

THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC.

Student Interactive Workbook

Grade 4

Cluster 4 - Modules 1 to 4

Module 1: CREATURES Foundation

Module 2: From Facts to a Coherent Case

Module 3: Understanding Others and Rebuttal

*Module 4: Ending, Significance, and the Full CREATURES
ECR*



Name: _____



The Writing Academy®, LLC

© 2026 The Writing Academy®, LLC. All rights reserved.

This document is provided for classroom instructional use. No part may be reproduced for resale or distribution outside the purchasing campus without written permission from The Writing Academy®, LLC.

THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC.

Student Interactive Workbook

Grade 4

Cluster 4 - Module 1

CREATURES Foundation



Name: _____



The Writing Academy®, LLC

Grade 4 • Cluster 4 • Module 1

© The Writing Academy®, LLC

All rights reserved. This student interactive workbook is provided for classroom instructional use. No part may be reproduced for resale or distribution outside the purchasing campus without written permission.

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

CREATURES Foundation



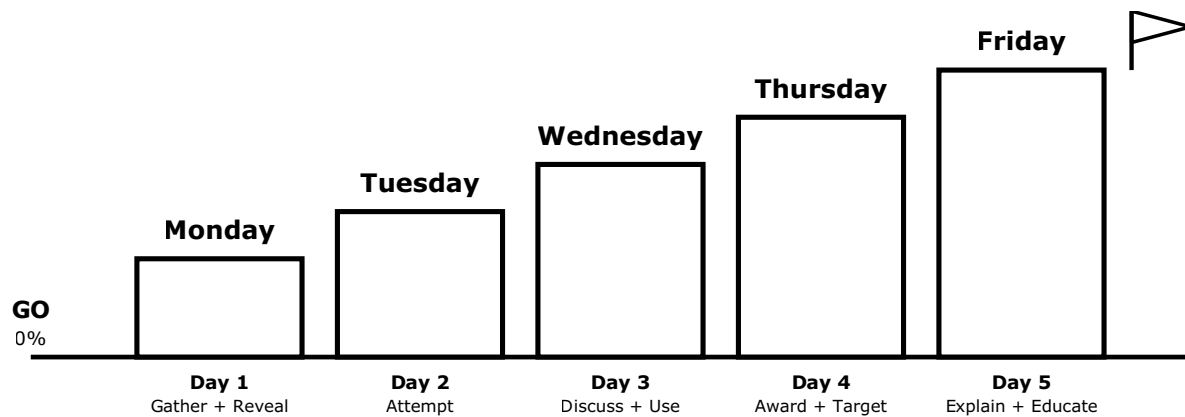
Why This Matters to Me

A strong argument begins when a writer chooses a position and gives the reader reasons and proof worth trusting. I will learn to build the C, R, and E foundation of CREATURES.

Essential Question

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

My Week Tracker



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

My First Thinking

I Can

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

I Will

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

The I Can I want to reach first, and why

[illegible]

My Week at a Glance

What I learn	What I read	What I make
How a clear claim, logical reasons, and relevant evidence create the C → R → E foundation of CREATURES.	Two nonfiction passages about Mansa Musa and the four Texas regions.	Labeled C → R → E chains, a CREATURES Foundation Builder, and a reflection.

Where We Are Going

I will move from listening to claim, reason, and evidence labels to building my own defensible C → R → E chain. I will finish by teaching someone else the foundation of CREATURES.

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

- ☐ My claim is direct and defensible.
- ☐ My reasons are logical and do not repeat.
- ☐ My evidence is accurate, relevant, and directly connected to the reason it proves.
- ☐ I can explain whether a C → R → E chain is defensible from the passage.

Check Myself

- ☐ I can write a clear claim that answers the prompt.
- ☐ I can give logical reasons that support my claim.
- ☐ I can choose evidence from the passage that proves each reason.

How I Will Show What I Know

I will show what I know with a labeled C → R → E foundation, a CREATURES Foundation Builder activity, a partner explanation, and the Day 5 exit ticket.

My GRADUATE Learning Path

Stage	Day	What I do
Gather	Day 1	I listen for the job each sentence performs.
Reveal	Day 1	I learn how C, R, and E build a strong foundation.
Attempt	Day 2	I play Build the Creature with sorting cards.
Discuss	Day 3	I explain why a true detail can still be weak evidence.
Use Again	Day 3	I build a C → R → E chain on my own.
Award	Day 4	I star my strongest C → R → E chain.
Target	Day 4	I choose my next step to strengthen my argument.
Explain/Educate	Day 5	I teach the C → R → E foundation to a partner.

Say It Together!

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

4.11B(iii):

TEKS says: (11)(B)(iii) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including a conclusion.

How I say it: I organize my draft with a clear structure and finish with a conclusion.

4.12C:

TEKS says: (12)(C)(i) compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using genre characteristics.

How I say it: I write an argument that takes a side, gives reasons, and proves them with evidence.

Call and Response

Read this together as a class before we start.

Teacher asks: "What do C, R, and E stand for in the CREATURES roadmap?"

Class answers: "C is Claim, take a side you can defend. R is Reasons, tell why your side makes sense. E is Evidence, prove it from the text."

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 writer takes a position and supports it. I can find details in a passage and tell the difference between a fact and an opinion.

A connection I can make

Remember It!

- ☐ A claim takes a side the writer can defend.
- ☐ A reason explains why the claim makes sense.
- ☐ Evidence comes straight from the passage and proves the reason.

One idea I remember

Ready Check

- ☐ I can name the difference between a topic and a claim.
- ☐ I can find a detail in a passage.
- ☐ I can explain why one detail is more important than another.

Watch Out! Common Mix-Up

Watch out! A topic names what the writing is about. A claim takes a defensible position. I might confuse the two. If I cannot find evidence for my claim, the claim may be too broad or not defensible from the passage.

Where This Fits in My Writing

Building C, R, and E is the first step before the rest of CREATURES. The foundation must be strong before a writer can explain, rebut, or conclude.

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 argumentative prompt. Underline the task. Circle the topic. Find the two sides the prompt offers.

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

Part 2: Claim

Write one clear, defensible claim that directly answers the prompt. Test it: Direct? Defensible? Evidence available?

My thesis (central idea)

Part 3: Argumentative Organization

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

Number	Sentence
_____	The passage states that Mansa Musa made sure traders could move safely.
_____	Protecting trade had the greater impact on Mali.
_____	This evidence directly shows that safe routes increased commerce.
_____	Safe routes encouraged more merchants to travel to Mali.

Part 4: Reason

Write one logical reason that explains why your claim makes sense. A reason is not just a passage detail.

My first sentence

Part 5: Evidence and Fit

Reason: Safe routes encouraged merchants to travel to Mali. 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 fits because...

Part 6: C → R → E Foundation

Write one clear claim, one logical reason, and one strong piece of evidence. Label each part C, R, or E.

My paragraph



Words I Need

Tier 1, everyday words



Say each word. Then use one word in a sentence about an argument you can defend.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
side	SIDE	One position in a disagreement.	I can choose a _____ I can defend.
choice	CHOIS	A decision between possibilities.	Mansa Musa made a smart _____.
idea	eye-DEE-uh	A thought a writer can express.	My _____ must be defensible.
fact	FAKT	Information that is true.	A _____ is true, but it may not prove my reason.
match	MACH	To connect things that belong together.	I _____ evidence to the reason it proves.
strong	STRONG	Able to do its job well.	A _____ reason supports the claim.
clear	KLEER	Easy to understand.	My claim must be _____ and direct.
true	TROO	Accurate or correct.	A _____ detail can still be weak evidence.
prove	PROOV	To show that an idea is supported.	Evidence must _____ the exact reason.
text	TEKST	The passage a reader uses.	My evidence comes from the _____.

Use one Tier 1 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 2, academic words

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

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
claim	KLAYM	A clear position that directly answers the argumentative prompt.	My _____ takes a side I can defend.
defensible	dih-FEN-suh-buhl	Able to be supported with logical reasons and evidence.	My claim must be _____ from the passage.
reason	REE-zuhn	A logical idea that explains why the claim should be accepted.	A strong _____ tells why my side makes sense.
evidence	EV-uh-duns	Accurate information from the text used as proof.	My _____ must directly prove the reason.
relevant	REL-uh-vuhnt	Directly connected to the claim or reason being proved.	Only _____ details count as evidence.
argument	AR-gyuh-muhnt	A connected case built from a claim, reasons, evidence, and thinking.	CREATURES builds the complete _____.
position	puh-ZISH-uhn	The side or conclusion a writer chooses to defend.	My _____ must be clear from the first sentence.
support	suh-PORT	Information or reasoning that makes an idea stronger.	Reasons _____ the claim.
trade	TRAYD	The exchange of goods, a major source of Mali's growth.	Mansa Musa protected _____ routes.
region	REE-juhn	An area with shared geographic features.	Each Texas _____ offers different jobs.

Use one Tier 2 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 3, passage words

These words come from our passages about The Wealth of Mansa Musa and Four Regions, One Big Adventure.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
CREATURES	KREE-churz	The nine-part argumentative-writing roadmap.	_____ gives us a memory path for argument writing.
rebuttal	rih-BUHT-uhl	A response that answers another position.	A _____ addresses what someone else might say.
significance	sig-NIF-ih-kuhns	Why an issue matters beyond the paper.	The _____ is the Bluebird Moment.
coherence	koh-HEER-uhns	The way ideas connect and flow clearly.	Good _____ means my ideas fit together.
distractor	dih-STRAK-ter	A choice that does not do the required job.	A _____ is true but does not prove the reason.
paraphrase	PAIR-uh-frayz	To restate text accurately in new words.	I can _____ evidence instead of copying it exactly.
commerce	KOM-ers	The exchange of goods through trade.	Safe routes increased _____ in Mali.
resource	REE-sors	Something available that people can use.	Each region has different natural _____.
resolution	rez-uh-LOO-shuhn	The way a problem or conflict is settled.	Trade provided a _____ for scarcity.
conventions	kuhn-VEN-shuhnz	Agreed rules for correct written language.	I edit my writing for _____.

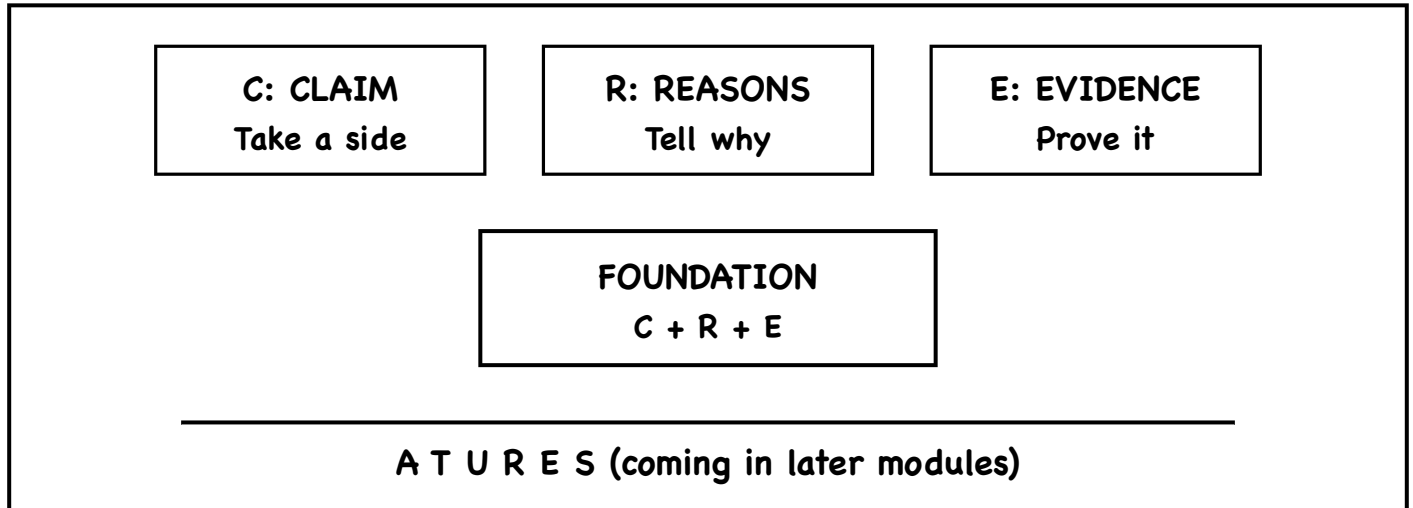
Use one Tier 3 word in a sentence



The CREATURES Roadmap



CREATURES is my roadmap for argumentative writing. This module builds the foundation: C, R, and E.



A claim without reasons and evidence is just an opinion. Build the foundation first.

The Three Tests

Mark	What it means
Claim Test	Direct? Defensible? Evidence available?
Evidence Test	Does it connect? Does it strongly support? Is it important enough to prove the reason?

An argumentative prompt asks you to take a side you can defend with reasons and passage evidence.

How this strategy works for me

CLAIM and TOPIC

CLAIM	TOPIC
takes a defensible position; answers the prompt directly; can be supported with text evidence.	names what the writing is about; does not take a side; is not enough for an argument.

A topic is not a claim. A claim takes a side the writer can defend.

How I Say the Standard!

4.11B(iii):

TEKS says: (11)(B)(iii) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including a conclusion.

How I say it: I organize my draft with a clear structure and finish with a conclusion.

4.12C:

TEKS says: (12)(C)(i) compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using genre characteristics.

How I say it: I write an argument that takes a side, gives reasons, and proves them with evidence.

Check My Writing

- ☐ My sentence has a subject and a verb.
- ☐ I use a capital letter for Mansa Musa, Mali, and Texas.
- ☐ I use a period or another ending mark.

A claim I can defend

Thinking Levels

Read the levels from the bottom up. Each level tells what I do with a claim, a reason, and evidence.

Thinking Level	Symbol	What I Do
Identify		Label sentences as Claim, Reason, or Evidence.
Explain		Tell how a claim differs from a topic and why a reason supports a claim.
Analyze		Match reasons and evidence, reject distractors, and explain why a true detail may still be weak evidence.
Evaluate and Create		Compare defensible claims, determine which has stronger evidence available, and create a complete C → R → E foundation.

The levels build from Identify to Evaluate and Create.

A thinking level I understand

Thinking Levels

These are the same thinking levels I use when a prompt asks how the parts of my argument work together.

Thinking Level	Symbol	What I Do
Identify	○	Label sentences as Claim, Reason, or Evidence.
Explain	□	Tell how a claim differs from a topic and why a reason supports a claim.
Analyze	▽	Match reasons and evidence, reject distractors, and explain why a true detail may still be weak evidence.
Evaluate and Create	△	Compare defensible claims, determine which has stronger evidence available, and create a complete C → R → E foundation.

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.	Argue whether protecting trade or supporting learning had the greater impact on Mali. Use evidence from the passage to support your position.
HOW	Analyze how parts work together or how something happens.	Argue which Texas region offers the strongest combination of work opportunities based on the passage. Use evidence to support your position.

CREATURES prompts ask you to argue a position. Your claim must be defensible, your reasons must be logical, and your evidence must come from the text.

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

Mansa Musa's choices about trade and learning helped Mali grow. Xavier's road trip shows how each Texas region offers different resources and opportunities.

Background I Need

In one passage, Mansa Musa protects trade routes and supports learning in Mali. In the other passage, Xavier travels through four Texas regions and notices the work people do in each.

Words I dotted while reading

The Wealth of Mansa Musa

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

My
marks

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

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

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

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

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Four Regions, One Big Adventure

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

My
marks

- 1 "Road trip!" Xavier shouted as his family packed the car. They were driving across Texas to learn about its different regions.
- 2 Their first stop was the Mountains and Basins in far West Texas. Xavier noticed tall, rocky mountains and dry land. "It's really hot here," he said. There were only a few plants, like cacti. His mom explained that people in this region often work in mining and oil because of the natural resources found underground.
- 3 Next, they traveled to the Great Plains. The land looked wide and flat with rolling hills. The weather was still dry, but not as hot. Xavier saw ranches and fields. "This must be where people raise cattle," he said. His dad nodded and added that farming is also common here.
- 4 After that, they reached the North Central Plains. "Everything looks greener and more colorful!" Xavier said. There were more trees and grass, and the land had gentle hills. The climate was milder, and people raised livestock and grew crops.
- 5 Finally, they arrived at the Coastal Plains near the Gulf of Mexico. It was humid, and Xavier could feel the warm, moist air. There were rivers, forests, and even beaches. "This region has a lot of different jobs," his mom said, "like farming, fishing, and working in big cities."
- 6 As they headed home, Xavier rethought about what he had seen. Each region looked different, but all were important parts of Texas.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Annotate: The Wealth of Mansa Musa

Choices, results, and details that could support a defensible position about leadership.

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: Four Regions, One Big Adventure

Regional features, natural resources, and work opportunities that a writer could use to argue a position.

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 defensible claim?

My thinking

My Prompt Marking Notes

An argumentative prompt asks you to take a side. Mark the parts that tell you what to argue.

Shape	Word	Question I ask myself
Red circle	Topic	What am I arguing about?
Yellow box	Task	What must my argument do?
Green underline	Two sides	Which side should I defend?

Underline the task. Circle the topic. Find the two sides the prompt offers.

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

My three marks in words

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 1: Gather + Reveal



I build the foundation of my argument

Our Question for Today

How do I tell the difference between a Claim, a Reason, and Evidence?

1. Gather: Listen, Label, and Defend

Listen to three sentences. Hold up C, R, or E after each sentence. Then say the clue that proves your choice.

A sentence I labeled and why

2. Reveal: The CREATURES Foundation

A claim takes a position. A reason tells why that position makes sense. Evidence proves the reason from the text. When those three jobs are clear, the argument has a strong foundation.

- ☐ C: Claim, take a side you can defend.
- ☐ R: Reasons, tell why your side makes sense.
- ☐ E: Evidence, prove it from the text.

3. Reveal: The Three Tests

Every claim, reason, and evidence choice must pass its test.

STOP & THINK

What happens if a claim has no evidence available in the passage?

My answer

Day 1: Reveal, continued

4. Model the C → R → E Chain

Underline the task. Circle the topic. Find the two sides the prompt offers.

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

Part	The model shows
C: Claim	Protecting trade had the greater impact on Mali because safe routes increased trade, wealth, and opportunity.
R: Reason	Safe routes encouraged more merchants to travel to Mali.
E: Evidence 1	The passage says that Mansa Musa "made sure traders could move safely, which brought more people and goods into Mali."
R: Reason 2	Strong trade helped cities such as Timbuktu become busy and important.
E: Evidence 2	The passage explains that increased trade helped Timbuktu become an important place for commerce and learning.

5. Listen and Label

Listen for each description. Hold up C, R, or E.

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

I can explain the difference between C, R, and E

Day 1: Reveal, continued

6. Fresh Recall

With notes covered, explain the difference among Claim, Reason, and Evidence in 20 seconds.

7. Fill In What You Hear

Sentence	My word
A _____ takes a side you can defend.	
A _____ tells why your side makes sense.	
_____ proves the reason from the text.	
A true detail can be weak _____ if it does not match the reason.	
If I cannot find evidence, my claim may need to be _____.	

 STOP & THINK

What is the difference between a topic and a claim?

My answer

STUDENT WORKBOOK



BUILD THE CREATURE

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards (sheet 1 of 2)

Cut on the dashed lines. Keep the 3 CREATURES cards in the middle of the table and the 11 sentence cards in a stack. Set A is Mansa Musa. Set B is Texas Regions. Store all cards in your Pocket Practice.

CLAIM	REASON
EVIDENCE	Protecting trade had the greater impact on Mali.
Safe routes encouraged merchants to visit Mali.	More trade brought goods and wealth into the kingdom.
"He made sure traders could move safely, which brought more people and goods into Mali."	Timbuktu became a busy and important place as trade grew.

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.

REASON the R in CREATURES. It tells why your side makes sense.	CLAIM the C in CREATURES. It takes a side you can defend.
Claim	EVIDENCE the E in CREATURES. It proves the reason from the text.
Reason	Reason
Evidence	Evidence

STUDENT WORKBOOK



BUILD THE CREATURE

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards (sheet 2 of 2)

Cut on the dashed lines. Keep the 3 CREATURES cards in the middle of the table and the 11 sentence cards in a stack. Set A is Mansa Musa. Set B is Texas Regions. Store all cards in your Pocket Practice.

Mansa Musa traveled to Mecca.

The Coastal Plains provide the widest variety of job opportunities.

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

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

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

The Mountains and Basins are hot and dry.

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.

Claim	Distractor (true but does not prove this claim)
Reason	Reason
Distractor (true but does not prove the Coastal Plains claim)	Evidence

Day 2: Attempt, continued

Our Question for Today: How do I build a defensible C → R → E chain from passage evidence?

1. Play It

- Sit with your team. Place the three CREATURES cards (C → R → E) face up in the middle.
- Draw one sentence card. Read it aloud. Decide whether the sentence is a Claim, Reason, Evidence, or Distractor.
- Place the card beside its match. Explain why it belongs there.
- If you grab the wrong card, put it back and your partner gets the point.
- Reject distractors and explain why they do not belong.
- Read the completed C → R → E chain aloud.
- Check each answer against the Self-Check key on the back of the cards.
- Put every card back in Pocket Practice.

Round	1	2	3	4	5
My partner					
My point					

2. Talk About It

Say why one card matched one label.

My reason

3. Mark the Second Prompt

Underline the task. Circle the topic. Find the two sides the prompt offers.

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

My claim for this prompt is...

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 3: Discuss + Use

I explain my thinking



Our Question for Today
Why can a true detail still be weak evidence?

1. Discuss
Explain your reasoning, not just your answer.

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

My discussion notes

2. My Personal Connection

Connect a time you had to defend a position to the CREATURES foundation. Tell which part was hardest.

My connection and what I learned

Retell how Mansa Musa's choices about trade helped Mali grow.

My retelling

Tell one way a defensible claim and a topic are different.

My comparison



? STOP & THINK

Evidence must directly prove the reason. In the model, what does the evidence about safe routes prove?

My answer

3. Use: Build Your Foundation

Work alone. Read the prompt. Write one defensible claim, two logical reasons, and one piece of evidence for each reason. Label each part C, R, or E.

1

Underline the task. Circle the topic. Find the two sides the prompt offers.

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

C, R, or E: _____

2

Underline the task. Circle the topic. Find the two sides the prompt offers.

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

C, R, or E: _____

Why does the evidence fit the reason?



C → R → E Practice, continued

Build a foundation for the second prompt. Label every part.

3

Underline the task. Circle the topic. Find the two sides the prompt offers.

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

C, R, or E: _____

4

Underline the task. Circle the topic. Find the two sides the prompt offers.

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

C, R, or E: _____

Embedded Check

Did I build a defensible foundation?

- ☐ My claim directly answers the prompt.
- ☐ My reasons are logical and distinct.
- ☐ My evidence comes from the passage.

What makes my strongest C → R → E chain work?

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 4: Award + Target



I notice evidence of my growth

Our Question for Today

What part of my argument foundation is strongest, and what needs work?

1. Award the Best Parts

Star your strongest C → R → E chain. Complete: My argument foundation is stronger because _____.

My Best C → R → E Chain (write it here)

Claim, Reason, Evidence

Something I did well, and where I did it

2. Target My Next Step

Choose one specific target for next time.

- ☐ Next time I will make my claim more direct.
- ☐ Next time I will choose evidence that matches the exact reason.
- ☐ Next time I will revise a claim when the evidence is weak.

My target: Next time I will...

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 5: Explain/Educate



I teach someone else

Our Question for Today

How would I teach someone else the C → R → E foundation?

1. Explain to Others

Teach a partner the foundation as if they have never seen CREATURES. Use the frames below.

- A claim is _____ because _____.
- A reason is different from a claim because _____.
- Evidence must be _____ and _____.
- A true detail can be weak evidence when _____.
- If a claim has no evidence, the writer should _____.

My partner taught me...

2. Educate: Say the Full CREATURES Acronym

Say each letter and its job together as a class.

C: Claim, take a side you can defend.

R: Reasons, tell why your side makes sense.

E: Evidence, prove it from the text.

The creature's foundation stands on three.

One CREATURES letter I can explain well

3. Transfer: Day 5 Exit Ticket

Complete each part on your own.

Underline the task. Circle the topic. Find the two sides the prompt offers.

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

My claim

One reason and one piece of evidence that proves it

Check My Exit Ticket

- ☐ My claim directly answers the prompt.
- ☐ My reason is logical and supports the claim.
- ☐ My evidence comes from the passage.
- ☐ My evidence directly proves the reason.
- ☐ I labeled each part C, R, or E.

STOP & THINK

I can build a defensible C → R → E foundation. A claim without reasons and evidence is just an opinion.

My final Day 5 thought



Write More

Plan, draft, revise, edit, and share



My Writing Assignment

Write a short response to this prompt:

Underline the task. Circle the topic. Find the two sides the prompt offers.

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

My Plan

- Read the argumentative prompt. Underline the task.
- Write one clear, defensible claim.
- Write two distinct, logical reasons.
- Choose one strong piece of passage evidence for each reason.

Two possible reasons from the passage

The stronger reason is...

CREATURES Color Coding

Claim 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.
- ☐ Mansa Musa, Mali, Timbuktu, Sahara, and Texas begin with capital letters.
- ☐ Trade, kingdom, and region 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
Claim	I wrote a clear, defensible claim.	
Reasons	I gave logical, distinct reasons.	
Evidence	My evidence directly proves each reason.	
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.

Argue whether protecting trade or supporting learning had the greater impact on Mali.

Low

Mansa Musa was good and trade was good.

What Needs Improvement: State a defensible claim, add a logical reason, and use relevant evidence from the passage to prove the reason.

Medium

Protecting trade had the greater impact on Mali. Safe routes helped trade. Mansa Musa made sure traders could move safely.

What Needs Improvement: Make the reason more precise, identify the detail as evidence, and explain how the evidence directly proves the reason.

High

Protecting trade had the greater impact on Mali because safe travel increased commerce and helped the kingdom grow. Safe routes encouraged more merchants to travel to Mali. The passage states that Mansa Musa "made sure traders could move safely, which brought more people and goods into Mali."

Why it works: the claim is clear and defensible, the reason is logical, and the evidence accurately and directly supports the reason.

What improves from Low to High?



Look Back & Look Forward

I own my learning



My Progress Tracker

I can...	Not yet	Growing	Got it
Write a clear, defensible claim.	☐	☐	☐
Give logical reasons that do not repeat.	☐	☐	☐
Choose relevant evidence from the passage.	☐	☐	☐
Explain why each evidence choice fits.	☐	☐	☐
Tell the difference between a topic and a claim.	☐	☐	☐
Reject a true detail that does not prove the reason.	☐	☐	☐
Label each part C, R, or E.	☐	☐	☐
Name my next step.	☐	☐	☐

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

The answer

A clear claim takes a defensible position. Logical reasons explain why the claim makes sense. Relevant evidence from the passage directly proves each reason. Together, C, R, and E form the foundation of a strong argument.

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 defensible claim, one reason, and one piece of evidence. Explain why the evidence fits.

My new prompt

Take It Further! CREATURES Foundation Challenge

Build a complete C → R → E chain from one prompt: Argue which Texas region offers the strongest combination of work opportunities. Build a complete C → R → E foundation with two reasons and evidence for each.

- Write one clear, defensible claim.
- Write two distinct, logical reasons.
- Choose one strong piece of evidence for each reason.
- Label every part C, R, or E.
- Test: Direct? Defensible? Evidence available?
- Present your chain to the class.
- Find one classmate whose claim differs, and tell why theirs also works.

My plan: claim, two reasons, evidence for each, and fit explanations

My CREATURES Foundation Challenge

Write your full C → R → E chain in the box below. Label each part.

At-Home Connection

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

C, R, or E?

One person states a position, a reason, or a piece of proof. The other person labels its job C, R, or E and explains the clue. Take turns.

Ask them: how can you tell the difference between a reason and a piece of evidence?

Family member signature: _____

Prove the Reason

Choose a detail from one passage. Name a reason it can prove. Explain why the match is direct.

Ask them: has anyone ever given you a reason that did not quite make sense? What was missing?

Family member signature: _____

Teach CREATURES

Teach someone at home what C, R, and E stand for. Explain one letter using an example from your own writing.

Ask them: when have you had to defend a position about something that mattered to you?

Family member signature: _____

My Family Conversation Notes

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

Notes

Track My Progress

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

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

Why This Helps Me

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

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

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

My Module 1 Snapshot

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

The most useful word I learned

The prompt part I can find fastest

My Strong Foundation

I built the part of the argument everything else depends on.

A note to my future writer self

My Proud Moment This Week

THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC.

Student Interactive Workbook

Grade 4

Cluster 4 - Module 2

From Facts to a Coherent Case



Name: _____



The Writing Academy®, LLC

Grade 4 • Cluster 4 • Module 2

© The Writing Academy®, LLC

All rights reserved. This student interactive workbook is provided for classroom instructional use. No part may be reproduced for resale or distribution outside the purchasing campus without written permission.

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

From Facts to a Coherent Case



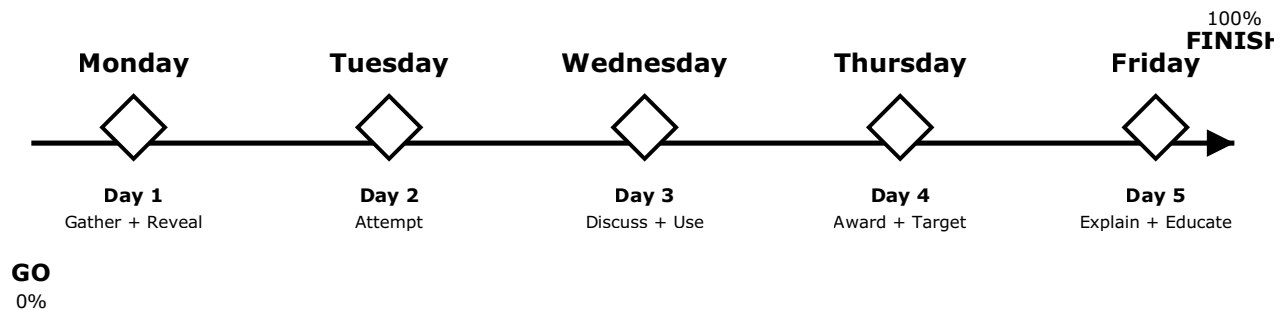
Why This Matters to Me

Evidence becomes persuasive only when the writer connects it into a case and explains why it matters. A connects the whole case. T explains how the proof works.

Essential Question

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

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 connect my reasons and evidence into a coherent line of argument and explain how the evidence supports my claim.
- I can build C to R to E to T chains that stay connected to one central claim.
- I can explain how and why evidence supports a reason instead of repeating the evidence.
- I can use transitions to show cause, effect, method, and relationships among ideas.

I Will

- I will read closely, speak about my thinking, use evidence accurately, and explain how each CREATURES move strengthens an argumentative response.
- I will organize two reason, evidence, and thinking chains so they build one coherent argument.
- I will revise a jump in logic and make my T: Thinking visible.
- I will use WHY to explain reasons and HOW to explain method or relationship while keeping C as my central claim.

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 A: Argument and T: Thinking connect claims, reasons, evidence, explanations, and transitions into one coherent case.	The Wealth of Mansa Musa and Four Regions, One Big Adventure at Medium Stamina.	One claim with two reason, evidence, and thinking chains connected by transitions.

Where We Are Going

I will move from hearing a broken chain to building two connected R/E/T chains, then teach how A connects the case and T explains the proof.

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

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

Check Myself

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

How I Will Show What I Know

I will build one claim with two R/E/T chains, connect them with transitions, and underline each T sentence.

My GRADUATE Learning Path

Stage	Day	What I do
Gather	Day 1	I listen for where an argument stops making sense.
Reveal	Day 1	I learn how A connects the case and T explains proof.
Attempt	Day 2	I build and revise chains in the Argument Chain Relay.
Discuss	Day 3	I explain what makes an argument coherent.
Use Again	Day 3	I connect two chains with transitions.
Award	Day 4	I highlight the T sentence that shows my thinking.
Target	Day 4	I choose one A + T target.
Explain/Educate	Day 5	I teach C to R to E to T and A.

Say It Together!

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

4.11B(ii):

TEKS says: 4.11B(ii) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including transitions.

How I say it: I can organize with purposeful structure, including transitions.

4.12C(i):

TEKS says: 4.12C(i) compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using genre characteristics.

How I say it: I can compose argumentative texts using genre characteristics.

Call and Response

Read this together as a class before we start.

Teacher asks: "What does that evidence prove?"

Class answers: "This supports the claim because..."

One TEKS I want to practice today



Get Ready

Before I begin



Before We Begin: What Do I Already Know?

I can take a defensible position, give a reason, and choose accurate evidence from a passage.

A connection I can make

Remember It!

- ☐ C sets the direction with a central claim.
- ☐ R gives a point and E proves it.
- ☐ T explains the proof, and A connects every chain back to C.

One idea I remember

Ready Check

- ☐ I can identify a cause, effect, method, or relationship supported by the passage.
- ☐ I can distinguish evidence from thinking and explain what the evidence proves.
- ☐ I can tell whether order and transitions make a response sound coherent.

Watch Out! Common Mix-Up

A response can have a claim and good evidence and still feel weak if the writer never explains how the proof works. Repeating evidence is not thinking.

Where This Fits in My Writing

A: Argument is the connected line of reasoning across the whole response. T: Thinking explains how and why the evidence proves the reason and supports the claim.

What I want to remember before I start

Where I Am Starting

This shows 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 argumentative prompt. Underline the task. Circle the topic. Find the two choices the prompt asks you to compare.

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

Part 2: Claim

Write one defensible claim that stays at the center of the argument.

My thesis (central idea)

Part 3: Coherent Order

Number these four sentences 1, 2, 3, 4 so the ideas connect and make sense together.

Number	Sentence
_____	Natural resources have the greater influence on work across Texas.
_____	Underground resources create specialized work.
_____	Resources found underground create mining and oil jobs.
_____	Another example appears in the Coastal Plains.

Part 4: Reason

Write one reason that connects to the same central claim.

My first sentence

Part 5: Evidence and Thinking

Reason: Underground resources create specialized work in the Mountains and Basins.
Copy one sentence from the passage that proves this reason. Then explain what the evidence proves.

The sentence I copied from the passage as evidence

This evidence supports the claim because...

Part 6: C, R, E, T Chain

Write one claim, one reason, one piece of evidence, and one thinking sentence. Label each part C, R, E, or T.

My paragraph



Words I Need

Tier 1, everyday words



Say each word. Then use one word to explain how ideas connect and make sense together.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
connect	kuh-NEKT	to join ideas so they make sense together	
choice	CHOYS	a decision	
result	ri-ZULT	what happens because of a choice or condition	
show	SHOH	to make something clear	
explain	ik-SPLAYN	to tell how or why something works	
order	OR-der	the arrangement of ideas	
link	LINK	a connection between ideas	
prove	PROOV	to support an idea with evidence	
matter	MAT-er	to be important	
strong	STRAWNG	clear and well supported	

Use one Tier 1 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 2, academic words

These academic words help you explain cause, effect, method, and relationships among ideas.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
coherent	koh-HEER-uhnt	organized so ideas connect and make sense together	
argument	AR-gyuh-muhnt	a connected line of reasoning that supports a claim	
thinking	THINK-ing	the explanation of how and why evidence supports the claim	
transition	tran-ZISH-uhn	a word or phrase that shows how ideas relate	
relationship	ri-LAY-shuhn-ship	the way two ideas, events, or conditions connect	
cause	KAWZ	something that helps make an event or result happen	
effect	ih-FEKT	a result that happens because of a cause	
method	METH-uhd	the way something happens or is done	
influence	IN-floo-uhns	the power to affect a result or decision	
opportunity	op-er-TOO-nuh-tee	a useful chance or possibility created by conditions or choices	

Use one Tier 2 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 3, passage words

These words come from our passages about The Wealth of Mansa Musa and Four Regions, One Big Adventure.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
claim	KLAYM	the defensible position at the center of an argument	
reason	REE-zuhn	a point that explains why a claim makes sense	
evidence	EV-uh-duhns	accurate proof from the text	
commerce	KOM-ers	the buying, selling, and movement of goods	
economy	ih-KON-uh-mee	the system of work, trade, and money in a place	
climate	KLY-mit	the usual weather of a place	
resources	REE-sor-siz	useful materials found in a place	
vegetation	vej-uh-TAY-shuhn	the plants growing in an area	
Timbuktu	tim-buk-TOO	a city known for trade and learning	
Coastal Plains	KOH-stuhl PLAYNZ	a Texas region with rivers, forests, beaches, farms, fishing, and large cities	

Use one Tier 3 word in a sentence



My Strategy Tools

The CREATURES Argumentative-Writing Roadmap



Module 2 spirals C, R, and E while adding A: Argument and T: Thinking.

C: CLAIM
Set direction

R: REASON
Give a point

E: EVIDENCE
Prove it

T: THINKING
Explain the proof

A: ARGUMENT connects every chain back to C

C sets direction. R gives a point. E proves it. T explains the proof. A connects every chain back to C.

A + T Deep Focus

Mark	What it means
A: Argument	The connected line of reasoning across the whole response.
T: Thinking	How and why the evidence proves the reason and supports the claim.
Transition Bank	first, another reason, for example, because, therefore, as a result, however, most importantly, together

A strong argumentative response cannot sound like a list of unrelated facts.

How A and T strengthen my argument

WHY and HOW

WHY	HOW	
WHY	explains reasons.	Argue whether climate or natural resources have the greater influence on how people live and work across Texas.
HOW	explains method, path, or relationship.	Argue whether protecting trade or supporting learning had the greater impact on Mali.

WHY explains reasons. HOW explains method, path, or relationship. Both can deepen T and clarify A, but neither replaces the central C: Claim.

How I Say the Standard!

4.11B(ii):

TEKS says: 4.11B(ii) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including transitions.

How I say it: I can organize with purposeful structure, including transitions.

4.12C(i):

TEKS says: 4.12C(i) compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using genre characteristics.

How I say it: I can compose argumentative texts using genre characteristics.

Check My Writing

- ☐ I use transitions to show relationships.
- ☐ I revise a jump in logic and a vague word.
- ☐ I edit prepositions and complete sentences.

A WHY or HOW explanation I can add

Five Thinking Levels: A + T

Each level shows how Argument and Thinking grow from listing a fact to revising a persuasive full case.

Level	Color	Thinking Stage	A + T Evidence	
Level 1	○	Red	Foundational	Lists a fact without a clear claim connection.
Level 2	◻	Orange	Emergent	Gives a reason and evidence but repeats instead of explains.
Level 3	▽	Yellow	Visible	Adds a T sentence that explains how the evidence supports the reason.
Level 4	△	Green	Independent	Connects two R/E/T chains with accurate transitions.
Level 5	◊	Blue	Reflective	Revises order, transitions, and thinking to make the full case more persuasive.

The levels move from Red Foundational thinking to Blue Reflective thinking.

The A + T level I can show

Five Thinking Levels

Use the same levels to check how clearly the response connects and explains its evidence.

Level	Color	Thinking Stage	A + T Evidence	
Level 1	○	Red	Foundational	Lists a fact without a clear claim connection.
Level 2	◻	Orange	Emergent	Gives a reason and evidence but repeats instead of explains.
Level 3	▽	Yellow	Visible	Adds a T sentence that explains how the evidence supports the reason.
Level 4	△	Green	Independent	Connects two R/E/T chains with accurate transitions.
Level 5	◊	Blue	Reflective	Revises order, transitions, and thinking to make the full case more persuasive.

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.	Argue whether climate or natural resources have the greater influence on how people live and work across Texas.
HOW	Analyze how parts work together or how something happens.	Argue whether protecting trade or supporting learning had the greater impact on Mali.

WHY explains reasons. HOW explains method, path, or relationship. Both can deepen T and clarify A, but neither replaces the central C: Claim.

The A + T level I want to reach



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

Protected trade routes connected choices to increased commerce in Mali. Across Texas, climate and natural resources connect to work opportunities and daily life.

Background I Need

The Wealth of Mansa Musa presents relationships among protected trade routes, increased commerce, learning in Timbuktu, and Mali's growth and reputation. Four Regions, One Big Adventure presents relationships among landforms, climate, natural resources, vegetation, jobs, and daily life across Texas.

Words I dotted while reading

The Wealth of Mansa Musa

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

My
marks

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

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

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

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

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Wealth of Mansa Musa (continued)

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

My
marks

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

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

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

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Four Regions, One Big Adventure

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

My
marks

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

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

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

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

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Four Regions, One Big Adventure (continued)

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

My
marks

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

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

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

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Annotate: The Wealth of Mansa Musa

Relationships among protected trade routes, increased commerce, learning in Timbuktu, and Mali’s growth and reputation.

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: The Wealth of Mansa Musa (continued)

Relationships among protected trade routes, increased commerce, learning in Timbuktu, and Mali's growth and reputation.

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

How could this detail become evidence for a reason?

My thinking

My Prompt Marking Notes

An argumentative prompt asks you to take a defensible position. Mark the topic, task, and choices.

Shape	Word	Question I ask myself
Red circle	Topic	What is the argument about?
Yellow box	Task	What must the response do?
Green underline	Choices	Which position will I defend?

Underline the task. Circle the topic. Find the two choices the prompt asks you to compare.

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

My three marks in words

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 1: Gather + Reveal



I hear and repair a broken argument chain

Our Question for Today

Where does an argument stop making sense?

1. Gather: Hear the Broken Chain

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

The missing or weak link and how I know

2. Reveal: The Argument Chain

C sets direction. R gives a point. E proves it. T explains the proof. A connects every chain back to C.

- ☐ C: Claim, take a defensible position.
- ☐ R: Reasons, organize logical support.
- ☐ E: Evidence, prove the reasons.
- ☐ T: Thinking, explain how and why the evidence works.
- ☐ A: Argument, make the whole case coherent.

3. Fresh Recall

STOP & THINK

Say C to R to E to T from memory and explain how A connects the chain.

My explanation

Day 1: Reveal, continued

4. Model the Argument Chain

Underline the task. Circle the topic. Find the two choices the prompt asks you to compare.

Argue whether protecting trade or supporting learning had the greater impact on Mali.

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

5. Listen and Label

Label each sentence C, R, E, T, or TRANSITION.

Sentence	My label
Natural resources have a greater influence than climate on work opportunities across Texas.	
Natural resources directly shape several important jobs.	
The passage explains that people in the Mountains and Basins work in mining and oil because valuable resources are found underground.	
The resource itself creates the work opportunity.	
Another example appears in the Coastal Plains.	

How T is different from E

Day 1: Reveal, continued

6. A + T Deep Focus

A is bigger than one sentence. A is the path the whole case follows. T is where the writer’s mind becomes visible.

7. Fill In What You Hear

Sentence	My word
A _____ is the defensible position at the center of an argument.	
A _____ is a point that explains why a claim makes sense.	
_____ is accurate proof from the text.	
_____ explains how and why evidence supports the claim.	
A _____ shows how ideas relate.	

Ⓢ STOP & THINK

Why is repeating evidence not the same as thinking?

My answer

STUDENT WORKBOOK



ARGUMENT CHAIN RELAY

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards

Cut on the dotted lines. Build C to R to E to T in the correct order. Add a transition that connects to the next reason. Store all cards in Pocket Practice.

A: ARGUMENT	T: THINKING
TRANSITION	Supporting learning had the greater long-term impact on Mali.
Education helped Timbuktu become respected for knowledge as well as trade.	The passage explains that students and teachers gathered to study and share ideas.
This supports the claim because education created knowledge that could continue helping people after a single trade transaction ended.	In addition, learning helped Mali become known beyond its wealth.

Self-Check (back of cards)

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

T: THINKING the writer’s reasoning that makes the mind visible by explaining how and why evidence supports the reason and strengthens the claim. Repeating evidence is not thinking.	A: ARGUMENT the connected line of reasoning across the response: C sets direction, R gives a point, E proves it, T explains the proof, and A connects every chain back to C.
C: Claim	TRANSITION a word or phrase that shows how ideas relate, such as first, another reason, for example, because, therefore, as a result, however, most importantly, and together.
E: Evidence	R: Reason
Transition to next reason	T: Thinking

Day 2: Attempt

Our Question for Today: How do I build a coherent argument chain?

1. Play the Argument Chain Relay

- Build C to R to E to T in the correct order.
- Add a transition that connects to the next reason.
- Read the chain aloud.
- If it sounds like a jump or list, revise A: Argument.
- Explain which T sentence makes the reasoning clearest.
- Speed does not count unless the chain makes logical sense.
- Check each answer against the Self-Check key on the back of the cards.
- Put every card back in Pocket Practice.

Round	1	2	3	4	5
My partner					
My point					

2. Talk About It

Explain which T sentence makes the reasoning clearest.

My explanation

3. Mark the Additional Prompt

Underline the task. Circle the topic. Find the two choices the prompt asks you to compare.

Argue whether protecting trade or supporting learning had the greater impact on Mali.

My C to R to E to T chain

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 3: Discuss + Use

I explain and connect my thinking



Our Question for Today

What makes a line of argument coherent?

1. Discuss A + T

Explain your reasoning, not just your answer.

Question	My thinking
What makes a line of argument coherent?	
How is T: Thinking different from repeating the evidence?	
When does a transition improve A: Argument?	
How can WHY and HOW thinking both help an argumentative response?	

My discussion notes

2. My Personal Connection

Think of a time when facts sounded like a list. Explain how order, transitions, or thinking could make the ideas connect.

My connection and what I learned

Explain how safer trade routes affected Mali.

My cause and effect explanation

Explain how natural resources connect to work opportunities across Texas.

My relationship explanation



? STOP & THINK

Thinking is the bridge between proof and claim. What happens when that bridge is missing?

My answer

3. Use: Build Two Argument Chains

Work alone. Take a defensible position. Write two distinct reasons. Select evidence for each reason. Add a T sentence after each piece of evidence.

1

Underline the task. Circle the topic. Find the two choices the prompt asks you to compare.

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

C, R, E, T, or transition: _____

2

Underline the task. Circle the topic. Find the two choices the prompt asks you to compare.

Argue whether protecting trade or supporting learning had the greater impact on Mali.

C, R, E, T, or transition: _____

How does each piece of evidence support the reason?



Argument Chain Practice, continued

Build another coherent case. Use transitions so the second reason grows from the first.

3

Underline the task. Circle the topic. Find the two choices the prompt asks you to compare.

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

C, R, E, T, or transition: _____

4

Underline the task. Circle the topic. Find the two choices the prompt asks you to compare.

Argue whether protecting trade or supporting learning had the greater impact on Mali.

C, R, E, T, or transition: _____

Embedded Check

Does every chain connect back to the central claim?

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

What makes my strongest chain coherent?

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 4: Award + Target



I make my thinking visible

Our Question for Today

Which T sentence makes my reasoning most visible, and what A + T move needs work?

1. Award Your Thinking

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

My Strongest A + T Chain

Claim, Reason, Evidence, Thinking, Transition

My argument became more coherent when I...

2. Target A + T

Choose one target for next time.

- ☐ Smoother transitions.
- ☐ Stronger evidence explanation.
- ☐ Clearer link back to claim.
- ☐ Less listing.
- ☐ More precise cause and effect language.

My next argument will feel more connected if I...

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 5: Explain/Educate



I teach the argument chain

Our Question for Today

How can I teach the difference between proof and thinking?

1. Explain to Others

Teach C to R to E to T to a partner. Explain how A is the line connecting every chain into one case.

- C sets direction by _____.
- R gives a point by _____.
- E proves the reason by _____.
- T explains the proof by _____.
- A connects every chain back to _____.

My partner taught me...

2. Educate: Say the Argument Chain

Say each letter and its job together.

C: Claim, set the direction.

R: Reason, give a point.

E: Evidence, prove it.

T: Thinking, explain the proof.

A: Argument, connect every chain back to C.

One part of the chain I can explain well

3. Transfer: Day 5 Exit Ticket

Complete each part on your own.

Underline the task. Circle the topic. Find the two choices the prompt asks you to compare.

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

My defensible claim

Two R/E/T chains and transitions

Check My Exit Ticket

- ☐ My claim takes a defensible position.
- ☐ Each reason and evidence choice connects to the same claim.
- ☐ Each T sentence explains what the evidence proves.
- ☐ My transitions show how ideas relate.
- ☐ I revised one jump in logic.

STOP & THINK

A connects the whole case. T explains how the proof works. When Argument and Thinking are strong, the reader never has to guess why a detail matters.

My final Day 5 thought



Write More

Plan, draft, revise, edit, and share



My Writing Assignment

Write a short response to this prompt:

Underline the task. Circle the topic. Find the two choices the prompt asks you to compare.

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

My Plan

- Take a defensible position.
- Write two distinct reasons.
- Select evidence for each reason.
- After each piece of evidence, write a T: Thinking sentence that explains how and why the evidence supports the reason.
- Use transitions so the second reason grows from the first instead of sounding disconnected.
- Read the response aloud and revise any jump in logic.

Two distinct reasons from the passage

The chain that connects most clearly is...

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.
- ☐ Mansa Musa, Mali, Timbuktu, Texas, and Coastal Plains begin with capital letters.
- ☐ Claim, reason, evidence, thinking, argument, and transition 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
Claim	My claim takes a defensible position.	
Argument	My reasons, evidence, transitions, and ideas build one connected case.	
Thinking	Each T sentence explains what the evidence proves.	
Transitions	My transitions show relationships among ideas.	

Study the Samples

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

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

Low

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

The response names facts but does not build a coherent chain. Add a clear claim, connect the evidence to a reason, and explain what the evidence proves with T: Thinking.

Medium

Natural resources have a greater influence on work across Texas. People in the Mountains and Basins work in mining and oil because valuable resources are found underground. This shows that natural resources help create jobs.

The claim, evidence, and thinking connect. Add a second distinct R/E/T chain and a transition so A: Argument develops across the whole response.

High

Natural resources have the greater influence on how Texans live and work because resources directly create many job opportunities across regions. Underground resources create specialized work in the Mountains and Basins. The passage explains that people often work in mining and oil because of resources found underground. This supports the claim because the jobs exist specifically because the resources are present in the land. Another example appears in the Coastal Plains, where several resources support different kinds of work. The passage names farming, fishing, rivers, forests, beaches, and large cities. Together, these details show that resources can shape multiple parts of a region's economy and daily life.

The argument flows logically; each T sentence clearly explains how evidence supports the reason and claim; transitions show relationships among ideas.



Look Back & Look Forward

I own my learning



My Progress Tracker

I can...	Not yet	Growing	Got it
Keep one defensible C: Claim at the center.	☐	☐	☐
Connect reasons and evidence into a coherent A: Argument.	☐	☐	☐
Write T: Thinking that explains how and why the proof works.	☐	☐	☐
Use transitions to show relationships among ideas.	☐	☐	☐
Explain WHY as reason and HOW as method or relationship without replacing C.	☐	☐	☐
Identify a cause, effect, method, or relationship supported by the passage.	☐	☐	☐
Distinguish evidence from thinking.	☐	☐	☐
Revise a jump in logic.	☐	☐	☐

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

The answer

A: Argument organizes reasons, evidence, transitions, and ideas so they build one connected case instead of a disconnected list. T: Thinking explains how and why each piece of evidence supports the reason and strengthens the claim. Together, A and T make the writer's logic visible to the reader.

My Final Thinking (in my own words)

What Changed in My Thinking?

At first I thought...

Now I think...

Try It Another Way

Use the other passage. Write one C, two R/E/T chains, and transitions that make the argument flow. Underline each T sentence.

My new prompt

Take It Further! Rebuild the Argument

Take a response that contains strong facts but weak organization: Take a response that contains strong facts but weak organization. Reorder the parts, add transitions, and write deeper T sentences. Explain which revision most improved A: Argument.

- Reorder the parts.
- Add transitions.
- Write deeper T sentences.
- Explain which revision most improved A: Argument.
- Justify what changed.
- Explain why the new order creates a more persuasive line of argument.
- Trace both chains back to C.

My plan for rebuilding the argument

My Rebuilt Argument

Write one claim with two reason, evidence, and thinking chains. Use transitions to connect the chains.

At-Home Connection

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

Evidence or Thinking?

One person states a passage detail. The other explains what the detail proves by beginning, "This supports the claim because..."

Ask: How is T: Thinking different from repeating evidence?

Family member signature: _____

Connect the Chain

Give C to R to E to T from memory. Explain how A connects each chain back to the central claim.

Ask: What makes an argument sound like one connected case instead of a list?

Family member signature: _____

Cause, Effect, Method, Relationship

Explain a fact from either passage, then add, "This matters because..." to make the thinking visible.

Ask: Which transition could show cause, effect, method, or another relationship?

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 Coherent Case

I connected the proof and showed the reader my thinking.

A note to my future writer self

My Proud Moment This Week

THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC.

Student Interactive Workbook

Grade 4

Cluster 4 - Module 3

Understanding Others and Rebuttal



Name: _____



The Writing Academy®, LLC

Grade 4 • Cluster 4 • Module 3

© The Writing Academy®, LLC

All rights reserved. This student interactive workbook is provided for classroom instructional use. No part may be reproduced for resale or distribution outside the purchasing campus without written permission.

How to Use My Workbook

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

My Name and My Goal for This Module

Pocket Practice

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



Meet My Week

Understanding Others and Rebuttal



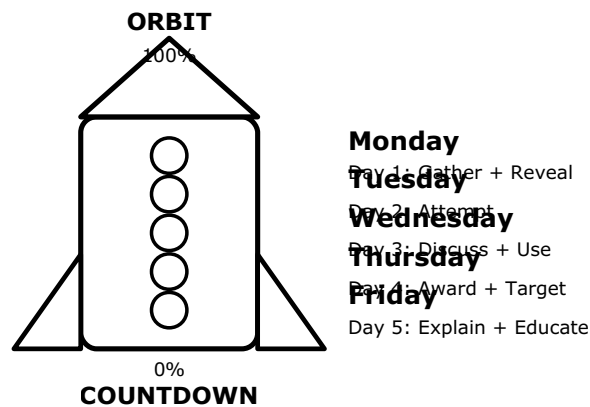
Why This Matters to Me

A rebuttal is stronger when it answers the real other viewpoint instead of a weaker version. Understanding others first makes the response respectful, specific, and credible.

Essential Question

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

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 COUNTDOWN to ORBIT!

My First Thinking

I Can

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

I Will

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

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 U: Understanding Others and R: Rebuttal let a writer represent another viewpoint fairly, then answer it with reasoning and evidence.	The Wealth of Mansa Musa and Four Regions, One Big Adventure at High Stamina.	A fair viewpoint sentence followed by a respectful, evidence-based rebuttal.

Where We Are Going

I will move from naming another view to representing it fairly, then answer the exact point with reasoning and evidence.

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

- ☐ The other viewpoint would agree that I represented it fairly.
- ☐ My wording is respectful and specific.
- ☐ My rebuttal answers the point with reasoning or evidence.
- ☐ My claim becomes more precise when the other view is valid.

Check Myself

- ☐ My claim takes a defensible position.
- ☐ My viewpoint sentence represents another view fairly and respectfully.
- ☐ My rebuttal answers the exact point with reasoning or evidence.
- ☐ My claim stays clear or becomes more precise.

How I Will Show What I Know

I will show what I know with a fair viewpoint sentence, an evidence-based rebuttal, and the Day 5 exit ticket.

My GRADUATE Learning Path

Stage	Day	What I do
Gather	Day 1	I listen for whether a viewpoint is represented fairly.
Reveal	Day 1	I learn what makes a fair U and an evidence-based R.
Attempt	Day 2	I play the Perspective Switchboard with viewpoint cards.
Discuss	Day 3	I explain why a fair viewpoint makes a rebuttal stronger.
Use Again	Day 3	I write a claim, an R/E/T chain, a fair U, and an evidence-based R.
Award	Day 4	I star the sentence that represents another view most accurately.
Target	Day 4	I choose one U or R target for next time.
Explain/Educate	Day 5	I teach why Understanding Others comes before Rebuttal.

Say It Together!

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

4.11B(iii):

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

4.12C(ii):

compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using craft

Call and Response

Read this together as a class before we start.

Teacher asks: "What do we do before we respond to another viewpoint?"

Class answers: "Understand it accurately first, then answer with evidence!"

One TEKS I want to practice today



Get Ready

Before I begin



Before We Begin: What Do I Already Know?

I can take a defensible position, give a clear reason, and choose accurate evidence from a passage.

A connection I can make

Remember It!

- ☐ C sets the direction with a central claim.
- ☐ R gives reasons, and E proves them.
- ☐ U states another view fairly, and R answers that exact point.

One idea I remember

Ready Check

- ☐ I can tell a fair representation of a viewpoint from an unfair one.
- ☐ I can find the exact point my rebuttal must answer.
- ☐ I can tell whether my response uses reasoning or evidence instead of repeating the claim.

Watch Out! Common Mix-Up

A rebuttal is not proving another person wrong or winning. Repeating the claim is not a rebuttal, and a straw-man response weakens credibility.

Where This Fits in My Writing

U and R come after the C, R, E, A, and T foundation. A rebuttal cannot stand alone; it must connect back to the writer's central claim.

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 both passages as often as you want.

Part 1: Take a Position

Read the prompt. Choose the position you will defend, then write your claim in one sentence.

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

Part 2: Order the Argument

Number the sentences 1 to 4 so they build a complete argument.

My thesis (central idea)

Part 3: Reason and Evidence

Write one reason that supports your claim. Copy the evidence that proves it.

Number	Sentence
_____	This supports the claim because knowledge can be shared and passed on.
_____	Supporting learning had the greater long-term impact on Mali.
_____	Timbuktu became known for study in subjects such as math, science, and religion.
_____	Some readers may argue that protected trade mattered more because safe routes increased merchants, goods, and wealth.

Part 4: Understand Others

Write one fair sentence that states a different reasonable viewpoint.

My first sentence

Part 5: Answer the Other Viewpoint

Reason: Supporting learning had the greater long-term impact on Mali. Copy one sentence from the passage that proves this reason. Then explain in one sentence why it proves the reason.

The sentence I copied from the passage

Why it proves the reason

Part 6: Check My Argument

Reread your argument. Star the sentence that answers the other viewpoint with reasoning or evidence.

My paragraph



Words I Need

Tier 1, everyday words



Say each word. Then use one word to explain how you would understand another viewpoint fairly.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
listen	LIS-uhn	to pay attention to what another person says	I listen for _____.
hear	HEER	to receive and understand spoken words	I heard the viewpoint say _____.
fair	FAIR	treating an idea honestly and without twisting it	This sentence is fair because _____.
side	SYDE	one position in a disagreement	Another side may say _____.
point	POYNT	one idea used to explain a position	The point I must answer is _____.
answer	AN-ser	to respond directly	I answer the point by _____.
agree	uh-GREE	to share or accept an idea	I can agree that _____ while still claiming _____.
choose	CHOOZ	to select after thinking	I choose this rebuttal because _____.
change	CHAYNJ	to make something different	I may change my claim by _____.
strong	STRAWNG	able to support a position well	This response is strong because _____.

Use one Tier 1 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 2, academic words

These academic words help you state another viewpoint fairly and answer it with reasoning and evidence.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
viewpoint	VYOO-poynt	the way a person sees or understands an issue	One viewpoint is _____.
counterpoint	KOWN-ter-poynt	a different idea that challenges part of an argument	A counterpoint to my claim is _____.
understanding	un-der-STAN-ding	accurately recognizing what another viewpoint is saying	I show understanding when _____.
rebuttal	ri-BUT-uhl	a reasoned response to another viewpoint	My rebuttal answers _____.
acknowledge	ak-NOL-ij	to recognize an idea fairly before responding	I acknowledge the point by _____.
accurate	AK-yuh-rut	correct and faithful to the text or viewpoint	My sentence is accurate because _____.
respectful	ri-SPEKT-fuhl	responding to ideas without insulting or misrepresenting people	I sound respectful when _____.
refine	ri-FYNE	to make a claim more precise after considering another idea	I can refine my claim by _____.
perspective	per-SPEK-tiv	a particular way of viewing an event or issue	From this perspective, _____.
credibility	kred-uh-BIL-uh-tee	the quality of being believable or trustworthy	Fairness builds credibility because _____.

Use one Tier 2 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 3, passage words

These words come from our passages about The Wealth of Mansa Musa and Four Regions, One Big Adventure.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
Understanding Others	un-der-STAN-ding UTH-erz	the CREATURES move that states another viewpoint accurately, respectfully, and specifically	My U sentence fairly says _____.
evidence-based response	EV-uh-duhns bayst ri-SPONS	a response supported by text evidence or specific reasoning	My evidence-based response uses _____.
fair viewpoint frame	FAIR VYOO-poynt FRAYM	an opening such as "Some readers may argue..." that introduces another view respectfully	My fair viewpoint frame is _____.
rebuttal frame	ri-BUT-uhl FRAYM	wording that respectfully begins the answer to another view	I begin my rebuttal with _____.
central claim	SEN-truhl KLAYM	the main position the writer defends	My rebuttal connects to the central claim by _____.
straw-man response	STRAW man ri-SPONS	an unfair response to a weakened or twisted version of another view	I avoid a straw-man response by _____.
intellectual fairness	in-tuh-LEK-choo-uhl FAIR-nis	representing an idea accurately before answering it	Intellectual fairness requires _____.
reasoning	REE-zuh-ning	thinking that explains how evidence supports a position	My reasoning shows _____.
claim refinement	KLAYM ri-FYNE-muhnt	making a claim more precise after considering another viewpoint	Claim refinement helps when _____.
CREATURES roadmap	KREE-churz ROHD-map	the nine-part memory architecture for a complete argumentative response	The CREATURES roadmap helps me _____.

Use one Tier 3 word in a sentence



My Strategy Tools

The CREATURES Argumentative-Writing Roadmap



Module 3 spirals C, R, E, A, and T while adding U: Understanding Others and R: Rebuttal.

C: CLAIM
Set direction

R: REASON
Give a point

E: EVIDENCE
Prove it

**U: UNDERSTANDING
OTHERS**
State the other view fairly

R: REBUTTAL answers the exact point and connects back to C

C sets direction. R gives a point. E proves it. U states the other view fairly. The second R answers that exact point and connects back to C.

U + R Deep Focus

Mark	What it means
U: Understanding Others	Stating another viewpoint accurately, respectfully, and specifically.
R: Rebuttal	Responding to that exact viewpoint with reasoning and evidence that defends or refines the claim.
Viewpoint and Rebuttal Frames	Some readers may argue that...; Another reasonable view is...; However, the stronger evidence shows...; That point matters, but...

A rebuttal answers reasoning with reasoning. Respect the idea; do not attack the person.

How U and R strengthen my argument

WHY and HOW

WHY	HOW
-----	-----

Both can deepen U and strengthen R, but neither replaces the central C: Claim. Each one answers a different job in the prompt.

How I Say the Standard!

4.11B(iii):

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

4.12C(ii):

compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using craft

Check My Writing

- ☐ I represent another viewpoint accurately and respectfully.
- ☐ I answer the actual point, not a weaker version.
- ☐ My rebuttal stays respectful and stays on the point.
- ☐ I keep my claim clear or make it more precise.
- ☐ I edit reflexive pronouns and the assigned capitalization categories.

A WHY or HOW explanation I can add

Five Thinking Levels

Each level shows how Understanding Others and Rebuttal grow from naming another view to refining a claim after considering it.

Thinking Stage	Symbol	U: Understanding Others and R: Rebuttal Work
Foundational	○	Names another view vaguely or dismissively.
Emergent	◻	States a fair view but gives a general response.
Visible	▽	Represents another viewpoint accurately and responds to the actual point.
Independent	△	Uses respectful wording plus reasoning or evidence to defend the claim.
Reflective	◊	Acknowledges a valid point and refines the claim when needed.

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

The U + R level I can show

Five Thinking Levels

Use the same levels to check how fairly the viewpoint is represented and how directly the rebuttal answers it.

Thinking Stage	Symbol	U: Understanding Others and R: Rebuttal Work
Foundational	○	Names another view vaguely or dismissively.
Emergent	◻	States a fair view but gives a general response.
Visible	▽	Represents another viewpoint accurately and responds to the actual point.
Independent	△	Uses respectful wording plus reasoning or evidence to defend the claim.
Reflective	◊	Acknowledges a valid point and refines the claim when needed.

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.	Argue whether protecting trade or supporting learning had the greater long-term impact on Mali.
HOW	Analyze how parts work together or how something happens.	Argue whether natural resources have a greater impact than climate on work opportunities across Texas.

WHY explains the reason behind a viewpoint. HOW explains how evidence supports a rebuttal. Both can deepen U and strengthen R, but neither replaces the central C: Claim.

The U + R level I want to reach



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

Mansa Musa made choices about trade and learning that helped Mali grow. Across Texas, climate and natural resources connect to the work people do in each region.

Background I Need

The Wealth of Mansa Musa presents evidence about protected trade routes, Timbuktu as a center of learning, Mali's reputation, and the choices that helped the kingdom grow. Four Regions, One Big Adventure presents evidence about landforms, climate, natural resources, vegetation, and the work people do in each region of Texas.

Words I dotted while reading

The Wealth of Mansa Musa

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

My
marks

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

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

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

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

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Wealth of Mansa Musa (continued)

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

My
marks

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

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

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

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Wealth of Mansa Musa (continued)

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

My
marks

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

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

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

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Wealth of Mansa Musa (continued)

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

My
marks

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

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

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

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Wealth of Mansa Musa (continued)

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

My
marks

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

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

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

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Four Regions, One Big Adventure

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

My
marks

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

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

3 "We are," his dad replied. "It will take some time, but by the end of the trip you'll understand why each region is unique."

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

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

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

7 "There aren't many trees," Xavier noticed.

8 "That's because this region is very dry," his mom explained. "Plants must be able to survive with very little rainfall."

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

10 "It almost feels like another state," he said.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Four Regions, One Big Adventure (continued)

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

My
marks

11 His dad smiled. "That's one reason learning about regions is important. Even though this is all Texas, the land can look very different."

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

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

14 "This must be where people raise cattle," he said.

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

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

17 "I've never seen so many cows," Xavier laughed.

18 His sister pointed toward a field filled with crops. "Look! Farmers grow food here too."

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

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

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Four Regions, One Big Adventure (continued)

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

My
marks

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

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

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

24 Later, they reached the North Central Plains.

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

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

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

28 “This feels different already,” Xavier said.

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

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

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Four Regions, One Big Adventure (continued)

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

My
marks

31 "We've seen cattle in more than one region," he said.

32 "That's true," his dad replied. "Some jobs can be found in more than one region, but the land and climate are still different."

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

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

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

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

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

38 "This place has a little bit of everything," Xavier said.

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

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

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Four Regions, One Big Adventure (continued)

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

My
marks

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Annotate: The Wealth of Mansa Musa

Evidence about time, reactions, actions, character, key knowledge, and setting that could support more than one reasonable position about Mansa Musa.

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: The Wealth of Mansa Musa (continued)

Evidence about time, reactions, actions, character, key knowledge, and setting that could support more than one reasonable position about Mansa Musa.

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

Would the other side agree this represents the view fairly?

My thinking

My Prompt Marking Notes

An argumentative prompt asks you to take a defensible position. Mark the topic, task, and the two choices.

Shape	Word	Question I ask myself
-------	------	-----------------------

Underline the task. Circle the topic. Find the two choices the prompt asks you to compare.

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

My three marks in words

[illegible]

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 1: Gather + Reveal



I hear whether a viewpoint is represented fairly

Our Question for Today

Where does an argument help me understand another viewpoint?

1. Gather: Two Voices, One Evidence Check

Listen to each pair. Show FAIR or UNFAIR for the viewpoint, then show R, E, or TRANSITION for the response that is missing or weak.

The fair or unfair viewpoint and how I know

2. Reveal: Fair U and Strong R

U states another viewpoint accurately and respectfully. R answers that exact point with reasoning and evidence.

- ☐ U: Understanding Others, state the other view fairly.
- ☐ R: Rebuttal, answer the exact point.
- ☐ A fair U uses a frame such as "Some readers may argue...".
- ☐ A strong R respects the idea and answers with evidence.
- ☐ A rebuttal is not an insult and not a repeated claim.

3. Fresh Recall

STOP & THINK

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

My explanation

Day 1: Reveal, continued

4. Model the U + R Pair

Underline the task. Circle the topic. Find the two choices the prompt asks you to compare.

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

Part	The model shows
C: Claim	Protecting trade had the greater impact on Mali.
U: Understanding Others	Some readers may argue that supporting learning mattered more because Timbuktu became known as a center of study.
R: Rebuttal	That point is reasonable; however, protected trade affected the whole kingdom by bringing more merchants and goods into Mali.
T: Thinking	This response acknowledges the value of learning while explaining why the evidence for protected trade better matches the claim about overall impact.

5. Listen and Label

Label each sentence C, U, R, or T.

Sentence	My label
Natural resources have a greater impact than climate on work opportunities across Texas.	
Another reasonable view is that climate matters most because temperature and rainfall affect vegetation and farming.	
Climate clearly matters; however, the passage repeatedly connects specific resources to specific work, including mining, oil, fishing, farming, and city-based jobs.	
The rebuttal accepts the climate connection but uses a wider range of job evidence to defend the original claim.	

How R is different from repeating the claim

Day 1: Reveal, continued

6. U + R Deep Focus

U is where the writer shows another viewpoint fairly. R is where the writer answers that exact point with reasoning or evidence.

7. Fill In What You Hear

Sentence	My word
A _____ is a viewpoint stated accurately and respectfully.	
A _____ answers another viewpoint with reasoning and evidence.	
A fair _____ frame begins with "Some readers may argue that..."	
A respectful _____ frame begins with "However..." or "That point matters, but..."	
When a viewpoint is fair, I may _____ my claim to make it more precise.	

Ⓢ STOP & THINK

Why is repeating the claim not the same as a rebuttal?

My answer

STUDENT WORKBOOK



PERSPECTIVE SWITCHBOARD

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards (sheet 1 of 2)

Cut on the dotted lines. Build a chain that states a fair viewpoint, then answers it with a respectful evidence-based rebuttal. Store all cards in Pocket Practice.

U: UNDERSTANDING OTHERS	R: REBUTTAL
VIEWPOINT AND REBUTTAL FRAMES	Supporting learning had the greater long-term impact because knowledge could continue helping future generations.
Protecting trade had the greater impact because safe routes increased merchants, goods, and wealth.	Mansa Musa's pilgrimage mattered most because it increased Mali's reputation beyond Africa.

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 the kind of move. Keep the cards in Pocket Practice when you finish.

R: REBUTTAL responding to that exact viewpoint with reasoning and evidence that defends or refines the claim. A rebuttal answers reasoning with reasoning.	U: UNDERSTANDING OTHERS the CREATURES move that states another viewpoint accurately, respectfully, and specifically before responding.
U: Understanding Others	VIEWPOINT AND REBUTTAL FRAMES Some readers may argue that...; Another reasonable view is...; A reader could point out that...; However, the stronger evidence shows...; That point matters, but...; Even though..., the passage more strongly supports...
E: Evidence	C: Claim

STUDENT WORKBOOK



PERSPECTIVE SWITCHBOARD

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards (sheet 2 of 2)

Cut on the dotted lines. Build a chain that states a fair viewpoint, then answers it with a respectful evidence-based rebuttal. Store all cards in Pocket Practice.

Climate has the greater influence because rainfall and temperature affect plants, farming, and daily conditions.

Natural resources have the greater influence because resources create specific jobs and economic opportunities.

Location has the greater influence in the Coastal Plains because access to water and cities supports many kinds of 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 the kind of move. Keep the cards in Pocket Practice when you finish.

R: Rebuttal

U: Understanding Others

T: Thinking

Day 2: Attempt

Our Question for Today: How do I build a fair viewpoint and an evidence-based rebuttal?

1. Play the Perspective Switchboard

- Draw a claim card.
- Draw two possible viewpoint cards.
- Choose the fairest, most accurate viewpoint.
- Build a rebuttal using one piece of text evidence.
- Partner check: "Would the other side agree this represents the view fairly?"
- Switch roles so both partners practice accurate listening and response.
- Check each pair against the four fairness rules.
- Put every card back in Pocket Practice.

Round	1	2	3	4	5
My partner					
My point					

2. Talk About It

Explain why the fairest viewpoint was the one you chose.

My explanation

3. Mark the Additional Prompt

Underline the task. Circle the topic. Find the two choices the prompt asks you to compare.

Argue whether natural resources have a greater impact than climate on work opportunities across Texas.

My fair U and evidence-based R

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 3: Discuss + Use

I explain why a fair viewpoint makes a rebuttal stronger



Our Question for Today
What makes a viewpoint representation fair?

1. Discuss U + R
Explain your reasoning, not just your answer.

Question	My thinking
What makes a viewpoint representation fair?	
Why can acknowledging a good point make my own argument stronger?	
What is the difference between rebutting an idea and attacking a person?	
When might considering another view cause a writer to refine the claim?	

My discussion notes

2. My Personal Connection

Think of a time when one person did not listen before answering. Explain how understanding the other view first could have changed the response.

My connection and what I learned

Explain why a rebuttal must answer the actual point, not a weaker version.

My explanation

Explain why protected trade had a broad effect on Mali.

My cause and effect explanation



? STOP & THINK

Understanding comes before responding. What happens to an argument when the viewpoint is unfair?

My answer

3. Use: Write a U + R Response

Work alone. Take a defensible position. Build one reason, evidence, and thinking chain. Write one accurate fair viewpoint sentence. Respond with a respectful rebuttal frame and evidence.

1 Underline the task. Circle the topic. Find the two choices the prompt asks you to compare.

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

C, R, E, U, or rebuttal: _____

2 Underline the task. Circle the topic. Find the two choices the prompt asks you to compare.

Argue whether natural resources have a greater impact than climate on work opportunities across Texas.

C, R, E, U, or rebuttal: _____

How does my rebuttal answer the exact point?



U + R Practice, continued

Write another fair viewpoint and a respectful rebuttal. Rearrange the order if the U or R interrupts the argument.

- 3 Underline the task. Circle the topic. Find the two choices the prompt asks you to compare.

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

C, R, E, U, or rebuttal: _____

- 4 Underline the task. Circle the topic. Find the two choices the prompt asks you to compare.

Argue whether natural resources have a greater impact than climate on work opportunities across Texas.

C, R, E, U, or rebuttal: _____

Embedded Check

Does my rebuttal answer the exact point with reasoning or evidence?

- ☐ My viewpoint is accurate, respectful, and specific.
- ☐ My rebuttal answers the actual point, not a weaker version.
- ☐ I used reasoning or evidence in the rebuttal.
- ☐ My central claim stays clear or becomes more precise.

What makes my rebuttal strongest?

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 4: Award + Target



I make my fairness visible

Our Question for Today

Which viewpoint sentence represents another view most accurately, and what U or R move needs work?

1. Award Your Fairness

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

My Strongest U + R Pair

Claim, Reason, Evidence, Viewpoint, Rebuttal

My rebuttal became stronger when I...

2. Target U + R

Choose one target for next time.

- ☐ More accurate viewpoint.
- ☐ More respectful wording.
- ☐ Stronger rebuttal evidence.
- ☐ A clearer response to the actual point.
- ☐ A willingness to refine the claim.

My next response will be fairer and stronger if I...

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 5: Explain/Educate



I teach why Understanding Others comes before Rebuttal

Our Question for Today

How can I teach why understanding the other view comes before responding?

1. Explain to Others

Teach a partner one fair viewpoint sentence and one respectful evidence-based rebuttal. Explain why a rebuttal is not an insult or a repeated claim.

- U states another viewpoint by _____.
- R answers the exact point by _____.
- A fair viewpoint sounds respectful because _____.
- A strong rebuttal uses reasoning or evidence by _____.
- Understanding another view can help me refine _____.

My partner taught me...

2. Educate: Say the U + R Moves

Say each move and its job together.

U: Understanding Others, state the other view fairly.

R: Rebuttal, answer that exact point.

C: Claim, keep the direction.

R: Reason and E: Evidence, prove it.

T: Thinking, explain the proof.

One part of U or R I can explain well

3. Transfer: Day 5 Exit Ticket

Complete each part on your own.

Underline the task. Circle the topic. Find the two choices the prompt asks you to compare.

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

My defensible claim

One R/E/T chain, a fair U viewpoint, and a respectful R rebuttal

Check My Exit Ticket

- ☐ My viewpoint is accurate, respectful, and specific.
- ☐ My rebuttal answers the actual point, not a weaker version.
- ☐ I used reasoning or evidence in the rebuttal.
- ☐ My central claim stays clear or becomes more precise.

STOP & THINK

A rebuttal is stronger when it answers the real viewpoint. When U and R are strong, the reader sees that the writer listened before responding.

My final Day 5 thought



Write More

Plan, draft, revise, edit, and share



My Writing Assignment

Write a short response to this prompt:

Underline the task. Circle the topic. Find the two choices the prompt asks you to compare.

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

My Plan

- Take a defensible position.
- Build one strong reason, evidence, and thinking chain.
- Write one accurate fair viewpoint sentence.
- Respond with a respectful rebuttal frame such as "However..." or "That point is reasonable; however..."
- Use evidence or specific reasoning in the rebuttal.
- Read the U sentence as if you held that viewpoint and revise if it sounds unfair.

One fair viewpoint and the exact point it makes

The rebuttal that answers the point most directly is...

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.
- ☐ Mansa Musa, Mali, Timbuktu, Texas, and the Sahara Desert begin with capital letters.
- ☐ Viewpoint, counterpoint, rebuttal, claim, and evidence 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
Claim	My claim takes a defensible position.	
Viewpoint	My U sentence represents another view accurately and respectfully.	
Rebuttal	My R sentence answers the exact point with reasoning or evidence.	
Refinement	My claim stays clear or becomes more precise.	

Study the Samples

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

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

Low

Some people think learning is dumb.

What Needs Improvement: It misrepresents the viewpoint and uses dismissive wording. It does not explain the real reason that could support learning.

Medium

Some people think learning was better. They are wrong.

What Needs Improvement: The viewpoint is vague, and the rebuttal neither answers the point respectfully nor uses reasoning or evidence.

High

Some readers may argue that supporting learning had the greater long-term impact because Timbuktu became a respected center of study. That point is reasonable; however, protected trade affected the kingdom more broadly by bringing more merchants, goods, and wealth into Mali.

The viewpoint is accurate and specific, the response is respectful, and the rebuttal answers the actual point with passage evidence while keeping the original claim clear.

What improves from Low to High?



Look Back & Look Forward

I own my learning



My Progress Tracker

I can...	Not yet	Growing	Got it
Represent another viewpoint accurately, respectfully, and specifically.	☐	☐	☐
Use a fair frame such as "Some readers may argue...".	☐	☐	☐
Answer the exact point instead of a weaker version.	☐	☐	☐
Use reasoning or evidence in the rebuttal.	☐	☐	☐
Tell a fair representation from a straw-man response.	☐	☐	☐
Explain when another viewpoint helps refine the claim.	☐	☐	☐
Read the U sentence as if I held that viewpoint and revise if it sounds unfair.	☐	☐	☐
Keep my central claim clear or make it more precise.	☐	☐	☐

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

The answer

U: Understanding Others states another viewpoint accurately, respectfully, and specifically. R: Rebuttal answers that exact point with reasoning and evidence that defends or refines the claim. When the writer represents the other view fairly, the rebuttal becomes more credible and respectful, and the writer may even refine the original claim.

My Final Thinking (in my own words)

What Changed in My Thinking?

At first I thought...

Now I think...

Try It Another Way

Use the other passage. Write one fair viewpoint sentence and one evidence-based rebuttal that answers the exact point. Underline the words that show respect for the other view.

My new prompt

Take It Further! Refine the Claim

Write a fair viewpoint and a strong rebuttal, then test your claim against it: Take a claim and write one fair viewpoint plus one evidence-based rebuttal. Then decide whether the other viewpoint reveals a weakness in the claim.

- Write a fair viewpoint sentence.
- Write an evidence-based rebuttal.
- Decide whether the viewpoint reveals a weakness.
- Revise the claim if needed.
- Explain why refinement makes the argument stronger.
- Keep the same position if it still holds.
- Explain one way the other view improved your argument.

My plan for refining the claim

My Refined Claim

Write one fair viewpoint sentence, one evidence-based rebuttal, and your refined claim.

At-Home Connection

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

Fair or Unfair?

One person reads a viewpoint sentence. The other says whether the other side would agree it is fair, and explains why.

Ask: Would the other side agree this represents the view accurately?

Family member signature: _____

Understand, Then Answer

State a fair viewpoint, then answer it with a respectful rebuttal that uses reasoning or evidence.

Ask: How is a rebuttal different from repeating the claim?

Family member signature: _____

Refine the Claim

Explain whether another viewpoint reveals a weakness in a claim, and revise the claim if needed.

Ask: Does refining the claim make the argument stronger?

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 Fair Rebuttal

I represented the other view fairly and answered it with evidence.

A note to my future writer self

My Proud Moment This Week

THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC.

Student Interactive Workbook

Grade 4

Cluster 4 - Module 4

Ending, Significance, and the Full
CREATURES ECR



Name: _____



The Writing Academy®, LLC

Grade 4 • Cluster 4 • Module 4

© The Writing Academy®, LLC

All rights reserved. This student interactive workbook is provided for classroom instructional use. No part may be reproduced for resale or distribution outside the purchasing campus without written permission.

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

Ending, Significance, and the Full CREATURES ECR



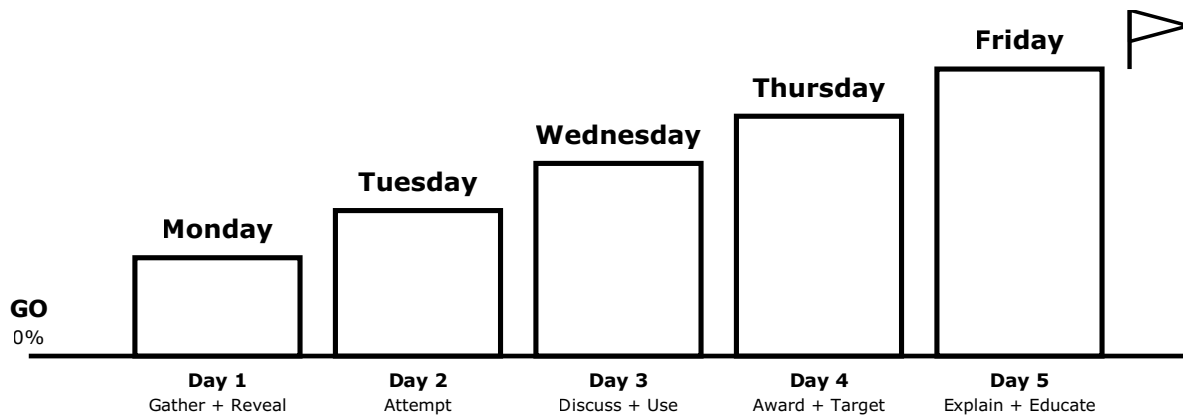
Why This Matters to Me

I complete the argumentative roadmap by learning E: Ending and S: Significance. The Ending brings my reasoning together. Significance is the Bluebird Moment, the final big-picture idea that explains why my argument matters beyond the paper. I then assemble a complete argumentative ECR with all nine CREATURES moves.

Essential Question

How do Ending and Significance complete a CREATURES argument and leave the reader with a meaningful Bluebird Moment?

My Week Tracker



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

My First Thinking

I Can

- I can write a purposeful ending, explain significance beyond the paper, and use the full CREATURES framework to produce a complete argumentative response.
- I can reinforce my central claim and synthesize my strongest reasoning in E: Ending.
- I can write S: Significance as a Bluebird Moment that grows from the argument and explains why it matters beyond the paper.
- I can use all nine CREATURES moves to plan and produce a coherent argumentative ECR.

I Will

- I will read closely, speak about my thinking, use evidence accurately, and explain how each CREATURES move strengthens an argumentative response.
- I will check that my Ending closes the case without copying the claim or adding a new reason.
- I will connect my Significance sentence to the evidence and reasoning before lifting the idea into a larger world.
- I will revise and edit a full CREATURES response for coherence, purposeful structure, and conventions.

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 E: Ending and S: Significance complete a CREATURES argument, then how to assemble a full argumentative ECR. Students learn how the Ending reinforces the claim and how the Significance sentence, the Bluebird Moment, connects the argument to a larger meaning.	The Wealth of Mansa Musa and Four Regions, One Big Adventure at Very High Stamina. Both passages appear a second time with the TRACKS evidence already highlighted for close study.	A complete argumentative ECR that ends with a purposeful conclusion and a Bluebird Moment. The response plans all nine CREATURES moves before drafting the final Ending and Significance sentences.

Where We Are Going

This week I complete the CREATURES roadmap. I write a purposeful Ending, create a meaningful Bluebird Moment, and assemble a coherent full CREATURES ECR. I use the full CREATURES roadmap, C, R, E, A, T, U, R, E, and S, to plan, draft, revise, and edit one complete argumentative response.

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

- ☐ My Ending reinforces the claim and synthesizes the strongest reasoning.
- ☐ My Significance sentence is a meaningful Bluebird Moment rooted in the argument.
- ☐ My planning shows C, R, E, A, T, U, R, E, and S, with T always meaning Thinking.
- ☐ My complete response is coherent, evidence-based, and purposeful.

Check Myself

- ☐ My Ending reinforces the claim and synthesizes the strongest reasoning without copying the introduction word for word.
- ☐ My Significance sentence is a meaningful Bluebird Moment that grows from the evidence and reasoning I already built.
- ☐ My planning shows all nine CREATURES moves, C, R, E, A, T, U, R, E, and S, with T always meaning Thinking.
- ☐ My complete response is coherent, evidence-based, purposeful, and edited for the assigned Cluster 4 conventions.

How I Will Show What I Know

I will show what I know with a full CREATURES plan, an Ending that reinforces my claim, a Significance Bluebird Moment, and the Day 5 exit ticket. I will also explain how my Ending is different from simply repeating my claim, and how my Bluebird Moment grows from the evidence I gathered.

My GRADUATE Learning Path

Stage	Day	What I do
Gather	Day 1	I hear whether a sentence closes this paper's case as E: Ending or lifts its meaning beyond the paper as S: Significance, and I explain the exact clue in the sentence that proves my label is correct. We name the Bluebird Moment out loud together as a class. I say the clue that proves my label out loud before I write my answer.
Reveal	Day 1	I learn the full CREATURES roadmap in order: C, R, E, A, T, U, R, E, and S, and I study a model Ending and Significance pair built from both the Mansa Musa passage and the Texas Regions passage. We keep the CREATURES reference card open the whole time. I picture the whole roadmap as one path from claim to Bluebird Moment.
Attempt	Day 2	I work with my team to build the Full CREATURES Case for the Mali prompt, choosing a defensible claim, two R/E/T chains, a fair understanding-others viewpoint, a rebuttal, a purposeful Ending, and a Significance sentence. Every team member is responsible for at least one CREATURES letter. I check that every letter our team used has a real job in the argument. We also decide together which CREATURES letter needs the most practice next.
Discuss	Day 3	I discuss how understanding another viewpoint and answering it changed or strengthened our claim, and I explain in my own words how an Ending is different from a Significance sentence. We compare our reasoning chains with a partner team before moving on. I listen for the exact moment the argument shifts from closing the case to lifting its meaning.
Use	Day 3	I plan and write an independent full CREATURES ECR for the Texas Regions prompt on my own, finishing with a purposeful Ending that reinforces my claim and a source-rooted Significance Bluebird Moment. We revise once with a partner before turning in the final draft. I check my plan against the Final CREATURES Rubric before I begin drafting. I check my final draft against the Final CREATURES Rubric one more time before I turn it in.
Award	Day 4	I star my strongest Bluebird Moment sentence and celebrate the part of my argument that sounds most like a real writer, explaining exactly why that part works so well. We record our target on the tracker page for next week. I explain my reasoning out loud so a partner can follow my thinking.
Target	Day 4	I choose one CREATURES target, such as claim clarity, reasoning coherence, or a stronger ending, and I explain how I will strengthen that target the next time I write. We repeat the target out loud so it becomes a clear next step. I write my target in one full sentence so I can check it again later. I say my target sentence twice so it becomes easy to remember.
Explain	Day 5	I teach a partner the whole CREATURES roadmap from C all the way through S, and I explain why the final Significance sentence is called the Bluebird Moment. We finish by writing our favorite CREATURES letter on the board. I ask my partner one question about the part they found hardest to build. I remind my partner that the last four letters, U, R, E, and S, always come last in the roadmap.

Say It Together!

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

4.11B(iii):

TEKS says: (11)(B)(iii) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including a conclusion.

How I say it: I can organize my draft with purposeful structure that includes a conclusion.

4.12C(i):

TEKS says: (12)(C)(i) compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using genre characteristics.

How I say it: I can compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using genre characteristics.

Call and Response

Read this together as a class before we start.

Teacher asks: "How is an Ending different from a Significance sentence?"

Class answers: "The Ending closes the case. Significance is the Bluebird Moment!"

One TEKS I want to practice today



Get Ready

Before I begin



Before We Begin: What Do I Already Know?

Reread both passages if you need to. Keep your CREATURES reference card nearby.

A connection I can make

Remember It!

- ☐ R, E, and T can repeat across body paragraphs.
- ☐ A is the coherence of the whole case, not one extra sentence.
- ☐ An Ending reinforces the claim; it does not repeat it word for word.
- ☐ A Bluebird Moment must grow from the evidence nest.

One idea I remember

Ready Check

- ☐ Does my Ending reinforce the claim and synthesize the strongest reasoning?
- ☐ Does my Significance sentence explain why the issue matters beyond the paper?

Watch Out! Common Mix-Up

Do not confuse repeating the claim with reinforcing it, and do not let Significance become an unrelated inspirational quote.

Where This Fits in My Writing

A strong full CREATURES ECR closes purposefully with E: Ending and lifts its meaning with S: Significance, the Bluebird Moment.

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 both passages as often as you want.

Part 1: Take a Position

Read the prompt. Choose the position you will defend, then write your claim in one sentence.

Argue whether protecting trade or supporting learning created the more important legacy for Mali.

Part 2: Order the Argument

Number the sentences 1 to 4 so they build a complete argument that ends with a purposeful Ending.

My thesis (central idea)

Part 3: Reason and Evidence

Write one reason that supports your claim. Copy the evidence that proves it.

Number	Sentence
_____	This supports the claim because knowledge can be shared and passed on.
_____	Supporting learning created the more important legacy for Mali.
_____	Timbuktu became known for study in subjects such as math, science, and religion.
_____	Overall, support for learning created the more important legacy because it strengthened Timbuktu's reputation and helped knowledge continue across generations.

Part 4: Ending

Write one sentence that reinforces your claim and synthesizes your strongest reasoning.

My first sentence

Part 5: Relevant Details and Evidence

Reason: Supporting learning created the more important legacy for Mali. Copy one sentence from the passage that proves this reason. Then explain in one sentence why it proves the reason.

My Ending sentence

Why it reinforces the claim instead of repeating it word for word

Part 6: Significance (Bluebird Moment)

Reread your Ending. Then write one sentence that explains why the issue matters beyond this paper.

My paragraph



Words I Need

Tier 1, everyday words



Say each word. Then use one word to explain how you would close or lift an argument.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
end	END	the final part	At the end, I _____.
matter	MAT-er	to be important	This matters because _____.
close	KLOHZ	to bring something to an end	I close the case by _____.
choice	CHOYS	an act of deciding	This choice affects _____.
lesson	LES-uhn	an idea learned from experience	The larger lesson is _____.
world	WURLD	people and places beyond one paper	This idea reaches the world by _____.
strong	STRONG	effective or well supported	My strongest reasoning is _____.
fair	FAIR	accurate and respectful	The other viewpoint is fair because _____.
whole	HOHL	all parts considered together	The whole argument shows _____.
grow	GROH	to develop or become greater	My Bluebird Moment grows from _____.

Use one Tier 1 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 2, academic words

These academic words help you reinforce a claim in the Ending and explain the larger meaning in Significance.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
ending	EN-ding	the purposeful conclusion that reinforces the claim	My ending reinforces _____.
synthesize	SIN-thuh-syze	combine the most important ideas into a new, concise understanding	I synthesize my reasoning by _____.
significance	sig-NIF-uh-kuhns	the larger importance of an issue, idea, or position	The significance of this issue is _____.
Bluebird Moment	BLOO-burd MOH-muhnt	the final big-picture idea that explains why the argument matters beyond the paper	My Bluebird Moment shows _____.
reinforce	ree-in-FORS	strengthen an idea by returning to it with added understanding	I reinforce my claim by _____.
conclusion	kuhn-KLOO-zhuhn	the final section that closes the response	My conclusion states _____.
legacy	LEG-uh-see	a lasting effect left by a person, choice, or community	One legacy of this choice is _____.
impact	IM-pakt	a strong effect or influence	The impact of this choice is _____.
community	kuh-MYOO-nih-tee	a group of people connected by place, interest, or shared life	This matters to my community because _____.
responsibility	ri-spon-suh-BIL-uh-tee	the duty to make thoughtful choices and consider consequences	My responsibility is to _____.

Use one Tier 2 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 3, passage words

These words come from our passages about The Wealth of Mansa Musa and Four Regions, One Big Adventure.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
CREATURES	KREE-churz	the nine-move roadmap for a complete argumentative response	CREATURES helps me _____.
central claim	SEN-truhl KLAYM	the defensible position at the center of an argument	My central claim is _____.
line of argument	LINE uhv AR-gyuh-muhnt	the connected reasoning that makes the whole case coherent	The line of argument moves from _____ to _____.
evidence-based	EV-uh-duhns BAYST	supported with proof from the text	My response is evidence-based because _____.
alternate viewpoint	AWL-ter-nit VYOO-point	another reasonable way to see the issue	The alternate viewpoint is _____.
rebuttal	ree-BUT-uhl	a reasoned response to another viewpoint	My rebuttal answers _____.
purposeful ending	PUR-puhs-fuhl EN-ding	a conclusion that reinforces and synthesizes	My purposeful ending _____.
significance statement	sig-NIF-uh-kuhns STAYT-muhnt	the sentence that explains why the issue matters beyond the paper	My significance statement shows _____.
Bluebird Moment	BLOO-burd MOH-muhnt	the final idea that lifts meaning beyond the paper	My Bluebird Moment leaves the reader with _____.
full ECR	FULL ee-see-AR	a complete extended constructed response	My full ECR includes _____.

Use one Tier 3 word in a sentence

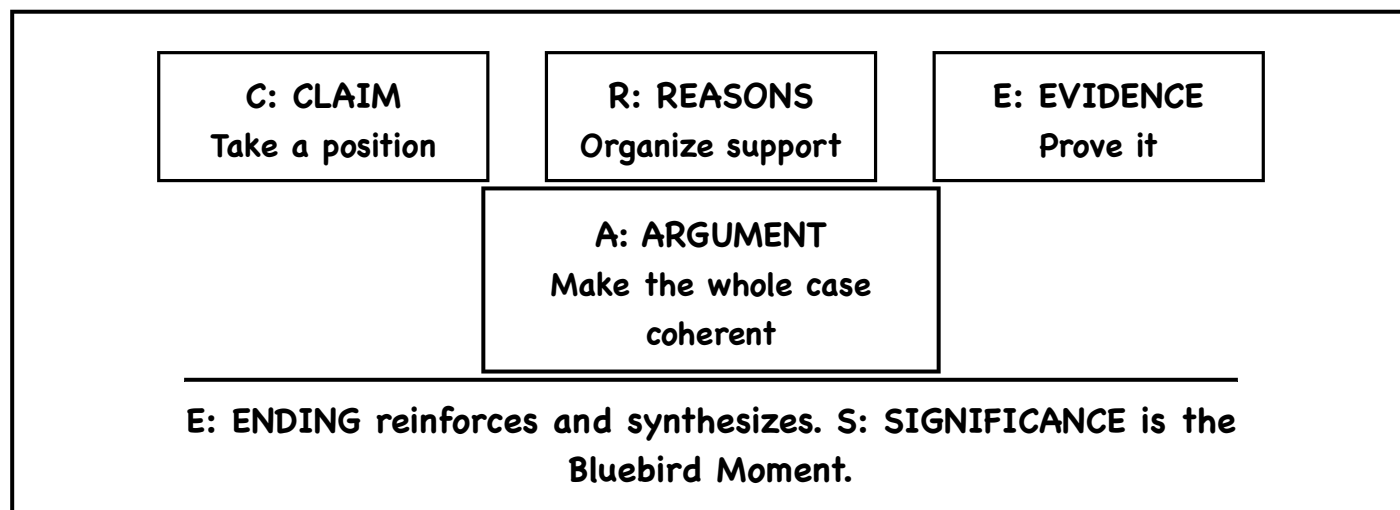


My Strategy Tools

The CREATURES Argumentative-Writing Roadmap



Module 4 completes CREATURES with E: Ending and S: Significance, then assembles the full argumentative ECR.



C takes a position. **R**, **E**, and **T** build and prove the case. **A** is the coherence of the whole case. **U** and **R** represent and answer another view. **E**: Ending closes the case. **S**: Significance lifts the idea beyond the paper.

E + S Deep Focus

Mark	What it means
E: Ending	Reinforcing the claim and synthesizing the strongest reasoning to close the response purposefully.
S: Significance	Explaining why the issue or position matters beyond this paper, the Bluebird Moment.
Ending and Significance Frames	Overall, ...; In the end, ...; This matters beyond the paper because ...; Communities can learn ...

An Ending sounds familiar but more mature because the body has supplied reasoning. A Bluebird Moment flies beyond the paper, but it still leaves from the evidence nest.

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.

WHY and HOW

WHY	HOW
explains the reason behind a claim.	explains how evidence supports an Ending.

Both can strengthen S, but neither replaces the central C: Claim.

How I Say the Standard!

4.11B(iii):

TEKS says: (11)(B)(iii) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including a conclusion.

How I say it: I can organize my draft with purposeful structure that includes a conclusion.

4.12C(i):

TEKS says: (12)(C)(i) compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using genre characteristics.

How I say it: I can compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using genre characteristics.

Check My Writing

- ☐ My Ending reinforces the claim and synthesizes the strongest reasoning.
- ☐ My Significance sentence is a meaningful Bluebird Moment rooted in the argument.
- ☐ I edit the assigned Cluster 4 conventions.

A WHY or HOW explanation I can add

Five Thinking Levels: E + S

Each level shows how Ending and Significance grow from repeating a claim to building a complete, reflective full CREATURES case.

Level	Symbol	Color	Thinking Stage	E + S Evidence
Level 1	○	Red	Foundational	Names Ending and Significance but repeats the claim or adds an unrelated idea.
Level 2	□	Orange	Emergent	Closes the response and offers a general statement of importance.
Level 3	▽	Yellow	Visible	Reinforces and synthesizes, then connects significance to the developed argument.
Level 4	△	Green	Independent	Builds a coherent full CREATURES response with a meaningful Bluebird Moment.
Level 5	◇	Blue	Reflective	Compares opposite complete cases and evaluates evidence, reasoning, rebuttal, and significance.

The levels move from Red Foundational thinking to Blue Reflective thinking.

The E + S level I can show

Five Thinking Levels: E + S

Use the same levels to check how purposefully the Ending closes the case and how clearly the Significance sentence grows from the evidence.

Level	Symbol	Color	Thinking Stage	E + S Evidence
Level 1	○	Red	Foundational	Names Ending and Significance but repeats the claim or adds an unrelated idea.
Level 2	◻	Orange	Emergent	Closes the response and offers a general statement of importance.
Level 3	▽	Yellow	Visible	Reinforces and synthesizes, then connects significance to the developed argument.
Level 4	△	Green	Independent	Builds a coherent full CREATURES response with a meaningful Bluebird Moment.
Level 5	◊	Blue	Reflective	Compares opposite complete cases and evaluates evidence, reasoning, rebuttal, and significance.

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.	Argue whether protecting trade or supporting learning created the more important legacy for Mali.
HOW	Analyze how parts work together or how something happens.	Argue whether climate or natural resources have the greater influence on how people live and work across Texas.

WHY explains the reason behind a claim. HOW explains how evidence supports an Ending. Both can strengthen S, but neither replaces the central C: Claim.

The E + S level I want to reach



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

Mansa Musa made choices about trade and learning that helped Mali grow and left a lasting legacy. Across Texas, natural resources shape the work opportunities people build their lives around.

Background I Need

The Wealth of Mansa Musa presents evidence about protected trade routes, Timbuktu as a center of learning, Mali's reputation, and the choices that helped the kingdom grow. Four Regions, One Big Adventure presents evidence about landforms, climate, natural resources, vegetation, and the work people do in each region of Texas.

Words I dotted while reading

The Wealth of Mansa Musa

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

My
marks

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

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

3 Traveling across the Sahara required careful planning. Merchants often traveled together in groups called caravans. Traveling with others made the journey safer because people could help one another if problems happened along the way. Caravan leaders knew where to find water and places to rest. They also understood the safest paths through the desert. Even with good planning, strong winds, blowing sand, and extreme temperatures could make every trip challenging.

4 Gold was one of Mali's greatest natural resources. People wanted gold because it could be made into coins, jewelry, and decorations. Salt was just as important because it helped preserve food and keep people healthy. Before refrigerators existed, salt helped keep food from spoiling during long trips. Some places had plenty of gold but very little salt, while other places had large salt mines but little gold. This made trading useful for everyone. Merchants also traded cloth, leather, pottery, spices, beads, tools, and other valuable goods. As trade increased, Mali became wealthier each year.

5 Many people earned their living through trade. Some mined gold, while others cut large blocks of salt from the ground. Craftspeople created beautiful items that merchants could sell in busy markets. Farmers raised crops that fed families, travelers, and workers throughout the kingdom. Every person's job helped Mali become stronger and more successful.

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

[illegible]

The Wealth of Mansa Musa (continued)

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

My
marks

7 The king also encouraged fairness in trade. Merchants wanted to visit places where they could buy and sell goods honestly. As more people trusted Mali's marketplaces, trade continued to increase. Visitors returned home with stories about the kingdom's wealth, safe roads, and busy cities. These stories encouraged even more travelers to visit Mali.

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

9 Marketplaces were exciting places filled with activity. Merchants displayed their goods while customers compared prices and looked for the best products. The sounds of conversations, animals, and trading filled the air throughout the day. Children often watched their families work while learning how business was done. These busy markets helped people meet others from different cultures and regions.

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

11 Teachers encouraged students to ask thoughtful questions and search for evidence to support their ideas. Lessons often included reading, writing, problem-solving, and discussions. Students worked hard because education opened doors to new opportunities. Scholars spent years studying important books and sharing what they learned with others. Their work helped spread knowledge across many regions.

12 Libraries in Timbuktu became famous because they stored thousands of handwritten books. Families often protected these books for generations because they believed knowledge was valuable. Visitors from distant places were amazed by the city's dedication to learning. The success of Timbuktu showed that education could become just as important as trade in building a strong society.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Wealth of Mansa Musa (continued)

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

My
marks

13 One of the most famous parts of Mansa Musa's life was his trip to Mecca, called a pilgrimage. This journey covered thousands of miles and lasted many months. Mansa Musa traveled with a large group that included family members, soldiers, workers, servants, merchants, and guides. Hundreds of camels carried supplies for the journey. Food, water, clothing, tents, and gold all had to be packed before leaving. Planning such a large trip required careful organization.

14 As the group traveled from city to city, many people came to see the famous king. Some hoped to trade with his group, while others simply wanted to witness the enormous caravan passing through their town. The sight of so many travelers and camels impressed everyone who watched them. News about Mansa Musa spread quickly wherever he went.

15 During his pilgrimage, Mansa Musa gave away large amounts of gold to people in need. He wanted to help others and share the wealth of his kingdom. His generosity became famous throughout the places he visited. Many people had never seen so much gold before. Some stories explained that he gave away so much gold that its value changed in certain cities for a period of time. Whether every story was completely accurate or not, people everywhere recognized his kindness and generosity.

16 After hearing these stories, people became curious about Mali. Merchants wanted to trade with the kingdom, while travelers hoped to visit its famous cities. Writers recorded stories about Mansa Musa, and mapmakers began including Mali on their maps because so many people had heard about its wealth. These stories spread across Africa, Europe, and the Middle East, making Mali one of the most recognized kingdoms of its time.

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

18 The kingdom continued to grow because many people worked together. Farmers raised crops that fed families and travelers. Craftspeople made tools, clothing, pottery, and jewelry. Merchants carried goods across trade routes, while teachers helped students gain new knowledge. Soldiers protected the kingdom, allowing trade and learning to continue without constant fear of attack. Every group played an important role in Mali's success.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Wealth of Mansa Musa (continued)

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

My
marks

19 Life in Mali depended on teamwork. Farmers relied on merchants to sell extra crops. Merchants depended on safe roads and trustworthy trading partners. Students depended on teachers, and teachers depended on people who carefully copied books by hand. Builders created schools, homes, markets, and places of worship. Each person contributed something important to the kingdom, helping it remain successful for many years.

20 Families also passed important skills from one generation to the next. Children learned how to farm, trade, build, or create useful goods by watching adults work. As they grew older, they practiced these skills themselves. This helped preserve knowledge and allowed the kingdom to continue growing.

21 Even after Mansa Musa's pilgrimage ended, people continued talking about him. His journey showed the world that Mali was rich, organized, and powerful. Travelers wrote about the kingdom's wealth, successful trade routes, and centers of learning. Although stories sometimes became larger than life as they spread, they helped introduce many people to the kingdom of Mali.

22 Today, historians continue studying Mansa Musa because his leadership changed the history of West Africa. His success shows that trade, education, and good leadership can help a kingdom grow stronger. Students around the world learn about Mali because it became one of the greatest trading empires in African history. The story of Timbuktu also reminds people that learning and education have always been valuable.

23 Because of the choices he made, Mali became known as a powerful and important kingdom. Mansa Musa understood that protecting trade, encouraging education, and helping others could strengthen an entire nation. His leadership allowed cities like Timbuktu to become famous for both business and learning. People still talk about Mansa Musa today when they study African history and discover how trade routes connected different cultures. His life reminds us that wise decisions, strong leadership, and a commitment to learning can leave a lasting impact for generations. Even hundreds of years later, his story continues to inspire people to understand the importance of education, cooperation, and using resources wisely to help others.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Four Regions, One Big Adventure

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

My
marks

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

2 Before they left, Xavier spread a large map of Texas across the kitchen table. The state looked enormous. He traced their route with his finger and smiled.

3 "It's hard to believe one state can have so many different places," he said.

4 His dad nodded. "Texas is one of the largest states in the country. That means the land, weather, and resources can change a lot from one place to another."

5 "I wonder which region I'll like best," Xavier said.

6 "You'll have to wait until the end of the trip to decide," his mom replied.

7 As they drove west, Xavier watched the scenery outside the window slowly change. At first he saw neighborhoods, farms, and trees. After several hours, the trees became fewer, the ground looked drier, and rocky hills appeared in the distance.

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

9 The family stopped at a scenic overlook where they could see for miles. High mountains rose above wide valleys, and the bright blue sky stretched across the horizon. The air felt dry, and the wind carried dust across the rocky ground.

10 "I've never seen mountains this tall," Xavier said quietly. His dad smiled. "This is one of the only places in Texas where you'll find mountain ranges like these."

11 As they continued exploring, Xavier noticed that most of the plants were small and spread far apart. There were cacti, shrubs, and patches of dry grass. "Why aren't there many trees?" he asked. "This region doesn't get much rain," his mom explained. "Only plants that can survive with very little water grow well here."

12 They passed signs showing oil wells and mining sites in the distance. His dad explained that valuable natural resources beneath the ground have helped create jobs for many people over the years. Xavier thought it was interesting that even though the land looked empty, it still provided important resources.

13 Before leaving, the family stopped to take pictures of the mountains. Xavier realized that this region looked nothing like the places he had visited near home. Even though it was dry and rocky, it had its own kind of beauty.

Four Regions, One Big Adventure (continued)

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

My
marks

14 The next morning, the family headed toward the Great Plains. As the miles passed, the mountains slowly disappeared behind them. The land became flatter, and wide grasslands stretched toward the horizon.

15 "The view changed again," Xavier noticed. "It sure did," his dad replied. "Every region has its own features." The weather was still fairly dry, but it did not feel quite as hot. Soon they began passing large ranches surrounded by long fences.

16 "This must be where people raise cattle," Xavier said. His dad nodded and added that farming is also common here. They watched herds of cattle grazing across open fields while farmers drove tractors through nearby crops. The wide-open spaces seemed to go on forever.

17 "I've never seen so much land," Xavier said. "That space is one reason ranching works so well here," his mom explained. "There is plenty of room for livestock to graze."

18 The family stopped for lunch at a small picnic area. As they ate, a steady breeze moved through the tall grass. "It feels windy," Xavier said. "With fewer trees and lots of open land, the wind can travel easily across the plains," his dad explained.

19 After lunch they visited a ranch where a rancher answered questions about caring for cattle. Xavier learned that raising livestock requires hard work every day. The animals need food, water, and safe places to live.

20 On the drive away from the ranch, Xavier looked out across the rolling hills and thought about how different this region was from the Mountains and Basins. There were still wide open spaces, but instead of rocky mountains, the land was covered with grass.

21 Later that day, the family reached the North Central Plains. "Everything looks greener and more colorful!" Xavier said. There were more trees and grass, and the land had gentle hills. The climate was milder, and people raised livestock and grew crops.

22 The family stopped at a community park filled with walking trails and tall shade trees. Birds sang from the branches while butterflies floated from flower to flower. A cool breeze made the afternoon feel comfortable.

23 "This place feels different," Xavier said. His mom smiled. "This region usually receives more rainfall than the ones we've already visited." As they walked, Xavier noticed ponds, grassy fields, and trees growing in every direction. He realized why so many farms were nearby.

24 They later visited a family farm where workers cared for animals and tended rows of growing crops. One farmer explained that the climate and soil help many plants grow well in this region. "So weather can change what people grow?" Xavier asked. "It certainly can," the farmer replied. "People often choose crops that grow best in the local climate."

Four Regions, One Big Adventure (continued)

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

My
marks

25 While driving through nearby towns, Xavier noticed fields stretching beside country roads. Some farms raised cattle while others grew crops. He remembered seeing cattle in the Great Plains too, but the scenery here looked much greener. His dad reminded him that regions can share some similarities while still being different. "That's why we study more than one characteristic," he explained. "We look at the land, the weather, the plants, and the kinds of work people do."

26 Xavier thought about everything he had learned so far. Every region had something that made it easy to recognize.

27 The next morning, they continued their trip toward the Coastal Plains near the Gulf of Mexico. As soon as they stepped out of the car, Xavier noticed the warm, sticky air. "It feels different here," he said. His mom smiled. "That's humidity. The air contains more moisture near the Gulf." It was humid, and Xavier could feel the warm, moist air. There were rivers, forests, and even beaches. "This region has a lot of different jobs," his mom said, "like farming, fishing, and working in big cities."

28 The family first visited a busy fishing harbor where boats lined the docks. Fishermen unloaded their catches while seabirds circled overhead. "I've never seen so many boats," Xavier said. His dad explained that the Gulf of Mexico supports fishing, which provides jobs for many people.

29 Later they drove through thick forests where tall trees shaded the highway. Soon they entered one of Texas's large cities. Cars filled the roads, and tall buildings reached high into the sky. "There are so many people here," Xavier said. "Large cities create many different kinds of jobs," his mom explained. "People may work in schools, hospitals, stores, offices, factories, or many other places."

30 As they continued driving, Xavier realized that this region looked very different from every other place they had visited. It had beaches, forests, rivers, farms, neighborhoods, and busy cities all within the same region.

31 The family spent the afternoon walking along the beach. Waves rolled onto the shore while children played in the sand. Xavier watched pelicans glide over the water and listened to the sound of the surf. "I think this might be my favorite stop," he said. His parents smiled. "Every region has something special," his dad replied.

32 On the drive home, Xavier looked through the pages of his notebook. He compared everything he had seen during the trip. The Mountains and Basins were dry with tall mountains and valuable natural resources. The Great Plains had wide grasslands, ranches, and farms. The North Central Plains were greener with gentle hills, crops, and livestock. The Coastal Plains had rivers, forests, beaches, humid weather, large cities, and many different industries.

Four Regions, One Big Adventure (continued)

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

My
marks

33 As the sun began to set, Xavier looked out the car window one last time. "I thought Texas would look the same everywhere," he admitted. His dad smiled. "A lot of people think that until they travel across the state." "I understand now," Xavier replied. "The land changes from place to place, and that changes how people live and work."

34 His mom nodded proudly. "That's exactly what makes each region important." As they headed home, Xavier rethought about what he had seen. Each region looked different, but all were important parts of Texas.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Annotate: The Wealth of Mansa Musa

Evidence that supports a final judgment about impact, and details that suggest a larger lesson.

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: The Wealth of Mansa Musa (continued)

Evidence that supports a final judgment about impact, and details that suggest a larger lesson.

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

Does this sentence close the case, or does it lift the idea beyond the paper?

My thinking

My Prompt Marking Notes

An argumentative prompt asks you to take a defensible position. Mark the topic, task, and the two choices.

Shape	Word	Question I ask myself
Red circle	Topic	What is the argument about?
Yellow box	Task	What must the response do?
Green underline	Choices	Which position will I defend?

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

Argue whether protecting trade or supporting learning created the more important legacy for Mali.

My three marks in words

STUDENT WORKBOOK

 Day 1: Gather + Reveal



I listen for whether a sentence is E: Ending or S: Significance

Our Question for Today

How do Ending and Significance complete a CREATURES argument and leave the reader with a meaningful Bluebird Moment?

1. Gather: Ending or Bluebird?

Listen to each sentence. Show E if it closes this paper's case. Show S if it lifts the idea into a larger world.

Sentence	E or S
In the end, protected trade had the greater impact because it increased commerce and supported Mali's growth.	
Leaders today can learn from this example that protecting systems people depend on can create opportunities far beyond one decision.	

The clue that proves my label

2. Reveal: Full CREATURES at a Glance

- ☐ C: Claim, take a defensible position.
- ☐ R: Reasons, organize logical support.
- ☐ E: Evidence, prove the reasons.
- ☐ A: Argument, make the whole case coherent.
- ☐ T: Thinking, explain how and why the evidence works.
- ☐ U: Understanding Others, represent another viewpoint accurately.
- ☐ R: Rebuttal, respond with reasoning and evidence.
- ☐ E: Ending, reinforce and synthesize.
- ☐ S: Significance, the Bluebird Moment: why it matters beyond the paper.



Day 1: Reveal, continued

3. Model Ending + Significance: Mansa Musa

Part	The model shows
E: Ending	In the end, protecting trade had the greater impact on Mali because safer routes increased commerce and helped the kingdom grow stronger.
S: Significance / Bluebird Moment	Mansa Musa's example shows that leaders can create lasting opportunity when they protect the systems people rely on and make choices that help communities grow.

4. Model Ending + Significance: Texas Regions

Part	The model shows
E: Ending	Overall, natural resources have a greater influence on work opportunities because they directly support mining, oil, fishing, farming, and other industries across Texas.
S: Significance / Bluebird Moment	Understanding how resources shape opportunity can help communities make thoughtful decisions about jobs, growth, and how they care for the land they depend on.

5. Listen and Label

Label each sentence E or S.

Sentence	My label
Overall, support for learning created the more important legacy because it strengthened Timbuktu's reputation.	
Communities today can still learn from Mali that investing in knowledge creates opportunities that continue long after one leader.	

How Significance is different from repeating the claim

Day 1: Reveal, continued

6. E + S Deep Focus

E: Ending reinforces the claim and synthesizes the strongest reasoning. S: Significance explains why the issue matters beyond the paper, the Bluebird Moment.

7. Fill In What You Hear

Sentence	My word
A _____ reinforces the claim and synthesizes the strongest reasoning.	
A _____ is the final big-picture idea that explains why the argument matters beyond the paper.	
The Bluebird Moment still leaves from the evidence _____.	
R, E, and _____ may repeat across body paragraphs.	
_____ is the coherence of the whole case.	

 STOP & THINK

Why is repeating the claim not the same as reinforcing it?

My answer

STUDENT WORKBOOK



BUILD THE FULL CREATURES CASE

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards (sheet 1 of 2)

Cut on the dotted lines. Sort each sentence under its CREATURES letter, then read the complete argument aloud. Store all cards in Pocket Practice.

E: ENDING	S: SIGNIFICANCE
BLUEBIRD MOMENT	FULL CREATURES
Supporting learning created the more important legacy for Mali.	Timbuktu became a respected center of learning.

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 the CREATURES letter. Keep the cards in Pocket Practice when you finish.

S: SIGNIFICANCE explain why the issue or position matters beyond this paper: who else should care, what larger lesson applies, and why it matters in communities, leadership, or real life.	E: ENDING reinforce the claim, synthesize the most important reasoning, and close purposefully.
FULL CREATURES C Claim, R Reasons, E Evidence, A Argument, T Thinking, U Understanding Others, R Rebuttal, E Ending, S Significance.	BLUEBIRD MOMENT the final idea that rises above the paper and leaves the reader with meaning. It still leaves from the evidence nest.
R: Reason	C: Claim

STUDENT WORKBOOK



BUILD THE FULL CREATURES CASE

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards (sheet 2 of 2)

Cut on the dotted lines. Sort each sentence under its CREATURES letter, then read the complete argument aloud. Store all cards in Pocket Practice.

Students and teachers gathered to study subjects such as math, science, history, geography, and religion.	This evidence supports the claim because education creates knowledge that can be shared and passed on.
Some readers may argue protected trade created the stronger legacy because safe routes brought more merchants, goods, and wealth into Mali.	That economic growth was essential; however, knowledge could continue influencing people after individual trade journeys ended.
Overall, support for learning created the more important legacy because it strengthened Timbuktu's reputation and helped knowledge continue across generations.	Communities today can still learn from Mali that investing in knowledge creates opportunities that may continue long after one leader or one period of wealth has passed.

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 the CREATURES letter. Keep the cards in Pocket Practice when you finish.

T: Thinking

E: Evidence

R: Rebuttal

U: Understanding Others

S: Significance

E: Ending

Day 2: Attempt

Our Question for Today: How do I build a complete CREATURES response with every letter doing its job?

1. Play Build the Full CREATURES Case

- Teams choose a defensible C: Claim.
- Teams build two R/E/T chains.
- Teams arrange the chains so A: Argument flows logically.
- Teams draw one U viewpoint card and write an accurate representation.
- Teams write a rebuttal that uses reasoning or evidence.
- Teams write an E: Ending that reinforces the claim and synthesizes the best reasoning.
- Teams write an S: Significance Bluebird Moment that explains why the issue matters beyond the paper.
- Teams read the full argument aloud. Listeners identify any missing or weak CREATURES move.

Round	1	2	3	4	5
My partner					
My point					

2. Talk About It

Explain why your team's Ending closes the case and your Significance sentence grows from the evidence.

My explanation

3. Mark the Additional Prompt

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

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

My team's Ending and Significance sentences

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 3: Discuss + Use

I explain why my full case is coherent



Our Question for Today
Which CREATURES letter was easiest to build? Which required the deepest thinking?

1. Discuss the Full Creature
Explain your reasoning, not just your answer.

Question	My thinking
How did U/R change or strengthen the claim?	
How is Ending different from Significance?	
Where did the argument need a transition or rearrangement to improve A?	
Why must a Bluebird Moment still come from the nest of evidence?	

My discussion notes

2. My Personal Connection

Think of a time you finished a project and explained why it mattered to someone else. Explain how that is like writing a Significance sentence.

My connection and what I learned

Explain why an Ending must reinforce the claim without simply copying the introduction.

My explanation



STOP & THINK

Understanding grows a claim. What happens to an argument when Significance becomes an unrelated idea instead of growing from the evidence?

My answer

3. Use: Independent Full CREATURES ECR

Work alone. Analyze the prompt and choose a defensible claim. Plan at least two logical reasons. Choose strong evidence for each reason.

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

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

My claim and my two R/E/T chains



Full CREATURES ECR, continued

Arrange the reasons so the line of argument is coherent. Acknowledge one reasonable alternate viewpoint accurately. Write a rebuttal using reasoning and evidence.

My A: Argument, U: Understanding Others, and R: Rebuttal

Finish with E: Ending and S: Significance

My E: Ending and S: Significance Bluebird Moment

Embedded Check

- ☐ My Ending reinforces the claim and synthesizes the strongest reasoning.
- ☐ My Significance sentence is a meaningful Bluebird Moment rooted in the argument.
- ☐ My planning shows C, R, E, A, T, U, R, E, and S.
- ☐ My complete response is coherent, evidence-based, and purposeful.

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 4: Award + Target

I revise and edit my full CREATURES ECR



Our Question for Today
How does revising the Ending and Significance make my full argument stronger?

1. Final Argument + Revision + Editing Check
ADD a missing idea. DELETE a distraction. COMBINE repeated ideas. REARRANGE for stronger A: Argument. Edit the assigned Cluster 4 conventions.

Weaker version	Stronger version
So natural resources are important.	Overall, natural resources have the greater influence on work opportunities because they directly shape important industries across Texas.

2. Award Your Full CREATURES Response

My Strongest CREATURES Letter

Claim, Reasons, Evidence, Argument, Thinking, Understanding Others, Rebuttal, Ending, Significance

The part of my argument that sounds most like a real writer is... because...

3. Target Your Next Argument

- ☐ C clarity
- ☐ R distinction
- ☐ E strength
- ☐ A coherence
- ☐ T depth
- ☐ U fairness
- ☐ R rebuttal
- ☐ E ending

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 5: Explain/Educate



I teach the whole CREATURES roadmap

Our Question for Today

How can I teach why S is called the Bluebird Moment?

1. Teach the Whole Creature

Partner A teaches C through T. Partner B teaches U through S. Then build one oral argument together from a passage prompt. Finish by explaining why S is called the Bluebird Moment.

- C: Claim takes a defensible position.
- R, E, T build and prove the case, and may repeat.
- A: Argument makes the whole case coherent.
- U: Understanding Others represents another viewpoint accurately.
- R: Rebuttal responds with reasoning and evidence.
- E: Ending reinforces and synthesizes.
- S: Significance is the Bluebird Moment: why it matters beyond the paper.

My partner taught me...

2. Educate: Say the Whole Roadmap

- C: Claim, take a position.
- R: Reasons and E: Evidence, prove it.
- A: Argument, make it whole.
- T: Thinking, explain how and why.
- U: Understanding Others, state it fairly.
- R: Rebuttal, answer the point.
- E: Ending, reinforce and close.
- S: Significance, the Bluebird flies.

One part of the roadmap I can explain well

3. Transfer: Day 5 Exit Ticket

Complete each part on your own.

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

Argue whether protecting trade or supporting learning created the more important legacy for Mali.

My defensible claim

One R/E/T chain, a fair U viewpoint, and a respectful R rebuttal

My E: Ending and S: Significance Bluebird Moment

Check My Exit Ticket

- ☐ My Ending reinforces the claim and synthesizes the strongest reasoning.
- ☐ My Significance sentence grows from the evidence and reasoning.
- ☐ My planning shows all nine CREATURES moves.
- ☐ My complete response is coherent, evidence-based, and purposeful.

Ⓢ STOP & THINK

You now have a memory system for the whole argumentative response. The Ending closes the case; the Significance sentence becomes the Bluebird Moment that leaves the reader with a lasting idea.

My final Day 5 thought



Write More

Full CREATURES ECR



My Full CREATURES ECR

Argue whether climate or natural resources have the greater influence on how people live and work across Texas. Plan with all nine CREATURES moves, then write a complete response.

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

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

My Plan

- Analyze the prompt and choose a defensible claim.
- Plan at least two logical reasons.
- Choose strong evidence for each reason.
- Arrange the reasons so the line of argument is coherent.
- Explain how and why the evidence supports the claim.
- Acknowledge one reasonable alternate viewpoint accurately.
- Write a rebuttal using reasoning and evidence.
- Conclude by reinforcing the claim and synthesizing the most important reasoning.
- Finish with a Bluebird Moment explaining why the issue matters beyond the paper.

My claim and my two R/E/T chains

The CREATURES letter I built most strongly is...

CREATURES Color Coding

Color-code C, R, E, A, T, U, R, E, and S. Draw a star beside your Bluebird Moment.

My defensible claim

My Draft



Write your full CREATURES ECR. Remember R, E, and T may repeat across body paragraphs.

Draft, page 1

The part of my argument that sounds most like a real writer is...

Revise, Edit, and Share

Revise

- ☐ ADD a missing idea.
- ☐ DELETE a distraction.
- ☐ COMBINE repeated ideas.
- ☐ REARRANGE for stronger A: Argument.

Edit

- ☐ I edit the assigned Cluster 4 conventions.
- ☐ My Ending reinforces the claim and synthesizes the strongest reasoning.
- ☐ My Significance sentence grows from the evidence and reasoning.

One way I improved my Ending or Significance

Share

Read your full argument aloud to a partner. Listeners identify any missing or weak CREATURES move.

What my partner noticed

Final CREATURES Rubric

Score each area 0 to 3. Reread your full CREATURES ECR one more time before you turn it in. Trace C to R/E/T to U/R to E/S one more time and check that every letter is doing its job.

Part	I can show...	Check
C: Claim	3 clear/defensible/direct; 2 clear but broad; 1 vague/weak; 0 missing/off-topic.	
R/E: Reasons & Evidence	3 logical/distinct/strongly supported; 2 mostly strong; 1 repetitive or weakly supported; 0 missing.	
A/T: Argument & Thinking	3 coherent line + deep explanation; 2 generally connected; 1 list-like or mostly summary; 0 missing.	
U/R: Understanding Others & Rebuttal	3 fair/accurate + evidence-based response; 2 fair but general; 1 distorted or repeated claim; 0 missing.	
E/S: Ending & Significance	3 reinforces/synthesizes + meaningful Bluebird; 2 closes but significance is general; 1 repeats or adds unrelated idea; 0 missing.	
Conventions	3 meaning is clear with strong control; 2 minor errors; 1 frequent errors interfere; 0 not enough writing to assess.	

Model Full CREATURES Exemplar

C: Claim: Natural resources have the greater influence on how Texans live and work because resources directly shape many of the jobs and economic opportunities found across the state. E: Ending: Overall, natural resources have the greater influence on work opportunities because they directly shape what industries can grow in different Texas regions. S: Significance: Understanding the relationship between resources and opportunity can help communities make wiser choices about jobs, growth, and how they use and protect the land that supports them. Notice how the Ending closes the case by reinforcing the claim, and how the Significance sentence lifts the idea beyond the paper without becoming an unrelated idea. The Low response names the topic but stops short of a full Ending. The Medium response reinforces the claim but has no Significance sentence yet. Notice that the High sample never repeats a sentence from the Low or Medium sample; instead, it grows the same idea into a complete, source-rooted Ending and Significance pair.

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

Low

So natural resources are important.

The sentence stays on the source topic, but it does not reinforce the full claim, synthesize the developed reasoning, or create a Bluebird Moment.

Medium

Overall, natural resources have the greater influence on work opportunities because they directly shape important industries across Texas.

The Ending reinforces the claim and closes the case purposefully, but the response still needs S: Significance to lift the meaning beyond the paper.

High

E: Ending: Overall, natural resources have the greater influence on work opportunities because they directly shape what industries can grow in different Texas regions. S: Significance / Bluebird Moment: Understanding the relationship between resources and opportunity can help communities make wiser choices about jobs, growth, and how they use and protect the land that supports them.

The Ending reinforces and synthesizes the source-based case, and the Significance sentence grows from that reasoning to leave a meaningful Bluebird Moment.

One part of the model I can use in my own Ending or Significance



Look Back & Look Forward

My Full CREATURES ECR



My Progress Tracker

I can...	Not yet	Growing	Got it
Reinforce my claim and synthesize my reasoning in E: Ending.	☐	☐	☐
Write S: Significance as a source-rooted Bluebird Moment.	☐	☐	☐
Explain every letter in the full CREATURES roadmap.	☐	☐	☐
Build two logical R/E/T chains and a coherent line of argument.	☐	☐	☐
Represent another viewpoint fairly and answer it with reasoning and evidence.	☐	☐	☐
Revise and edit a complete argumentative ECR.	☐	☐	☐

What I did well

My strongest CREATURES letter is

My next target

My next-letter target is

Essential Question Answered

How do Ending and Significance complete a CREATURES argument and leave the reader with a meaningful Bluebird Moment?

The answer

E: Ending brings the argument to a purposeful close by reinforcing the claim and synthesizing the strongest reasoning. S: Significance then lifts the idea beyond the immediate paper by explaining why the issue or position matters to communities, leaders, decisions, or the world around us. The Ending closes the case; the Significance sentence becomes the Bluebird Moment that leaves the reader with a lasting idea.

One place I can make the argument more coherent is

How My Ending Changed

My first Ending draft was

My revised Ending is

Practice with the Other Passage

Use the other passage. Write a full claim, one R/E/T chain, a fair U viewpoint, a respectful R rebuttal, an E: Ending, and an S: Significance Bluebird Moment.

My practice full CREATURES response

Take It Further! Two Complete Cases

Build two defensible arguments from opposite positions on the same source prompt, then use the CREATURES rubric to justify which case is more persuasive. Build two defensible arguments from opposite positions on the same source prompt, then use the CREATURES rubric to justify which case is more persuasive.

- Build a full CREATURES case for one position.
- Build a full CREATURES case for the opposite position.
- Compare evidence strength and reasoning depth.
- Compare rebuttal quality and Bluebird Moments.
- Decide which case is more persuasive.
- Justify your evaluation with the Final CREATURES Rubric.

My evaluation of the two cases

My Bluebird Moment

Write the Bluebird Moment from your stronger case and explain why it grows from the evidence.

At-Home Connection

Teach someone at home the nine CREATURES moves in order, then explain how the Ending closes the case and how Significance carries its meaning beyond the paper.

Close or Lift?

Read these source sentences aloud. Decide which one closes this paper's case and which one lifts the idea into the world beyond the paper: "In the end, protected trade had the greater impact because it increased commerce and supported Mali's growth." and "Leaders today can learn from this example that protecting systems people depend on can create opportunities far beyond one decision."

Ask: What does E: Ending do for the reader, and why is S: Significance called the Bluebird Moment?

Family member signature: _____

Teach the Whole Creature

Teach someone at home the nine CREATURES moves in order.

Ask: How can a writer reinforce a claim without copying it word for word?

Family member signature: _____

Grow the Bluebird Moment

Explain to someone at home how the Ending closes the case and how Significance carries its meaning beyond the paper.

Ask: Why must the Bluebird Moment grow from the evidence and reasoning?

Family member signature: _____

Family Conversation

Why must the Bluebird Moment grow from the evidence and reasoning?

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 Full CREATURES Case

I built a complete argument that closes with a purposeful Ending and a Significance Bluebird Moment.

A note to my future writer self

My Proud Moment This Week
