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Module 1 — TRACKS: Reading the Passages for Evidence

Before students build a response, they read "The Energy We Use Everyday" and "Columbus's Arrival" and TAP the TRACKS to find the six kinds of measurable evidence. This helps students gather the exact words they will use as evidence on the branches of their tree.

The Six Types of Measurable Evidence: TRACKS

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

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

Module 2 — Thinking Levels

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

The Five Thinking Levels

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

The Three Pieces and Two Types

Piece	Where It Comes From
Noun of Importance	the prompt - what it is about
Verb of Importance	the prompt - what to explain
Answer	the student's own thinking

Prompt Type	Sentence Habit	Clue Words
WHY	Complex sentence with a subordinator	because, since, although, while, after, before, when, if
HOW	Simple sentence with a preposition	by, through, with, during, across, in

Challenge: Rebuild a WHY thesis (central idea) as a HOW thesis (central idea) (or the reverse). Notice how the sentence structure changes.

Tier 3 Vocabulary — Passage-Specific Words

Word	Pronunciation	Student-Friendly Definition	Oral Rehearsal Frame
renewable	rih-NOO-uh-buhl	able to be replaced over time and used again	A renewable resource is ____.
nonrenewable	non-rih-NOO-uh-buhl	not able to be replaced quickly once it is used	A nonrenewable resource is ____.
resource	REE-sorss	a material or supply that people use	One resource we use is ____.
pollution	puh-LOO-shun	harmful materials that damage the environment	Pollution can ____.
environment	en-VY-run-ment	the natural world around us	The environment is affected when ____.
Columbus	kuh-LUM-bus	the explorer who sailed to the Americas in 1492	Columbus ____.
Taino	TY-noh	a Native American people of the Caribbean	The Taino ____.
Carib	KAIR-ib	a Native American people known for resisting the Spanish	The Carib ____.
missionaries	MISH-uh-nair-eez	people who travel to teach a religion	Missionaries traveled to ____.
hydroelectric	hy-droh-ih-LEK-trik	making electricity from moving water	A hydroelectric dam ____.



Teacher Resource

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

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