1	I catch and repair an explanation that repeats the evidence.
Reveal	Day 1	I learn what an explanation sentence does and the power of THIS.
Attempt	Day 2	I play the Explanation Relay Race, sorting evidence and explanation.
Discuss	Day 3	I discuss how I know evidence from explanation.
Use Again	Day 3	I build the third sentence to complete a full SCR.
Award	Day 4	I star the explanation I am most proud of.
Target	Day 4	I choose a precise next goal for my explanation.
Explain/Educate	Day 5	I teach a partner what an explanation sentence does.

Say It Together!

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

4.12B(i):

TEKS says: 4.12B(i) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea.

How I say it: I can complete a full SCR with a thesis (central idea), evidence, and an explanation that makes the evidence mean something.

4.11C(ii):

TEKS says: 4.11C(ii) revise drafts to improve word choice.

How I say it: I can use a starter signal and THIS to explain what the evidence means instead of repeating it.

Call and Response

Read this together as a class before we start.

Teacher asks: "Evidence proves."

Class answers: "Explanation tells the reader what the proof means."

One TEKS I want to practice today



Get Ready

Before I begin



Before We Begin: What Do I Already Know?

I already know that a response has a thesis (central idea) and evidence, the author's exact words used as proof.

A connection I can make

Remember It!

- ☐ A thesis (central idea) is the clear main idea a response will prove.
- ☐ Evidence is the author's exact words used as proof from the passage.
- ☐ An explanation tells what the evidence means and why it matters.

One idea I remember

Ready Check

- ☐ I can find a detail in a passage and quote it as evidence.
- ☐ I can tell the difference between a fact and what the fact means.
- ☐ I can write a complete sentence.

Watch Out! Common Mix-Up

Watch out! I might think explaining means repeating the evidence in slightly different words. I might write a personal opinion that is not connected to the quoted evidence at all. An explanation must tell what the evidence means and why it matters, not restate it.

Where This Fits in My Writing

Completing the SCR with a strong explanation sentence is the habit that finishes every Short Constructed Response you will write this year.

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 as often as you want.

Part 1: Prompt Analysis

Read the prompt. Circle the topic in red. Draw a yellow box around the charge. Underline the task in green.

Why is the setting important to the people in Tayanita's village? Complete a full SCR: a thesis (central idea), evidence, and an explanation that makes the evidence mean something.

Part 2: Thesis (Central Idea)

Write one clear thesis (central idea) that directly answers the prompt.

My thesis (central idea)

Part 3: Evidence Order

Number these four sentences 1, 2, 3, 4 to show the order they belong in a complete SCR.

Number	Sentence
_____	The text says, "Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows."
_____	The setting is important because people depend on farming and trade.
_____	This means the village setting helps the people grow food and exchange goods with others.
_____	The text also says, "They brought pottery and tools to trade."

Part 4: Evidence

Copy one sentence from the passage, in the author's exact words, that proves your thesis (central idea).

My first sentence

Part 5: Explanation

Reason: The setting is important because people depend on farming. Copy one sentence from the passage that proves this reason. Then explain in one sentence what that evidence means.

The sentence I copied from the passage as evidence

This evidence means...

Part 6: SCR Foundation

Write one clear thesis (central idea), one piece of evidence, and one explanation. Label each part.

My paragraph



Words I Need

Tier 1, everyday words



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

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
explain	ek-SPLAYN	to make an idea clear	I explain the quote by ____.
mean	MEEN	what something stands for	This means ____.
show	SHO	to make something known	This shows ____.
point	POYNT	to direct attention to something	THIS points back to ____.
connect	kuh-NEKT	to link two things together	My explanation connects to ____.
matter	MAT-er	to be important	This matters because ____.
prove	PROOV	to show something is true	The evidence proves ____.
clear	KLEER	easy to understand	A clear explanation ____.
think	THINK	to use your mind	This makes me think of ____.
understand	un-der-STAND	to know the meaning of something	The reader can understand ____.

Use one Tier 1 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 2, academic words

These words help you build a strong explanation sentence. Say each word, then use it with a partner.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
explanation	eks-pluh-NAY-shun	thinking that tells what the evidence means	My explanation shows ____.
clarify	KLAIR-uh-fy	to make an idea clearer	I clarify the quote by ____.
meaning	MEE-ning	what the evidence tells us	The meaning of this quote is ____.
signal marker	SIG-nul MAR-ker	a starter that begins an explanation	I use the signal marker ____.
demonstrative pronoun	dem-un-STRA-tiv PRO-noun	a word like THIS that points to something	THIS is a demonstrative pronoun that ____.
anecdote	AN-ik-dote	a short story that connects to an idea	An anecdote here is ____.
cause	KAWZ	the reason something happens	The cause was ____.
effect	ih-FEKT	what happens because of a cause	The effect was ____.
metacognition	met-uh-kog-NISH-un	thinking about your own thinking	I use metacognition when I ____.
thesis (central idea)	THEE-sis	the clear main idea a response will prove	My thesis (central idea) is ____.

Use one Tier 2 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 3, passage words

These words come from our two passages, "A Promise Written Long Ago" and "Morning in the Village." Say each word, read its meaning, and use it in the frame sentence.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
Magna Carta	MAG-nuh KAR-tuh	a 1215 document that limited the king's power	The Magna Carta ____.
Runnymede	RUN-ee-meed	the field in England where the Magna Carta was sealed	At Runnymede, ____.
barons	BAIR-uhnz	powerful landowners who wanted the king to follow rules	The barons ____.
territory	TERR-ih-tor-ee	an area of land a country controls	England lost territory when ____.
Caddo	KAD-oh	a Native American people of the Piney Woods	The Caddo village ____.
Three Sisters	three SIS-terz	corn, beans, and squash grown together	The Three Sisters ____.
mound	mownd	a tall built-up hill used for important events	The mound ____.
pottery	POT-uh-ree	objects shaped from clay	The visitors brought pottery to ____.
harvest	HAR-vist	the gathering of ripe crops	A successful harvest meant ____.
Constitution	kon-stih-TOO-shun	a written plan of a government's rules and powers	The U.S. Constitution ____.

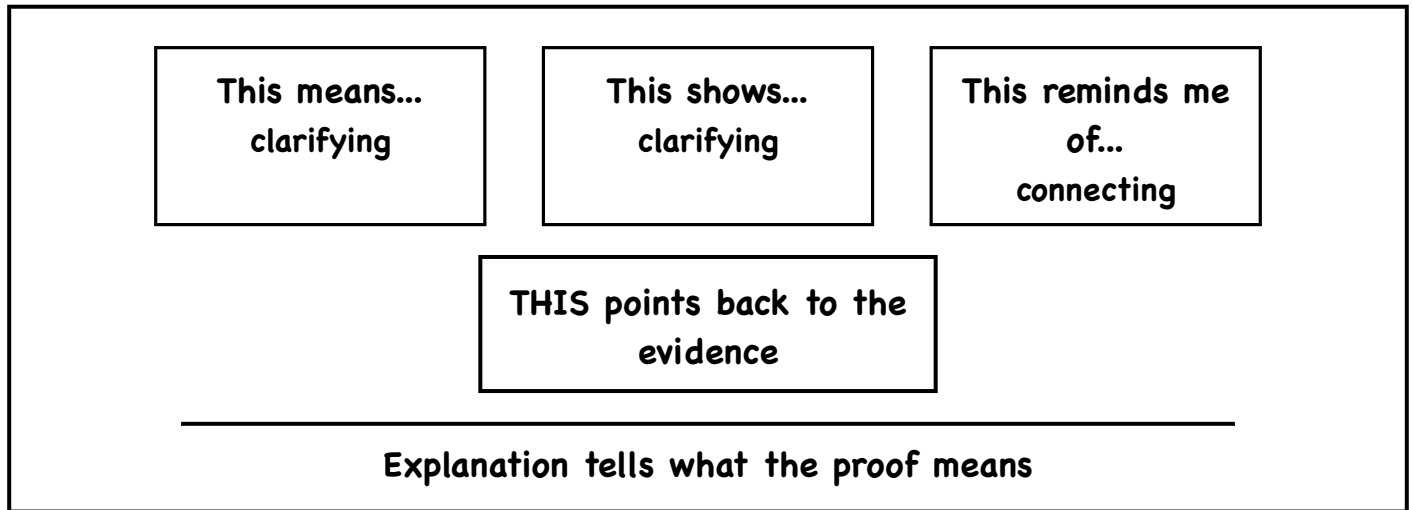
Use one Tier 3 word in a sentence

My Strategy Tools

Evidence Proves. Explanation Tells What the Proof Means.



Evidence proves an idea. Explanation tells the reader what the proof means and why it matters, and it connects the evidence back to the thesis (central idea).



An explanation is NOT another quote, repeated evidence, or a random thought not connected to the evidence.

The SCR Structure

Part	What it means
Thesis (Central Idea)	The clear idea your response will prove.
Evidence	The author's exact words used as proof.
Explanation	Your thinking about what the evidence means.

A Short Constructed Response has three parts: thesis (central idea) + evidence + explanation.

How this strategy works for me

Explanation IS and Explanation is NOT

Explanation IS	Explanation is NOT
tells what the evidence means; explains why the evidence matters; connects the evidence back to the thesis (central idea)	another quote or repeated evidence; a random thought not connected to the evidence; an off-topic story

The Power of THIS: THIS is a demonstrative pronoun that points back to the evidence sentence right before it, helping the writer connect ideas clearly.

How I Say the Standard!

4.12B(i):

TEKS says: 4.12B(i) compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea.

How I say it: I can complete a full SCR with a thesis (central idea), evidence, and an explanation that makes the evidence mean something.

4.11C(ii):

TEKS says: 4.11C(ii) revise drafts to improve word choice.

How I say it: I can use a starter signal and THIS to explain what the evidence means instead of repeating it.

Check My Writing

- ☐ My sentence has a subject and a verb.
- ☐ I use a capital letter for Magna Carta, Runnymede, and Tayanita.
- ☐ I use a period or another ending mark.

An explanation starter I can use

Five Thinking Levels

Read from the bottom up. Each level names the kind of thinking a task or response requires.

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

Challenge: Write two explanations for the same evidence, one clarifying (This means / This shows) and one connecting (This reminds me of / This makes me think of). Compare which shows stronger thinking.

A thinking level I understand

Five Thinking Levels

Use these levels to name the level of thinking a task and a student response require.

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

Student reminder: Evidence proves. Explanation tells the reader what the proof means.

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 Magna Carta's ideas about fair limits on power reached the U.S. Constitution, and the Caddo village showed how cooperation and trade connected communities. Both passages show that explaining why something matters helps other people understand its meaning.

Background I Need

This module uses the same two Cluster 1 passages at Very High Stamina, the longest and most detailed versions. "A Promise Written Long Ago" tells the full account of the Magna Carta: King John's costly wars and taxes, the barons' demand for limits on royal power, the sealing at Runnymede, and the document's lasting influence on the U.S. Constitution. "Morning in the Village" is a full historical-fiction account of a day in a Caddo village, rich with details of farming, the mound, the river, trade, and family tradition.

A Promise Written Long Ago

Nonfiction and historical fiction. Very High Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

1 In the year 1215, a very important document called the Magna Carta was created in a place called Runnymede, England. At that time, King John ruled England. Many people, especially powerful landowners called barons, were unhappy with how he treated them. The king collected heavy taxes and made unfair decisions.

2 England in the early 1200s was very different from the country people know today. Most people lived in small villages and worked on farms. Roads were rough, and traveling long distances took a great deal of time. There were no cars, trains, or airplanes. News spread slowly because messages had to be carried by travelers on horseback or by foot. Life was difficult for many people, and most families worked hard every day to grow food and care for their homes.

3 At that time, kings held tremendous power. The king made important decisions about laws, taxes, land, and government. Many people believed a king's authority came from God, which made it difficult for ordinary citizens to challenge his decisions. If a king chose to create a new tax or punish someone, there were often few ways for people to object.

4 King John became ruler of England in 1199. During his reign, he faced several challenges. He spent large amounts of money fighting wars against neighboring countries. Many of these military campaigns ended unsuccessfully, causing England to lose territory and influence. Because wars were expensive, King John continually searched for ways to raise money.

5 One of the main ways he raised money was through taxes. He demanded payments from landowners and other groups throughout the kingdom. Many people believed these taxes were unfair. They felt they were being forced to pay more and more money while receiving little in return. As frustration grew, trust in the king began to decline.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

A Promise Written Long Ago (continued)

Nonfiction and historical fiction. Very High Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

6 Among the most dissatisfied people were the barons. Barons were wealthy landowners who controlled large areas of land throughout England. They often provided soldiers and support to the king during times of war. In return, they expected fair treatment and protection of their rights.

7 However, many barons believed King John was not treating them fairly. They felt he ignored their concerns and made decisions without listening to anyone else. They worried that if the king's power continued to grow, the rights of the people would become even weaker.

8 The barons wanted the king to follow rules. They believed even the king should not have complete power. They argued that leaders should be responsible for their actions and should not be allowed to make decisions without limits. At the time, this idea was unusual because many rulers believed they could govern however they wished.

9 As disagreements increased, tensions between King John and the barons became more serious. The barons began meeting together to discuss possible solutions. They believed something needed to change. Eventually, they decided to demand that the king agree to certain rules that would limit his authority.

10 Their goal was not to remove King John from power. Instead, they wanted to make sure he governed more fairly. They hoped to create an agreement that would protect people from unfair treatment and prevent the king from abusing his power.

11 Finally, in June of 1215, King John met the barons at Runnymede, a grassy meadow beside the River Thames. It was there that one of the most important documents in history was created.

12 The Magna Carta was agreed to and sealed.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

A Promise Written Long Ago (continued)

Nonfiction and historical fiction. Very High Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

13 Although the document may have seemed like a simple agreement at the time, its impact would last for centuries. The Magna Carta established rules that limited the authority of the king and protected certain rights. It became a symbol of fairness and the belief that no one should be above the law.

14 The Magna Carta was important because it limited the king's power. Before this document existed, kings often made decisions without restrictions. The Magna Carta introduced a different idea. It stated that the king must follow the law just like everyone else.

15 Today, this idea may seem ordinary, but in 1215 it was groundbreaking. Many people had never considered the possibility that a king could be required to obey laws. The Magna Carta challenged the belief that rulers should have unlimited authority.

16 The document also protected certain rights of the people. One of its most famous principles involved fair treatment under the law. For example, it stated that free men could not be punished without a lawful judgment. This meant a person could not simply be arrested or punished because a ruler wanted it to happen.

17 Instead, there needed to be a legal process. Evidence had to be considered, and decisions needed to be made fairly. This concept became an important foundation for future legal systems.

18 The circumstances at the time helped shape the Magna Carta. People were tired of unfair treatment and wanted change. They wanted leaders who would respect laws and consider the needs of the people they governed. Because of this, the document reflects the growing belief that fairness and justice should be important parts of government.

19 While the Magna Carta was an important step forward, it did not immediately solve every problem. Conflicts between the king and the barons continued. Some parts of the document were challenged, revised, or ignored over time. Even so, the ideas contained in the Magna Carta continued to spread.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

A Promise Written Long Ago (continued)

Nonfiction and historical fiction. Very High Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

20 Many people recognized that the document introduced powerful concepts about government. They saw value in the idea that leaders should have limits and that citizens should have protections under the law.

21 As centuries passed, the Magna Carta became more than just an agreement between a king and a group of barons. It became a symbol of freedom, fairness, and accountability. Scholars, lawmakers, and political leaders studied its principles and applied them in new situations.

22 Its influence reached far beyond England. Governments in different parts of the world began considering similar ideas about rights and the rule of law. Many leaders believed that fair governments should protect citizens and prevent any one person from becoming too powerful.

23 Hundreds of years later, the ideas from the Magna Carta influenced other governments. Leaders in the United States used similar ideas when creating the U.S. Constitution. Like the Magna Carta, the Constitution limits government power and protects the rights of citizens.

24 When American leaders met to design a new government after the American Revolution, they carefully considered lessons from history. They wanted to avoid the problems that can occur when too much power is placed in the hands of one person or group.

25 As a result, they created a system that divided power among different branches of government. This structure helps prevent any single branch from becoming too powerful. The idea of limiting government authority can be connected to principles first expressed in the Magna Carta.

26 Other American documents also reflect ideas that can be traced back to the Magna Carta. The Bill of Rights protects important freedoms and guarantees certain legal protections. Concepts such as fair trials, due process, and equal treatment under the law are connected to principles that were first introduced centuries earlier.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

A Promise Written Long Ago (continued)

Nonfiction and historical fiction. Very High Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

27 The influence of the Magna Carta can still be seen today. Courts continue to rely on laws and legal procedures to help ensure fairness. Government leaders are expected to follow laws rather than act however they choose. Citizens have rights that governments are responsible for protecting.

28 These ideas help create stability and trust within society. When people believe laws will be applied fairly, they are more likely to feel confident in their government. Fair laws help protect individuals and encourage leaders to act responsibly.

29 The Magna Carta also reminds people that positive change often begins when individuals work together to address problems. The barons recognized that something needed to change, and they took action to seek a solution. Their efforts resulted in a document that would eventually influence millions of people around the world.

30 Students who study the Magna Carta are learning about more than a single historical event. They are learning about ideas that continue to shape governments and societies today. Concepts such as fairness, justice, accountability, and equal treatment remain important because they help communities function effectively.

31 More than 800 years have passed since the Magna Carta was sealed at Runnymede. Yet its message remains relevant. It reminds people that laws should apply to everyone, leaders should be accountable for their actions, and citizens deserve protection under the law.

32 Even today, the Magna Carta reminds us that rules should apply to everyone and that people deserve to be treated fairly. What began as an agreement between a king and a group of barons eventually became one of the most influential documents in world history. Its ideas have shaped governments, inspired leaders, and helped protect the rights of citizens for generations. Because of its lasting impact on freedom, justice, and the rule of law, the Magna Carta continues to be remembered as a promise written long ago that still matters today.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Morning in the Village

Nonfiction and historical fiction. Very High Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

1 The sun was just starting to come up when Tayanita stepped outside. The tall pine trees were still dark, but she could hear people moving around the village.

2 Her family lived in a Caddo village near a river in the Piney Woods. Their homes were built close together, and everyone knew each other. Some people were already cooking, while others were heading out to work.

3 Tayanita liked the early morning hours. The village felt peaceful before the day became busy. Smoke drifted from cooking fires, and the smell of food filled the air. Birds called from the trees, and the river moved quietly nearby. She could hear people talking as they began their daily chores.

4 The Caddo people worked hard to provide for their families. Everyone had responsibilities. Some people farmed, some hunted, and others made baskets, pottery, or tools. Children learned by watching adults and helping whenever they could. Tayanita felt proud when her parents trusted her with important jobs.

5 Her family had lived in the village for many years. The people knew one another well and often worked together. If someone needed help building a home or gathering food, neighbors were willing to assist. The community depended on cooperation.

6 Tayanita walked with her mother to the fields. Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows. Her mother always called them the "Three Sisters" because they helped each other grow. Tayanita didn't understand all of it, but she knew they needed all three to have enough food.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Morning in the Village (continued)

Nonfiction and historical fiction. Very High Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

7 The fields were important to the village. Families worked together to plant, water, and harvest the crops. Everyone understood that a successful harvest meant there would be enough food for the coming months. Tayanita often helped by pulling weeds or carrying baskets filled with vegetables.

8 As they worked, her mother explained how the plants supported one another. The corn grew tall and provided a place for bean vines to climb. The beans helped improve the soil. The squash spread across the ground and helped keep weeds from taking over. Although the explanation seemed complicated, Tayanita liked learning about the plants.

9 Nearby, her uncle was talking about planting something different in one part of the field next season. He said it helped the soil stay strong. Tayanita just nodded and kept pulling weeds.

10 Although she did not understand everything her uncle was saying, she enjoyed listening to the adults discuss farming. They seemed to know exactly what the land needed. Her grandfather often said that people should take care of the land because the land took care of them. Tayanita thought about those words whenever she worked outside.

11 As the morning continued, the sun climbed higher into the sky. Workers moved steadily through the fields. Some people carried baskets, while others checked the growing crops. Children helped where they could. The village depended on everyone doing their part.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Morning in the Village (continued)

Nonfiction and historical fiction. Very High Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

12 One woman walked through the fields checking the condition of the plants. Another family was preparing an area for future planting. Everywhere Tayanita looked, people were busy. The work was not easy, but everyone understood its importance.

13 By midday, the weather had become warmer. Tayanita wiped sweat from her forehead and took a short break. She sat beneath a tree and looked across the fields. Rows of crops stretched in every direction. Seeing all the work made her realize how much effort it took to feed an entire village.

14 Her mother sat beside her and handed her a drink of water.

15 "You are becoming a good worker," her mother said.

16 Tayanita smiled. She liked hearing that.

17 After their break, they continued working until it was time to leave the fields. Tayanita gathered her tools and followed her grandfather toward the center of the village.

18 Later, she went with her grandfather to the large mound in the middle of the village. It was tall, and it had taken many years to build. People gathered there for important events. From the top, she could see trees stretching far in every direction.

19 Her grandfather told her that many generations of Caddo people had helped build the mound. It was a special place where leaders met, ceremonies were held, and important decisions were discussed. People respected the mound because it connected them to their history.

20 As they climbed, her grandfather explained that the mound represented the hard work of many people. No single person had built it alone. Each generation had added to it little by little.

21 "That is how communities become strong," her grandfather said. "People work together."

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Morning in the Village (continued)

Nonfiction and historical fiction. Very High Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

22 Tayanita liked that idea.

23 When they reached the top, she looked across the village. Homes stood in neat groups. Smoke rose from cooking fires. Children played near their families while adults worked nearby.

24 Beyond the village stood the Piney Woods. Tall trees covered the landscape in every direction. Tayanita thought the forest looked endless.

25 Her grandfather pointed toward different parts of the village and explained their importance. He showed her where food was stored after harvests and where families gathered for celebrations. Every place had a purpose.

26 As they climbed down from the mound, they passed several people carrying supplies. Some were bringing wood for cooking fires. Others transported baskets of food. Everyone seemed busy preparing for the afternoon.

27 Near the river, several people were collecting water while others prepared canoes. The river was one of the village's most valuable resources. It provided water for drinking, cooking, and cleaning. It also helped people travel to nearby villages.

28 Tayanita enjoyed watching the canoes. She imagined what it would be like to travel far from home and see places she had never visited before.

29 That afternoon, visitors came from another village. They brought pottery and tools to trade. In return, her people shared food. Tayanita liked watching the trades. It felt like everyone was connected somehow.

30 The visitors displayed carefully made pottery decorated with patterns. Some carried stone tools, while others brought items their village was known for producing. The Caddo people examined the goods and discussed possible exchanges.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Morning in the Village (continued)

Nonfiction and historical fiction. Very High Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

31 Trade was important because no village could make everything it needed. By exchanging goods, communities gained access to resources that might not be available nearby. Trade also helped people build friendships and maintain relationships with neighboring groups.

32 Tayanita listened as adults talked with one another. Some discussed hunting, while others shared news about nearby communities. The visitors told stories about places they had traveled and people they had met.

33 One visitor described a river much larger than the one near the village. Another spoke about traveling for many days through forests and grasslands. Tayanita listened carefully and imagined what those places looked like.

34 She noticed that the visitors were treated with respect. Even though they came from another village, they were welcomed warmly. Her family believed that cooperation helped communities grow stronger.

35 One of the visitors showed Tayanita a piece of pottery decorated with patterns she had never seen before.

36 "Did you make this?" she asked.

37 The visitor smiled.

38 "My family did," he replied.

39 Tayanita studied the pottery carefully. She admired the skill it must have taken to create something so beautiful.

40 As the afternoon turned to evening, families began preparing meals. Children returned home, and workers finished their tasks for the day. The sounds of conversation filled the village as people gathered together.

41 Tayanita helped carry food while her mother prepared dinner. The smell of cooking filled the air. Family members shared stories about their day while they worked.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Morning in the Village (continued)

Nonfiction and historical fiction. Very High Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

42 As they ate, her grandfather shared stories about Caddo traditions. He spoke about the importance of community, responsibility, and respect. He reminded everyone that each generation had a responsibility to preserve the customs that had been passed down.

43 Tayanita listened closely. She enjoyed hearing stories about the past. They helped her understand why certain traditions remained important.

44 Her grandfather explained that traditions connected people to those who came before them. They reminded families of their history and helped keep the community strong.

45 As darkness slowly settled over the village, cooking fires glowed brightly. Families finished their meals and spent time together. Some people told stories while others laughed and talked about the day.

46 Tayanita looked around and felt grateful for everything she had experienced. She had worked in the fields, learned from her grandfather, visited the mound, watched traders arrive, and spent time with her family.

47 As the day ended, she looked around her village. It was busy, but it also felt like home.

48 The glow of evening fires spread across the village. Families shared meals, laughed together, and prepared for the next day. The sounds of conversation mixed with the gentle sounds of nature surrounding the community.

49 Before going inside, Tayanita looked one last time at the homes, the fields, the mound, the river, and the forests beyond the village. Tomorrow would bring another busy day. There would be more work to do and more things to learn.

50 She smiled as she stepped inside her home. Surrounded by family, friends, and traditions that had been passed down for generations, Tayanita felt thankful to be part of the Caddo community and proud of the village she called home.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Annotate: A Promise Written Long Ago

Details about the barons, the sealing at Runnymede, and how the Magna Carta's ideas about fair limits on power reached the U.S. Constitution.

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: A Promise Written Long Ago (continued)

Details about the barons, the sealing at Runnymede, and how the Magna Carta's ideas about fair limits on power reached the U.S. Constitution.

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 make the strongest evidence for an explanation sentence?

My thinking

My Prompt Marking Notes

A Short Constructed Response prompt asks you to explain or prove an idea. Mark the parts that tell you what to do.

Shape	Word	Question I ask myself
Red circle	Topic	What am I writing about?
Yellow box	Charge	What job must my answer do?
Green underline	Task	What must I explain or prove?

Circle the topic in red. Box the charge in yellow. Underline the task in green.

Why is the setting important to the people in Tayanita's village? Complete a full SCR: a thesis (central idea), evidence, and an explanation that makes the evidence mean something.

My three marks in words

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 1: Gather + Reveal



I discover what an explanation sentence does

Our Question for Today

What does an explanation sentence do, and how is it different from evidence?

1. Gather: Catch and Correct the Mistake

Your teacher may try to trick your ears. When you hear a near-miss, show CATCH IT!, name the problem, repair the sentence, and explain why your repair is stronger.

Teacher Says	The Problem
"'The barons wanted the king to follow rules' is an explanation."	It is EVIDENCE when quoted, because it uses the author's exact words.
"'This means the barons wanted limits on the king's power' is evidence."	It is an EXPLANATION, it states the writer's interpretation.
"The text says, 'The barons wanted the king to follow rules.' This means the barons wanted the king to follow rules."	The explanation just repeats the evidence. Repair: "This shows the barons believed the king's power should be limited by rules."
"The text says, 'They brought pottery and tools to trade.' This reminds me of my favorite store."	Off-topic. Repair: "This shows trade connected the village to other communities and helped people share resources."

Fresh Recall: Evidence proves _____. Explanation tells _____.

Day 1: Reveal, continued

2. Reveal: What an Explanation Does

An Explanation IS...	An Explanation is NOT...
tells what the evidence means	another quote or repeated evidence
explains why the evidence matters	a random thought not connected to the evidence
connects the evidence back to the thesis (central idea)	an off-topic story

Starters: This means... / This shows... (clarifying); This reminds me of... / This makes me think of... (story). THIS points back to the evidence sentence right before it.

STOP & THINK

Which one really explains? A. "I forgot my boots, and the ground was wet." B. "I forgot my boots, and the ground was wet. That means my socks got soaked and I felt uncomfortable all morning."

Response ____ explains more clearly because...

3. Chant

SCR Structure: Thesis (Central Idea) to Evidence to Explanation. Evidence proves. Explanation tells the reader what the proof means. Chant: "Wow! Wow! Wow! I'm explaining now!"

Complete: Evidence proves ____, and explanation tells ____.

[illegible]



Thinking Ahead

Tomorrow I will play the Explanation Relay Race and sort sentences into evidence or explanation. Quotation marks and exact words usually signal evidence. Words that tell what something means or why it matters usually signal explanation.

One sentence I predict will be evidence, and one I predict will be explanation

STOP & THINK

Why is it important to keep evidence and explanation separate in a Short Constructed Response?

My answer

STUDENT WORKBOOK



EXPLANATION RELAY RACE

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards (sheet 1 of 2)

Cut on the dashed lines. Read each sentence. Decide Evidence or Explanation, and be ready to explain why. Store all cards in your Pocket Practice.

"The tall pine trees were still dark."	This shows the village is surrounded by nature early in the morning.
"Her family lived in a Caddo village near a river."	This means the setting includes natural resources that helped the people live there.
"Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows."	This shows the people depend on the land for food.
"They brought pottery and tools to trade."	This means the setting is a place where people connect and share resources.

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.

Explanation	Evidence
Explanation	Evidence
Explanation	Evidence
Explanation	Evidence

STUDENT WORKBOOK



EXPLANATION RELAY RACE

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards (sheet 2 of 2)

Cut on the dashed lines. Read each sentence. Decide Evidence or Explanation, and be ready to explain why. Store all cards in your Pocket Practice.

"The king collected heavy taxes and made unfair decisions."	This shows why the barons believed the king's power needed limits.
"The barons wanted the king to follow rules."	This means the barons believed rules should apply even to a powerful ruler.
"This reminds me of a town market where people bring what they have and share with others."	"This makes me think of a farm community where everyone depends on the land."
"People gathered there for important events."	This shows the village setting is also a place for community life, not just work.

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.

Explanation	Evidence
Explanation	Evidence
Explanation	Explanation
Explanation	Evidence

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 2: Attempt



I sort evidence from explanation

Our Question for Today

Can I tell an evidence sentence apart from an explanation sentence, and explain why?

Explanation Relay Race: How to Play

- Pick up a card.
- Read the sentence.
- Decide Evidence or Explanation.
- Place it in the correct category.
- Be ready to explain why.
- Move your Pencil Guy for each correct set.
- Fast check: quotation marks and exact text = likely evidence; meaning, connection, or why it matters = explanation.

Sentence	Answer
"The tall pine trees were still dark."	Evidence
This shows the village is surrounded by nature early in the morning.	Explanation
"Her family lived in a Caddo village near a river."	Evidence
This means the setting includes natural resources that helped the people live there.	Explanation
"Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows."	Evidence
This shows the people depend on the land for food.	Explanation
"They brought pottery and tools to trade."	Evidence
This means the setting is a place where people connect and share resources.	Explanation
"The king collected heavy taxes and made unfair decisions."	Evidence
This shows why the barons believed the king's power needed limits.	Explanation
"The barons wanted the king to follow rules."	Evidence
This means the barons believed rules should apply even to a powerful ruler.	Explanation



Day 2: Attempt, continued

Sentence	Answer
"This reminds me of a town market where people bring what they have and share with others."	Explanation
"This makes me think of a farm community where everyone depends on the land."	Explanation
"People gathered there for important events."	Evidence
This shows the village setting is also a place for community life, not just work.	Explanation

? STOP & THINK

Remember: if a sentence has quotation marks and uses the author's exact words, it is evidence. If a sentence tells what the evidence means, it is explanation.

Day 2 Closing

One evidence-and-explanation pair from my notebook, underlined to show which is which

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 3: Discuss + Use



I build the third sentence

Our Question for Today

How is the explanation helping the reader understand the evidence?

1. Discuss: Evidence or Explanation, How Do You Know?

Question	My thinking
What did evidence sentences have?	
What job did explanation sentences do?	
Why is the word THIS useful?	
What happens when an explanation does not connect to the evidence?	

Can I just repeat the evidence in different words? Why or why not?

2. Use Again: Build the Third Sentence

For each set: read the thesis (central idea), read the evidence, then write the explanation. Begin with a starter signal, make THIS point back to the evidence, and tell what the evidence means or why it matters.

Set 1: Thesis (Central Idea): The setting is important because people depend on farming and trade. Evidence: "Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows" and "They brought pottery and tools to trade."

My explanation for Set 1

Set 2: Thesis (Central Idea): The author shows the setting through details about the environment. Evidence: "The tall pine trees were still dark" and "Her family lived in a Caddo village near a river."

My explanation for Set 2

Set 3: Thesis (Central Idea): The Magna Carta was important because it limited the king's power. Evidence: "The barons wanted the king to follow rules."

My explanation for Set 3

Set 4: Thesis (Central Idea): The Magna Carta influenced later governments by spreading ideas about limits on power and rights. Evidence: "Like the Magna Carta, the Constitution limits government power and protects the rights of citizens."

My explanation for Set 4



3. Module 4 Cumulative SCR Sweep

Check your Thesis (Central Idea) to Evidence to Explanation response: Are your sentences complete and clear? Does each subject agree with its verb? Did you use singular/plural and common/proper nouns correctly? Did you use past-tense irregular verbs correctly when needed? Did you check grade-appropriate spelling patterns and high-frequency words? Did you use capitalization correctly? Does your explanation add meaning instead of repeating the quote?

- ☐ My sentences are complete and clear.
- ☐ My subjects and verbs agree.
- ☐ My nouns and capitalization are correct.
- ☐ My explanation adds meaning instead of repeating the quote.

Day 3 Closing

Underline the explanation sentence in a different color from the thesis (central idea) and evidence so the three parts are clear.

My completed SCR

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 4: Award + Target



I recognize my strongest explanation

Our Question for Today

Which explanation am I most proud of, and what is my precise next goal?

1. Award

Put a star beside the explanation you are most proud of. Circle the strongest signal marker you used. Earn the title "Meaning Maker" for the day.

My explanation helped the reader understand ____

2. Target

Choose one next step.

- ☐ I will make my explanation connect more clearly to my evidence.
- ☐ I will use THIS correctly to point back to the quote.
- ☐ I will use stronger words from my Thinking Level Chart.

Curiosity Questions: Why does explanation help a reader trust the writer? How does explanation make evidence more powerful? Can one quote have more than one possible explanation?

Day 4 Closing

My next explanation goal is ____ because ____

**Extra Practice: Match the Explanation**

Read the thesis (central idea) and evidence, then choose the explanation that tells what the evidence means and connects to the thesis (central idea).

Set A: Thesis (Central Idea): The setting is important because people depend on farming and trade. Evidence: "Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows" and "They brought pottery and tools to trade." Choices: (a) This means the village setting helps people grow food and share resources. (b) "Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows." (c) The author wrote a passage.

My choice for Set A, and why

Set B: Thesis (Central Idea): The author shows the setting through details about the environment. Evidence: "The tall pine trees were still dark" and "Her family lived in a Caddo village near a river." Choices: (a) This shows the setting includes important natural features. (b) The village is a place. (c) "Her family lived in a Caddo village near a river."

My choice for Set B, and why

Set C: Thesis (Central Idea): The Magna Carta was important because it limited the king's power. Evidence: "The barons wanted the king to follow rules." Choices: (a) This means the barons believed the king should not have unlimited power. (b) The text has information in it. (c) "The barons wanted the king to follow rules."

My choice for Set C, and why

The explanation sentence does not float away by itself. It stays connected to the evidence right before it.

My answer

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 5: Explain/Educate



I teach someone else

Our Question for Today

How would I teach someone else what an explanation sentence does?

1. Turn and Teach: What Does Explanation Do?

Teach your partner: the definition of explanation; one starter signal; what THIS points to; one example using today's evidence; and how explanation connects back to the thesis (central idea).

Frame: "An explanation sentence tells _____. I can start with _____. In this response, THIS points back to _____. The explanation helps the reader understand _____."

My partner taught me...

2. Overarching Question Answer

How does an explanation sentence turn evidence into clear thinking for the reader?

My answer

3. Transfer: Day 5 Exit Ticket

Complete each part on your own.

Circle the topic in red. Box the charge in yellow. Underline the task in green.

Why is the setting important to the people in Tayanita's village? Complete a full SCR: a thesis (central idea), evidence, and an explanation that makes the evidence mean something.

My thesis (central idea)

My evidence (the author's exact words)

My explanation (starts with a signal; THIS points back to the evidence)

- ☐ My thesis (central idea) is clear.
- ☐ My evidence is the author's exact words.
- ☐ My explanation adds meaning and does not repeat the quote.
- ☐ THIS points back to the evidence sentence right before it.

Ⓢ STOP & THINK

Explanation tells the reader what the proof means. Keep your explanation short, direct, and connected to the sentence before it.

One thing I now understand about writing an explanation sentence is ____



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. Underline the task in green.

Why is the setting important to the people in Tayanita's village? Complete a full SCR: a thesis (central idea), evidence, and an explanation that makes the evidence mean something.

My Plan

- Read the thesis (central idea).
- Read the evidence, the author's exact words.
- Write the explanation. Begin with a starter signal.
- Make THIS point back to the evidence.

Two possible pieces of evidence from the passage

The stronger piece of evidence is...

Writing Color Coding

Thesis (central idea) and reasons, Green. Evidence, Yellow. Explanation, Red or Pink. Significance (Bluebird Moment), Blue.

My explanation starter

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

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.
- ☐ Magna Carta, Runnymede, England, Caddo, Piney Woods, and Tayanita begin with capital letters.
- ☐ Barons, document, village, taxes, rights, and crops 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
Thesis (Central Idea)	I wrote a clear thesis (central idea) that answers the prompt.	
Evidence	I used the author's exact words in quotation marks.	
Explanation	I explained what the evidence means, using a starter and THIS, instead of repeating it.	
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 is the setting important to the people in Tayanita's village?

Low

The setting is important. The text says, "Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows." The corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows.

The third sentence repeats the evidence instead of explaining it, it adds no meaning. Replace the repeat with an explanation that starts with a signal and tells what the evidence means.

Medium

The setting is important because people depend on farming. The text says, "Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows." This means they grow food.

What is working: a thesis (central idea), exact evidence, and an explanation that begins with a starter and interprets the quote. What needs improvement: push the explanation to show why farming matters to the whole village.

High

The setting is important because people depend on farming and trade. The text says, "Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows" and "They brought pottery and tools to trade." This means the village setting helps the people grow food and exchange goods with others.

The explanation adds meaning and points back to the evidence using THIS, the response makes the evidence mean something.

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 an explanation sentence from an evidence sentence.	☐	☐	☐
Begin an explanation with a starter signal.	☐	☐	☐
Make THIS point back to my evidence.	☐	☐	☐
Complete a full SCR with a thesis (central idea), evidence, and explanation.	☐	☐	☐
Check my finished SCR for conventions.	☐	☐	☐

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 does an explanation sentence turn evidence into clear thinking for the reader?

The answer

An explanation sentence interprets the evidence. It tells the reader what the quoted words mean, why they matter, and how they connect back to the thesis (central idea). Starters such as This means and This shows can help the writer build the habit of pointing back to the evidence, but the explanation must add the writer's thinking rather than repeat the quote.

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 about the other passage. Write a thesis (central idea), choose exact evidence, and write an explanation that points back to the evidence with THIS.

My new prompt

Take It Further! Explanation Challenge

Use the same evidence to write two different strong explanations: a clarifying explanation (This means... / This shows...) and a story or connection explanation (This reminds me of... / This makes me think of...). Challenge Set: Thesis (Central Idea): The setting is important because people depend on farming and trade. Evidence: "Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows" and "They brought pottery and tools to trade." Possible responses: "This means the setting gives people a place to grow food and exchange goods." / "This makes me think of a community market where people bring what they have and depend on one another."

- Which explanation stays closest to the thesis (central idea)?
- Which explanation helps the reader picture the idea?
- How does each explanation change the reader's understanding?
- Which explanation shows the stronger thinking level, and why?
- Underline the word **THIS** in each explanation.
- Check your sentence for conventions.

My plan: clarifying explanation (This means / This shows) and connecting explanation (This reminds me of / This makes me think of)

My Explanation Challenge

Write your strongest explanation in the box below. Underline the word **THIS**.

At-Home Connection

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

So What Does It Mean?

Share one fact from your day ("It rained"). Then explain it with "This means..." or "This shows..." ("This means we moved the picnic inside").

Ask: You gave me a fact. Now tell me what it means and why it matters.

Family member signature: _____

Point It Back

Give a fact, then an explanation that starts with THIS. Check together that THIS clearly points back to the fact you just said.

Ask: What does THIS point back to in your explanation?

Family member signature: _____

Family Conversation Starters

Talk about these at home: What does an explanation sentence do that an evidence sentence does not? What does the word THIS point back to in a response? Why is repeating the evidence not the same as explaining it? What is one starter you can use to begin an explanation?

Ask: Why is repeating the evidence not the same as explaining it?

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 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 Explanation Growth

I proved that an explanation sentence turns evidence into clear thinking for the reader.

A note to my future writer self

My Proud Moment This Week
