THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what a story, poem, or play is about, in a word or two.

The theme is the lesson or message the text teaches, in a full sentence.

A strong theme fits the whole story and can be true beyond it.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "The Recess Question"

This week we study **Topic vs. theme**. The topic is what a story is about. The theme is a global life lesson that fits the whole story. STAAR asks: **Is the word in the title the topic or the theme of the story?** Watch for **Topic word, not theme**. A strong theme is: **listening to different ideas helps people make thoughtful choices together**.

This deck teaches **finding theme the STAAR way** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

⏰ ~5 min

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

"This week we are finding theme the STAAR way. The topic is what a story is about. The theme is the lesson it teaches."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will practice telling a title topic from a full life lesson and proving the lesson with details."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for the Prepare Cluster Module 1 . a class or student copy of "The Recess Question" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to name a topic and a theme from a story they know.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice the difference between topic and theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice the topic and lesson.

Read the line. Name the topic, then circle words that hint at a bigger lesson.

"'Sometimes recess gives us time to get to know someone new,' she said."

I CAN | I can notice a lesson that fits the whole story.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 ·

Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice the difference between topic and theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A topic names the subject. A theme teaches a lesson that can reach beyond this story."

▸ *Students write the topic in one or two words and circle the lesson hint on the NOTICE row.*

ANSWER KEY: Topic: recess and friendship. Hint: get to know someone new.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to name the topic and the hint words.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write recess as the theme. Recess is the topic, not a lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Can the title word be the theme? No. It names the topic, not the lesson.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about telling topic from theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which later choice connects to this hint.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a theme that fits the whole story."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose the theme.

STAAR asks: **Is the word in the title the topic or the theme of the story?** Choose a lesson, not a topic word.

"'Because a good decision should not be based only on what we want,' Mrs. Green replied."

A Recess and playground games • **B** Students should always get their way • **C** Listening helps groups make thoughtful choices together

I CAN | I can choose a full life lesson and reject a topic trap.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose a theme that fits the whole story."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A theme is a lesson. Which choice could guide people in many situations?"

▸ *Students choose privately, then label one wrong choice with its trap name.*

ANSWER KEY: C. Listening helps groups make thoughtful choices together.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why A is a topic instead of a theme.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose A because recess fills the story. A subject is not a lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What makes C a theme? It gives a lesson in a complete sentence.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about selecting the theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to say the theme without using the word recess.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can show how details support a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show the theme with evidence.

Use the story to show why listening and considering reasons lead to thoughtful choices.

"Good citizens listen to one another, consider the reasons, and make decisions respectfully."

I CAN | I can connect details from the beginning and end to one lesson.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 ·

Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can show how details support a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Strong evidence comes from more than one part of the story."

▸ *Students write two details and explain how each supports the theme on the SHOW row.*

ANSWER KEY: Beth includes Lily, and the class listens before voting. Both support the theme.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask for one detail about Lily and one about the class decision.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may repeat the theme without evidence. Ask for exact story details.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why use two details? They show the lesson fits the whole story.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about explaining how details support a theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which detail best shows respectful listening.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a theme in my own words."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own the theme.

Write a theme for the whole story in a full sentence. Do not write only the title topic.

"Now it had become a question about choices, communities, and how people make decisions together."

I CAN | I can write a global lesson that fits the whole story.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a theme in my own words."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Start with the topic, then ask what the whole story teaches about it."

▸ *Students write a theme on the OWN row and check that it is a lesson, not a summary.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Listening to different ideas helps people make thoughtful choices together.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to explain why the theme fits the whole story.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may retell the vote. A summary tells what happened, but a theme tells what it teaches.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How can I test my theme? Ask whether it could be true in another community.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about inferring a theme independently. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to connect the lesson to a group decision in life.

FRIDAY • REFLECTIVE (Highly Independent)
THEME

THEME

WEEK 1 of 36
TEKS 3.8(A) · Slide 6 of 10

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend my theme and explain why a trap is wrong."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against the trap.

A student writes: **Recess** is the theme. Explain the trap and replace it with a lesson.

"'People in a community do not always agree,' she explained."

I CAN | I can prove why a topic word is not a theme.

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Grade 3 · Prepare Cluster · Theme · Friday

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 1 of 36 · Prepare Cluster · Module 1 · slide 6 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend my theme and explain why a trap is wrong."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A topic is a word or two. A theme is a full lesson that reaches beyond the story."

▸ *Students name the trap and rewrite the topic as a full theme on the DEFEND row.*

ANSWER KEY: Topic word, not theme. Recess names the subject, not the lesson.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to turn recess into a full life lesson.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept the answer because recess appears often. Repeated does not mean theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why is Recess not enough? It does not teach what people should learn.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about proving why a topic trap fails. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask for another topic word from the story.

THEME

Find the theme on your own.

Write the topic in one or two words. Then write the theme in a full sentence and copy one line that supports it.

Go back to the reading.
Write the topic in one or two words.
Write the theme in a full sentence. Copy one line that supports it.

I CAN | I can tell the topic from the theme and support the theme with a line from the story.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Topic first in one or two words, then the theme in a full sentence, then one proof line."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **The topic is recess and friendship.** The words get to know someone new hint that including others can build a stronger community.

CHOOSE **C.** Listening helps groups make thoughtful choices together.

SHOW **Beth includes Lily at recess, and later the class listens to several perspectives before voting.** Those details support the lesson about listening before making choices.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Listening to different ideas helps people make thoughtful choices together.

DEFEND **Topic word, not theme.** Recess is what much of the story is about, but it is not a lesson. The story teaches that listening helps groups make thoughtful choices.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Topic: community choices. Theme: Listening to different ideas helps people make thoughtful choices together. Line: We considered different solutions.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 · Review the Answers

~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"Good citizens listen to one another, consider the reasons, and make decisions respectfully. ... We looked at a problem. We gathered information. We considered different solutions. We listened to one another."

Which statement best describes a theme of the story?

A Recess is the topic of the story.

B Listening to different ideas helps groups make thoughtful choices together.

C Students should always get their way.

D The playground is a place where students play.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 1 of 36 · Prepare Cluster · Module 1 · slide 9 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is B.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing a title word because it appears in the story, even though it is only the topic.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is B.

A **Recess is the topic of the story.**
Topic word, not theme. Recess names the subject, but it does not state a life lesson.

B **Listening to different ideas helps groups make thoughtful choices together.** **Correct.**
Correct. The class listens to different views, considers reasons, and makes a group choice.

C **Students should always get their way.**
Life lesson not supported by this text. The story shows students considering different needs, not always getting their way.

D **The playground is a place where students play.**
Setting or event, not theme. This is a setting fact, not a life lesson.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 1 of 36 · Prepare Cluster · Module 1 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 ·

The Answer, and Why

⏰ ~4 min

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

"The answer is B. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what a story, poem, or play is about, in a word or two.

The theme is the lesson or message the text teaches, in a full sentence.

A character's learning can help us infer the theme, but the theme must fit the whole story.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "The Recess Question"

This week we study **What the main character learns**. The theme is the lesson a story teaches beyond its events. STAAR asks: **What lesson does the main character learn by the end of the story?** Watch for **Setting or event, not theme**. A strong theme is: **listening to different ideas helps people make thoughtful choices together**.

This deck teaches **finding theme the STAAR way** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

~5 min

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

"This week we will infer theme from what the main character learns. Events show the path, but the theme is the lesson beyond the events."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will track Beth's thinking, then test whether an answer is a setting, an event, or a life lesson."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for the Prepare Cluster Module 2 . a class or student copy of "The Recess Question" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student how a character's change can reveal a theme.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice what the main character learns."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice the character's change.

Read the line. Ask what Beth is beginning to understand, not just what happens.

"At first, she had been certain that longer recess was the only good answer."

I CAN | I can connect a character's change to a life lesson.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice what the main character learns."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"An event is what happens. A theme is what the character learns from what happens."

▸ *Students write Beth's first belief and circle the words that show her starting point.*

ANSWER KEY: Beth starts certain that longer recess is the only answer.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what Beth believes at first.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may name the vote as the theme. A vote is an event, not a lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Is a character's action always the theme? No. Ask what the action teaches.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about noticing a character's learning. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask what later detail might change Beth's thinking.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose the lesson a character learns."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose the lesson Beth learns.

STAAR asks: **What lesson does the main character learn by the end of the story?** Choose the lesson, not the setting or event.

"Now she was not so sure."

A Listening helps people make thoughtful choices together • **B** The playground is a place where students play • **C** Beth votes for a solution at school

I CAN | I can reject a setting or event when I look for theme.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose the lesson a character learns."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"The lesson should explain Beth's change and apply beyond the school."

▸ *Students choose privately, then label the setting or event trap beside one wrong choice.*

ANSWER KEY: A. Listening helps people make thoughtful choices together.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why C tells an event instead of a lesson.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose C because Beth really does vote. That event does not state what she learns.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What does a lesson answer? It answers what the character learns about life.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about inferring the character's lesson. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to connect Beth's change to Lily's idea.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can show how details support a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show how Beth learns.

Use two details to explain how Beth moves from one answer to considering several choices.

"She thought about all the things they needed to learn during the school day."

I CAN | I can use a character's thoughts and actions as evidence.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 ·

Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can show how details support a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A character's thoughts can reveal the lesson, especially when they change."

▸ *Students list Beth's first idea and two things she considers before making her choice.*

ANSWER KEY: Beth thinks about Lily and school learning, showing she considers different needs.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what two needs Beth weighs.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may only state that Beth votes. Ask how her thinking changes first.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why does Beth's thinking matter? It shows she listens before choosing.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about explaining a character's learning. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which thought most changes Beth's first opinion.

THURSDAY • ADVANCED
THEME

THEME

WEEK 2 of 36
TEKS 3.8(A) · Slide 5 of 10

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write the theme in my own words."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own the lesson.

Write the theme in a full sentence. Make it a life lesson, not a sentence about Beth or recess.

"She thought about running and jumping."

I CAN | I can state a lesson that grows from a character's change.

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Grade 3 · Prepare Cluster · Theme · Thursday

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 2 of 36 · Prepare Cluster · Module 2 · slide 5 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write the theme in my own words."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Use Beth's change to reach a lesson that could help people anywhere."

▸ *Students write a theme and check that it does not name Beth, Lily, or recess.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Listening to different ideas helps people make thoughtful choices together.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why the lesson is bigger than Beth's single choice.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write Beth voted. That is a summary of an event, not a theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How do I move from event to theme? Ask what the event teaches people.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about writing a character-based theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to give a real-life example of listening before deciding.

FRIDAY • REFLECTIVE (Highly Independent)
THEME

THEME

WEEK 2 of 36
TEKS 3.8(A) · Slide 6 of 10

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme against an event trap."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against the trap.

A student writes: **The lesson is that students vote in class.** Explain why this is a trap.

"'People in a community do not always agree,' she explained."

I CAN | I can prove why a setting or event is not the lesson.

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Grade 3 · Prepare Cluster · Theme · Friday

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 2 of 36 · Prepare Cluster · Module 2 · slide 6 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a theme against an event trap."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"An event can help show a theme, but it is not the theme by itself."

▸ *Students name the trap, then turn the event into a full life lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: Setting or event, not theme. Voting is what happens, not what the story teaches.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask students to add a lesson to the word voting.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may call any important event a theme. Important events still need a lesson attached.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What question exposes the trap? Ask what voting teaches.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending a theme against an event trap. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask for the lesson hidden behind the event.

THEME

Find the lesson on your own.

Write what Beth learns in a full sentence. Then copy one line that shows her thinking changed.

Go back to the reading.
Write the lesson Beth learns in a full sentence.
Copy one line that shows her thinking changed.

I CAN | I can infer a theme from a character's change and support it with a line from the story.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Find the character's change, state the lesson, and copy the line that proves it."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **Beth begins with one certain answer.** This hints that listening to other views may help her think more carefully.

CHOOSE **A.** Listening helps people make thoughtful choices together.

SHOW **Beth first wants longer recess, but she thinks about Lily's smile and the class's learning needs.** Her thoughts show that she considers more than her first choice.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Listening to different ideas helps people make thoughtful choices together.

DEFEND **Setting or event, not theme.** Voting happens in the story, but the lesson is about listening to different ideas and considering reasons before choosing.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Theme: Listening to different ideas helps people make thoughtful choices together. Line: Now she was not so sure.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 · Review the Answers

~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"At first, she had been certain that longer recess was the only good answer. ... She thought about all the things they needed to learn during the school day. Then Beth made her choice."

What lesson does the main character learn by the end of the story?

A Beth learns that recess takes place on a playground.

B Beth learns that students vote on a class question.

C Beth learns that school days include many subjects.

D Beth learns that listening to different ideas helps people make thoughtful choices together.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 2 of 36 · Prepare Cluster · Module 2 · slide 9 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is D.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing the vote because it is an important event, even though it is not the lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is D.

A **Beth learns that recess takes place on a playground.**
Setting or event, not theme. The playground is a setting, not the lesson Beth learns.

B **Beth learns that students vote on a class question.**
Setting or event, not theme. Voting is an event; it does not state the larger lesson.

C **Beth learns that school days include many subjects.**
Setting or event, not theme. The story mentions subjects, but this fact does not state Beth's larger lesson.

D **Beth learns that listening to different ideas helps people make thoughtful choices together.** **Correct.**
Correct. Beth considers several perspectives and needs before making a choice.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 2 of 36 · Prepare Cluster · Module 2 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 ·

The Answer, and Why

⏰ ~4 min

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

"The answer is D. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what a story, poem, or play is about, in a word or two.

The theme is the lesson or message the text teaches, in a full sentence.

A theme should grow from the whole story, not from one interesting object.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "The Mystery of the Traveling Shell"

This week we study **Theme as a full sentence**. A topic names what a story is about, while a theme gives a lesson that reaches beyond the story. STAAR asks: **Which sentence best states a theme of the story?** Watch for **Topic word, not theme**. A strong theme is: **careful questions and evidence can help people solve mysteries about the past**.

This deck teaches **finding theme the STAAR way** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

⏰ ~5 min

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

"This week we will turn a mystery's clues into a theme. The topic names the subject, but the theme explains the lesson."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will practice choosing a full-sentence theme and using evidence to prove it fits the whole story."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for the Prepare Cluster Module 3 . a class or student copy of "The Mystery of the Traveling Shell" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student why one clue is not always enough to solve a mystery.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice how evidence points to a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice the lesson in the clues.

Read the line. Name the topic, then notice how it points toward a bigger lesson.

"People did not always have every resource they wanted or needed where they lived."

I CAN | I can notice a life lesson in a mystery story.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice how evidence points to a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A topic is short. A theme turns what happens in the story into a lesson for life."

▸ *Students write the topic and underline the words that show Emsy is reasoning from clues.*

ANSWER KEY: Topic: solving a mystery. Hint: people need resources they cannot find everywhere.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what problem the people had to solve.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write shell as the theme. The shell is an object in the mystery, not a lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Can a theme be just shell? No. That is a topic word, not a message.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about turning clues into a lesson. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which other clue joins the pattern.

TUESDAY • DEVELOPING
THEME

THEME

WEEK 3 of 36
TEKS 3.8(A) · Slide 3 of 10

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a theme written as a full sentence."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose the theme sentence.

STAAR asks: **Which sentence best states a theme of the story?** Choose the full life lesson.

"'Mystery number one: How did this shell travel so far?'"

A Seashells and copper • **B** Questions and evidence solve past mysteries. • **C** Emsy visits a museum to study a shell

I CAN | I can choose a life lesson instead of a topic word.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose a theme written as a full sentence."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A theme sentence should teach something that can be true beyond this museum."

▸ *Students choose privately, then label the topic word in one wrong choice.*

ANSWER KEY: B. Questions and evidence solve past mysteries.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why B names topics but does not teach a lesson.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose B because the objects are important clues. Important objects are still not themes.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What does a full theme sentence do? It turns the story's idea into a lesson.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about choosing a full-sentence theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to explain how the shell supports the theme.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can show how details support a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show the theme with clues.

Explain how Emsy's questions and the river map support the theme about evidence.

"People at Poverty Point traveled along rivers, which could have helped them move from place to place."

I CAN | I can connect separate clues to one lesson.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 ·

Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can show how details support a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A theme becomes believable when several details fit together logically."

▸ *Students name Emsy's question and the river evidence, then connect both to the theme.*

ANSWER KEY: The question starts the investigation, and the river map supplies evidence.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what the river clue helps Emsy explain.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may only say that the shell is far from the ocean. Add how that detail becomes evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why does the map matter? It gives evidence for how objects could travel.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about explaining evidence for a theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which clue would be weakest by itself.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a theme in my own words."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Write the theme in your own words.

Write a theme for the whole story in a full sentence. Keep it broader than the shell or Emsy.

"The seashell probably reached Poverty Point through long-distance trade."

I CAN | I can turn a mystery's evidence into a life lesson.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 · Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a theme in my own words."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"The claim solves this mystery. The theme explains what the process teaches us."

▸ *Students write a theme and cross out any answer that only names the shell, Emsy, or Poverty Point.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Careful questions and evidence can help people solve mysteries about the past.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask how the theme could fit another investigation.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may copy the trade claim. That is the answer to this mystery, not the larger lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How is a claim different from a theme? A claim solves this case; a theme teaches beyond it.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about writing a theme from a mystery. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name another problem evidence could help solve.

FRIDAY • REFLECTIVE (Highly Independent)
THEME

THEME

WEEK 3 of 36
TEKS 3.8(A) · Slide 6 of 10

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme against a topic trap."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend the theme against a topic trap.

A student writes: **Seashells** is the theme. Explain why it is a trap and repair it.

"The answer was scarcity. People did not always have every resource they wanted or needed where they lived."

I CAN | I can explain why an object is not a life lesson.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a theme against a topic trap."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A topic can be one object. A theme must say what the whole story teaches."

▸ *Students name the trap and turn the topic word into a full lesson on the DEFEND row.*

ANSWER KEY: Topic word, not theme. Seashells names an object, not the message.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to make seashells part of a complete lesson.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose the object because the title and clues repeat it. Repetition does not make a theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What should I ask about a topic word? Ask what lesson the whole story teaches about it.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending a theme against a topic trap. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask for a different topic word from the story.

THEME

Find the theme on your own.

Write the topic in one or two words. Then write the theme in a full sentence and copy one clue that supports it.

Go back to the reading.
Write the topic in one or two words.
Write the theme in a full sentence. Copy one clue that supports it.

I CAN | I can distinguish the topic from the theme and support the theme with a clue.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Name the topic, write the lesson, and copy one clue that helps prove it."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **The topic is solving a mystery with evidence.** The line about resources hints that people solve needs through reasoning and exchange.

CHOOSE **B.** Questions and evidence solve past mysteries.

SHOW **Emsy asks how the shell traveled, and the river clue gives a possible answer.** Her question and evidence work together to solve the mystery.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Careful questions and evidence can help people solve mysteries about the past.

DEFEND **Topic word, not theme.** Seashells is one object in the story. The theme is that careful questions and evidence can help solve mysteries about the past.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Topic: evidence and mysteries. Theme: Careful questions and evidence can help people solve mysteries about the past. Line: Her first clue was the shell itself.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 ·

Review the Answers

~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"Her third clue was even more interesting. The map showed large rivers, including the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers. ... 'One traveling object could be an accident,' Emsy thought. ... 'But several objects from distant places make a pattern.'"

Which sentence best states a theme of the story?

A A museum has a display case.

B Careful questions and evidence can help people solve mysteries about the past.

C Emsy writes clues in a notebook.

D Seashells can be found near the ocean.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 3 of 36 · Prepare Cluster · Module 3 · slide 9 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is B.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing seashells because it is an important object, even though it is only a topic.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is B.

A **A museum has a display case.**
Setting or event, not theme. This is a place detail, not a lesson from the whole story.

B **Careful questions and evidence can help people solve mysteries about the past.** **Correct.**
Correct. Emsy's questions and several clues help her explain the shell's journey.

C **Emsy writes clues in a notebook.**
Topic word, not theme. This describes one action instead of a lesson that reaches beyond the story.

D **Seashells can be found near the ocean.**
Topic word, not theme. This is a fact about the object, not the story's message.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 3 of 36 · Prepare Cluster · Module 3 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 ·
The Answer, and Why

⏰ ~4 min

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

"The answer is B. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what a story, poem, or play is about, in a word or two.

The theme is the lesson or message the text teaches, in a full sentence.

The best supporting detail is specific to the story's lesson, not a moral that could fit every story.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "The Mystery of the Traveling Shell"

This week we study **Evidence for a basic theme**. A theme is a global life lesson, and details should support that lesson in this story. STAAR asks: **Which detail best supports the theme of the story?** Watch for **Generic moral that fits many stories**. A strong theme is: **careful questions and evidence can help people solve mysteries about the past**.

This deck teaches **finding theme the STAAR way** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

~5 min

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

"This week we are choosing evidence for a theme. The best detail is specific to the story and helps prove its lesson."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will learn why a true but generic moral may still be a trap when the question asks for evidence from this story."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for the Prepare Cluster Module 4 . a class or student copy of "The Mystery of the Traveling Shell" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student how a detail can be true but still not support a particular theme.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a detail that supports a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice the strongest kind of evidence.

Read the line. Notice how Emsy's actions turn a surprising object into evidence for a conclusion.

"A strong conclusion needed more than imagination; it needed evidence that fit together logically."

I CAN | I can notice evidence that belongs to this story's lesson.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice a detail that supports a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A supporting detail should connect to the exact lesson, not just sound wise."

▸ *Students underline evidence and fit together, then explain how those words connect to the theme.*

ANSWER KEY: The line says that evidence must fit together logically, which supports the theme.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what kind of evidence the line says Emsy needs.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may pick any positive sentence. A generic moral is not the best support for this theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Does every true sentence support this theme? No. It must connect to this mystery and its evidence.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about spotting story-specific evidence. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which other detail shows evidence fitting together.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a detail that supports a specific theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose the detail that supports the theme.

STAAR asks: **Which detail best supports the theme of the story?** Look for a detail about questions, evidence, and solving this mystery.

"The information panel explained that people connected with Poverty Point traveled along major waterways."

A People should always try their best. • **B** Emsy likes mysteries. • **C** The map showed rivers that could have helped people move the shell.

I CAN | I can reject a generic moral and choose story evidence.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose a detail that supports a specific theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"The best detail should prove this story's idea, not fit every story in the world."

▸ *Students choose privately, then label the generic moral beside one wrong choice.*

ANSWER KEY: C. The map showed rivers that could have helped people move the shell.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why A could fit many stories but C fits this mystery.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose A because it sounds like a good rule. A broad moral is not specific evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What makes C stronger? It explains how the shell could travel in this story.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about selecting story-specific evidence. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask what question the river detail helps answer.

WEDNESDAY • INDEPENDENT
THEME

THEME

WEEK 4 of 36
TEKS 3.8(A) · Slide 4 of 10

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can explain how one detail supports a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show why the detail fits.

Explain how the river detail supports the theme that careful evidence can solve mysteries about the past.

"Rivers were transportation routes long before highways or airplanes existed."

I CAN | I can connect a specific detail to the story's larger lesson.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 · Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can explain how one detail supports a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Good evidence does a job. It helps answer a question in the story."

▸ *Students write the mystery question and explain how rivers help answer it.*

ANSWER KEY: Rivers explain possible travel, so the detail helps solve the shell mystery.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what the rivers help Emsy understand.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may say rivers are interesting without explaining their evidence job.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How do I prove a detail supports a theme? Explain how it helps the story reach its lesson.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about explaining evidence for a theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask what other travel evidence appears later.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a theme and connect it to evidence."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own the evidence-based theme.

Write a theme for the whole story in a full sentence. Then name the kind of detail that supports it.

"Suddenly, the mysterious shell did not seem misplaced at all."

I CAN | I can write a lesson that is supported by this story's clues.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a theme and connect it to evidence."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A theme is a lesson. A supporting detail is a clue that makes the lesson believable here."

▸ *Students write the theme and name one story-specific clue on the OWN row.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Careful questions and evidence can help people solve mysteries about the past.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why the chosen clue belongs to this story instead of every story.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write Always do your best. That moral is too general for the evidence task.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What should a supporting detail answer? It should answer how this story proves the theme.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about writing a supported theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to add a second clue to strengthen the answer.

FRIDAY • REFLECTIVE (Highly Independent)
THEME

THEME

WEEK 4 of 36
TEKS 3.8(A) · Slide 6 of 10

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a specific theme against a generic moral."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against a generic moral.

A student chooses: **People should always try their best.** Explain why it is a trap for this story.

"Perhaps people at Poverty Point had traveled enormous distances themselves, or perhaps objects had moved from community to community through repeated exchanges."

I CAN | I can prove why a broad moral is not the best support.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a specific theme against a generic moral."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A generic moral may be true, but the best theme must be supported by this text."

▸ *Students name the trap and replace the generic moral with a story-specific theme.*

ANSWER KEY: Generic moral that fits many stories. It does not use the mystery's questions or evidence.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask which words in the trap could fit almost any story.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept the moral because it sounds positive. Positive is not the same as supported.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How can I spot this trap? Ask whether the answer uses details unique to this story.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending specific evidence. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to make the generic moral fit this mystery.

THEME

Find the best evidence on your own.

Write the theme in a full sentence. Copy one detail that specifically supports it and explain the connection.

Go back to the reading.
Write the theme in a full sentence.
Copy one specific detail and explain how it supports the theme.

I CAN | I can choose story-specific evidence for a theme and explain the connection.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Write the lesson, copy one specific detail, and explain how that detail does the work of proof."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **The topic is solving a mystery.** The words evidence that fit together logically point to the theme about using clues and careful questions.

CHOOSE **C.** The map showed rivers that could have helped people move the shell.

SHOW **The river detail gives a real way the shell could travel from the coast to Poverty Point.** It is evidence that helps solve the mystery.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Careful questions and evidence can help people solve mysteries about the past.

DEFEND **Generic moral that fits many stories.** Trying your best is not the specific lesson supported by this mystery. The details support using questions and evidence to solve a problem about the past.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Theme: Careful questions and evidence can help people solve mysteries about the past. Detail: Rivers were transportation routes long before highways or airplanes existed. Connection: Rivers explain how the shell could travel.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 · Review the Answers

~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"The label explained that the shell came from a coastal environment. Poverty Point, however, was located inland. ... Rivers were transportation routes long before highways or airplanes existed."

Which detail best supports the theme that careful evidence can help people solve mysteries about the past?

A Emsy studied several clues before making her conclusion.

B People should always try their best.

C The shell was displayed behind glass.

D Emsy moved to the next display.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is A.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing a positive moral because it sounds wise, even though it could fit many stories.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is A.

A **Emsy studied several clues before making her conclusion.** **Correct.**
Correct. Studying several clues shows how careful evidence helps solve this mystery.

B **People should always try their best.**
Generic moral that fits many stories. It sounds positive but is not supported by this story's specific evidence.

C **The shell was displayed behind glass.**
Setting or event, not theme. The display case is a setting detail and does not help explain the shell's journey.

D **Emsy moved to the next display.**
Setting or event, not theme. This action does not show how evidence supports the story's lesson.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 ·
The Answer, and Why

⏰ ~4 min

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

"The answer is A. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

TEKS 3.8(A)
THEME • STANDARDS SWEEP TEACHING DECK

THEME

WEEK 5 of 36
Grade 3 · Cluster 1 · Module 1

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what a story is about, in a word or two.

The theme is the lesson or message the story teaches, in a full sentence.

A good theme fits the whole story, not just one event or place.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "The Recess Question"

A **topic** is what a story is about, such as recess or friendship. A **theme** is a lesson that fits the whole story, such as **listening to others can help a group make a good choice**. STAAR may ask: **What problem does the main character face, and what does it teach?** Trap this week: **Setting or event, not theme**.

This deck teaches **finding theme the STAAR way** across the five RPLD thinking levels:
NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

⏰ ~5 min

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

"This week we will connect a character's problem to the theme. The problem is what needs to be solved. The theme is the lesson it teaches."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will practice stepping back from one event and asking what the whole story teaches about making choices together."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 1 Module 1 . a class or student copy of "The Recess Question" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to name a problem from a familiar story and a lesson it teaches.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a character's problem and its lesson."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice the problem and lesson.

Read the line. Beth notices a problem when she sees Lily alone. What bigger lesson might grow from this moment?

"'I think Lily might need someone to play with,' Beth said."

I CAN | I can move from what happens in a story to what it teaches.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice a character's problem and its lesson."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"The problem is what needs to be solved. The theme is the lesson we can carry beyond the playground."

▸ *Students name the problem, then circle words that hint at a lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: Beth sees Lily alone. The moment hints at including someone who needs a friend.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to state Beth's problem without naming a theme yet.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may call Lily or the playground the theme. Those are story details, not a lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Is Lily the theme? No. Lily is a character. The theme is what the story teaches about people.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about noticing the problem behind a theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask how this problem could matter outside this story.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a theme connected to the character's problem."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose the theme from the problem.

STAAR asks: **What problem does the main character face, and what does it teach?** Which choice gives a lesson, not just an event?

"'Sometimes recess gives us time to get to know someone new,' she said."

A Listening to others can help a group make a good choice • **B** Beth played jump rope at recess • **C** The playground has a fence

I CAN | I can choose the life lesson and avoid a setting or event trap.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose a theme connected to the character's problem."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A theme reaches beyond the story. Which answer could guide people in many groups?"

▸ *Students choose a letter and label one wrong choice as Setting or event, not theme.*

ANSWER KEY: A. Listening to others can help a group make a good choice.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why Beth playing jump rope cannot be the theme.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose B because it happened. An event is evidence, not the lesson itself.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What makes C a setting detail? It names a place feature instead of teaching an idea.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about choosing a lesson from a character problem. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to say the theme without using the words recess or Beth.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can use details to show how a problem teaches a lesson."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show how the group problem teaches.

Explain how the class problem and the students' discussion support a theme about listening before making a group choice.

"Good citizens listen to one another, consider the reasons, and make decisions respectfully."

I CAN | I can connect a character's actions and words to a theme.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 ·

Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can use details to show how a problem teaches a lesson."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A theme is stronger when more than one part of the story supports it."

▸ *Students name two details: Beth changes her thinking, and the class listens before voting.*

ANSWER KEY: Beth listens and rethinks her first choice; the class listens to several perspectives before voting.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask for two details, not just the word listen.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may repeat the theme with no evidence. Ask where the story shows that lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What does Beth do that supports the lesson? She considers new reasons instead of clinging to her first idea.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about connecting details to a theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask whether the class would learn the same lesson if no one listened.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a theme that fits the character's whole problem."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Write the lesson in your own words.

Write a theme for the whole story in a full sentence. Do not name Beth, recess, or the playground.

"She thought about all the things they needed to learn during the school day."

I CAN | I can turn story events into a lesson that applies beyond this story.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a theme that fits the character's whole problem."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Use the story details, then step back. Write what people can learn from the whole problem."

▸ *Students write a theme, then cross out any story-only names or places.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Listening to different reasons can help people make fair group decisions.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student why the theme fits more than one scene.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may summarize the vote. A summary tells what happened; a theme tells what it teaches.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Does a theme need the word recess? No. A global lesson should work outside this story.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about writing a theme from a problem. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to test their theme against the beginning and ending.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme by naming a story-detail trap."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against the trap.

A student wrote this theme: **The class voted on a recess plan.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"'People in a community do not always agree,' she explained."

I CAN | I can explain why an event is not the lesson of the whole story.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

⏰ ~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a theme by naming a story-detail trap."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Setting or event, not theme means the answer tells where or what happened, not what the story teaches."

▸ *Students write the trap name and revise the event into a global lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: Setting or event, not theme. The vote is evidence for the lesson, not the lesson itself.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask students to point to the event and then state the lesson it supports.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept the answer because the vote is important. Important events still are not themes.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How can you repair the trap? Change the event into a lesson about listening and group decisions.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending a theme against an event trap. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask for another event that supports the same theme.

THEME

Find the theme on your own.

Go back to the story. Write the character's problem in a few words. Then write the theme in a full sentence and copy one supporting line.

Go back to the reading.
Write the problem in a few words.
Write the theme in a full sentence and copy one line that supports it.

I CAN | I can connect a character's problem to a theme and prove it with a line.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Name the problem first. Then step back, write the lesson, and prove it with a line."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **Beth notices that Lily is alone and may need a friend.** This event hints that including others can help a group feel connected.

CHOOSE **A.** Listening to others can help a group make a good choice. B is an event, and C is a setting detail.

SHOW **Beth first wants longer recess, but she listens to reasons about learning time and another movement break.** The class hears different views before voting, showing that listening helps groups decide.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Listening to different reasons can help people make fair group decisions.

DEFEND **Setting or event, not theme.** Voting on recess is one event in the story. The lesson is about listening, considering reasons, and making decisions respectfully.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Problem: the class must decide how to use its time. Theme: Listening to different reasons can help people make fair group decisions. Line: Good citizens listen to one another, consider the reasons, and make decisions respectfully.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 · Review the Answers

~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"Beth looked at Lily. ... Good citizens listen to one another, consider the reasons, and make decisions respectfully. ... We looked at a problem. We gathered information. We considered different solutions."

Which statement best describes a theme of the story?

A Beth invited Lily to play jump rope at recess.

B The playground is a place where children can play.

C The story shows that listening to different reasons can help groups make good decisions.

D A class should always choose a longer recess.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is C.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing B because Beth helping Lily is an important event, but it is not the whole lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is C.

A **Beth invited Lily to play jump rope at recess.**
Setting or event, not theme. This is one kind action, not the full lesson about group decisions.

B **The playground is a place where children can play.**
Setting or event, not theme. The playground is a setting, not a life lesson.

C **The story shows that listening to different reasons can help groups make good decisions.** **Correct.**
Correct. The story shows students consider several choices, listen to reasons, and decide respectfully.

D **A class should always choose a longer recess.**
Life lesson not supported by this text. The story considers several solutions and never teaches that longer recess is always best.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 5 of 36 · Cluster 1 · Module 1 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 ·

The Answer, and Why

~4 min

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

"The answer is C. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic tells what a story is about.

The theme is a lesson that fits the whole story.

A character's actions can reveal a lesson that reaches beyond one character.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "The Mystery of the Traveling Shell"

A **topic** is the subject, such as a shell or trade. A **theme** is a full lesson, such as **careful questions and evidence can reveal connections**. STAAR may ask: **What theme do the actions of the main character express?** Trap this week: **One character's view, too narrow**.

This deck teaches **finding theme the STAAR way** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

~5 min

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

"This week we will find theme through a character's actions. Actions are clues to what a story teaches."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will watch Emsy investigate, then step back from her choices to find a lesson that can help many readers."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 1 Module 2 . a class or student copy of "The Mystery of the Traveling Shell" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student what a character's action can teach in a familiar story.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice how a character's actions hint at theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice what the main character does.

Read the line. Emsy chooses observation instead of guessing. What lesson might her action show?

"She loved mysteries, especially those that required observation instead of guessing."

I CAN | I can use what a character does to infer a lesson for many people.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice how a character's actions hint at theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Actions are clues to theme. Ask what the character's choice teaches, not just what the character likes."

▸ *Students write Emsy's action and a possible lesson beside it.*

ANSWER KEY: Emsy observes carefully rather than guessing. This hints that evidence helps people understand mysteries.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what Emsy does before she makes a claim.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write mysteries as the theme. That is a topic, not a lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Does observation name the whole theme? It is an action that helps reveal the lesson.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about reading theme through actions. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask how this action could help someone in another situation.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a theme from a character's repeated actions."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose the lesson in Emsy's actions.

STAAR asks: **What theme do the actions of the main character express?** Choose the lesson that fits Emsy's whole investigation.

"Still, one shell was not enough evidence."

A Emsy likes visiting museums • **B** The shell was found far from the ocean • **C** Careful evidence can help people understand the past

I CAN | I can skip narrow details and select a lesson that reaches beyond one character.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose a theme from a character's repeated actions."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"The correct theme should still make sense if we replace Emsy with another careful thinker."

▸ *Students choose privately, then mark the narrow character view in one wrong choice.*

ANSWER KEY: C. Careful evidence can help people understand the past.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why the shell's location is too small to be the theme.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose B because it starts the mystery. A starting detail is not the lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What makes a statement too narrow? It describes only Emsy's preference or one artifact.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about choosing a theme from repeated actions. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to restate C without using the word evidence.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can connect several actions to one theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show how actions build the theme.

Explain how Emsy's actions across the story support the idea that careful evidence helps people understand the past.

"A strong conclusion needed more than imagination; it needed evidence that fit together logically."

I CAN | I can explain how a character's choices build a lesson over time.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 ·

Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can connect several actions to one theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"One action can hint at theme. A pattern of actions makes the theme stronger."

▸ *Students list two actions and draw an arrow from each to the theme.*

ANSWER KEY: Emsy compares clues and organizes them before concluding that trade carried the shell.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask for two actions, not just the final answer.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may say Emsy solved a mystery. That summarizes the plot but does not explain the lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why does Emsy wait before concluding? She needs evidence that fits together logically.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about showing how actions support theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which action would be missing if Emsy were only guessing.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a theme that reaches beyond one character."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Write the lesson in your own words.

Write a theme for the whole story. Do not make it only about Emsy, the shell, or the museum.

"She drew a box around her final claim."

I CAN | I can turn a character's actions into a lesson for many readers.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a theme that reaches beyond one character."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Use Emsy's actions, then widen the lesson so it can guide someone else."

▸ *Students write a theme and underline the words that make it apply beyond Emsy.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Careful questions and evidence can help people understand connections from the past.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask whether the theme would fit a different person solving a different mystery.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write Emsy solved the shell mystery. That is a summary, not a life lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Can a theme name Emsy? Usually no. One character's view, too narrow is a trap.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about writing a broad theme from character actions. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to connect their theme to a question they might investigate.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme against a one-character trap."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against the narrow view.

A student wrote this theme: **Emsy should always visit museums.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"Artifacts were clues. Maps were clues. Rivers were clues."

I CAN | I can explain why a character's personal preference is too narrow.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a theme against a one-character trap."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"One character's view, too narrow means the answer fits one person's preference, not the whole story's lesson."

▸ *Students name the trap, then revise the answer into a lesson about evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: One character's view, too narrow. Visiting museums is Emsy's interest, not the story's global lesson.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what readers besides Emsy can learn from the story.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept the answer because Emsy likes mysteries. A character's interest is not a theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How do you widen this answer? Replace Emsy's personal choice with a lesson about careful evidence.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending a theme against a narrow view. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to name another narrow answer that starts with Emsy should.

THEME

Find the theme on your own.

Write the topic in one or two words. Then write a theme in a full sentence and copy one line that supports it.

Go back to the reading.
Write the topic in one or two words.
Write the theme in a full sentence and copy one line that supports it.

I CAN | I can tell the topic from the theme and support the theme with a line.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Track what the character does, then widen the lesson beyond that one character."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **Emsy studies clues instead of guessing.** Her action hints that careful observation can lead to a strong understanding.

CHOOSE **C.** Careful evidence can help people understand the past. A and B name a preference or detail, not a global lesson.

SHOW **Emsy studies the map, compares the shell with copper, organizes clues, and checks that they fit.** Her actions show that evidence can support a careful conclusion.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Careful questions and evidence can help people understand connections from the past.

DEFEND **One character's view, too narrow.** The story does not teach everyone to visit museums. It shows that people can use careful evidence to understand the past.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Topic: evidence and trade. Theme: Careful evidence can help people understand connections from the past. Line: A strong conclusion needed more than imagination; it needed evidence that fit together logically.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 ·

Review the Answers

⏰ ~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"She studied the coastline, located Poverty Point, and traced the distance between them with one finger. ... Emsy returned to her notebook and organized her clues. ... A strong conclusion needed more than imagination; it needed evidence that fit together logically."

Which statement best describes a theme of the story?

A Emsy wrote the mystery in a notebook.

B The shell traveled along rivers.

C Everyone should visit a museum to learn history.

D Careful questions and evidence can help people understand the past.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is D.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing A because Emsy's notebook is a detail, but it is too narrow to be the theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is D.

A **Emsy wrote the mystery in a notebook.**
One character's view, too narrow. This is one action Emsy takes, not a lesson for all readers.

B **The shell traveled along rivers.**
Too narrow. This is one possible story detail, not the lesson supported by Emsy's whole investigation.

C **Everyone should visit a museum to learn history.**
One character's view, too narrow. The story does not tell everyone to visit museums.

D **Careful questions and evidence can help people understand the past.** **Correct.**
Correct. Emsy studies several clues and uses them to understand how the shell traveled long ago.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 · The Answer, and Why

~4 min

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

"The answer is D. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is the subject of a story, such as community choices.

The theme is the message about life that the whole story supports.

A true life lesson must be supported by the text, not just sound nice.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "The Recess Question"

A **topic** might be voting or recess. A **theme** is a full message, such as **people should listen to different views before making a group decision**. STAAR asks: **Which sentence best states a theme of the story?** Trap this week: **Life lesson not supported by this text**.

This deck teaches **finding theme the STAAR way** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

⏰ ~5 min

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

"This week we will test a possible theme against the story. A theme must be a life lesson the text really supports."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will practice rejecting answers that sound nice but cannot be proved by the characters' words and actions."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 1 Module 3 . a class or student copy of "The Recess Question" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student how they can prove that a theme fits a story.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a possible theme and look for support."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice the lesson in the discussion.

Read the line. Ask what this statement teaches about people in a community, then check the rest of the story for support.

"'People in a community do not always agree,' she explained."

I CAN | I can tell a true-sounding life lesson from one the story actually teaches.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice a possible theme and look for support."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A theme is not just a nice rule. The story must show it through actions, words, and events."

▸ *Students write a possible lesson and underline two details they would use to test it.*

ANSWER KEY: Different views are normal. The story asks people to listen and consider reasons before deciding.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask students for one later detail that supports the line.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose any kind-sounding rule. The passage must support the exact lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

If a lesson sounds nice but never appears in the story, can it be the theme? No. It is not supported by this text.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about testing a possible theme against the text. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask how the class discussion would need to change to support a different lesson.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a theme that the text truly supports."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose the supported theme.

STAAR asks: **Which sentence best states a theme of the story?** Pick the lesson the whole story supports.

"At first, she had been certain that longer recess was the only good answer."

A Recess is the best part of every school day. • **B** Listening to different views helps groups decide respectfully. • **C** Everyone should always agree with the teacher.

I CAN | I can reject a nice-sounding lesson when the story does not prove it.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose a theme that the text truly supports."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Before choosing, ask: Which answer can I prove with several parts of the story?"

▸ *Students choose a letter and write one line that supports or challenges each choice.*

ANSWER KEY: B. Listening to different views helps groups decide respectfully.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why the story does not teach students to agree with a teacher every time.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may select C because it sounds respectful. The story shows people can disagree while still listening.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What makes C weak? It is a character opinion and does not state the story's larger message.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about checking whether a life lesson is text-supported. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to improve B so it becomes a theme the story supports.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can show how several details support a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show the theme with evidence.

The story supports the theme that people should listen to different views before deciding. Name two details that prove it.

"No one shouted. No one laughed at another person's answer."

I CAN | I can prove that a life lesson is supported by the whole story.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 · Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

⏰ ~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can show how several details support a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Evidence turns a possible theme into a supported theme. Point to what people say and do."

▸ *Students record two details and explain how each connects to the theme.*

ANSWER KEY: The class considers advantages and disadvantages and listens respectfully before voting.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask students to explain the connection, not only list details.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may call the theme supported because it sounds fair. Require text evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why does the class's quiet listening matter? It shows the lesson through action.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about showing text support for a life lesson. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which detail would be strongest evidence and why.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a theme and support it with story details."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Write a supported theme.

Write a theme for the whole story in a full sentence. Then name two details that support it.

"Now she was not so sure."

I CAN | I can make sure my life lesson is truly taught by the text.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 · Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a theme and support it with story details."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A strong theme has a strong proof trail. If you cannot point to the story, revise it."

▸ *Students write a theme and two supporting details on the OWN row.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Listening to different views can help people make respectful group decisions.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to point to two places where the lesson appears.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write a personal rule that the story never teaches. Ask for proof.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How can you test your theme? Find at least two different story details that support it.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about writing and supporting a theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to explain how Beth changes her thinking.

FRIDAY • REFLECTIVE (Highly Independent)
THEME

THEME

WEEK 7 of 36
TEKS 3.8(A) · Slide 6 of 10

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme by checking whether the text supports it."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against an unsupported lesson.

A student wrote this theme: **Everyone should spend all afternoon playing outside.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"Because a school community has many needs,"

I CAN | I can explain why a nice-sounding life lesson is unsupported.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a theme by checking whether the text supports it."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Life lesson not supported by this text means the rule may sound good, but the story does not teach it."

▸ *Students name the trap and copy a detail that disproves the unsupported lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: Life lesson not supported by this text. The passage says a school community has many needs, not only outdoor play.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask students to find a line showing why all-afternoon recess is not supported.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept the answer because recess is enjoyable. Enjoyment does not prove the lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What evidence challenges the trap? The class needs time to read, write, learn mathematics, and study science.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending a theme with text support. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to revise the trap into a true theme.

THEME

Find and support the theme.

Write the topic in one or two words. Write a theme in a full sentence. Then copy two lines that support it.

Go back to the reading.
Write the topic in one or two words.
Write the theme in a full sentence and copy two lines that support it.

I CAN | I can write a supported theme and prove it with two lines.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Write the lesson, then make a proof trail with two lines from the story."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **The line introduces the idea that people have different views.** The story supports a lesson about listening and making group decisions respectfully.

CHOOSE **B.** Listening to different views helps groups decide respectfully. A is an opinion, and C is a life lesson the story does not support.

SHOW **Mrs.** Green asks the students to consider advantages and disadvantages, and the class listens without shouting or laughing. These details support respectful group decisions.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Listening to different views can help people make respectful group decisions. Beth considers several reasons, and the class listens before voting.

DEFEND **Life lesson not supported by this text.** The story values recess, but it also explains that students need time for many subjects and activities.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Topic: community decisions. Theme: Listening to different views can help people make respectful group decisions. Lines: Good citizens listen to one another, consider the reasons, and make decisions respectfully. / No one shouted. No one laughed at another person's answer.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 · Review the Answers

~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"Good citizens listen to one another, consider the reasons, and make decisions respectfully. ... No one shouted. No one laughed at another person's answer. They asked questions and listened."

Which statement best describes a theme of the story?

A The class discusses recess and voting.

B People should listen to different views before making a group decision.

C Everyone should spend all afternoon playing outside.

D Beth likes playing with her friends.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 7 of 36 · Cluster 1 · Module 3 · slide 9 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is B.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing C because playing outside sounds good, but the story does not teach that everyone should do it all afternoon.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is B.

A **The class discusses recess and voting.**
Topic, not theme. These are subjects in the story, not the message about how people should act.

B **People should listen to different views before making a group decision.** **Correct.**
Correct. The class hears perspectives, considers reasons, and listens respectfully before voting.

C **Everyone should spend all afternoon playing outside.**
Life lesson not supported by this text. The story says a school community has many needs, including learning.

D **Beth likes playing with her friends.**
One character's view, too narrow. Beth's preference is one detail, not the lesson for the whole story.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 · The Answer, and Why

⏰ ~4 min

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

"The answer is B. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what a story is about, such as clues or trade.

The theme is a message in a full sentence that fits the whole story.

A strong theme can be supported by more than one detail.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "The Mystery of the Traveling Shell"

A **topic** might be mysteries, maps, or trade. A **theme** is a global life lesson, such as **careful investigation can help people understand the world**. STAAR may ask: **What is a theme of the story? Support it with evidence.** Trap this week: **Generic moral that fits many stories**.

This deck teaches **finding theme the STAAR way** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

⏰ ~5 min

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

"This week we will support theme with evidence. The best theme explains the story's particular clues."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will learn to reject generic morals and build a proof trail from maps, rivers, artifacts, and the character's reasoning."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 1 Module 4 . a class or student copy of "The Mystery of the Traveling Shell" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student how a theme can be specific to one story.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a theme and the evidence that points to it."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice the evidence behind the lesson.

Read the line. Emsy learns that even a small object can reveal a large story. What specific lesson does the investigation support?

"Finally, scarcity gave people a reason to exchange resources."

I CAN | I can connect a story's details to a specific lesson, not a generic rule.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice a theme and the evidence that points to it."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Notice the exact lesson. A generic moral could fit almost any story, so it is not strong enough."

▸ *Students underline the details in the line that make the lesson specific to this story.*

ANSWER KEY: The smallest clues can reveal larger connections about how people traveled, traded, and solved problems.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask which words make this lesson fit this story instead of every story.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write a broad rule such as work hard. It sounds good but does not use this story's evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What makes a moral generic? It could fit many stories without explaining this story's clues.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about noticing a specific evidence-based theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to name one clue that supports the line.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a specific theme supported by the whole story."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose the evidence-based theme.

STAAR asks: **What is a theme of the story?** Choose the lesson that matches the investigation and its clues.

"The word scarcity appeared in bold letters."

A Always work hard and never give up. • **B** The museum has a glass display case. • **C** Careful evidence can reveal how communities connect.

I CAN | I can reject a generic moral and a story detail.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose a specific theme supported by the whole story."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Ask whether the choice explains the shell mystery. If it could fit almost any story, it is too generic."

▸ *Students choose a letter and label B as a generic moral or C as a detail.*

ANSWER KEY: C. Careful evidence can reveal how communities connect.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why work hard and never give up does not explain the clues.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose B because it is positive. Positive is not the same as text-supported.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What does A explain? It connects the clues to the story's ideas about travel and communication.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about selecting a specific theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to add one piece of evidence to choice A.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can support a theme with several connected clues."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show the theme with clues.

Explain how two or more clues support the theme that evidence can reveal connections between communities.

"The information panel explained that people connected with Poverty Point traveled along major waterways."

I CAN | I can explain how evidence builds a specific lesson.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 ·

Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can support a theme with several connected clues."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Evidence should do more than repeat the topic. Explain how the clues build the message."

▸ *Students choose two clues and write how each supports the theme.*

ANSWER KEY: Rivers explain travel; distant materials show exchange. Together they reveal connections between communities.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask students to name two different clues and their shared lesson.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may list clues without explaining them. Require the connection to the theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do two clues help? They show a pattern, not just one surprising object.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about explaining evidence for a theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask what the shell alone could not prove.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a specific theme and support it with evidence."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Write a theme with proof.

Write a theme for the whole story in a full sentence. Add two details that support your idea.

"A strong conclusion needed more than imagination; it needed evidence that fit together logically."

I CAN | I can avoid a generic moral by naming what this story teaches.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a specific theme and support it with evidence."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Name the lesson, then show why these clues matter together."

▸ *Students write a theme and two supporting details on the OWN row.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Careful evidence can help people understand how distant communities connected.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask whether the theme explains at least two different clues.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write a generic moral such as be curious. Ask what this story specifically teaches about curiosity.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How do you make a theme less generic? Connect it to the story's particular pattern of clues.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about writing and proving an evidence-based theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to explain why their theme would not fit every mystery.

FRIDAY • REFLECTIVE (Highly Independent)
THEME

THEME

WEEK 8 of 36
TEKS 3.8(A) · Slide 6 of 10

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a specific theme against a generic moral."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against a generic moral.

A student wrote this theme: **Always do your best.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"Either way, the artifacts suggested communication and connection between people who lived far apart."

I CAN | I can explain why a broad good rule does not fit this evidence closely enough.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a specific theme against a generic moral."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A generic moral is too reusable. A strong theme explains the important details in this particular story."

▸ *Students name the trap and revise the generic moral into a specific theme.*

ANSWER KEY: Generic moral that fits many stories. The answer does not explain the shell, rivers, or traded materials.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask students to name two details the generic moral leaves unexplained.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept the moral because it is true. A true rule still needs support from this text.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How can you repair it? Mention the evidence and the connections it reveals.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending a specific theme against a generic moral. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to create another generic moral and then reject it.

THEME

Find and prove the theme.

Write the topic in one or two words. Write a specific theme in a full sentence. Then copy two lines that support it.

Go back to the reading.
Write the topic in one or two words.
Write a specific theme in a full sentence and copy two lines that support it.

I CAN | I can tell a generic moral from a specific theme and prove my choice.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Write a lesson that explains this story, then prove it with two connected clues."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **The line supports a lesson that careful attention to evidence can reveal important connections about the past.** It fits the shell, maps, rivers, and trade clues.

CHOOSE **C.** Careful evidence can reveal how communities connect. A is a Generic moral that fits many stories, and B is only a detail.

SHOW **The rivers show how people traveled, and distant shells and copper show that materials moved between communities.** Together, the clues support the theme about connections.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Careful evidence can help people understand how distant communities connected. The map, rivers, shells, and copper all support this idea.

DEFEND **Generic moral that fits many stories.** Always do your best could fit almost any story. This story specifically teaches that evidence can reveal how distant people connected.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Topic: ancient trade. Theme: Careful evidence can help people understand how distant communities connected. Lines: The artifacts suggested communication and connection between people who lived far apart. / A strong conclusion needed more than imagination; it needed evidence that fit together logically.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 · Review the Answers

~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"The information panel explained that people connected with Poverty Point traveled along major waterways. ... Either way, the artifacts suggested communication and connection between people who lived far apart. ... A strong conclusion needed more than imagination; it needed evidence that fit together logically."

Which statement best describes a theme of the story?

A The story includes a shell, a map, and rivers.

B People should always do their best.

C Careful evidence can reveal how distant communities connected.

D Emsy enjoys solving mysteries at a museum.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is C.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing B because it sounds wise, but it is a Generic moral that fits many stories.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is C.

A **The story includes a shell, a map, and rivers.**
Topic, not theme. These are subjects and details, not a life lesson.

B **People should always do their best.**
Generic moral that fits many stories. It does not explain the particular clues about travel and exchange.

C **Careful evidence can reveal how distant communities connected.** **Correct.**
Correct. Emsy uses maps, rivers, and artifacts to infer long-distance travel and trade.

D **Emsy enjoys solving mysteries at a museum.**
One character's view, too narrow. This describes Emsy's interest, not a lesson for readers.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 · The Answer, and Why

⏰ ~4 min

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

"The answer is C. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what a story is about, in a word or two.

The theme is the lesson or message the story teaches, in a full sentence.

The test may give me a topic trap, so I check that my theme is a lesson that fits the whole story.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "The Recess Question"

A **topic** might be recess, choices, or voting. A **theme** is a life lesson, such as **listening and thinking can help a group make a good decision**. STAAR asks: **What does the author want readers to learn from the story?** Trap this week: **Topic word, not theme**.

This deck teaches **finding theme the STAAR way** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

⏰ ~5 min

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

"This week we will reread a story and find what the author wants readers to learn. The topic is the subject. The theme is the lesson."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will practice turning a topic like recess into a full theme about listening, thinking, and making decisions together."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 2 Module 1 . a class or student copy of "The Recess Question" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to give a topic and a theme from a story they know.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice words that hint at a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice the bigger lesson.

Read the line. Is **recess** the theme, or does the line hint at a lesson about people?

"For a few minutes, the playground seemed full of nothing but running feet, swinging ropes, bouncing balls, and happy voices."

I CAN | I can look beyond a topic word to find the lesson a story teaches.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice words that hint at a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"The topic names the subject. The theme explains what the story teaches about that subject."

▸ *Students write the topic in one or two words and circle the words that hint at a lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: Recess is the topic. Getting to know someone new hints that including others matters.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to name the topic and the hint words.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may copy recess as the theme. That is a topic word, not a lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Can recess be the whole theme? No. It is a topic. The theme must be a full lesson.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about moving from topic to theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask how the line could teach someone who is not at this school.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a theme instead of a topic word."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose the theme.

STAAR asks: **What does the author want readers to learn from the story?** Choose the lesson that fits the whole story.

"What if we could have another short movement break instead of making recess a lot longer?"

A Listening and thinking can help groups make good decisions • **B** Recess and voting • **C** Beth likes playing outside

I CAN | I can choose the full lesson and avoid a topic trap.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose a theme instead of a topic word."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A theme is a lesson that reaches beyond this classroom. A topic only names what the story discusses."

▸ *Students choose privately, then label one wrong choice with its trap name.*

ANSWER KEY: A. Listening and thinking can help groups make good decisions.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why Recess and voting is not a theme.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may pick B because those words appear in the story. Words from the text are not automatically a theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What is the Topic word, not theme trap? It gives the subject but not the lesson.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about choosing a lesson over a topic. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to say A in their own words.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can show how details support a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show how the story supports the theme.

STAAR asks: **How does the story support the theme** that listening and thinking can help groups make good decisions? Give two details.

"We should consider the advantages and disadvantages of each choice."

I CAN | I can connect two details to the lesson of the whole story.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 · Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can show how details support a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A strong answer builds a proof trail. Name what the class does, then connect it to the lesson."

▸ *Students write two details that show the class thinking before making a decision.*

ANSWER KEY: The class gathers information, considers solutions, and listens before voting.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to name the second detail after the line.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may only say the theme again. They need details from the story.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why does gathering information matter? It shows the class does not decide only from a first wish.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about connecting details to a theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask how Lily's idea adds to the group's thinking.

THURSDAY • ADVANCED
THEME

THEME

WEEK 9 of 36
TEKS 3.8(A) · Slide 5 of 10

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a theme in my own words."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own the theme.

Write a theme for the story in a full sentence. Make it fit the recess problem and the class decision.

"As the class lined up, Max said, 'Recess always feels too short.'"

I CAN | I can write a lesson that fits the whole story, not just recess.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a theme in my own words."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Start with the topic, then ask what the characters learn about it."

▸ *Students write a full-sentence theme on the OWN row.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Listening to different ideas can help people make thoughtful group decisions.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student why their theme fits more than one part of the story.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write a summary such as the class votes. A summary tells what happened; a theme tells the lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How do I make my theme global? Remove names and details that belong only to this classroom.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about writing a whole-story theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to connect the lesson to a group decision they have seen.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme and name the trap in a wrong answer."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against the trap.

A student wrote this theme: **Recess and voting.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"Finally, Mrs. Green handed each student a small paper ballot."

I CAN | I can prove why a topic word is not a theme.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a theme and name the trap in a wrong answer."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A topic word or phrase tells what the story is about. A theme tells the lesson in a full sentence."

▸ *Students write the trap name and revise the answer into a life lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: Topic word, not theme. It names story subjects instead of giving a lesson.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to turn the topic into a theme.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept the answer because both words are important. Important topics still need a lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What question can expose this trap? Ask, 'What does this teach readers?'

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending a theme against a topic trap. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask for a theme that includes the ideas but is not just a list.

THEME

Find the theme on your own.

Go back to the story. Write the topic in one or two words. Then write a theme in a full sentence and copy one line that supports it.

Go back to the reading.
Write the topic in one or two words.
Write the theme in a full sentence. Then copy one line that supports it.

I CAN | I can tell the topic from the theme and support the theme with a line from the story.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Name the topic first. Then write the lesson and prove it with a line from the story."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **Recess is a topic.** The words get to know someone new hint at a lesson about including others.

CHOOSE **A.** Listening and thinking can help groups make good decisions. B is Topic word, not theme, and C is one character's preference.

SHOW **Mrs.** Green says the class needs information and should consider different solutions. Later, the students listen to several perspectives before voting. These details support the theme.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Listening to different ideas can help people make thoughtful group decisions.

DEFEND **Topic word, not theme.** Recess and voting names subjects in the story, but it does not state what readers should learn.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Topic: group decisions. Theme: Listening to different ideas helps groups make thoughtful choices. Line: We considered different solutions.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 ·

Review the Answers

⏰ ~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"We looked at a problem. We gathered information. ... Then we used voting to help make a group decision."

Which statement best describes a theme of the story?

A Listening to different ideas can help groups make good decisions.

B The class talks about recess and voting.

C Recess is a fun part of the school day.

D Every group should choose the same solution.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 9 of 36 · Cluster 2 · Module 1 · slide 9 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is A.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing B because recess and voting appear in the story, but that answer gives a topic, not a theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is A.

A **Listening to different ideas can help groups make good decisions.** **Correct.**
Correct. The class gathers information, listens to different views, and then votes.

B **The class talks about recess and voting.**
Topic word, not theme. These are subjects in the story, not a lesson.

C **Recess is a fun part of the school day.**
Too narrow. This describes one part of the story, not the message about making group decisions.

D **Every group should choose the same solution.**
Opposite. The story shows that people can have different views and still listen respectfully.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 9 of 36 · Cluster 2 · Module 1 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 ·

The Answer, and Why

~4 min

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

"The answer is A. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what a story is about, in a word or two.

The theme is a life lesson in a full sentence.

A fact tells something from the text. A theme tells what the whole story teaches.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "The Mystery of the Traveling Shell"

A **topic** might be shells, maps, or trade. A **theme** is a life lesson, such as **careful evidence can help people understand the past**. STAAR asks: **How is the theme of the story different from a fact the reader learns?** Trap this week: **Topic-adjacent statement as message**.

This deck teaches **finding theme the STAAR way** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

⏰ ~5 min

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

"This week we will separate facts from theme. A fact belongs to the story. A theme is the life lesson the whole story teaches."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will use Emsy's clues to see how facts fit together and point to a lesson about evidence."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 2 Module 2 . a class or student copy of "The Mystery of the Traveling Shell" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to give a fact and a theme from a story they know.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice the difference between a fact and a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice fact versus lesson.

Read the line. Is it a fact about the story, or does it point to a lesson readers can use?

"The seashell probably reached Poverty Point through long-distance trade."

I CAN | I can tell a detail from the larger lesson it helps reveal.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice the difference between a fact and a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A fact stays inside the story. A theme steps back and teaches a lesson beyond one shell or place."

▸ *Students label the sentence FACT and write a possible life lesson beside it.*

ANSWER KEY: The shell's trade route is a fact. It points toward learning from evidence and clues.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask whether the sentence could be true outside this story.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may copy the fact as the theme. A story detail is not automatically a life lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What makes a theme different from a fact? A theme teaches a global lesson instead of naming one story detail.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about separating fact from theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask how this fact helps Emsy solve the mystery.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a theme instead of a fact."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose the life lesson.

STAAR asks: **How is the theme of the story different from a fact the reader learns?** Choose the statement that is a lesson, not a detail.

"A strong conclusion needed more than imagination; it needed evidence that fit together logically."

A Seashells and copper came from far away • **B** Careful evidence can help people understand the past • **C** Poverty Point is in Louisiana

I CAN | I can separate the global lesson from details the reader learns.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose a theme instead of a fact."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Ask which answer teaches something people can use in another situation. That answer is the theme."

▸ *Students choose privately, then mark which choices stay inside the story.*

ANSWER KEY: B. Careful evidence can help people understand the past.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why B reaches beyond the museum display.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may pick A because it is an important clue. Important clues are still facts, not the theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Can a fact be the theme? No. A fact supports the theme, but the theme is the lesson.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about choosing a life lesson over a fact. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to turn A into a broader lesson.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can show how facts support a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show how facts build the theme.

Explain how the facts about the shell, rivers, and other materials support the theme that careful evidence can help people understand the past.

"Artifacts were clues. Maps were clues. Rivers were clues."

I CAN | I can connect several facts to one larger lesson.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 · Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can show how facts support a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Facts are the pieces. Theme is the idea those pieces teach when they fit together."

▸ *Students list two facts and draw an arrow from them to the theme.*

ANSWER KEY: The artifacts, maps, and rivers give Emsy evidence to understand the past.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask for two facts that Emsy uses together.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may list facts without explaining the lesson. Require the connection.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do several facts matter? Together they make a strong conclusion instead of a guess.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about connecting facts to a theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask what Emsy would know if she had only one clue.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a theme that reaches beyond a story fact."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own the theme.

Write a theme for the mystery in a full sentence. Make sure it reaches beyond the shell and the museum.

"No one could ask the original travelers exactly what had happened, but the artifacts could still communicate information."

I CAN | I can write the lesson that the facts work together to show.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a theme that reaches beyond a story fact."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Use the facts to ask what the whole investigation teaches about solving questions."

▸ *Students write a full-sentence theme and underline the words that make it global.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Careful evidence can help people understand how people lived and connected long ago.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why the theme is not just about a shell.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may summarize Emsy's steps. A summary tells events; a theme states the lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What should I remove from a theme? Story-only names and details such as Emsy or Poverty Point.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about writing a theme from facts. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to connect the theme to a new mystery.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme against a fact-like trap."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against the trap.

A student wrote this message: **Trade happened at Poverty Point.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"Suddenly, the mysterious shell did not seem misplaced at all."

I CAN | I can explain why a topic-adjacent statement is not the whole message.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a theme against a fact-like trap."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A fact may be important, but it stays tied to the text. A theme tells what readers can learn from it."

▸ *Students name the trap and revise the statement into a global lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: Topic-adjacent statement as message. It tells what happened in the story, not what the story teaches.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask students to change the answer into a full life lesson.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept the answer because it explains the mystery. Explaining the mystery is not the same as stating the theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What question exposes the trap? Ask, 'Could this lesson apply to another situation?'

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending theme against a fact. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask for a broader lesson supported by the trade evidence.

THEME

Find the theme on your own.

Write one fact from the story. Then write the theme in a full sentence and copy one line that supports it.

Go back to the reading.
Write one fact from the story.
Write the theme in a full sentence. Then copy one line that supports it.

I CAN | I can separate a fact from the theme and support the theme with a line.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Write one fact, then step back and write the lesson that the facts reveal."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **This is a fact or conclusion about the shell.** It helps point toward a broader lesson about using evidence to understand the past.

CHOOSE **B.** Careful evidence can help people understand the past. A is a fact, and C is a fact too.

SHOW **The shell came from far away, rivers carried travelers, and copper also came from a distant place.** Emsy connects these facts to infer trade and understand how people were connected long ago.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Careful evidence can help people understand how people lived and connected long ago.

DEFEND **Topic-adjacent statement as message.** Trade at Poverty Point is a fact or conclusion from this story, not a lesson that applies beyond the story.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Fact: Rivers were transportation routes. Theme: Evidence from many clues can help people understand the past. Line: A strong conclusion needed more than imagination; it needed evidence that fit together logically.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 · Review the Answers

~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"A strong conclusion needed more than imagination; it needed evidence that fit together logically. … The seashell probably reached Poverty Point through long-distance trade. … the smallest object could reveal an enormous story about how people traveled, traded, solved problems, and connected with one another long ago."

Which statement best describes a theme of the story?

A The shell was found at Poverty Point, Louisiana.

B Careful evidence can help people understand the past.

C Rivers were used as transportation routes.

D Emsy wrote clues in a notebook.

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TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 10 of 36 · Cluster 2 · Module 2 · slide 9 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

⏰ ~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is B.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing A because it is a true fact, but the question asks for a theme, not a detail from the story.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is B.

A **The shell was found at Poverty Point, Louisiana.**
Topic-adjacent statement as message. This is a fact from the text, not a life lesson.

B **Careful evidence can help people understand the past.** **Correct.**
Correct. Emsy connects clues from artifacts, maps, and rivers to understand how people lived and traded long ago.

C **Rivers were used as transportation routes.**
Topic-adjacent statement as message. It is a fact that supports the theme, not the broader lesson.

D **Emsy wrote clues in a notebook.**
Too narrow. This is one action by one character, not a theme for readers.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 10 of 36 · Cluster 2 · Module 2 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 · The Answer, and Why

~4 min

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

"The answer is B. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what a story is about, in a word or two.

The theme is a lesson in a full sentence.

A character's change can reveal a theme, but the theme must reach beyond that one character.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "The Recess Question"

A **topic** might be recess, fairness, or choices. A **theme** is a global lesson, such as **listening to others can help people make wiser choices**. STAAR asks: **How does the main character change, and what theme does that show?** Trap this week: **One character's view, too narrow**.

This deck teaches **finding theme the STAAR way** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

~5 min

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

"This week we will watch how Beth changes. A character's change is a clue to the story's theme."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will compare Beth's first opinion with her later thinking, then widen the lesson beyond one character."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 2 Module 3 . a class or student copy of "The Recess Question" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student how a character's change can reveal a theme.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

MONDAY • FOUNDATIONAL (Emerging)
THEME

THEME

WEEK 11 of 36
TEKS 3.8(A) · Slide 2 of 10

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice how a character changes."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice Beth's change.

Read the line. What does Beth begin to understand that she did not consider at first?

"At first, she had been certain that longer recess was the only good answer."

I CAN | I can use a character's change to infer a lesson for many people.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 11 of 36 · Cluster 2 · Module 3 · slide 2 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice how a character changes."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A change is a clue. Ask what the character learns, then widen that learning into a life lesson."

▸ *Students write Beth's first view and her later thinking in two short phrases.*

ANSWER KEY: Beth changes from wanting one answer to considering Lily, learning time, and other choices.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what Beth thinks about before making her choice.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write Beth likes recess as the theme. That is one character's view, too narrow.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Does Beth's opinion by itself make a theme? No. We need the lesson shown by her change.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about reading theme through character change. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask how Beth's thinking could help someone in another group.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a theme from a character's change."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose the lesson in Beth's change.

STAAR asks: **How does the main character change, and what theme does that show?** Choose the lesson that fits the whole story.

"Now she was not so sure."

A Considering other people's ideas can lead to better choices • **B** Beth wants longer recess • **C** Lily joins a jump-rope game

I CAN | I can look past one character's opinion to find the larger lesson.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose a theme from a character's change."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A theme should explain Beth's change and also make sense for people beyond Beth."

▸ *Students choose privately, then label B with the trap name.*

ANSWER KEY: A. Considering other people's ideas can lead to better choices.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why Beth wants longer recess is too narrow.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may pick B because it is Beth's first opinion. The story shows her thinking grows beyond it.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What makes an answer too narrow? It tells only one character's view instead of a lesson for readers.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about choosing a theme from change. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to restate A without using Beth's name.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can show how a character's change supports a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show how Beth changes.

Explain how Beth's beginning and ending thoughts support the theme that considering other people's ideas can lead to better choices.

"But now there was more to think about."

I CAN | I can compare a character's first view with the thinking that follows.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 ·

Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can show how a character's change supports a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Show the before and after. The difference between them carries the lesson."

▸ *Students write one beginning thought and one later thought, then connect them to the theme.*

ANSWER KEY: Beth begins certain about longer recess, then considers Lily's idea and the class's learning needs.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what new ideas Beth considers.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may only retell the recess event. Require the change in Beth's thinking.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why does the change matter? It shows Beth learns to consider more than her first choice.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about explaining change as theme evidence. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which line best shows Beth is ready to listen.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a theme from a character's change."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own the theme.

Write a theme for the story in a full sentence. Make it explain Beth's change and fit the class discussion.

"She thought about all the things they needed to learn during the school day."

I CAN | I can turn one character's learning into a lesson for many people.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 · Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a theme from a character's change."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Do not copy Beth's opinion. Ask what her change teaches any person making a choice with a group."

▸ *Students write a full-sentence theme on the OWN row.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Considering different needs and ideas can help people make thoughtful choices.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why the theme fits the whole discussion, not only Beth.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write Beth chooses another solution. That is a plot detail, not the lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How do I widen the lesson? Replace the character's name with people or groups.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about writing a theme from character learning. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to connect the theme to a decision they might make.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme against a narrow character view."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against the trap.

A student wrote this theme: **Beth wants longer recess.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"Beth listened as her classmates spoke."

I CAN | I can explain why one character's opinion is not the whole lesson.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a theme against a narrow character view."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A character's view may be evidence, but it is too narrow if it cannot teach readers beyond that character."

▸ *Students name the trap and revise the answer into a whole-story theme.*

ANSWER KEY: One character's view, too narrow. The answer gives Beth's opinion instead of the lesson from her change.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask students to use Beth's change to repair the answer.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept it because Beth says it. A character's words are not always the theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What should I ask about a narrow answer? Does it explain the character's learning or only repeat a preference?

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending a whole-story theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask for a theme that includes Beth's first view and her later thinking.

THEME

Find the theme on your own.

Write how Beth changes. Then write the theme in a full sentence and copy one line that shows the change.

Go back to the reading.
Write how Beth changes.
Write the theme in a full sentence. Then copy one line that shows the change.

I CAN | I can explain a character's change, infer a theme, and support it with a line.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Show the before and after. Then write the lesson that the change teaches."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **Beth first wants longer recess only.** Later she thinks about Lily and classroom learning, so she becomes more open to other ideas.

CHOOSE **A.** Considering other people's ideas can lead to better choices. B is One character's view, too narrow, and C is one event.

SHOW **Beth first agrees that recess should be longer.** After hearing about school needs and Lily's idea, she thinks about several perspectives before choosing. Her change supports the theme.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Considering different needs and ideas can help people make thoughtful choices.

DEFEND **One character's view, too narrow.** Beth's first opinion is only one part of the story. The story shows her listening to other ideas and thinking more carefully.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Change: Beth moves from one certain answer to considering many needs. Theme: Listening to different ideas can improve group choices. Line: Now she was not so sure.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 ·

Review the Answers

~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"At first, she had been certain that longer recess was the only good answer. ... Now she was not so sure. ... She thought about all the things they needed to learn during the school day."

Which statement best describes a theme of the story?

A Beth enjoys recess with her friends.

B The class has three choices about recess.

C People should always choose what they want first.

D Considering different ideas can help people make thoughtful choices.

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TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 11 of 36 · Cluster 2 · Module 3 · slide 9 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is D.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing A because it is true about Beth, but it is one character's view, too narrow, not a whole-story theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is D.

A **Beth enjoys recess with her friends.**
One character's view, too narrow. This describes Beth's feeling, not the lesson from her change.

B **The class has three choices about recess.**
Topic word, not theme. It names a story detail instead of stating a life lesson.

C **People should always choose what they want first.**
Opposite. Beth learns to consider other people and the class's needs before choosing.

D **Considering different ideas can help people make thoughtful choices.** **Correct.**
Correct. Beth changes when she listens to other perspectives and thinks about the needs of the whole class.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 11 of 36 · Cluster 2 · Module 3 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 ·

The Answer, and Why

~4 min

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

"The answer is D. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what each story is about, in a word or two.

The theme is a life lesson in a full sentence.

A shared theme must be supported by both stories, not just one.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "The Recess Question and The Mystery of the Traveling Shell"

The two stories have topics such as choices, clues, and connections. A shared **theme** is a lesson both stories teach, such as **listening and evidence can help people solve problems**. STAAR asks: **What theme do both stories share?** Trap this week: **Plausible life lesson, unsupported**.

This deck teaches **finding theme the STAAR way** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

⏰ ~5 min

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

"This week we will compare two stories. A shared theme is a lesson both texts teach."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will build two proof piles, using the recess discussion and the traveling shell investigation to find one shared lesson."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 2 Module 4 . a class or student copy of "The Recess Question" and "The Mystery of the Traveling Shell" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student how they can prove that a theme belongs to two stories.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a possible shared theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice a lesson in both stories.

Read the line from the first story. What lesson about group choices might connect to Emsy's careful investigation?

"People in a community do not always agree,"

I CAN | I can look for a lesson that both stories support.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice a possible shared theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"For a shared theme, make two proof piles, one for each story."

▸ *Students write one detail from each story that could support the same lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: The class listens through disagreement, and Emsy considers several clues before concluding.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask for one matching detail from the shell story.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose a nice lesson that fits only one story. A shared theme needs proof from both.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Can one story prove a shared theme? No. Both stories must support it.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about finding a shared theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask how each story shows people solving a question.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a theme shared by two stories."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose the shared theme.

STAAR asks: **What theme do both stories share?** Choose the lesson supported by the class discussion and the shell investigation.

"A strong conclusion needed more than imagination; it needed evidence that fit together logically."

A Museums are interesting places to visit • **B** Every problem can be solved quickly • **C** Listening and evidence can help people solve problems

I CAN | I can check that one life lesson fits both texts.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose a theme shared by two stories."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Test the choice twice. What line from the recess story proves it? What line from the shell story proves it?"

▸ *Students choose privately and make one proof note for each story.*

ANSWER KEY: C. Listening and evidence can help people solve problems.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask which story detail proves C in the recess story.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose A because Emsy is in a museum. A place in one story cannot prove a shared theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What makes a shared theme strong? Both stories teach it through their details and actions.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about comparing themes across two texts. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to explain C without naming either story.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can show how two stories support one theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show the shared theme.

Explain how both stories support the theme that listening and evidence can help people solve problems.

"We looked at a problem. We gathered information."

I CAN | I can use one detail from each story to prove a shared lesson.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 ·

Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can show how two stories support one theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Name one proof from each text. Then say what lesson they share."

▸ *Students write two columns, one for each story, and add a supporting detail.*

ANSWER KEY: The class uses information and listening to decide. Emsy uses clues and evidence to solve the mystery.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask for one detail from each story, not two from the same story.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may compare only topics. Recess and shells are topics; the shared theme is the lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why is one detail from each text important? It proves the theme belongs to both stories.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about proving a shared theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask what question both groups are trying to answer.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a theme shared by two stories."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own the shared theme.

Write a theme that both stories support. Do not name a character, place, or object from only one text.

"The information panel explained that people connected with Poverty Point traveled along major waterways."

I CAN | I can write one global lesson that fits both texts.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a theme shared by two stories."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Put both stories on the same proof trail. If your theme needs only one story, it is not shared."

▸ *Students write a full-sentence shared theme and name one proof from each story.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Gathering information and listening to ideas can help people solve problems wisely.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why the theme fits the shell story and the recess story.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write a theme about museums or recess. Those are tied to one text.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How can I check a shared theme? Point to one supporting detail in each story.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about writing a shared theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to replace any story-only word in their theme.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a shared theme with proof from both texts."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against the trap.

A student wrote this shared theme: **Being curious always makes every problem easy.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"Still, one shell was not enough evidence."

I CAN | I can reject a life lesson that sounds good but is not supported by both stories.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a shared theme with proof from both texts."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A shared theme must sound true and be proven twice. Nice words are not enough."

▸ *Students name the trap, then revise the sentence into a shared theme.*

ANSWER KEY: Plausible life lesson, unsupported. Both texts require careful thinking, but neither promises that every problem becomes easy.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask students for one detail that challenges the word easy.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept the answer because curiosity helps Emsy. One helpful idea does not support every claim.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What should I do with words like every? Check whether both texts really prove that broad claim.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending a shared theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to replace easy with a supported idea.

THEME

Find the shared theme on your own.

Write one detail from each story. Then write a shared theme in a full sentence.

Go back to both readings.
Write one detail from each story.
Write a shared theme in a full sentence.

I CAN | I can compare two texts and support a shared theme with both.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Find one proof detail in each text, then write the lesson they share."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **The line suggests that people may have different ideas, so they need to listen and think.** Emsy also considers several clues before making a conclusion.

CHOOSE **C.** Listening and evidence can help people solve problems. A is plausible but unsupported by both stories, and B is too broad.

SHOW **The class listens and gathers information before voting.** Emsy gathers clues and evidence before concluding that trade moved the shell. Both use careful thinking to solve a question.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Gathering information and listening to ideas can help people solve problems wisely.

DEFEND **Plausible life lesson, unsupported.** The stories show that information, listening, and evidence help, but they do not say curiosity makes every problem easy.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Recess detail: The class listens to several perspectives. Shell detail: Emsy organizes her clues. Shared theme: Careful thinking and information help people solve problems.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 · Review the Answers

~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"We looked at a problem. We gathered information. We considered different solutions. ... A strong conclusion needed more than imagination; it needed evidence that fit together logically. ... the artifacts could still communicate information."

Which statement best describes a theme shared by both stories?

A People enjoy spending time with friends and visiting museums.

B Problems should be solved without asking for help.

C Gathering information and considering ideas can help people solve problems.

D Every mystery has an easy answer.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 12 of 36 · Cluster 2 · Module 4 · slide 9 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

⏰ ~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is C.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing A because both stories include familiar places, but the texts do not support that as a shared life lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is C.

A **People enjoy spending time with friends and visiting museums.**
Plausible life lesson, unsupported. The texts include friends and a museum, but they do not teach this as a shared lesson.

B **Problems should be solved without asking for help.**
Opposite. The recess class listens to others, and Emsy uses information from displays and clues.

C **Gathering information and considering ideas can help people solve problems.** **Correct.**
Correct. The class gathers information and hears perspectives, while Emsy gathers clues and evidence to solve questions.

D **Every mystery has an easy answer.**
Plausible life lesson, unsupported. Neither story says that all mysteries or problems are easy.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 12 of 36 · Cluster 2 · Module 4 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 · The Answer, and Why

~4 min

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

"The answer is C. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what a poem is about, in a word or two.

The theme is the lesson or message the poem teaches, in a full sentence.

A strong theme fits the whole poem, not just one word or line.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "Why We Need Laws"

The topic of this poem includes **laws** and fairness. A **theme** is the bigger lesson, such as **fair rules can help communities live safely and fairly**. STAAR asks: **What theme does the poet express in the poem?** Trap this week: **Topic word, not theme**.

This deck teaches **finding theme the STAAR way** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

⏰ ~5 min

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

"This week we will find the theme of a poem. The topic names the subject, but the theme is the lesson."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will read the problem and solution in the poem, then use the lines to defend a full-sentence theme."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 3 Module 1 . a class or student copy of "Why We Need Laws" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to give a topic word and turn it into a theme sentence.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a topic word and look for the theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice the topic and the lesson.

Read the line. Is **rules** the topic or the theme? Notice how the poem points to a bigger lesson.

"Without clear rules to guide what should be done,"

I CAN | I can tell the difference between what a poem is about and what it teaches.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 ·

Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice a topic word and look for the theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A topic names the subject. A theme turns the subject into a life lesson."

▸ *Students write TOPIC: laws or rules and circle words that hint at the lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: Rules are the topic. Guide what should be done hints at a lesson about fair rules.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to name the topic and one hint word.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write laws as the theme. That is only a topic word, not a full lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Can laws be a theme? No. Laws are a topic. The theme explains what the poem teaches about laws.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about noticing the topic and theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask what lesson the poem gives about rules.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a theme that fits the whole poem."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose the theme.

STAAR asks: **What theme does the poet express in the poem?** Choose the full-sentence lesson.

"To write fair rules that everyone would obey."

A Laws and fairness • **B** Fair rules can help communities live safely and fairly • **C** People should never disagree

I CAN | I can choose a full-sentence lesson instead of a topic word.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose a theme that fits the whole poem."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Look for a lesson that reaches beyond the word laws and matches the whole poem."

▸ *Students choose privately, then label one wrong answer with its trap name.*

ANSWER KEY: B. Fair rules can help communities live safely and fairly.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why A is only a topic, not a theme.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose A because laws appear in the poem. A subject word is not the poem's lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What makes B a theme? It teaches what fair rules can do for a community.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about choosing a poem's theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to restate B in different words.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can show how lines support a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show how the poem supports the theme.

Explain how the poem supports the theme that fair rules can help communities live safely and fairly.

"Communities could grow more safe and true."

I CAN | I can connect several poem lines to one lesson.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 · Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can show how lines support a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Put the problem lines and the solution lines together. Both parts help build the theme."

▸ *Students copy two lines, one showing the problem and one showing the result of fair rules.*

ANSWER KEY: The poem contrasts problems without rules with safer communities guided by laws.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask for one line that shows the problem before laws.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may repeat only the theme. Ask for exact lines that prove it.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why use more than one line? The whole poem shows both the need for rules and their benefit.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about showing theme evidence. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which words show the community improved.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a theme in my own words."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own the poem's theme.

Write the lesson of the whole poem in a full sentence. Do not write only the topic word.

"With laws to guide what people say and do,"

I CAN | I can write a life lesson that fits every part of the poem.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a theme in my own words."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Start with laws and fairness, then ask what the poem teaches about them."

▸ *Students write a full-sentence theme on the OWN row.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Fair rules can help people solve disagreements and live together peacefully.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student why their theme fits the beginning and ending.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may summarize the poem. A summary tells events; a theme tells the lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How do I avoid a topic word? Make your answer a complete lesson sentence.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about writing a theme independently. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to connect the poem's lesson to a community they know.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme and name a trap."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against the trap.

A student wrote this theme: **Laws and fairness.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"Many small problems quickly grew to one."

I CAN | I can explain why a topic word is not a theme.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a theme and name a trap."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A theme must tell what the poem teaches, not just name what appears in it."

▸ *Students write the trap name and revise the topic words into a theme sentence.*

ANSWER KEY: Topic word, not theme. The answer names subjects but gives no lesson.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to turn the topic into a full theme.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept the answer because both words appear in the poem. Appearance does not make a theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What question can I ask? What does the poem teach about this topic?

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending the theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to improve the trap without naming only laws.

THEME

Find the theme on your own.

Write the topic in one or two words. Then write the theme in a full sentence and copy one line that supports it.

Go back to the poem.
Write the topic in one or two words.
Write the theme in a full sentence. Then copy one line that supports it.

I CAN | I can tell a topic from a theme and support the theme with a poem line.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Name the topic first. Then write the bigger lesson and prove it with a poem line."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **Rules are a topic word.** The line hints that clear rules can guide people and prevent problems.

CHOOSE **B.** Fair rules can help communities live safely and fairly. A is Topic word, not theme. C is Opposite because the poem begins with disagreements.

SHOW **The poem says problems grew when there were no clear rules.** It then says fair rules helped communities grow safer, so the lines support the theme.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Fair rules can help people solve disagreements and live together peacefully.

DEFEND **Topic word, not theme.** Laws and fairness names subjects in the poem, but it does not state the lesson the poem teaches about them.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Topic: laws. Theme: Fair rules can help communities solve problems and live peacefully. Line: Communities could grow more safe and true.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 ·

Review the Answers

~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

**"So people gathered, searching for a way, To write fair rules that everyone would obey. ...
With laws to guide what people say and do, Communities could grow more safe and true."**

Which statement best describes a theme of the poem?

A Fair rules can help communities live safely and fairly.

B Laws and fairness are important words.

C People should always agree with one another.

D The poem takes place in a town.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is A.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing B because laws and fairness appear in the poem, even though those words do not state a lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is A.

A **Fair rules can help communities live safely and fairly.** **Correct.**
Correct. The poem shows problems without rules and safer communities with fair laws.

B **Laws and fairness are important words.**
Topic word, not theme. It names ideas in the poem but does not state a lesson.

C **People should always agree with one another.**
Opposite. The poem begins with disagreements and explains how rules can guide them.

D **The poem takes place in a town.**
Setting or event, not theme. A place is not the life lesson of the poem.

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TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 13 of 36 · Cluster 3 · Module 1 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 · The Answer, and Why

⏰ ~4 min

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

"The answer is A. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what a poem is about, in a word or two.

The theme is the lesson or message the poem teaches, in a full sentence.

Supporting lines must connect to the lesson, not just repeat a word from it.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "Why We Need Laws"

The poem's theme is that **fair rules can help communities solve problems and treat people well**. STAAR asks: **Which lines best support the theme of the poem?** Trap this week: **Word association from the lines**. A line may contain a theme word without proving the theme.

This deck teaches **finding theme the STAAR way** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

⏰ ~5 min

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

"This week we will prove a poem's theme with strong lines. A line must support the lesson, not just share a word."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will compare problem lines with solution lines and choose the evidence that best builds the theme."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 3 Module 2 . a class or student copy of "Why We Need Laws" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student what makes a line strong evidence for a theme.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a line that points toward a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice lines that build a theme.

Read the line. How does it connect to the theme that fair rules can help communities solve problems and treat people well?

"And fairness often seemed to tumble down."

I CAN | I can connect a poem line to the lesson it helps build.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice a line that points toward a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Do not match only one word. Explain what the whole line shows about the lesson."

▸ *Students write what problem this line shows and connect it to the theme.*

ANSWER KEY: The line shows that fairness was being lost, which creates the need for helpful rules.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what problem the line shows.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may pick any line with the word fairness. Word association is not proof by itself.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Does a line prove a theme just because it uses one theme word? No. Explain the line's meaning.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about noticing theme evidence. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to find a line that shows the solution.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose lines that strongly support a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose the strongest supporting lines.

STAAR asks: **Which lines best support the theme of the poem?** Choose the lines that show how fair rules help people.

"The rules helped neighbors settle what was fair,"

A Long ago people argued over land and things, • **B** Voices grew loud like clashing, noisy rings. • **C** The rules helped neighbors settle what was fair,

I CAN | I can use the meaning of a line, not just a matching word.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose lines that strongly support a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Ask what each choice proves. The best evidence explains how rules help the community."

▸ *Students choose privately and underline the words that show the rules' effect.*

ANSWER KEY: C. The rules helped neighbors settle what was fair,

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why C is stronger than a line that only shows disagreement.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose B because it sounds dramatic. Strong evidence must connect to the lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What makes evidence strong? It shows the action or result that supports the theme.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about selecting supporting lines. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to explain C without repeating the theme.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can explain how lines support a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show how the lines support the theme.

Explain how the poem's lines support the theme that fair rules can help communities solve problems and treat people well.

"People learned how to work and live as one,"

I CAN | I can use the meaning of several lines as evidence.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 ·

Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can explain how lines support a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Translate the line into your own words, then connect those words to the lesson."

▸ *Students copy one line and write how it supports the theme in their own words.*

ANSWER KEY: Living and working together shows the positive result of fair rules.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to explain the phrase work and live as one.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may say the line supports the theme only because it contains the word people. Explain its full meaning.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What does this line show people doing? They learn to work and live together.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about explaining line evidence. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which earlier problem this line helps answer.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can choose and explain evidence for a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own the evidence.

Write a theme for the poem and copy two lines that support it. Explain the connection.

"They helped bring order year after year."

I CAN | I can show how lines across the poem build one lesson.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can choose and explain evidence for a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Strong evidence can come from different parts of the poem. Make sure both lines prove the same lesson."

▸ *Students write a theme, two lines, and a short connection for each line.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Fair rules can help communities live together peacefully.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why the two selected lines are better than a line that only mentions rules.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may copy lines without explaining them. Evidence needs a connection to the theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How do I know a line supports a theme? I can say what the line shows and how that proves the lesson.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about building a theme with evidence. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to find evidence from both the beginning and ending.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can reject weak evidence and name the trap."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against the trap.

A student chose this line because it contains a theme word: **With laws to guide what people say and do,** Explain why the choice needs more support and name the trap.

"Strong voices won while quiet ones stayed brittle."

I CAN | I can explain why matching a word is not enough proof.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can reject weak evidence and name the trap."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A matching word can be a clue, but the whole meaning must support the theme."

▸ *Students name the trap and replace the weak evidence with a stronger line.*

ANSWER KEY: Word association from the lines. Seeing laws is not enough; the line must prove the lesson.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask students to name a stronger line and explain why it works.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may think any line containing laws is the best evidence. Look for the result of the laws.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What should I ask about a matching word? What does the line show, and does that support the whole theme?

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending evidence choices. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to compare the weak line with a line about rights.

THEME

Find the strongest proof on your own.

Write the theme in a full sentence. Then copy two lines that support it and explain how each line helps.

Go back to the poem.
Write the theme in a full sentence.
Copy two supporting lines and explain each one.

I CAN | I can select lines that truly support a theme and explain why.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Read the whole line, explain what it shows, and connect it to the theme."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **This line shows the problem before fair rules.** It helps build the theme because the poem will explain how rules can restore fairness.

CHOOSE **C.** The rules helped neighbors settle what was fair, A and B show the problem, but C best supports the theme's solution.

SHOW **The line shows that people learned to live and work together.** Along with the lines about rights and fair treatment, it supports the theme about helpful rules.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Fair rules can help communities live together peacefully. The lines about settling what is fair and bringing order support this theme.

DEFEND **Word association from the lines.** The word laws appears, but this line is only a fragment. Strong evidence explains the helpful result of fair rules, such as rights or order.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Theme: Fair rules can help communities live together peacefully. Proof: The rules helped neighbors settle what was fair, and They helped bring order year after year.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 · Review the Answers

⏰ ~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"The rules helped neighbors settle what was fair, And gave each person rights that all could share. ... People learned how to work and live as one, And solve their problems before fights had begun."

Which lines best support the theme that fair rules help communities live together?

A Long ago people argued over land and things, Voices grew loud like clashing, noisy rings.

B Some took more food while others had too little, Strong voices won while quiet ones stayed brittle.

C The rules helped neighbors settle what was fair, And gave each person rights that all could share.

D Disagreements spread like storms across the town, And fairness often seemed to tumble down.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is C.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing a line because it contains the word laws, without checking what the line actually proves.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is C.

A **Long ago people argued over land and things, Voices grew loud like clashing, noisy rings.**
Word association from the lines. These lines mention the conflict but do not show how fair rules help.

B **Some took more food while others had too little, Strong voices won while quiet ones stayed brittle.**
Word association from the lines. It shows unfairness, not the helpful result of rules.

C **The rules helped neighbors settle what was fair, And gave each person rights that all could share.** **Correct.**
Correct. These lines directly show rules solving unfairness and helping people share rights.

D **Disagreements spread like storms across the town, And fairness often seemed to tumble down.**
Word association from the lines. It shows the problem before rules, not the theme's solution.

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TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 14 of 36 · Cluster 3 · Module 2 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 ·

The Answer, and Why

~4 min

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

"The answer is C. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what a play is about, in a word or two.

The theme is the lesson or message the play teaches, in a full sentence.

A theme fits the whole play, not just the lunchroom or one event.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "The Lunchroom Discoveries"

The play's topic includes science, germs, and milk. Its **theme** is a bigger lesson, such as **scientific discoveries can improve people's lives for many years**. STAAR asks: **What is a theme of the play?** Trap this week: **Setting or event, not theme**.

This deck teaches **finding theme the STAAR way** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

⏰ ~5 min

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

"This week we will find a theme in a play. The topic may be science, but the theme is the lesson about science."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will listen to the characters' ideas and avoid confusing the lunchroom setting with the play's bigger message."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 3 Module 3 . a class or student copy of "The Lunchroom Discoveries" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to name the setting and then name a theme.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a lesson in a play."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice the play's bigger lesson.

Read the line. What does it suggest about the work of scientists beyond this lunchroom conversation?

"One discovery ended up helping millions of people."

I CAN | I can move from a science topic to a life lesson.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice a lesson in a play."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A theme reaches beyond the characters and setting. Ask what a reader can learn from the whole play."

▸ *Students write the topic and circle words that point to the larger lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: The line points to the theme that discoveries can help many people.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask who benefits from the discovery in the line.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may answer milk or germs. Those are topics, not the play's full lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What makes this bigger than a topic? It tells what one discovery can do for people.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about noticing a play's theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to name another discovery that helps people.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a theme that fits the whole play."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose the theme.

STAAR asks: **What is a theme of the play?** Choose the lesson that fits the whole conversation.

"It shows how one person's work can help lots of other people."

A Scientific discoveries can improve people's lives for many years. • **B** Milk and germs • **C** Students eat lunch in a cafeteria

I CAN | I can skip a setting or event and choose the play's lesson.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose a theme that fits the whole play."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Which choice teaches something that can be true beyond this play?"

▸ *Students choose privately and label the setting or event trap.*

ANSWER KEY: A. Scientific discoveries can improve people's lives for many years.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why C is not a theme.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose C because the lunchroom appears in the play. A setting is not a lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What is the difference between an event and a theme? An event happens; a theme tells what the story teaches.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about selecting a play's theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to explain A without naming Pasteur.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can show how dialogue supports a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show how the play supports the theme.

Explain how the play supports the theme that scientific discoveries can improve people's lives for many years.

"Scientists continue asking questions and looking for answers."

I CAN | I can connect different moments in a play to one lesson.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 · Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can show how dialogue supports a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Follow the idea through the play: a question leads to a discovery, and the discovery helps people."

▸ *Students name two details from the dialogue that support the theme.*

ANSWER KEY: The play connects questions and discoveries with safer food and help for millions.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask for one detail besides the milk carton.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may repeat only the theme. Require two moments from the play.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why does the ending matter to the theme? It reminds us that the discovery still improves lives today.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about showing a play's theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask how the students' thinking changes during the play.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a theme in my own words."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own the play's lesson.

Write a theme for the whole play in a full sentence. Do not name only the lunchroom or milk.

"Scientists often build on what other people have learned."

I CAN | I can write a life lesson that fits the whole play.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 · Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a theme in my own words."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Use the topic as a starting point, then ask what the play teaches about it."

▸ *Students write their theme on the OWN row and underline the life lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: New discoveries can build on earlier work and help people for a long time.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student why the theme fits more than one scene.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write a summary of what Pasteur did. A theme is a lesson, not a retelling.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Would your theme fit another discovery? If yes, it may be global enough.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about writing a play's theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to connect the theme to a discovery they know.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme and explain a trap."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against the trap.

A student wrote this theme: **Eating lunch in a cafeteria.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"The cafeteria becomes louder as students finish their lunches."

I CAN | I can tell a setting or event from a lesson.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a theme and explain a trap."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A setting tells where. An event tells what happens. A theme tells what the whole play teaches."

▸ *Students name the trap and revise the setting into a global theme.*

ANSWER KEY: Setting or event, not theme. The lunchroom is a place, not the play's lesson.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask students to replace the setting with a lesson.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept it because lunch appears often. Repeated setting details still do not make a theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What question separates setting from theme? Does the answer tell where, or what the play teaches?

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending a play's theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to prove the real theme with two dialogue lines.

THEME

Find the theme on your own.

Write the topic in one or two words. Then write a theme in a full sentence and copy one line that supports it.

Go back to the play.
Write the topic in one or two words.
Write the theme in a full sentence. Then copy one line that supports it.

I CAN | I can tell the topic from the theme and support the theme with dialogue.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Name the topic, turn it into a lesson, and prove the lesson with a line from the play."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **The line suggests that one discovery can help many people, even beyond the person who made it.**

CHOOSE **A.** Scientific discoveries can improve people's lives for many years. B is a topic, and C is Setting or event, not theme.

SHOW **The students explain that discoveries solve problems, make food safer, and help millions.** Their discussion shows that science can improve lives over time.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: New discoveries can build on earlier work and help people for a long time.

DEFEND **Setting or event, not theme.** The cafeteria is where the play happens, but eating lunch is not the lesson about discoveries helping people.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Topic: discoveries. Theme: Scientific discoveries can improve people's lives for many years. Line: One discovery ended up helping millions of people.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 · Review the Answers

⏰ ~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"One discovery ended up helping millions of people. ... It shows how one person's work can help lots of other people. ... The students leave the cafeteria thinking about how a discovery made long ago continues to improve lives today."

Which statement best describes a theme of the play?

A Milk is a drink students have at lunch.

B Scientific discoveries can improve people's lives for many years.

C Students talk in a school cafeteria.

D Every science question has an easy answer.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 15 of 36 · Cluster 3 · Module 3 · slide 9 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is B.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing C because the cafeteria is where the play happens, even though a setting is not a theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is B.

A **Milk is a drink students have at lunch.**
Topic, not theme. Milk is a detail in the play, not the lesson about discoveries.

B **Scientific discoveries can improve people's lives for many years. Correct.**
Correct. The play shows a discovery helping millions and continuing to improve lives today.

C **Students talk in a school cafeteria.**
Setting or event, not theme. It tells where the play happens, not what it teaches.

D **Every science question has an easy answer.**
Generic moral that fits many stories. The play says discoveries can take work, study, and time.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 15 of 36 · Cluster 3 · Module 3 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 · The Answer, and Why

~4 min

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

"The answer is B. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what a play is about, in a word or two.

The theme is the lesson or message the play teaches, in a full sentence.

The ending can show what the characters understand and strengthen the theme.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "The Lunchroom Discoveries"

The play builds a theme that **asking questions and working patiently can lead to discoveries that help people**. STAAR asks: **How does the ending help develop the theme of the play?** Trap this week: **Generic moral that fits many stories**.

This deck teaches **finding theme the STAAR way** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

⏰ ~5 min

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

"This week we will study how a play's ending develops its theme. The ending can gather the lesson into a final thought."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will connect the final advice and ideas to the questions, discoveries, and helpful results from the whole play."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 3 Module 4 . a class or student copy of "The Lunchroom Discoveries" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student what a strong ending can help a reader understand.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice how an ending points to a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice what the ending adds.

Read the ending line. What does it show the students understand about discoveries and their effects?

"The students leave the cafeteria thinking about Louis Pasteur, scientific discoveries, and how one person's ideas can continue helping people many years later."

I CAN | I can use the ending to understand the play's lesson.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice how an ending points to a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"An ending can echo the important idea. Ask what the characters carry with them after the problem or discussion ends."

▸ *Students underline the ending words that repeat the play's bigger idea.*

ANSWER KEY: The ending highlights discoveries from the past continuing to help people.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what idea the students are still thinking about.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may describe only that the students leave. The important part is what they understand as they leave.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How does the ending help? It shows the students connect past discoveries with help for people today.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about noticing an ending's message. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask how the ending would change if the students learned nothing.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can explain how an ending develops a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose how the ending develops the theme.

STAAR asks: **How does the ending help develop the theme of the play?** Choose the best explanation.

"I guess every discovery starts with a question."

A It shows that lunch is almost over. • **B** It connects questions to discoveries that help many people. • **C** It teaches that everyone should agree with the teacher.

I CAN | I can connect the final idea to the play's lesson.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can explain how an ending develops a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Look for the ending's connection to the play's repeated idea, not just the bell or lunch period."

▸ *Students choose privately and underline the words that connect the ending to the theme.*

ANSWER KEY: B. It connects questions to discoveries that help many people.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why A is not the best explanation of the theme.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose A because it is true. A true event can still miss how the ending develops theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What should an ending explanation include? The final detail and the lesson it strengthens.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about explaining how an ending develops theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to connect B to the first scene.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can show how the ending develops a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show the ending's theme connection.

Explain how the ending helps develop the theme that asking questions and working patiently can lead to discoveries that help people.

"And one answer can help a lot of people."

I CAN | I can connect the final advice to the play's earlier details.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 ·

Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can show how the ending develops a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"The ending does not start a new lesson. It gathers the earlier lesson into a final thought."

▸ *Students name the final advice and one earlier detail it connects to.*

ANSWER KEY: Keep asking questions connects curiosity to helpful discoveries.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what action the ending encourages.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may say the ending is only about leaving. Explain the idea the characters take with them.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Does the ending introduce a different topic? No. It returns to questions, answers, and helping people.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about showing an ending's support. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask what earlier line makes the final advice meaningful.

THURSDAY • ADVANCED
THEME

THEME

WEEK 16 of 36
TEKS 3.8(A) · Slide 5 of 10

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a theme and explain the ending."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own the ending's lesson.

Write a theme for the play and explain how the ending helps develop it.

"Sometimes we use them so often that we forget someone had to create them."

I CAN | I can connect the final scene to a global lesson.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a theme and explain the ending."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Write the lesson first. Then explain what the ending reminds readers to understand."

▸ *Students write a theme and two sentences about how the ending develops it.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Asking questions and working patiently can lead to discoveries that help people for many years.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to point to the ending detail that supports their theme.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write that the bell rings. That is an event, not the lesson developed by the ending.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How do I explain an ending? Say what it shows and how that connects to the whole play.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about writing about an ending and theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to explain how the final line reaches beyond the cafeteria.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme with text evidence."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against the trap.

A student says the ending teaches this theme: **People should always try their best.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"I learned more during lunch today than I expected."

I CAN | I can reject a nice lesson that the ending does not specifically support.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a theme with text evidence."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A kind or inspiring sentence is not automatically this play's theme. Match it to the ending's exact idea."

▸ *Students name the generic moral trap and revise the answer to fit the play.*

ANSWER KEY: Generic moral that fits many stories. The ending supports a specific lesson about questions, discoveries, and helping people.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what words in the ending are missing from the trap answer.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept the trap because trying hard is usually good advice. The text must support the exact lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How can I test a generic moral? Ask whether this ending gives specific proof for it.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending a theme from the ending. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to replace the generic moral with one tied to the play.

THEME

Explain the ending on your own.

Write a theme for the play. Then explain how the ending develops that theme, using one ending detail.

Go back to the play.
Write a theme in a full sentence.
Explain how the ending develops the theme with one detail.

I CAN | I can connect the ending to a theme and support my explanation with the text.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Write the theme, then explain what the ending adds and which earlier idea it connects to."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **The ending shows that the students now understand how one person's ideas can keep helping people.** It brings the play's lesson together.

CHOOSE **B.** It connects questions to discoveries that help many people. A is a setting event, and C is Generic moral that fits many stories.

SHOW **Mr.** Reyes tells the students to keep asking questions. The ending connects that advice with the idea that one answer can help many people, strengthening the theme about curious, patient work.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Asking questions and working patiently can lead to discoveries that help people for many years. The ending repeats that answers and ideas can help many people.

DEFEND **Generic moral that fits many stories.** Trying your best is a general idea, but the ending specifically develops the lesson that questions and discoveries can keep helping people.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Theme: Asking questions and working patiently can lead to discoveries that help people. The ending tells the students to keep asking questions and shows that one person's ideas can help people many years later.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 · Review the Answers

~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"Keep asking questions. ... And one answer can help a lot of people. ... The students leave the cafeteria thinking about Louis Pasteur, scientific discoveries, and how one person's ideas can continue helping people many years later."

How does the ending help develop the theme of the play?

A It shows that the students are ready to leave lunch.

B It teaches that everyone should try their best in every situation.

C It connects asking questions and finding answers with discoveries that continue helping people.

D It proves that science is the only important school subject.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 16 of 36 · Cluster 3 · Module 4 · slide 9 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is C.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing B because it sounds like good advice, even though it is a generic moral and not the play's specific lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is C.

A **It shows that the students are ready to leave lunch.**
Setting or event, not theme. Leaving lunch is an event, not the ending's lesson.

B **It teaches that everyone should try their best in every situation.**
Generic moral that fits many stories. The ending gives a more specific idea about questions and discoveries.

C **It connects asking questions and finding answers with discoveries that continue helping people. Correct.**
Correct. The final advice and thoughts return to the play's lesson about helpful discoveries.

D **It proves that science is the only important school subject.**
Too broad. The ending praises questions and discoveries, but it does not dismiss every other subject.

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TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 16 of 36 · Cluster 3 · Module 4 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 · The Answer, and Why

~4 min

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

"The answer is C. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what a poem is about, in a word or two.

The theme is the lesson or message the poem teaches, in a full sentence.

A theme must fit the whole poem, not just a word or one detail.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "Why We Need Laws"

A **topic** is one or two words, like laws or fairness. A **theme** is a lesson that fits the whole poem, like **fair rules help communities live and work together**. STAAR asks: **What is the theme, not the topic, of the poem?** Traps this week: **Topic-adjacent statement as message**, **Too narrow**, and **Too broad**.

This deck teaches **finding theme the STAAR way** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

~5 min

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

"This week we will find a poem's theme the STAAR way. The topic is what the poem is about. The theme is the lesson it teaches."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will practice moving from a subject like laws to a full lesson about how people live together, while watching for close traps."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 4 Module 1 . a class or student copy of "Why We Need Laws" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to name a topic and a full theme from a poem they know.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a clue that points from the topic to a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice the poem's bigger message.

Read the line. Is **rules** the topic or the theme? Notice the words that point toward a lesson.

"The rules helped neighbors settle what was fair,"

I CAN | I can notice how a poem's details point to a lesson.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 ·

Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice a clue that points from the topic to a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A topic names the subject. A theme tells what the poem teaches about that subject."

▸ *Students write TOPIC: rules and underline the words that show the rules help people.*

ANSWER KEY: Rules is the topic. Helped neighbors settle what was fair is a theme clue.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to name the topic and the clue words.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may copy the topic as the theme. The theme must be a complete lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Can rules be the theme? No. Rules is a topic word, not a life lesson.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about moving from topic to theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask for another line that shows why the rules mattered.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a theme that fits the whole poem."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose the poem's theme.

Think about this question: **What is the theme, not the topic, of the poem?**

"When citizens work together and obey,"

A Fair rules and cooperation can help a community grow stronger • **B** Laws and rules • **C** People should never disagree

I CAN | I can reject topic-adjacent statements and choose a full life lesson.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose a theme that fits the whole poem."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"The assigned answer position is a reminder to inspect the choice carefully. A topic word is not a theme."

▸ *Students choose privately, then explain why the other choices do not state the poem's full message.*

ANSWER KEY: A. Fair rules and cooperation can help a community grow stronger.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to turn A into a full theme sentence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose A because laws appear throughout the poem. Repeated words can still be only the topic.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What makes a statement topic-adjacent? It mentions the subject but does not say what the poem teaches.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about checking a theme against the whole poem. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to point to two parts of the poem that support the lesson.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can show how two details support a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show how the poem builds its message.

How do the poem's details support the theme that **fair rules and cooperation can strengthen a community**? Explain.

"People learned how to work and live as one,"

I CAN | I can connect details from different parts of a poem to its lesson.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 ·

Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can show how two details support a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Use evidence from more than one part. A theme should grow from the whole poem."

▸ *Students copy the line and add a second supporting line from the poem.*

ANSWER KEY: Working and living as one, plus stronger communities through cooperation, support the theme.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask which detail shows the message near the end.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may retell the history of laws. Ask them to explain how the detail teaches a lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Does one line prove the whole theme? It helps, but details from different parts make the support stronger.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about linking poem details to a theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask how the beginning and ending work together.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a theme in my own words."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own the poem's lesson.

Write a theme for the poem in a full sentence. Make it true beyond this poem about laws.

"Communities worked better when people knew,"

I CAN | I can state a global lesson that the whole poem supports.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a theme in my own words."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Name the topic silently, then ask what the poem teaches about it."

▸ *Students write one full theme sentence on the OWN row and check that it does not name the poem's town.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Communities are stronger when people follow fair rules and work together.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to explain why the lesson fits the whole poem.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write Laws help towns. Push them to state the broader lesson about people and communities.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How do I know it is a theme? It is a lesson that could apply to many communities, not just this poem.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about stating a theme independently. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to give a real life example of the theme.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can explain why a tempting statement is not the best theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against a close trap.

A student wrote this theme: **Laws make people vote and serve on juries.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"Drivers stop safely when the light turns red,"

I CAN | I can defend a theme by naming the exact trap.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can explain why a tempting statement is not the best theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A topic-adjacent statement sounds connected, but it reports one part instead of the message."

▸ *Students label the trap and revise the statement into a global lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: Topic-adjacent statement as message. Voting and jury service are examples, not the whole lesson.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what broader lesson includes this example.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept the trap because it is true in the poem. A true detail is not always the theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What is wrong with a true detail as a theme? It may be too close to one example and miss the poem's larger message.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending the whole-story theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to repair the trap in one sentence.

THEME

Find the poem's theme on your own.

Return to the poem. Write the topic in one or two words. Then write the theme in a full sentence and copy one line that supports it.

Return to the poem.
Write the topic in one or two words.
Write the theme in a full sentence. Copy one supporting line.

I CAN | I can tell the topic from the theme and support the theme with a line.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Topic first in one or two words, then a full theme sentence, then a proof line from the poem."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **Rules is a topic.** Helped neighbors settle what was fair points toward the theme that fair rules help people live together.

CHOOSE **A.** Fair rules and cooperation can help a community grow stronger.

SHOW **The poem says people learned to work and live as one, and later says communities become stronger when citizens work together and obey.** These details support the theme.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Communities are stronger when people follow fair rules and work together.

DEFEND **Topic-adjacent statement as message.** The line is one example of following rules, but the whole poem teaches a broader lesson about fair rules helping communities.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Topic: laws. Theme: Fair rules and cooperation help communities grow stronger. Line: When citizens work together and obey,

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 · Review the Answers

~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"When citizens work together and obey, Communities become stronger every day. ... The lesson people learned long, long ago, Is one that helps our towns and cities grow."

Which statement best describes a theme of the poem?

A Laws and rules

B Towns have leaders and streets.

C People should never have disagreements.

D Fair rules and cooperation can help communities grow stronger.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is D.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing A because laws and rules are repeated in the poem.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is D.

A **Laws and rules**
Topic-adjacent statement as message. Laws and rules name the subject, not the lesson.

B **Towns have leaders and streets.**
Too narrow. This is one detail about towns, not the poem's message.

C **People should never have disagreements.**
Opposite. The poem explains that laws help people settle disagreements.

D **Fair rules and cooperation can help communities grow stronger.** **Correct.**
Correct. The poem shows fair rules settling problems and people growing stronger when they work together.

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TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 17 of 36 · Cluster 4 · Module 1 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 · The Answer, and Why

⏰ ~4 min

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

"The answer is D. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what a play is about, in a word or two.

The theme is the lesson the play teaches in a full sentence.

A theme can grow from dialogue, but it must fit the whole play.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "The Lunchroom Discoveries"

A **topic** is one or two words, like discoveries or science. A **theme** is a lesson that fits the whole play, like **curiosity and careful work can lead to discoveries that help many people**. STAAR asks: **What theme do the words of the main character in line 18 suggest?** Traps this week: **Word association from the lines**, **Topic, not theme**, and **Too narrow**.

This deck teaches **finding theme the STAAR way** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

~5 min

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

"This week we will listen for theme in a play's dialogue. The topic is what the play is about, while the theme is the lesson the characters help us understand."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will follow the characters' thinking about questions and discoveries, then reject answers that only repeat a detail."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 4 Module 2 . a class or student copy of "The Lunchroom Discoveries" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to tell how a character's words can reveal a theme.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a character's words that point to a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice the message in dialogue.

Read Jordan's words. What bigger lesson do they suggest? Do not stop at the word **scientists**.

"I never thought about how many things scientists have helped improve."

I CAN | I can notice a lesson suggested by dialogue.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice a character's words that point to a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A character may name the topic, but the character's thinking can reveal the lesson."

▸ *Students circle helped improve and write one possible lesson beside the line.*

ANSWER KEY: Helped improve points toward a lesson about discoveries helping people.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what the word improve tells us about the message.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may answer scientists because that word is in the line. That is a topic word.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Is scientists a theme? No. It is a topic word. A theme explains what the play teaches about discoveries.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about reading theme clues in dialogue. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to find another line showing the discovery helped people.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose the lesson suggested by a character's words."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose the theme suggested by the dialogue.

STAAR asks: **What theme do the words of the main character in line 18 suggest?**

"I never realized how many things started with someone trying to solve a problem."

A Milk is safer when it is pasteurized. • **B** The students eat lunch in a cafeteria. • **C** Questions and effort can lead to helpful discoveries.

I CAN | I can avoid word association and select a message supported by the play.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose the lesson suggested by a character's words."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Look past the nouns in the dialogue. Ask what lesson the speakers learn about discoveries."

▸ *Students choose, then label each wrong choice with the trap it shows.*

ANSWER KEY: C. Questions and effort can lead to helpful discoveries.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask which words show that questions can lead to useful answers.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose the milk answer because milk is discussed. A detail about milk is not the whole message.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What is word association from the lines? It is choosing a word or detail simply because it appears, without explaining the lesson.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about choosing a dialogue-based theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to restate the theme without using the word discovery.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can connect dialogue to a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show how the characters support the theme.

Explain how the characters' words support the theme that **curiosity and careful work can lead to discoveries that help people**.

"Many scientific discoveries happen because someone asks a question and refuses to give up until they find an answer."

I CAN | I can explain how characters' words build a play's message.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 ·

Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

⏰ ~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can connect dialogue to a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Use what more than one character says when you explain a theme from a play."

▸ *Students record one line from Mr. Reyes and one idea from the students.*

ANSWER KEY: Questions, persistence, and a discovery helping millions all support the theme.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask which words show persistence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may only say Pasteur helped with milk. Ask for the larger lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why does refuses to give up matter? It shows that effort and curiosity can lead to useful discoveries.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about explaining support from dialogue. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask how the final lines connect back to the first conversation.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a theme in my own words."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own the play's message.

Write a theme for the whole play in a full sentence. Make it a lesson, not a summary of Pasteur's work.

"And one answer can help a lot of people."

I CAN | I can write a global lesson supported by the whole play.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a theme in my own words."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A summary tells what happened. A theme tells what the play teaches about what happened."

▸ *Students write a full theme and underline the words that make it a life lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Asking questions and working for answers can lead to ideas that help many people.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why the theme applies beyond Louis Pasteur.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may retell that Pasteur studied germs. That is a summary, not a theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Does a theme need to name Pasteur? No. A global lesson should apply beyond one person.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about stating a theme from dialogue. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to connect the theme to a question they have asked.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme against a word association trap."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against word association.

A student wrote this theme: **Milk helps people stay healthy.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"Sometimes we use them so often that we forget someone had to create them."

I CAN | I can explain why a detail from the play is not its full message.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

⏰ ~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a theme against a word association trap."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Word association grabs a familiar detail. Check whether that detail explains the whole play."

▸ *Students name the trap and rewrite the statement as a broader lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: Word association from the lines. Milk is evidence in one example, not the full theme.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what idea includes the milk example and the other discoveries.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept the answer because safer milk is true. A true detail can still be the wrong theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What should I ask when a choice repeats a line? Does it explain the whole play or only echo one detail?

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending against a detail trap. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to fix the trap in a global sentence.

THEME

Find the play's theme on your own.

Go back to the play. Write the topic in one or two words. Then write a full theme and copy one line that supports it.

Go back to the play.
Write the topic in one or two words.
Write the theme in a full sentence and copy one supporting line.

I CAN | I can tell the topic from the theme and support it with dialogue.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Topic in a few words, theme in a full sentence, and proof from what the characters say."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **Scientists is part of the topic.** The words how many things they have helped improve suggest that discoveries can improve people's lives.

CHOOSE **C.** Questions and effort can lead to helpful discoveries.

SHOW **Mr.** Reyes says discoveries happen when someone asks a question and keeps working for an answer. The students also notice that one discovery helped millions, so their words support the theme.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Asking questions and working for answers can lead to ideas that help many people.

DEFEND **Word association from the lines.** Milk is mentioned, but the play's message is about questions, discoveries, and how ideas help people.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Topic: discoveries. Theme: Asking questions and working for answers can help many people. Line: And one answer can help a lot of people.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 · Review the Answers

~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"JORDAN: I never thought about how many things scientists have helped improve. ... MR. REYES: You're welcome. Keep asking questions."

Which statement best describes a theme of the play?

A People should keep asking questions and working to solve problems.

B Louis Pasteur studied germs in milk.

C The students learn during lunch.

D Every scientific question has an easy answer.

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TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 18 of 36 · Cluster 4 · Module 2 · slide 9 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

⏰ ~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is A.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing B because germs and milk are important details in the play.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is A.

A **People should keep asking questions and working to solve problems.** **Correct.**
Correct. The characters explain that discoveries begin with questions and that answers can help many people.

B **Louis Pasteur studied germs in milk.**
Topic, not theme. This names one subject and one detail from the play.

C **The students learn during lunch.**
Too narrow. Lunch is the setting and the statement does not give the play's life lesson.

D **Every scientific question has an easy answer.**
Word association from the lines. The play values questions, but it never says answers are always easy.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 18 of 36 · Cluster 4 · Module 2 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 · The Answer, and Why

~4 min

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

"The answer is A. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what a story is about, in a word or two.

The theme is the lesson the story teaches in a full sentence.

A character's opinion may be part of the story, but a theme reaches beyond one character.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "The Recess Question"

A **topic** is one or two words, like recess or decisions. A **theme** is a lesson that fits the whole story, like **good decisions require listening to different points of view**. STAAR asks: **What theme is shown by how the main character changes?** Traps this week: **One character's view, too narrow**, **Too narrow**, and **Topic, not theme**.

This deck teaches **finding theme the STAAR way** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

⏰ ~5 min

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

"This week we will watch how a main character changes. A character's growth can reveal a theme, but one character's opinion is not the whole lesson."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will follow Beth from her first idea to her thoughtful decision, then practice avoiding narrow answers."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 4 Module 3 . a class or student copy of "The Recess Question" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student how a character's change can teach a lesson.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice when a character's thinking changes."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice Beth's change.

Read what Beth says after thinking. What lesson does her change point toward?

"Beth looked at the three choices."

I CAN | I can notice how a character's change points to a theme.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice when a character's thinking changes."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A change matters because it can show what the story teaches."

▸ *Students write Beth at first and Beth later, then name the difference.*

ANSWER KEY: Beth moves from certainty to considering more information and choices.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what caused Beth to become less certain.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may say the theme is recess. That is the topic, not the lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Does less certain mean Beth gives up? No. She becomes more thoughtful about the decision.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about tracking character growth. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to find the line that shows Beth's first opinion.

TUESDAY • DEVELOPING
THEME

THEME

WEEK 19 of 36
TEKS 3.8(A) · Slide 3 of 10

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a theme shown by a character's change."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose the theme shown by Beth's growth.

STAAR asks: **What theme is shown by how the main character changes?**

"At first, she had been certain that longer recess was the only good answer."

A Beth wants a longer recess. • **B** Listening to ideas can improve group decisions. • **C** Recess should last all afternoon.

I CAN | I can look beyond one character's opinion to find the story's broader lesson.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose a theme shown by a character's change."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A character's opinion can be evidence, but it is not automatically the story's theme."

▸ *Students choose, then explain how Beth's later thinking makes the lesson broader than recess.*

ANSWER KEY: B. Listening to ideas can improve group decisions.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask how Beth changes after hearing other points of view.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose B because Beth says it. The question asks for the lesson shown by her growth.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why is B too narrow? It tells what Beth wants, not what the story teaches about making decisions.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about inferring theme from character growth. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to state Beth's new way of thinking.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can show how a character's change supports a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show how Beth's change supports the theme.

Explain how the story supports the theme that **good decisions require listening to different points of view**.

"She thought about all the things they needed to learn during the school day."

I CAN | I can connect the beginning, middle, and end of a story to its message.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 · Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can show how a character's change supports a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Follow the character across the story. What does the character think first, and what does the character consider later?"

▸ *Students list Beth's first opinion and two new ideas she considers.*

ANSWER KEY: Beth considers Lily's idea and school needs instead of holding only her first opinion.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask for one new point Beth considers.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may only explain that recess is fun. Ask how Beth's thinking changes.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Does changing your mind mean you were wrong? Not always. Beth learns to consider more information.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about connecting growth to theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask how the class discussion affects Beth.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a theme that reaches beyond one character."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own the story's lesson.

Write a theme for the whole story in a full sentence. Do not make it only about recess.

"Good citizens listen to one another, consider the reasons, and make decisions respectfully."

I CAN | I can write a global lesson supported by the character's growth.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a theme that reaches beyond one character."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Move from Beth's problem to the life lesson her experience shows."

▸ *Students write a full theme and circle the words that make it apply to many groups.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Listening to different ideas and considering reasons can help people make respectful group decisions.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why the theme fits the class discussion and Beth's choice.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write Beth likes recess. That tells a character fact, not a lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Can the theme name Beth? It should not need to. A theme should apply to people beyond the story.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about writing a theme from growth. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to name a group decision they have seen.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can explain why one character's view is not the whole theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against a narrow view.

A student wrote this theme: **Beth thinks recess is important.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"No one laughed at another person's answer."

I CAN | I can name and repair a too-narrow theme.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can explain why one character's view is not the whole theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"One character's view can support a theme, but it cannot replace the story's larger message."

▸ *Students label the trap and revise the statement into a lesson about groups.*

ANSWER KEY: One character's view, too narrow. Beth's opinion is evidence, not the complete message.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what other people and ideas the story includes.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept it because Beth is the main character. Main character does not mean every thought is the theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How can I widen a narrow answer? Add the lesson about what people should learn or do beyond this character.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending a whole-story theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to repair the trap in one full sentence.

THEME

Find the story's theme on your own.

Return to the story. Write the topic in one or two words. Then state a full theme and copy one line that supports it.

Return to the story.
Write the topic in one or two words.
Write the theme in a full sentence and copy one supporting line.

I CAN | I can distinguish a character's view from a theme and support my answer.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Name the topic, state the larger lesson, and prove it with a line that shows Beth's growth."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **Beth changes from being certain that longer recess is the only answer to considering other needs and solutions.** This points to listening and thinking before deciding.

CHOOSE **B.** Listening to ideas can improve group decisions.

SHOW **Beth first wants longer recess, but she then thinks about Lily's idea, classroom learning, and the group's needs.** Her change shows that listening and considering reasons leads to a better decision.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Listening to different ideas and considering reasons can help people make respectful group decisions.

DEFEND **One character's view, too narrow.** Beth's opinion is one detail, while the whole story teaches people to listen and consider reasons before group decisions.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Topic: group decisions. Theme: Listening to different ideas helps people make respectful decisions. Line: Good citizens listen to one another, consider the reasons, and make decisions respectfully.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 · Review the Answers

~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"At first, she had been certain that longer recess was the only good answer. ... Then Beth made her choice."

Which statement best describes a theme of the story?

A Beth enjoys playing with her friends.

B Students should always choose another solution.

C Listening to different ideas can help people make wiser group decisions.

D Recess is an important part of the school day.

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TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 19 of 36 · Cluster 4 · Module 3 · slide 9 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is C.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing A because Beth enjoys playing with friends, which is only one character detail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is C.

A **Beth enjoys playing with her friends.**
One character's view, too narrow. This tells a character detail, not the story's larger lesson.

B **Students should always choose another solution.**
Too broad. The story presents another solution as one option, not a rule for every decision.

C **Listening to different ideas can help people make wiser group decisions.** **Correct.**
Correct. The class listens, considers several choices, and Beth changes her thinking before deciding.

D **Recess is an important part of the school day.**
Topic, not theme. Recess is the subject of the discussion, not the full message.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 19 of 36 · Cluster 4 · Module 3 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 ·

The Answer, and Why

~4 min

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

"The answer is C. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what a story is about, in a word or two.

The theme is the lesson or message the story teaches in a full sentence.

Evidence must fit the whole story, so a life lesson that is not supported is a trap.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "The Mystery of the Traveling Shell"

A **topic** is one or two words, like evidence or trade. A **theme** is a lesson that fits the whole story, like **careful observation and evidence can help people solve mysteries**. STAAR asks: **State a theme of the story and support it with evidence.** Traps this week: **Life lesson not supported by this text**, **Too narrow**, and **Topic, not theme**.

This deck teaches **finding theme the STAAR way** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

⏰ ~5 min

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

"This week we will state a theme and support it with evidence. A theme is a lesson, and a strong answer must be proven by the story."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will follow Emsy's clues from the shell, map, and artifacts, while rejecting life lessons the text never teaches."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 4 Module 4 . a class or student copy of "The Mystery of the Traveling Shell" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student why a theme needs evidence from the story.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a detail that points toward a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice the lesson in the evidence.

Read the line. What does it teach about solving a mystery? Look for the idea behind **evidence**.

"A strong conclusion needed more than imagination; it needed evidence that fit together logically."

I CAN | I can notice how a story's evidence supports a lesson.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice a detail that points toward a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"The topic might be mysteries or artifacts. The theme tells what the story teaches about solving problems."

▸ *Students write TOPIC: solving a mystery and underline the words that point to a lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: Evidence that fit together logically hints at careful thinking before making a conclusion.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why imagination alone is not enough.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write evidence as the theme. That is a topic word, not a lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Can evidence be a theme? No. Evidence is a subject word. A theme says what evidence teaches us about thinking.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about turning evidence into a lesson. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask for another clue that helps Emsy solve the mystery.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a theme that the whole story supports."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose a supported theme.

STAAR asks: **State a theme of the story and support it with evidence.** First choose the lesson that the whole story supports.

"The shell had been discovered far from the place where it could have formed naturally."

A Careful observation and evidence can help people solve mysteries. • **B** People should collect pretty objects. • **C** Every mystery can be solved in one minute.

I CAN | I can reject unsupported life lessons and choose a message proven by the text.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose a theme that the whole story supports."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Before choosing, ask whether the whole story proves the lesson, not just whether it sounds nice."

▸ *Students select a theme and point to two clues that support it.*

ANSWER KEY: A. Careful observation and evidence can help people solve mysteries.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask which evidence Emsy uses to reach her conclusion.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose a pleasant lesson about collecting things. The story does not teach that.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What makes a theme supported? The character's actions and the story's details must show it.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about choosing a text-supported theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to explain how the map supports A.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can support a theme with evidence."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show the theme with evidence.

Support the theme **careful observation and evidence can help people solve mysteries** with two details from the story.

"She studied the coastline, located Poverty Point, and traced the distance between them with one finger."

I CAN | I can name details and explain how they prove a theme.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 ·

Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can support a theme with evidence."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Do not just list a detail. Tell how the detail supports the lesson."

▸ *Students write two evidence details and a sentence explaining each one.*

ANSWER KEY: Studying the map and connecting distant materials to trade show Emsy's careful reasoning.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask how the map changes Emsy's thinking.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may say the shell is pretty. That describes an object but does not support the theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How much evidence do I need? Use at least one clear detail and explain its connection to the theme.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about explaining evidence for a theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which clue changed everything for Emsy.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can state a theme and support it with a detail."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own a supported theme.

Write a theme for the story in a full sentence. Then name one detail that supports it.

"No one could ask the original travelers exactly what had happened, but the artifacts could still communicate information."

I CAN | I can make a claim about theme and prove it from the whole story.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can state a theme and support it with a detail."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A strong response has two parts: the lesson and the proof from the story."

▸ *Students write a full theme, then copy one evidence line and explain it.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Careful observation and evidence can help people solve difficult mysteries. Emsy's organized clues support it.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to point to the exact evidence that supports the theme.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write a life lesson about always traveling. The story does not support that lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Can my theme be a nice idea? Only if the story gives evidence for it.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about stating and proving a theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to use the word because in their explanation.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme by checking it against the text."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against an unsupported lesson.

A student wrote this theme: **People should travel to as many places as possible.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"The information panel explained that people connected with Poverty Point traveled along major waterways."

I CAN | I can name a life lesson that the story does not support and explain why.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a theme by checking it against the text."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A life lesson may sound wise and still be wrong if the text does not support it."

▸ *Students name the trap, cite what the story actually teaches, and repair the answer.*

ANSWER KEY: Life lesson not supported by this text. Travel is part of the history, not the lesson for readers.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask which actions the story praises instead of traveling.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept it because the shell traveled far. One event does not make a supported life lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How do I test an answer? Point to several details that prove it. If you cannot, it may be unsupported.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about rejecting unsupported lessons. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to turn the trap into a true theme.

THEME

Find and support the theme on your own.

Return to the story. Write the topic in one or two words. Then write a full theme and copy one line that supports it.

Return to the story.
Write the topic in one or two words.
Write the theme in a full sentence and copy one supporting line.

I CAN | I can state a supported theme and prove it with evidence.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

⏰ ~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Write the topic, state a full theme, then copy and explain a line that supports it."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **Evidence is part of the topic.** The line suggests the theme that careful thinking and evidence help people reach strong conclusions.

CHOOSE **A.** Careful observation and evidence can help people solve mysteries.

SHOW **Emsy studies the map and distance, then connects the shell, copper, rivers, and scarcity.** These details show that careful observation and evidence help her solve the mystery.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Careful observation and evidence can help people solve difficult mysteries. Support: Emsy organizes clues from the shell, map, rivers, and copper.

DEFEND **Life lesson not supported by this text.** The story explains how objects traveled and how Emsy used evidence, but it never teaches everyone to travel widely.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Topic: solving mysteries. Theme: Careful observation and evidence can help people solve difficult mysteries. Line: A strong conclusion needed more than imagination; it needed evidence that fit together logically.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 ·

Review the Answers

⏰ ~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"Emsy stared at the list. A strong conclusion needed more than imagination; it needed evidence that fit together logically. … The seashell probably reached Poverty Point through long-distance trade."

Which statement best describes a theme of the story?

A Careful observation and evidence can help people solve difficult mysteries.

B The museum has a glass display case.

C People should travel to as many places as possible.

D Seashells are prettier than copper.

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TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 20 of 36 · Cluster 4 · Module 4 · slide 9 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is A.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing C because travel is part of the story, even though the story does not teach everyone to travel.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is A.

A **Careful observation and evidence can help people solve difficult mysteries.** **Correct.**
Correct. Emsy studies maps, gathers clues, and connects evidence to solve the mystery.

B **The museum has a glass display case.**
Too narrow. This is one setting detail and not a lesson.

C **People should travel to as many places as possible.**
Life lesson not supported by this text. The story describes travel by objects, but it does not teach everyone to travel.

D **Seashells are prettier than copper.**
Topic, not theme. The story mentions both materials, but it does not compare their beauty.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 20 of 36 · Cluster 4 · Module 4 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 ·

The Answer, and Why

~4 min

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

"The answer is A. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what a poem is about, in a word or two.

The theme is the lesson or message the poem teaches in a full sentence.

A setting or event can be part of a poem without being its theme.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "Why We Need Laws"

A **topic** is one or two words, like laws or fairness. A **theme** is a lesson that fits the whole poem, like **fair rules help communities live and work together**. STAAR asks: **What theme does the poet develop through the details in the poem?** Trap this week: **Setting or event, not theme**.

This deck teaches **finding theme the STAAR way** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

⏰ ~5 min

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

"This week we will find a theme from the details of a poem. The topic is laws and communities, but the theme is the lesson about how people live together."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will practice telling a whole-poem lesson from a setting or event that is only one part of the poem."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 5 Module 1 . a class or student copy of "Why We Need Laws" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to give a topic and a theme from a poem they know.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a detail that hints at a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice the poem's lesson.

Read the line. What does it teach about rules? Look for a lesson bigger than one event.

"People learned how to work and live as one,"

I CAN | I can notice how a poem's details point to a lesson.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice a detail that hints at a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A poem may mention a town, but the theme is what readers can learn about life."

▸ *Students write TOPIC: laws and underline words that point to a lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: Work and live as one hints that fair rules help communities cooperate.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what the line teaches beyond the town in the poem.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write town as the theme. That is a setting, not a lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Can a place be a theme? No. A place is a setting. A theme is a lesson in a sentence.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about turning poem details into a lesson. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask for another detail that shows people working together.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a theme supported by a poem's details."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose the poem's theme.

STAAR asks: **What theme does the poet develop through the details in the poem?**

"Communities worked better when people knew,"

A Laws and towns • **B** Fair rules help communities work together • **C** People should live in busy cities

I CAN | I can avoid a setting or event and choose the poem's larger lesson.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose a theme supported by a poem's details."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Ask which choice is a lesson and which choices name a subject or place."

▸ *Students choose privately, then label the setting or event trap.*

ANSWER KEY: B. Fair rules help communities work together.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why C is not a theme of the poem.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose C because the poem mentions towns and cities. That is a setting detail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What is a setting or event trap? It names where something happens or what happens, not what the poem teaches.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about selecting a whole-poem theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to restate B without using the word laws.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can show how details support a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show how details support the theme.

Explain how the poem supports the theme that **fair rules help communities work together**.

"The rules helped neighbors settle what was fair,"

I CAN | I can connect several poem details to its message.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 · Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can show how details support a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Name the detail, then explain how it connects to the lesson."

▸ *Students write two details and explain how each one supports the theme.*

ANSWER KEY: Settling what is fair and sharing rights show how rules help a community.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask for a second detail besides neighbors settling disagreements.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may retell that rules exist. Ask how the rules affect the community.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why use more than one detail? Several details show the theme fits the whole poem.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about explaining theme support in a poem. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask how the rules help both strong and quiet people.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a theme in my own words."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own the poem's lesson.

Write a theme for the whole poem in a full sentence. Do not write only a place or event.

"When citizens work together and obey,"

I CAN | I can write a whole-poem lesson instead of naming a setting or event.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a theme in my own words."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Move from the poem's laws to the lesson those laws teach about communities."

▸ *Students write a full theme on the OWN row and check that it applies beyond this poem.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Fair rules and cooperation help communities grow stronger.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student why the theme fits more than one town.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write laws in towns. That names the subject, not the message.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Can my theme name one town? It should apply to many communities, not one setting.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about stating the poem's larger lesson. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to connect the theme to a community they know.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme against a setting or event trap."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against the setting trap.

A student wrote this theme: **The town became a place with busy streets.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"The town became a place where trust could grow,"

I CAN | I can explain why a setting or event is not the poem's full lesson.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a theme against a setting or event trap."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A setting tells where. A theme tells what the poem teaches about life."

▸ *Students name the trap, then repair the answer into a full lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: Setting or event, not theme. The town is a place, not the poem's message.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what lesson the town's changes help show.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept the answer because the poem mentions towns. Mentioning a place does not make it the theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How do I spot this trap? Check whether the answer could be drawn on a map. If so, it may be a setting.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending a whole-poem theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to turn the setting answer into a lesson.

THEME

Find the poem's theme on your own.

Return to the poem. Write the topic in one or two words. Then state a full theme and copy one line that supports it.

Return to the poem.
Write the topic in one or two words.
Write the theme in a full sentence and copy one supporting line.

I CAN | I can tell a poem's topic from its theme and support the theme with a line.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

⏰ ~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Write the topic first, then a full theme, then a line that proves it."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **The line shows that fair rules can help people live and work together.** It points beyond one town to a lesson about communities.

CHOOSE **B.** Fair rules help communities work together. A is Topic, not theme. C is a setting idea, not the poem's lesson.

SHOW **The rules help neighbors settle disagreements, share rights, and work together.** These details support the theme that fair rules make communities stronger.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Fair rules and cooperation help communities grow stronger.

DEFEND **Setting or event, not theme.** The town is where the ideas happen, but the poem teaches that fair rules and cooperation help communities grow.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Topic: laws and communities. Theme: Fair rules help communities live and work together. Line: Communities worked better when people knew,

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 · Review the Answers

~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"The rules helped neighbors settle what was fair, ... When citizens work together and obey, Communities become stronger every day."

Which statement best describes a theme of the poem?

A Laws and towns

B Fair rules help communities live and work together.

C The town has busy streets.

D People should obey every rule without thinking.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 21 of 36 · Cluster 5 · Module 1 · slide 9 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is B.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing C because the poem mentions towns and streets, which is only a setting detail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is B.

A **Laws and towns**
Topic, not theme. These words name subjects in the poem, not a life lesson.

B **Fair rules help communities live and work together.** **Correct.**
Correct. The poem shows rules settling disputes, protecting rights, and helping communities grow.

C **The town has busy streets.**
Setting or event, not theme. Busy streets are a setting detail, not the poem's message.

D **People should obey every rule without thinking.**
Too broad. The poem explains that fair rules should help everyone; it does not praise every rule.

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TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 21 of 36 · Cluster 5 · Module 1 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 · The Answer, and Why

⏰ ~4 min

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

"The answer is B. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what a play is about, in a word or two.

The theme is the lesson or message the play teaches in a full sentence.

A topic word can appear in the title without being the theme.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "The Lunchroom Discoveries"

A **topic** is one or two words, like discoveries or lunch. A **theme** is a lesson that fits the whole play, like **questions and discoveries can help people for many years**. STAAR asks: **How does the title connect to the theme of the play?** Trap this week: **Topic word, not theme**.

This deck teaches **finding theme the STAAR way** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

⏰ ~5 min

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

"This week we will use a title as a clue to theme. The title names the lunchroom and discoveries, but the play teaches a larger lesson about ideas helping people."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will practice moving from a title word to a full theme, while avoiding topic answers."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 5 Module 2 . a class or student copy of "The Lunchroom Discoveries" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student how a title can give a clue without stating the whole theme.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice how a play's title points toward a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice what the title points toward.

Read the line. The title names a place and an idea. What larger lesson grows from the discoveries in the play?

"It sounds like one discovery can lead to many others."

I CAN | I can use the title and details to look for a larger lesson.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice how a play's title points toward a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A title can name the subject. The details show what the subject teaches."

▸ *Students write TOPIC: discoveries and circle words that point to a lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: One discovery can lead to many others hints that ideas can keep helping people.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why discoveries alone is not a theme.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may copy a title word as the theme. A topic word is not a full lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Can discoveries be a theme? No. It is a topic. A theme says what discoveries can teach us.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about connecting a title to a theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask how the title includes both the place and the subject.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can connect a title to a theme instead of copying a topic word."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose the title's theme.

STAAR asks: **How does the title connect to the theme of the play?** Choose the lesson, not a title word.

"JORDAN: So his work helped more than just people who drank milk?"

A Milk and lunch • **B** The cafeteria is a busy place • **C** Questions and discoveries can help many people for years

I CAN | I can explain how a title's topic connects to the play's larger message.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can connect a title to a theme instead of copying a topic word."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"The title gives us a clue about the subject. The whole play gives us the lesson."

▸ *Students choose, then explain why the lunchroom is not the theme.*

ANSWER KEY: C. Questions and discoveries can help many people for years.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask which part of C goes beyond the title word discoveries.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose A because lunchroom is in the title. That is a topic, not a theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why is C stronger than A? C says what the play teaches about discoveries.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about using the title as a theme clue. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to explain how Pasteur's work supports C.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can show how a title and details support a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show how the title connects.

Explain how the title **The Lunchroom Discoveries** connects to the theme that questions and discoveries can help people for years.

"ALEX: We are talking about Louis Pasteur and how his discoveries still help people."

I CAN | I can connect the title's topic to the play's message.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 ·

Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can show how a title and details support a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Explain what the title names and what the play teaches about it."

▸ *Students write one title connection and one detail about Pasteur's lasting help.*

ANSWER KEY: Lunchroom names the setting; discoveries connect to Pasteur's work helping people today.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask how the title gives only part of the theme.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may explain only where the scene happens. Require the lesson about discoveries.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Does the title tell the whole theme? No. It gives a topic clue that the play develops.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about explaining a title-theme connection. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask how the title would change if the play were about only lunch.

THURSDAY • ADVANCED
THEME

THEME

WEEK 22 of 36
TEKS 3.8(A) · Slide 5 of 10

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a theme and connect it to the title."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own the play's message.

Write a theme for the whole play in a full sentence. Explain how the title helps you find it.

"And one answer can help a lot of people."

I CAN | I can use a title as a clue without mistaking it for the theme.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a theme and connect it to the title."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Start with the title's topic, then ask what the whole play teaches about it."

▸ *Students write a theme and add one sentence about how the title connects.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Questions can lead to discoveries that help people for many years.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to point to the title word that begins the theme idea.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write lunchroom. That tells the setting, not the lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Can a theme repeat the title? It should explain the lesson behind the title's topic.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about writing a title-supported theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to use because to connect the title and theme.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme against a topic word trap."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against the topic trap.

A student wrote this theme: **Lunchroom discoveries.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"The students leave the cafeteria thinking about Louis Pasteur, scientific discoveries, and how one person's ideas can continue helping people many years later."

I CAN | I can explain why a title word is not the whole message.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a theme against a topic word trap."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A topic names what the play is about. A theme tells the lesson about that topic."

▸ *Students name the trap and revise the topic words into a full lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: Topic word, not theme. The answer names the title's topic instead of its message.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what the play teaches about discoveries beyond the lunchroom.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept it because it sounds like the title. A title is a clue, not a complete theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How do I repair a topic answer? Add what the story teaches about the topic in a full sentence.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending a title-based theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to turn the trap into a theme.

THEME

Find the play's theme on your own.

Return to the play. Write the topic in one or two words. Then state a full theme and copy one line that supports it.

Return to the play.
Write the topic in one or two words.
Write the theme in a full sentence and copy one supporting line.

I CAN | I can use the title and details to distinguish a topic from a theme.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Use the title for the topic, then use the whole play to write the lesson and proof."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **Discoveries are part of the topic, but the line points to the theme that one question or discovery can lead to more help for people.**

CHOOSE **C.** Questions and discoveries can help many people for years.

SHOW **The lunchroom is where the students discuss discoveries, and Pasteur's work still protects people.** The title names the setting and subject, while the play develops the lesson that discoveries can keep helping others.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Questions can lead to discoveries that help people for many years. The title points to discoveries, and the play shows their lasting effects.

DEFEND **Topic word, not theme.** Lunchroom discoveries names the setting and subject, but the play teaches that questions and discoveries can keep helping people.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Topic: discoveries. Theme: Questions can lead to discoveries that help people for many years. Line: And one answer can help a lot of people.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 · Review the Answers

~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"One discovery ended up helping millions of people. ... And one answer can help a lot of people."

Which statement best describes a theme of the play?

A Lunchroom discoveries

B Students should eat lunch while they study

C Questions and discoveries can help many people for years

D Scientists never need to work with other people

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 22 of 36 · Cluster 5 · Module 2 · slide 9 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

⏰ ~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is C.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing A because it repeats the title, even though it is only a topic.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is C.

A **Lunchroom discoveries**
Topic word, not theme. This repeats the setting and subject from the title.

B **Students should eat lunch while they study**
Not in the text. The play uses lunch as a setting, not as advice for students.

C **Questions and discoveries can help many people for years** **Correct.**
Correct. The students explain that Pasteur's work still helps people and that one answer can help many people.

D **Scientists never need to work with other people**
Opposite. The play says scientists build on what other people have learned.

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TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 22 of 36 · Cluster 5 · Module 2 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 · The Answer, and Why

⏰ ~4 min

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

"The answer is C. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what a story is about, in a word or two.

The theme is the lesson or message the story teaches in a full sentence.

A generic moral may sound wise but still fail if it does not fit this story.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "The Recess Question"

A **topic** is one or two words, like recess or decisions. A **theme** is a lesson that fits the whole story, like **good decisions require listening to different ideas and considering reasons**. STAAR asks: **Which sentence best states a theme of the story?** Trap this week: **Generic moral that fits many stories**.

This deck teaches **finding theme the STAAR way** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

⏰ ~5 min

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

"This week we will choose the best theme from several possible lessons. A theme must fit this story's details, not just sound wise."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will follow the class as students listen, consider reasons, and make a group decision while avoiding generic morals."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 5 Module 3 . a class or student copy of "The Recess Question" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student why a true saying might still be the wrong theme for a story.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a theme in a character's thinking."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice the lesson in the decision.

Read the line. What does Beth learn about making a group decision? Look for a lesson tied to this story.

"Good citizens listen to one another, consider the reasons, and make decisions respectfully."

I CAN | I can notice a story-specific lesson instead of a generic moral.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice a theme in a character's thinking."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A good theme is more than a nice saying. It must match the story's problem and details."

▸ *Students write TOPIC: group decisions and circle the actions that make the lesson specific.*

ANSWER KEY: Listen, consider reasons, and decide respectfully point to the story's lesson.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask which problem in the story this line helps explain.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write Be kind. It sounds nice but does not explain this story's decision process.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What makes a moral generic? It could fit almost any story and does not use this story's important ideas.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about spotting a story-specific lesson. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask what Beth considers before she chooses.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a theme that fits this whole story."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose the best theme.

STAAR asks: **Which sentence best states a theme of the story?** Choose the lesson that fits the whole story, not any nice saying.

"We should consider the advantages and disadvantages of each choice."

A Listening to ideas can help groups make respectful decisions • **B** People should always be kind to one another • **C** Beth likes recess

I CAN | I can reject a generic moral and choose a lesson supported by the story.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose a theme that fits this whole story."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Ask which choice explains the story's problem, discussion, and decision together."

▸ *Students choose, then explain why the kind saying is too general.*

ANSWER KEY: A. Listening to different ideas can help people make respectful group decisions.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what details make A fit this story.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose B because it sounds like a good lesson. It does not match the story's main decision work.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Can a true saying still be a trap? Yes. A generic moral may be true but not supported as this story's theme.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about choosing the best-supported theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to name two perspectives the class considered.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can show how story details support a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show why the theme fits.

Explain how the story supports the theme that **good decisions require listening to different ideas and considering reasons**.

"No one shouted. No one laughed at another person's answer."

I CAN | I can connect the problem, discussion, and ending to the lesson.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 ·

Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can show how story details support a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Follow the whole decision: the choices, the reasons, and the respectful listening."

▸ *Students list two perspectives and explain how listening to them helps the group.*

ANSWER KEY: The class considers several choices without shouting or laughing, which supports the theme.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why the third solution matters to the theme.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may focus only on recess. Ask what the discussion teaches about decisions.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How is this more than Be kind? It explains when and how people should listen in a group decision.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about explaining a text-specific theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask how Beth's thinking changes after hearing reasons.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a theme that fits this story, not every story."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own the story's lesson.

Write a theme for the whole story in a full sentence. Make it specific to the problem the class solves.

"Because a school community has many needs,"

I CAN | I can write a specific lesson instead of a generic moral.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a theme that fits this story, not every story."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Use the story's key ideas: a group problem, different solutions, reasons, and respectful listening."

▸ *Students write a theme and underline the words that connect it to this story.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Listening to different ideas and considering reasons helps groups make respectful decisions.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask which part of the story proves the theme is not generic.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write Always be nice. That does not name the decision lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How can I make a theme less generic? Include the important idea the story develops, such as reasons or group decisions.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about writing a story-specific theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to connect their theme to a group decision in their lives.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a specific theme against a generic moral."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against the generic moral trap.

A student wrote this theme: **Always be a good person.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"'Because a good decision should not be based only on what we want,'"

I CAN | I can explain why a broad good saying does not fit this story best.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a specific theme against a generic moral."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A generic moral can be true and still not be the best theme for this text."

▸ *Students name the trap and revise the moral to include the story's decision lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: Generic moral that fits many stories. The answer does not explain the class problem or discussion.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what words would make the generic moral fit this story better.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept it because being good sounds wise. Wise is not enough; the text must support it.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How do I test a generic moral? Ask whether it explains the important details in this story.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending the best theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to repair the trap in one full sentence.

THEME

Find the story's theme on your own.

Return to the story. Write the topic in one or two words. Then state a full theme and copy one line that supports it.

Return to the story.
Write the topic in one or two words.
Write the theme in a full sentence and copy one supporting line.

I CAN | I can reject a generic moral and support a story-specific theme.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Write the topic, choose the story-specific lesson, and prove it with a line."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **The line teaches that people should listen, consider reasons, and decide respectfully.** It fits the class problem and discussion in the story.

CHOOSE **A.** Listening to different ideas can help people make respectful group decisions.

SHOW **The students listen respectfully while they consider longer recess, the same recess, and another solution.** This shows that group decisions improve when people hear different ideas and reasons.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Listening to different ideas and considering reasons helps groups make respectful decisions.

DEFEND **Generic moral that fits many stories.** It sounds positive, but the story specifically teaches people to listen, consider reasons, and make group decisions respectfully.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Topic: group decisions. Theme: Listening to different ideas helps groups make respectful decisions. Line: Good citizens listen to one another, consider the reasons, and make decisions respectfully.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 · Review the Answers

⏰ ~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"We should consider the advantages and disadvantages of each choice. ... Then we used voting to help make a group decision."

Which statement best describes a theme of the story?

A Beth enjoys recess with her friends.

B Listening to different ideas and considering reasons helps groups make respectful decisions.

C People should always be kind to one another.

D Every group problem has one perfect answer.

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TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 23 of 36 · Cluster 5 · Module 3 · slide 9 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

⏰ ~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is B.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing C because it sounds like good advice, even though it does not explain the story's group decision.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is B.

A **Beth enjoys recess with her friends.**
Too narrow. This is one character's feeling, not the lesson of the whole story.

B **Listening to different ideas and considering reasons helps groups make respectful decisions.** **Correct.**
Correct. The class gathers information, listens to perspectives, and uses the discussion to make a group decision.

C **People should always be kind to one another.**
Generic moral that fits many stories. It does not explain the story's focus on reasons and group choices.

D **Every group problem has one perfect answer.**
Opposite. The story presents several choices and asks students to consider advantages and disadvantages.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 23 of 36 · Cluster 5 · Module 3 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 · The Answer, and Why

~4 min

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

"The answer is B. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what a story is about, in a word or two.

The theme is the lesson or message the story teaches in a full sentence.

One character's thought can be evidence without being the whole theme.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "The Mystery of the Traveling Shell"

A **topic** is one or two words, like clues or trade. A **theme** is a lesson that fits the whole story, like **careful evidence can help people understand how communities connected**. STAAR asks: **What theme does the author develop? Use evidence.** Trap this week: **One character's view, too narrow**.

This deck teaches **finding theme the STAAR way** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

~5 min

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

"This week we will state a theme and support it with evidence. Emsy's thoughts help us begin, but the theme must reach beyond one character."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will connect artifacts, maps, rivers, and trade to a larger lesson about how evidence reveals human connections."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 5 Module 4 . a class or student copy of "The Mystery of the Traveling Shell" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student why a main character's opinion is not automatically the theme.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice how evidence points to a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice the larger lesson.

Read the line. What does Emsy's thinking teach about solving a mystery? Look beyond one person's thought.

"The seashell probably reached Poverty Point through long-distance trade."

I CAN | I can notice a whole-story lesson instead of one character's view.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice how evidence points to a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A character can discover a lesson, but the theme should apply beyond that character."

▸ *Students write TOPIC: solving a mystery and underline words that point to a larger lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: Evidence that fits together logically hints at careful thinking and strong conclusions.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why imagination alone is not enough.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write Emsy solves the mystery. That is one character's event, not the whole theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Can a character's thought be the whole theme? It can be evidence, but the theme reaches beyond one character.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about moving from one character to a whole-story lesson. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which clues Emsy puts together.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a theme broader than one character's view."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose a whole-story theme.

STAAR asks: **What theme does the author develop? Use evidence.** Choose the lesson that reaches beyond Emsy's single thought.

"Still, one shell was not enough evidence."

A Emsy enjoys solving mysteries • **B** The shell traveled a long distance • **C** Careful evidence can help people understand how communities connected

I CAN | I can use the whole story to choose a lesson and avoid a narrow answer.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose a theme broader than one character's view."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Ask which choice fits Emsy's clues, the artifacts, and the story's conclusion together."

▸ *Students select a theme and point to two kinds of evidence that support it.*

ANSWER KEY: C. Careful evidence can help people understand how communities connected.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why C reaches beyond Emsy.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose A because Emsy is the main character. Her interest is only one part of the story.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What makes A too narrow? It tells one character's feeling, not what the whole story teaches.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about choosing a whole-story theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to connect the rivers and artifacts to C.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can support a theme with evidence from the whole story."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show the theme with evidence.

Support the theme **careful evidence can help people understand how communities connected** with two details.

"The information panel explained that people connected with Poverty Point traveled along major waterways."

I CAN | I can explain how several clues develop a theme beyond one character.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 ·

Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can support a theme with evidence from the whole story."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Do not just name a clue. Explain what it reveals about people and communities."

▸ *Students write two clues and a sentence explaining how each supports the theme.*

ANSWER KEY: Waterways and distant materials show connections between communities.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask how the shell and copper form a pattern.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may say only that Emsy likes mysteries. Ask for evidence about the communities.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why use evidence from more than Emsy? The theme is about a larger human connection, not one person's hobby.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about explaining a whole-story theme with clues. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask how scarcity gives people a reason to trade.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can state a theme and support it with evidence."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own the theme with evidence.

Write a theme for the story in a full sentence. Then name one detail that supports it.

"A strong conclusion needed more than imagination; it needed evidence that fit together logically."

I CAN | I can write a lesson that reaches beyond one character's view.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can state a theme and support it with evidence."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"State the lesson first, then prove it with clues that fit together."

▸ *Students write a full theme, copy one evidence line, and explain the connection.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Careful evidence can reveal how people traveled, traded, and connected.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to name evidence beyond Emsy's opinion.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write Emsy is curious. That is one character trait, not the whole theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Can my theme name Emsy? It should not need to. A theme should apply beyond one character.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about stating and supporting a broad theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to use because to explain their evidence.

FRIDAY • REFLECTIVE (Highly Independent)
THEME

THEME

WEEK 24 of 36
TEKS 3.8(A) · Slide 6 of 10

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a whole-story theme against one character's view."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against a narrow view.

A student wrote this theme: **Emsy loves solving mysteries.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"And sometimes, Emsy realized, the smallest object could reveal an enormous story about how people traveled, traded, solved problems, and connected with one another long ago."

I CAN | I can explain why a character detail is too narrow for the theme.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a whole-story theme against one character's view."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A character's thought may help prove the theme, but it is not the theme by itself."

▸ *Students name the trap, cite a broader detail, and repair the answer into a lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: One character's view, too narrow. Emsy's interest is one detail, while the theme reaches to communities and evidence.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what the artifacts reveal beyond Emsy's feelings.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept it because Emsy drives the story. The main character's view is still only one part.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How can I widen a narrow answer? Replace the character's feeling with what the evidence teaches readers about people.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending a whole-story theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to repair the trap in one full sentence.

THEME

Find the theme on your own.

Return to the story. Write the topic in one or two words. Then state a full theme and copy one line that supports it.

Return to the story.
Write the topic in one or two words.
Write the theme in a full sentence and copy one supporting line.

I CAN | I can distinguish one character's view from a whole-story theme and support my answer.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Write the topic, state the larger lesson, then copy and explain a proof line."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **The line teaches that careful thinking needs evidence.** It points to a lesson that reaches beyond Emsy and this one shell.

CHOOSE **C.** Careful evidence can help people understand how communities connected.

SHOW **The rivers show that people traveled and communicated, and distant shells and copper show that materials moved between communities.** Together, the clues support the theme about evidence revealing connections.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Careful evidence can reveal how people traveled, traded, and connected. Support: Emsy uses the shell, map, rivers, and copper to reach her conclusion.

DEFEND **One character's view, too narrow.** Emsy's interest begins the investigation, but the story teaches how evidence reveals travel, trade, problem solving, and connection.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Topic: artifacts and trade. Theme: Careful evidence can reveal how communities connected. Line: A strong conclusion needed more than imagination; it needed evidence that fit together logically.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 · ~4 min

Review the Answers

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"Perhaps people at Poverty Point had traveled enormous distances themselves, or perhaps objects had moved from community to community through repeated exchanges. ... A strong conclusion needed more than imagination; it needed evidence that fit together logically."

Which statement best describes a theme of the story?

A Emsy enjoys solving mysteries.

B The shell is a small, pearly object.

C People should always travel far from home.

D Careful evidence can reveal how communities traveled, traded, and connected.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

⏰ ~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is D.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing A because Emsy likes mysteries, which is only one character's view.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is D.

A **Emsy enjoys solving mysteries.**
One character's view, too narrow. Emsy's interest begins the story but is not the whole lesson.

B **The shell is a small, pearly object.**
Topic, not theme. This describes one artifact instead of stating a life lesson.

C **People should always travel far from home.**
Life lesson not supported by this text. The story explains travel as evidence, not as advice for everyone.

D **Careful evidence can reveal how communities traveled, traded, and connected.** **Correct.**
Correct. Emsy connects the shell, map, rivers, copper, and scarcity to understand how communities were linked.

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TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 24 of 36 · Cluster 5 · Module 4 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 ·

The Answer, and Why

~4 min

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

"The answer is D. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what a story is about, in a word or two.

The theme is the lesson or message the story teaches, in a full sentence.

A turning point is an important moment that can reveal the story's lesson.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "Crash"

A **topic** is one or two words, like honesty or mistakes. A **theme** is a lesson that fits the whole story, like **being honest can help make a mistake right**. A turning point is the moment when a character makes an important choice. STAAR asks: **What theme does the turning point in the story help develop?** Trap this week: **Setting or event, not theme**.

This deck teaches **finding a turning-point theme the STAAR way** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

~5 min

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

"This week we are finding a theme through a turning point. The topic is what the story is about. The theme is the lesson it teaches."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"Each day we will study Amina's important choice and practice spotting an event trap that is not a theme."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 6 Module 1 . a class or student copy of "Crash" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to name a turning point from a story they know and the lesson it reveals.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a turning point that hints at a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice the turning point.

Read the line. What important choice does Amina make at the turning point? Notice how the choice hints at a lesson.

"Amina took a deep breath and raised her hand."

I CAN | I can notice how an important choice can reveal a lesson.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice a turning point that hints at a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A turning point is not the theme by itself. It is a moment that helps us infer the theme."

▸ *Students underline the turning-point action and write one lesson it may hint at.*

ANSWER KEY: Amina raises her hand to tell the truth. Her choice hints at the value of honesty.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what choice changes the direction of the story.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may name the broken jar as the theme. The jar is an event, not a lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Is the broken jar a theme? No. It is an event that leads to Amina's important choice.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about finding a theme from a turning point. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask what Amina might have learned if she had stayed quiet.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a theme that grows from an important choice."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose the theme from the turning point.

STAAR asks: **What theme does the turning point in the story help develop?**

"Accidents happen, but being honest shows responsibility."

A The importance of honesty • **B** Being honest and taking responsibility can help make mistakes right • **C** A broken jar on a classroom floor

I CAN | I can choose the lesson, not the event that starts the lesson.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose a theme that grows from an important choice."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"The turning point is Amina telling the truth. Which choice explains the lesson of that choice?"

▸ *Students choose privately, then name the trap in one wrong choice.*

ANSWER KEY: B. Being honest and taking responsibility can help make mistakes right.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why the broken jar cannot be the theme.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose the jar because it causes the problem. A cause or event is not a life lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What must a theme do? It must teach a lesson that can fit beyond this one classroom.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about choosing a theme from a choice. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to say B without the word mistake.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can show how a turning point supports a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show how the turning point supports the theme.

Explain how Amina's choice at the turning point supports the theme that honesty and responsibility can help make mistakes right.

"Thank you for telling the truth, Amina."

I CAN | I can use what happens before and after a choice to prove a theme.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 · Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can show how a turning point supports a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Look on both sides of the turning point. What leads to the choice, and what happens because of it?"

▸ *Students name the difficult choice and one result that supports the theme.*

ANSWER KEY: Amina tells the truth, and the class works to make things right.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask for one detail before and one detail after the turning point.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may only retell the crash. Ask how Amina's choice teaches a lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why does the result matter? It shows that honesty helps the problem get solved.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about supporting a turning-point theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask whether the theme would change if Amina stayed silent.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a theme in my own words."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own the turning-point theme.

Write a theme for the story in a full sentence. Connect it to Amina's choice at the turning point.

"She had made a mistake, but her honesty helped make things right."

I CAN | I can write a lesson that fits the choice and the ending.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a theme in my own words."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Use the choice and the result to write a lesson that is true beyond Amina's classroom."

▸ *Students write a full-sentence theme and circle the words that make it a life lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Telling the truth and taking responsibility can help people fix mistakes.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to explain how the ending supports the theme.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write that Amina felt proud. That tells a feeling, not the lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Does a theme name one character? It can be based on a character, but it should teach a general lesson.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about writing a turning-point theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to make their theme true for any person who makes a mistake.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme by naming an event trap."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against the event trap.

A student wrote this theme: **The glass jar fell and broke.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"The glass jar fell to the floor and broke."

I CAN | I can explain why an event is not a life lesson.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a theme by naming an event trap."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"An event tells what happened. A theme tells what the story teaches about life."

▸ *Students label the trap and rewrite the event as a general lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: Setting or event, not theme. The jar breaking is what happened, not what the story teaches.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask students to turn the event into a theme.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may call the event a theme because it is important. Important does not mean it is a lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How can I spot this trap? Ask whether the answer tells what happened or what the story teaches.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending a turning-point theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask for another event that supports the lesson without being the lesson.

THEME

Find the turning-point theme on your own.

Go back to the passage. Write the turning point, then write the theme it helps develop and copy one supporting line.

Go back to the reading.
Write the turning point.
Write the theme it helps develop. Then copy one supporting line.

I CAN | I can connect a turning point to a theme and support it with a line from the text.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Find the important choice first. Then write the lesson it helps develop and your proof line."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **Amina chooses to speak up after she breaks the jar.** That choice hints that honesty matters, even when telling the truth feels hard.

CHOOSE **B.** Being honest and taking responsibility can help make mistakes right. A is Topic, not theme. C is Setting or event, not theme.

SHOW **Amina tells the truth even though she is nervous.** Then Mrs. Ramirez thanks her, and the class helps clean up. These details show that honesty and responsibility help solve a problem.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Telling the truth and taking responsibility can help people fix mistakes.

DEFEND **Setting or event, not theme.** The broken jar is an event in the story. The lesson is about being honest and taking responsibility after a mistake.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Turning point: Amina tells the truth about breaking the jar. Theme: Honesty and responsibility can help people fix mistakes. Line: Being a good citizen means telling the truth, even when it feels hard.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 ·

Review the Answers

~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"Amina took a deep breath and raised her hand. ... Being a good citizen means telling the truth, even when it feels hard."

Which statement best describes a theme that the turning point helps develop?

A Being honest and taking responsibility can help people make mistakes right.

B A glass jar can break during a classroom project.

C Students should work on plant projects.

D Accidents always cause problems for everyone.

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TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 25 of 36 · Cluster 6 · Module 1 · slide 9 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is A.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing B because the broken jar is an important event in the story.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is A.

A **Being honest and taking responsibility can help people make mistakes right.** **Correct.**
Correct. Amina tells the truth, takes responsibility, and helps the class make things right.

B **A glass jar can break during a classroom project.**
Setting or event, not theme. This tells an event from the story, not a lesson.

C **Students should work on plant projects.**
Topic, not theme. The project is part of the setting, but it is not the message.

D **Accidents always cause problems for everyone.**
Opposite. The story shows that honesty and teamwork help after an accident.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 25 of 36 · Cluster 6 · Module 1 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 · The Answer, and Why

⏰ ~4 min

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

"The answer is A. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what a story is about, in a word or two.

The theme is the lesson or message the story teaches, in a full sentence.

A character's choice can show what the story wants readers to learn.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "Crash"

A **topic** is one or two words, like honesty or responsibility. A **theme** is a life lesson in a full sentence, like **admitting mistakes can help people make things right**. Look closely at the main character's choices. STAAR asks: **What theme do the choices of the main character express?** Trap this week: **Life lesson not supported by this text**.

This deck teaches **finding theme through a character's choice** across the five RPLD thinking levels:
NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

⏰ ~5 min

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

"This week we are using the main character's choices to find theme. The topic is what the story is about. The theme is the lesson it teaches."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will check every life lesson against Amina's choices so we do not choose a true-sounding answer the story does not support."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 6 Module 2 . a class or student copy of "Crash" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to name a character choice from a story and the lesson it shows.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice the choice that expresses a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice Amina's choice.

Read the line. What does Amina choose to do, even though she feels nervous?

"She took a deep breath and raised her hand."

I CAN | I can connect a main character's choice to a lesson.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice the choice that expresses a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A character's choice is evidence. Ask what the choice teaches about life."

▸ *Students underline the choice and write one possible lesson beside it.*

ANSWER KEY: Amina tells the truth about her mistake. Her choice expresses honesty and responsibility.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what Amina could have done instead.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may say the theme is the plant. The plant is part of the story, not a lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why study Amina's choice? It shows what she learns and what the story values.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about connecting a character's choice to theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask what choice shows responsibility after Amina tells the truth.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a theme expressed by a character's choices."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose the lesson in Amina's choice.

STAAR asks: **What theme do the choices of the main character express?**

"But deep down, Amina knew that was not the right choice."

A Honesty and responsibility matter when mistakes happen • **B** The class is studying how plants grow • **C** Telling the truth is always easy

I CAN | I can skip a topic detail and a life lesson the story does not support.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose a theme expressed by a character's choices."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Amina thinks about staying silent, but then tells the truth. Which lesson matches that choice?"

▸ *Students choose privately and mark the unsupported lesson with an X.*

ANSWER KEY: A. Honesty and responsibility matter when mistakes happen.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why telling the truth is not always easy in this story.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose C because honesty is praised. The word always makes the claim unsupported.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What makes a lesson supported? The character's choices and the ending must show it.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about selecting a choice-based theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to replace always with words the story supports.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can show how a character's choices support a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show what Amina's choices express.

Explain how two of Amina's choices support the theme that honesty and responsibility matter when mistakes happen.

"She remembered a lesson her parents often talked about at home."

I CAN | I can use more than one choice to explain a theme.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 ·

Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can show how a character's choices support a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Use two choices, not just one. Together they show the character's lesson more clearly."

▸ *Students list Amina's truth-telling choice and her responsibility choice, then connect them to the theme.*

ANSWER KEY: Amina admits the mistake and helps solve the problem.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask students to name both choices before explaining the lesson.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may name what the teacher says but not what Amina does. Bring them back to her choices.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Can one choice support a theme? Yes, but two connected choices make the evidence stronger.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about using choices as theme evidence. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which choice shows courage and which shows responsibility.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a supported theme in my own words."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own the character-choice theme.

Write a theme in your own words. Make sure Amina's choices and the whole story support it.

"However, telling the truth had helped solve the problem."

I CAN | I can write a life lesson that the character's choices truly support.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a supported theme in my own words."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Do not add a life lesson the story never shows. Build your sentence from Amina's choices and results."

▸ *Students write a theme, then point to two choices that support it.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Telling the truth about a mistake can help people solve problems and earn trust.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask how the theme is supported by Amina's ending.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write a pleasant but unsupported lesson, such as being kind makes every problem easy.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What should I do with an interesting life lesson? Check whether this story actually supports it.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about writing a supported choice-based theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to underline the part of their theme supported by the ending.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme by checking its support in the text."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against an unsupported lesson.

A student wrote this theme: **Everyone should tell the truth every single time.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"Sometimes doing the right thing is not easy."

I CAN | I can explain why a true-sounding lesson is not supported by this story.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a theme by checking its support in the text."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A theme must fit the text. A sentence can sound wise and still be unsupported."

▸ *Students name the trap, then revise the claim so it matches Amina's choices.*

ANSWER KEY: Life lesson not supported by this text. The story teaches honesty after a mistake, not a rule about every situation.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask which words make the trap claim too unsupported.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept the answer because it sounds like good advice. Advice still needs text evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How do I test a life lesson? Ask whether the character's choices and the ending prove it.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending a supported theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to rewrite the trap as a theme this story supports.

THEME

Find the choice-based theme on your own.

Write the main character's important choices. Then write a supported theme and copy one line that proves it.

Go back to the reading.
Write Amina's important choices.
Write a supported theme. Then copy one proof line.

I CAN | I can use a character's choices to infer a supported theme.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

⏰ ~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"List the choices first. Then write the lesson those choices support and your proof line."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **Amina chooses to raise her hand and tell the truth.** Her choice shows that honesty matters even when a person may get in trouble.

CHOOSE **A.** Honesty and responsibility matter when mistakes happen. B is Topic, not theme. C is Life lesson not supported by this text.

SHOW **Amina decides not to stay silent, and she admits that she bumped the table.** Then she helps make things right. These choices support the theme of honesty and responsibility.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Telling the truth about a mistake can help people solve problems and earn trust.

DEFEND **Life lesson not supported by this text.** The story supports telling the truth about mistakes, but it does not prove the claim about every single time.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Choices: Amina admits the mistake and helps make things right. Theme: Honesty and responsibility can help people solve problems. Line: Her honesty helped make things right.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 · Review the Answers

~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"She took a deep breath and raised her hand. ... Sometimes it takes courage to admit a mistake."

Which statement best describes a theme expressed by the main character's choices?

A People should never make mistakes.

B The classroom plant is part of a science project.

C Amina should tell the teacher immediately every time something happens.

D Admitting mistakes and taking responsibility can help people make things right.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 26 of 36 · Cluster 6 · Module 2 · slide 9 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

⏰ ~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is D.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing A because it sounds like a rule, even though the story shows that mistakes happen.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is D.

A **People should never make mistakes.**
Opposite. The story says accidents happen and shows what to do after a mistake.

B **The classroom plant is part of a science project.**
Topic, not theme. This is a story detail, not the lesson from Amina's choices.

C **Amina should tell the teacher immediately every time something happens.**
Too narrow. It gives a rule about Amina and one situation, not the whole lesson.

D **Admitting mistakes and taking responsibility can help people make things right.** **Correct.**
Correct. Amina admits the mistake, accepts responsibility, and helps solve the problem.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 26 of 36 · Cluster 6 · Module 2 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 ·

The Answer, and Why

~4 min

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

"The answer is D. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what a story is about, in a word or two.

The theme is a lesson that fits the whole story, not just any true advice.

A strong theme is specific enough to match the character's problem and change.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "The Good Citizen"

A **topic** is one or two words, like responsibility or animals. A **theme** is a lesson that fits the whole story, like **people earn trust by following through on responsibilities**. A statement can be true and still miss the story's message. STAAR asks: **Why is "Always be careful" not the best theme of the story?** Trap this week: **Generic moral that fits many stories**.

This deck teaches **telling a true theme from a generic moral** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

~5 min

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

"This week we are choosing a theme that fits this story especially well. The topic is what the story is about. The theme is the lesson it teaches."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will practice rejecting generic morals, such as Always be careful, when a more specific lesson fits the whole story."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 6 Module 3 . a class or student copy of "The Good Citizen" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to give a broad moral and then make it fit one story more closely.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a theme that fits this story's problem."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice the story's specific lesson.

Read the line. What responsibility does Elena understand she must follow through on?

"Being a good citizen meant more than simply helping when it was convenient."

I CAN | I can notice why a specific lesson is stronger than general advice.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice a theme that fits this story's problem."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A generic moral could fit many stories. A strong theme explains this character's exact problem and change."

▸ *Students underline the words that make Elena's lesson specific to responsibility.*

ANSWER KEY: Elena learns to follow through on responsibilities, not just help when it is convenient.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what Elena forgot when she rushed.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose Always be careful because it is true. It is too general for this story's message.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Is every true sentence a good theme? No. It must fit the whole story especially well.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about spotting a specific theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to name the responsibility Elena needed to remember.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose the specific theme instead of a generic moral."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose the best theme.

STAAR asks: **Why is "Always be careful" not the best theme of the story?**

"It meant following through on responsibilities."

A Dogs at a shelter need food and care • **B** People earn trust by following through on responsibilities • **C** Always be careful

I CAN | I can choose a lesson that fits Elena's problem and change.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose the specific theme instead of a generic moral."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Which choice explains why Rusty and the manager can count on Elena after she learns the lesson?"

▸ *Students choose privately, then write why Always be careful is too general.*

ANSWER KEY: B. People earn trust by following through on responsibilities.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what makes B fit this story better than C.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose C because it sounds like good advice. It does not explain Elena's responsibility problem.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What is a generic moral? It is a broad piece of advice that could fit many different stories.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about choosing a specific theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to make B more specific without naming Elena.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can show why a specific theme fits the whole story."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show why the theme fits the whole story.

Explain how Elena's mistake and her change support the theme that people earn trust by following through on responsibilities.

"The more she thought about it, the more worried she became."

I CAN | I can connect the problem, response, and ending to the theme.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 · Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can show why a specific theme fits the whole story."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Track the problem, the fix, and the change at the end. A theme should connect all three."

▸ *Students list Elena's mistake, repair, and new habit, then link them to the theme.*

ANSWER KEY: Elena fixes the missed responsibility and later uses a checklist to follow through.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask for one detail from the problem and one from the ending.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may only say Elena was careful. Push them to explain how she became dependable.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why does the ending matter? It shows Elena changed her actions after learning the lesson.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about supporting a specific theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask how the checklist proves more than Always be careful.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a theme that fits one story especially well."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own the story's specific theme.

Write a theme for the whole story. Avoid a generic moral that could fit almost any story.

"What mattered was admitting mistakes and making them right."

I CAN | I can write a specific lesson instead of a broad piece of advice.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a theme that fits one story especially well."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Your theme should explain Elena's mistake, repair, and new habit in one life lesson."

▸ *Students write a theme, then cross out any words that make it too general.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Responsible people admit mistakes, fix them, and learn to follow through.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask how the theme fits both Elena's mistake and her checklist.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write Always be careful. It is true advice, but it does not capture the whole story.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How do I avoid a generic moral? Include the kind of problem and change the story develops.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about writing a precise theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to replace a broad word with a more exact idea from the story.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a specific theme against a generic moral."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against the generic-moral trap.

A student wrote this theme: **Always be careful.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"Most importantly, good citizens can be trusted to do what they say they will do."

I CAN | I can explain why broad advice misses the story's main lesson.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a specific theme against a generic moral."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A generic moral may be true, but it is not the best theme if it could fit almost any story."

▸ *Students name the trap and revise Always be careful into a theme about responsibility.*

ANSWER KEY: Generic moral that fits many stories. The story is specifically about following through and fixing a missed responsibility.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what important story details the generic moral leaves out.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept the trap because everyone should be careful. The question asks for this story's best lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What should a better theme mention? The story's lesson about responsibility, trust, and following through.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending against a generic moral. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to turn the generic moral into a precise theme.

THEME

Find the precise theme on your own.

Write the topic in one or two words. Then write a specific theme and copy one line that supports it.

Go back to the reading.
Write the topic in one or two words.
Write a specific theme. Then copy one supporting line.

I CAN | I can tell a generic moral from a specific theme and support my choice with a line.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Name the topic first. Then write the specific theme and prove it with a line from the story."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **Elena learns that responsibility means doing important jobs carefully, even when something more fun is waiting.**

CHOOSE **B.** People earn trust by following through on responsibilities. A is Topic, not theme. C is the Generic moral that fits many stories.

SHOW **Elena realizes she forgot Rusty's food, so she returns and fixes the mistake.** Later, she uses a checklist and completes every task. These details show her learning to be dependable.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Responsible people admit mistakes, fix them, and learn to follow through.

DEFEND **Generic moral that fits many stories.** Always be careful does not explain Elena's forgotten responsibility, her repair, or her new checklist.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Topic: responsibility. Theme: Responsible people admit mistakes, fix them, and learn to follow through. Line: Most importantly, good citizens can be trusted to do what they say they will do.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 · Review the Answers

⏰ ~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"Being a good citizen meant more than simply helping when it was convenient. ... Most importantly, good citizens can be trusted to do what they say they will do."

Which statement best describes a theme of the story?

A Dogs at shelters need food, water, and attention.

B People can earn trust by taking responsibility and following through.

C Always be careful when you are doing a job.

D Elena should use a checklist every Saturday at the shelter.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 27 of 36 · Cluster 6 · Module 3 · slide 9 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is B.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing C because Always be careful sounds wise, even though it fits many stories.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is B.

A **Dogs at shelters need food, water, and attention.**
Topic, not theme. This is an important story detail, but it is not the full lesson.

B **People can earn trust by taking responsibility and following through. Correct.**
Correct. Elena fixes her mistake, uses a checklist, and becomes someone Rusty can count on.

C **Always be careful when you are doing a job.**
Generic moral that fits many stories. It does not explain Elena's responsibility and change.

D **Elena should use a checklist every Saturday at the shelter.**
Too narrow. A checklist is one action Elena takes, not a life lesson for the whole story.

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TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 27 of 36 · Cluster 6 · Module 3 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 · The Answer, and Why

⏰ ~4 min

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

"The answer is B. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what a story is about, in a word or two.

The theme is the lesson or message the story teaches, in a full sentence.

A strong theme is supported by details from the beginning, problem, and ending.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "The Good Citizen"

A **topic** is one or two words, like responsibility or volunteering. A **theme** is a message in a full sentence, like **responsibility means admitting mistakes, fixing them, and learning from them**. To defend a theme, use details from the whole story. STAAR asks: **Short response: What is a theme of the story? Defend it with two details.** Trap this week: **Topic-adjacent statement as message**.

This deck teaches **defending a theme with evidence** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

⏰ ~5 min

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

"This week we are defending a theme with evidence. The topic is what the story is about. The theme is the lesson it teaches."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will choose a full-sentence message, avoid topic-adjacent answers, and prove our theme with two details."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 6 Module 4 . a class or student copy of "The Good Citizen" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to give a theme and two details from a story they know.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a theme that needs evidence."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice a theme and its evidence.

Read the line. What message does Elena learn, and what part of the story could support it?

"Responsibility means admitting mistakes, correcting them, and learning from them."

I CAN | I can notice how a character's lesson connects to details across a story.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice a theme that needs evidence."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A theme is an idea. Evidence is what happened in the story that proves the idea."

▸ *Students underline the theme words and list two events that support them.*

ANSWER KEY: The theme is about responsibility. Elena fixes the missed chore and changes how she works.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask for two details that support Elena's lesson.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may copy a topic phrase such as animal shelter. A topic-adjacent statement is not the message.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need details? Details show that the theme fits the whole story.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about noticing a theme that needs proof. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which detail shows Elena learned from the mistake.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a theme and prepare to defend it with evidence."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose the message, not a topic neighbor.

STAAR asks: **What is a theme of the story? Defend it with two details.**

"She wanted to be certain everything was complete."

A The shelter is a place where dogs wait for homes • **B** Elena uses a checklist to finish her tasks • **C** Responsibility means fixing mistakes and learning from them

I CAN | I can skip a topic-adjacent statement and choose the full message.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose a theme and prepare to defend it with evidence."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Which choice teaches a life lesson that the missed bowl and the later checklist both support?"

▸ *Students choose privately, then name two details that could defend their choice.*

ANSWER KEY: C. Responsibility means fixing mistakes and learning from them.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why the checklist is evidence instead of the theme.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose B because it is an important ending detail. It is one action, not the message.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What is a topic-adjacent statement? It mentions a story idea but does not state the deeper lesson.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about choosing a defendable theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to turn B into a life lesson.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can defend a theme with two details."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show two details that defend the theme.

Defend the theme that responsibility means admitting mistakes, fixing them, and learning from them. Name two details.

"After changing clothes and grabbing a snack, she headed to the park."

I CAN | I can explain how two details from different parts of a story support one message.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 ·

Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can defend a theme with two details."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Choose details from different moments. One can show the problem and one can show the change."

▸ *Students write two details and a sentence explaining how both support the theme.*

ANSWER KEY: Elena feeds Rusty after the mistake and later uses a checklist to prevent another missed task.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask students to explain both details, not just list them.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may copy two lines without explaining them. Add how each line supports the theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Do two details have to be identical? No. They should connect to the same message.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about defending a theme with two details. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which detail proves Elena learned, not just fixed, the problem.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a theme and defend it with evidence."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own the defended theme.

Write a theme for the story in a full sentence. Then name two details that defend it.

"The following Saturday, Elena arrived at the shelter carrying a small checklist she had created at home."

I CAN | I can connect a full-sentence theme to two details from the whole story.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

⏰ ~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a theme and defend it with evidence."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A strong response gives the message first, then two details that prove it."

▸ *Students write the theme and two evidence sentences on the OWN row.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Responsible people fix mistakes and learn better ways to follow through.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to point to the detail that shows a change over time.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write only a summary. Add the lesson that the details teach.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How is a defense different from a summary? A defense explains why details prove the theme.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about writing and defending a theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to replace a topic-adjacent statement with a true theme.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme against a topic-adjacent statement."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against the topic-adjacent trap.

A student wrote this message: **Volunteering at an animal shelter is important.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"It was about understanding that other people (and sometimes animals) count on you to do your part."

I CAN | I can explain why mentioning the topic is not enough to state the message.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a theme against a topic-adjacent statement."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A topic-adjacent statement stays near the topic. A theme explains what the story teaches about it."

▸ *Students name the trap and rewrite the message so it includes the story's lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: Topic-adjacent statement as message. It names volunteering but misses the lesson about responsibility.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what important change the trap leaves out.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept the trap because volunteering is important in the story. Importance is not the whole message.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How can I fix this trap? Add the lesson about admitting mistakes, correcting them, and learning.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending against a topic-adjacent message. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to add two story details to their corrected theme.

THEME

Find and defend the theme on your own.

Write a theme in a full sentence. Then copy two details and explain how each one supports the theme.

Go back to the reading.
Write a theme in a full sentence.
Copy two details and explain how each one supports it.

I CAN | I can distinguish a theme from a topic-adjacent statement and defend it with two details.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Write the message first. Then give two details and explain how each one proves the message."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **Elena learns that responsibility includes fixing mistakes and learning from them.** Her missed chore, return to the shelter, and checklist can support this theme.

CHOOSE **C.** Responsibility means fixing mistakes and learning from them. A is Topic, not theme. B is Topic-adjacent statement as message.

SHOW **First, Elena returns to feed Rusty after realizing she forgot.** Later, she creates a checklist and completes every task. These details show her fixing the mistake and learning from it.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Responsible people fix mistakes and learn better ways to follow through. Details: Elena returns to feed Rusty; later she uses a checklist and completes every task.

DEFEND **Topic-adjacent statement as message.** Volunteering is part of the story's topic, but the deeper message is about admitting mistakes, fixing them, and learning.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Theme: Responsibility means admitting mistakes, fixing them, and learning from them. Details: Elena returns to feed Rusty; the next Saturday she uses a checklist and completes every task.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 · Review the Answers

~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"She had forgotten. ... The following Saturday, Elena arrived at the shelter carrying a small checklist she had created at home."

Which statement best describes a theme of the story?

A A dog shelter is a place where animals wait for homes.

B Elena should always use a checklist when she volunteers.

C Volunteering at an animal shelter is important.

D Responsibility means admitting mistakes, fixing them, and learning from them.

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TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 28 of 36 · Cluster 6 · Module 4 · slide 9 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is D.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing C because volunteering is important in the story, even though it is not the deeper message.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is D.

A **A dog shelter is a place where animals wait for homes.**
Topic, not theme. It tells what the setting is about, not the lesson Elena learns.

B **Elena should always use a checklist when she volunteers.**
Too narrow. The checklist is one way Elena changes, not the full life lesson.

C **Volunteering at an animal shelter is important.**
Topic-adjacent statement as message. It mentions the topic but misses the deeper lesson about responsibility.

D **Responsibility means admitting mistakes, fixing them, and learning from them. Correct.**
Correct. Elena returns to fix the mistake and later learns a better way to complete her responsibilities.

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TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 28 of 36 · Cluster 6 · Module 4 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 · The Answer, and Why

⏰ ~4 min

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

"The answer is D. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what a poem is about, in a word or two.

The theme is the lesson or message the poem teaches, in a full sentence.

A strong theme fits the whole poem, not just a repeated word or image.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "A Dream Can Grow"

A **topic** is one or two words, like dreams or hope. A **theme** is a lesson in a full sentence, like **sharing hope can help good ideas grow**. STAAR asks: **What theme does the poet express in the poem?** Trap this week: **Word association from the lines**.

This deck teaches **finding a theme in a longer poem** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

⏰ ~5 min

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

"This week we are finding a theme in a longer poem. The topic is what the poem is about. The theme is the lesson it teaches."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will follow one idea across stanzas, choose a global message, and avoid answers that only repeat poem words."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 7 Module 1 . a class or student copy of "A Dream Can Grow" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to give a topic word and a full-sentence theme from a poem they know.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a theme in a longer poem."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice the poem's bigger message.

Read the line. What topic words do you notice, and what bigger lesson might the whole poem teach?

"One hopeful word can travel through, Until another dreams it too."

I CAN | I can look past repeated words to find the poem's larger lesson.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice a theme in a longer poem."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A repeated word can point toward a theme, but the word itself is not the theme."

▸ *Students circle a topic word and write a possible life lesson beside it.*

ANSWER KEY: Hope and dreams are topic words. The possible lesson is that shared hope can inspire others.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to turn one topic word into a full lesson.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may copy dream or hope as the theme. Those are words from the topic, not a lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Can hope be the theme by itself? No. Hope is a topic word; the theme says what the poem teaches about hope.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about noticing a poem's larger message. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask what happens when one hopeful word travels to others.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a theme that fits every stanza."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose the whole poem's theme.

STAAR asks: **What theme does the poet express in the poem?** Look for a lesson, not a repeated word.

"It moves through classrooms, homes, and towns, And lifts our hearts when we feel down."

A Sharing hope can inspire people to help good ideas grow • **B** Dreams and kindness • **C** A child should always have the same dream as a friend

I CAN | I can choose a life lesson instead of matching a word from the poem.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose a theme that fits every stanza."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"The poem shows hope moving from one person to many. Which choice explains that lesson?"

▸ *Students choose privately, then underline the words in the poem that support the lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: A. Sharing hope can inspire people to help good ideas grow.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why B is only a pair of words, not a theme.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose B because dreams and kindness appear in the poem. Words from the poem are not automatically the message.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What makes a theme global? It teaches something that could be true beyond this poem.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about selecting a whole poem theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to name one stanza that supports A.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can show how two details support a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show how the poem grows its theme.

Explain how the poem shows that sharing hope can inspire people to help good ideas grow. Use two details.

"Together we can help it grow, By sharing kindness as we go."

I CAN | I can connect images and actions across a poem to its message.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 · Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can show how two details support a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Follow the idea across stanzas. The poem moves from a small dream to many people helping."

▸ *Students record one detail about the dream spreading and one about people helping it grow.*

ANSWER KEY: The dream travels from friend to friend, and children share kindness to help it grow.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask students to explain how both details connect to sharing hope.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may name only the word dream. Require an action that shows the lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why use two details? Two moments show that the message fits more than one part.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about connecting poem details to theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which detail shows people acting on hope.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a theme in my own words."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own the poem's theme.

Write a theme for the whole poem in a full sentence. Make it a lesson that could fit real life.

"The future waits for what we do, For dreams need helping hands there too."

I CAN | I can write a global lesson that fits the poem from start to finish.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a theme in my own words."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Use the topic of dreams and hope, then state what the poem teaches about them."

▸ *Students write a full sentence theme and star the words that make it a life lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Shared hope and kind actions can help good ideas become real.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student why the theme fits the ending as well as the beginning.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may summarize the dream's journey. A theme tells the lesson, not every event.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How can I test my theme? Ask whether it could be true in another place or poem.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about writing a theme independently. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to connect their theme to one action in the poem.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme against a word trap."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against word association.

A student wrote this theme: **Dreams, hope, and kindness.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"But many hearts can help it grow."

I CAN | I can explain why repeated words are clues, not a complete message.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a theme against a word trap."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Word association from the lines means an answer borrows words but misses what the poem teaches."

▸ *Students name the trap, then turn the word list into a full theme sentence.*

ANSWER KEY: Word association from the lines. The answer lists poem words but gives no lesson.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what lesson the word list needs to explain.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept the answer because every word appears in the poem. A theme must say more than the poem's vocabulary.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How can I fix this trap? Explain what hope and kindness do for people or ideas.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending a theme against word association. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to revise the trap into a true theme.

THEME

Find the theme on your own.

Write the topic in one or two words. Then write a full-sentence theme and copy two poem lines that support it.

Go back to the poem.
Write the topic in one or two words.
Write the theme in a full sentence. Copy two supporting lines.

I CAN | I can tell the topic from a theme and support my theme with two lines.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Name the topic first. Then write the larger lesson and prove it with two lines."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **The words hopeful and dreams point to hope spreading.** The larger lesson is that shared hope can inspire more people.

CHOOSE **A.** Sharing hope can inspire people to help good ideas grow. B is Word association from the lines. C is Too narrow and not supported.

SHOW **The poem first shows a dream moving from friend to friend.** Later, children share kindness to help it grow. Together, these details support the theme.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Shared hope and kind actions can help good ideas become real.

DEFEND **Word association from the lines.** The words name ideas in the poem, but they do not state the lesson that sharing hope and kindness helps dreams grow.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Topic: hope and dreams. Theme: Sharing hope and kindness can help good ideas grow. Lines: One hopeful word can travel through, Until another dreams it too. Together we can help it grow, By sharing kindness as we go.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 · Review the Answers

⏰ ~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"One hopeful word can travel through, Until another dreams it too. ... Together we can help it grow, By sharing kindness as we go."

Which statement best describes a theme of the poem?

A Sharing hope and kindness can help good ideas grow.

B Dreams, hope, and helping hands.

C The poem takes place in classrooms and towns.

D Every dream will come true if someone says it aloud.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 29 of 36 · Cluster 7 · Module 1 · slide 9 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is A.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing B because dreams, hope, and helping hands are words from the poem, even though they do not state a lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is A.

A **Sharing hope and kindness can help good ideas grow.** **Correct.**
Correct. The dream spreads through hopeful words, and people help it grow by sharing kindness.

B **Dreams, hope, and helping hands.**
Word association from the lines. These are poem words, not a lesson in a full sentence.

C **The poem takes place in classrooms and towns.**
Setting or event, not theme. Locations show where the dream travels, not the message.

D **Every dream will come true if someone says it aloud.**
Too broad. The poem says people help a dream grow, not that every dream must come true.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 29 of 36 · Cluster 7 · Module 1 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 · The Answer, and Why

~4 min

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

"The answer is A. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what a poem is about, in a word or two.

The theme is the lesson or message the poem teaches, in a full sentence.

Images can help readers feel and understand a theme, but an image is not the theme by itself.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "A Dream Can Grow"

A **topic** is one or two words, like dreams or hope. A **theme** is a message in a full sentence, like **shared hope can move people to care for one another**. Images are details that help build the message. STAAR asks: **How do the images in lines 3 and 4 support the theme?** Trap this week: **Topic word, not theme**.

This deck teaches **using imagery to support theme** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

~5 min

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

"This week we are using imagery to support theme. The topic is what the poem is about. The theme is the lesson it teaches."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will picture the poet's images, explain what they reveal, and avoid choosing a topic word as the message."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 7 Module 2 . a class or student copy of "A Dream Can Grow" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to name an image from a poem and explain what it might reveal.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice how an image supports a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice images that carry meaning.

Read the line. What image do you picture, and what lesson could that image help support?

"I looked at Mama's shining eyes, And saw the tears that made me wise."

I CAN | I can connect a picture in a poem to the larger message.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice how an image supports a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"An image helps us picture or feel an idea. We still need to explain the lesson it supports."

▸ *Students sketch the image, then write what it helps them understand about the poem.*

ANSWER KEY: Mama's shining eyes and tears show that the message affects her and supports shared hope.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what the tears reveal about the words Mama hears.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write tears as the theme. Tears are an image, not the life lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What is the difference between an image and a theme? An image creates a picture; a theme states a lesson.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about noticing imagery that supports theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask what feeling the image creates for the reader.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose an explanation of imagery and theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose what the images show.

STAAR asks: **How do the images in lines 3 and 4 support the theme?** Explain what the pictures help readers understand.

"A little spark, a little shine."

A The poem is about dreams. • **B** The speaker sees a spark in a room. • **C** A spark image shows hope beginning and spreading.

I CAN | I can explain what an image means instead of naming only the topic.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose an explanation of imagery and theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Which choice names what the image shows? Which choice only names what the poem is about?"

▸ *Students choose privately, then draw a line from the image to the idea it helps readers see.*

ANSWER KEY: C. A spark image shows hope beginning and spreading.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why B is only a topic word.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose B because dreams are important. The question asks what the image shows, not just the topic.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Can a topic word explain an image? No. It names the subject but does not tell what the image shows or means.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about explaining an image's role. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to connect the spark image to the feeling of hope.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can show how imagery supports a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show how the images support the theme.

Explain how the images of shining eyes and a little spark support the theme that shared hope can move people to care.

"It traveled into hearts like mine, A little spark, a little shine."

I CAN | I can explain how two images make a poem's message clearer.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 · Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can show how imagery supports a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Ask what each image helps us feel, then connect both feelings to the theme."

▸ *Students name both images and write one sentence explaining the connection between them.*

ANSWER KEY: The eyes show care, and the spark shows hope entering a new heart.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask students to explain how the second image shows hope spreading.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may list the images without explaining them. Always add what the image reveals.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why does the poet use a spark? It helps readers picture a small hope beginning inside someone.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about showing how imagery builds theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which image shows feeling and which shows hope beginning.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a theme and connect an image to it."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own the message behind the images.

Write a full-sentence theme for the poem. Then name one image and explain how it supports your theme.

"A dream grows stronger when we share, Through thoughtful words and acts of care."

I CAN | I can state a life lesson and use imagery as evidence.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a theme and connect an image to it."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Write the lesson first. Then use the image as proof of how the lesson feels or grows."

▸ *Students write their theme and explain one image in a complete evidence sentence.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Shared hope and caring actions can inspire people to help one another.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to point to the image that supports their theme.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write a picture description instead of a theme. A description tells what we see; a theme tells what we learn.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How does an image become evidence? Explain what it helps the reader understand about the lesson.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about writing a theme from imagery. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to compare two images from the poem.

FRIDAY • REFLECTIVE (Highly Independent)
THEME

THEME

WEEK 30 of 36
TEKS 3.8(A) · Slide 6 of 10

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme against a topic word."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against the topic trap.

A student wrote this theme: **Dreams.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"I carry it when I choose what's right, And help another heart feel light."

I CAN | I can explain why a topic word does not state the poem's message.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a theme against a topic word."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Topic word, not theme means the answer names the subject but leaves out the lesson."

▸ *Students label the trap and add a lesson to turn the one word into a theme.*

ANSWER KEY: Topic word, not theme. Dreams are the subject, not the full message.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what the poem teaches about dreams.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept the one word because it is important in every stanza. Importance does not make a topic word a theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How can I repair the answer? Add what people learn about sharing dreams and helping others.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending against a topic word. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to turn Dreams into a full life lesson.

THEME

Find the theme and image evidence.

Write the topic in one or two words. Write a full-sentence theme, then copy one image and explain how it supports the theme.

Return to the poem.
Write the topic in one or two words.
Write the theme and explain one image that supports it.

I CAN | I can distinguish a topic word from a theme and use imagery as evidence.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"State the lesson, then point to an image and explain how it helps readers feel or understand that lesson."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **The shining eyes and tears show that the hopeful words matter deeply.** The image supports a theme about shared hope moving people to care.

CHOOSE **C.** A spark image shows hope beginning and spreading. A is a broad theme, but this question asks how the images support it. B is Topic word, not theme.

SHOW **Mama's shining eyes show that the message touches her.** The spark in the speaker's heart shows that hope passes to someone new. Together, the images support shared hope.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Shared hope and caring actions can inspire people to help one another. The image of a spark in a heart shows hope being passed to someone new.

DEFEND **Topic word, not theme.** Dreams name what the poem discusses, but the poem teaches that shared hope and caring actions can affect others.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Topic: hope and service. Theme: Shared hope can inspire people to care for one another. Image: a little spark in the speaker's heart shows hope passing to a new person.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 · Review the Answers

⏰ ~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"I looked at Mama's shining eyes, And saw the tears that made me wise. ... It traveled into hearts like mine, A little spark, a little shine."

How do the images in lines 3 and 4 support the theme that shared hope can move people to care?

A They show that the speaker is standing in a crowd.

B They prove that every dream will come true.

C They name the topic of the poem: dreams.

D They show that hopeful words can touch people and spread from heart to heart.

The Writing Academy®, LLC

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is D.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing C because dreams are the topic, even though the question asks what the images show about the theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is D.

A **They show that the speaker is standing in a crowd.**
Setting or event, not theme. The crowd is a detail, but it does not explain the images' meaning.

B **They prove that every dream will come true.**
Too broad. The images show hope spreading, not that every dream will come true.

C **They name the topic of the poem: dreams.**
Topic word, not theme. Dreams name the subject but do not explain what the images teach.

D **They show that hopeful words can touch people and spread from heart to heart.** **Correct.**
Correct. Shining eyes, tears, and a spark in a heart show hope affecting people and moving onward.

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TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 30 of 36 · Cluster 7 · Module 2 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 · The Answer, and Why

⏰ ~4 min

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

"The answer is D. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what a poem is about, in a word or two.

The theme is the lesson or message the poem teaches, in a full sentence.

A theme can build as a poem moves from an idea to actions and then to a personal choice.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "What Will You Give?"

A **topic** is one or two words, like service or helping. A **theme** is a lesson in a full sentence, like **people can make a difference by offering their time and skills**. To track a theme, notice how each stanza adds to the message. STAAR asks: **How does the theme build from stanza to stanza?** Trap this week: **Describes one stanza only**.

This deck teaches **tracking a theme across stanzas** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

~5 min

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

"This week we are tracking a theme across stanzas. The topic is what the poem is about. The theme is the lesson it teaches."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will watch the message grow from an invitation, to shared work, to the speaker's own choice to help."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 7 Module 3 . a class or student copy of "What Will You Give?" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to describe how a theme can change or grow as a poem continues.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice how a poem begins a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice a theme beginning to build.

Read the line. What invitation begins here, and how might later stanzas develop it?

"A voice sent out a simple word: To serve, and thousands stood and heard."

I CAN | I can track an idea as it grows across several stanzas.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice how a poem begins a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"The first stanza may plant an idea. Keep reading to see what the poem does with that idea."

▸ *Students underline the invitation and predict one action that might develop it.*

ANSWER KEY: The first invitation is to serve. It starts the theme about helping through action.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what the thousands do after they hear the word.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may call the crowd the theme. A crowd is one detail, not the poem's message.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why read beyond the first stanza? The whole poem may show how the first idea changes or grows.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about noticing a theme's starting point. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to predict how the speaker may respond later.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose the idea that starts a developing theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose how the theme starts.

STAAR asks: **How does the theme build from stanza to stanza?** Choose the idea that begins the poem's message.

"Find how to serve somebody today."

A Grandpa hears a message in winter. • **B** An invitation to serve can lead to helpful action. • **C** The poem describes one crowd outside.

I CAN | I can identify the message instead of describing one stanza.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose the idea that starts a developing theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Which choice names an idea that later stanzas can develop?"

▸ *Students choose privately, then point to a later stanza that might add to the idea.*

ANSWER KEY: B. An invitation to serve can lead to helpful action.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why C cannot describe the whole poem's message.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose A because Grandpa's memory starts the poem. A beginning event is not the developing theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What is a one-stanza trap? It describes one small part but does not explain the poem's full movement.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about choosing a developing theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask what later action could grow from the invitation.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can show how a theme changes or grows across stanzas."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show the theme's movement.

Explain how the theme builds from an invitation to serve, to people working together, to the speaker's own choice.

"The invitation asks of me: 'What will your contribution be?'"

I CAN | I can connect the beginning, middle, and ending of a poem to one message.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 · Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can show how a theme changes or grows across stanzas."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Use the poem's path: an idea is heard, people act together, and the speaker decides to help."

▸ *Students make a three-part chain: invitation, cooperation, personal choice.*

ANSWER KEY: The message grows from a call to serve, to shared work, to the speaker's own contribution.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask which part shows the theme becoming personal.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may explain only the crowd or only the speaker. Name all three stages.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How does the ending change the poem? It brings the public invitation into the speaker's own life.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about showing how a theme builds. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to name the stanza that shifts from history to the speaker.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a theme and trace its growth."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own the theme across the poem.

Write a theme for the whole poem. Then describe how the beginning, middle, and ending build that message.

"So when I wonder where to start, I'll look nearby and use my heart."

I CAN | I can explain how multiple stanzas work together to teach one lesson.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a theme and trace its growth."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A strong answer names the lesson and follows it from the poem's beginning through its ending."

▸ *Students write a theme and label one supporting moment from the beginning, middle, and end.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: People can serve others by noticing needs and offering what they can.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to identify the ending action that supports the theme.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may retell each stanza without naming the lesson. Begin with the theme sentence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How do I know my theme fits the whole poem? I can match it to moments at the beginning, middle, and end.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about tracing a theme across a poem. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to connect the speaker's choice to their own school community.

FRIDAY • REFLECTIVE (Highly Independent)
THEME

THEME

WEEK 31 of 36
TEKS 3.8(A) · Slide 6 of 10

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme against a one-stanza answer."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against a one-stanza trap.

A student wrote this theme: **People volunteer in faraway places.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"Sometimes it starts not far away, But three short desks from yours today."

I CAN | I can explain why one detail cannot replace the whole poem's message.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a theme against a one-stanza answer."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Describes one stanza only means the answer may be true in one place but does not fit the poem's whole development."

▸ *Students name the trap and add the local and personal parts the answer leaves out.*

ANSWER KEY: Describes one stanza only. The poem includes faraway service, but it ends by asking what each person can do nearby.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what the trap misses at the end of the poem.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept the trap because the poem mentions volunteers. One mentioned example is not the whole theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How can I test this answer? Check whether it explains the invitation, cooperation, and the speaker's choice.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending against a one-stanza answer. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to revise the trap into a theme that includes the ending.

THEME

Track the theme on your own.

Write the topic in one or two words. Write a theme in a full sentence. Then explain how one early and one late stanza support it.

Return to the poem.
Write the topic in one or two words.
Write the theme and show how an early and late stanza support it.

I CAN | I can tell the topic from a theme and explain how the message builds across the poem.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Name the lesson, then trace it through an early, middle, and late moment."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **The poem begins with an invitation to serve.** Later stanzas can show people answering it with useful actions.

CHOOSE **B.** An invitation to serve can lead to helpful action. A is one event. C is Describes one stanza only.

SHOW **The poem begins with a public invitation to serve.** It then shows volunteers cooperating and finally asks the speaker what contribution to make. The theme moves from hearing an idea to acting on it personally.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: People can serve others by noticing needs and offering what they can. The poem begins with an invitation, shows shared work, and ends with the speaker looking nearby for a way to help.

DEFEND **Describes one stanza only.** Faraway volunteers appear in one part, but the poem also shows local and personal ways to serve.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Topic: service. Theme: People can make a difference by noticing needs and offering what they can. Early support: the call to serve. Late support: the speaker looks nearby for a contribution.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 · Review the Answers

~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"To serve, and thousands stood and heard. ... The invitation asks of me: 'What will your contribution be?'"

How does the theme build from stanza to stanza?

A The poem starts with Grandpa's memory and ends with the speaker choosing a way to help.

B The poem describes a crowd that hears a speech in winter.

C The poem moves from a call to serve, to shared work, to the speaker's own decision to contribute.

D The poem teaches that only people in faraway places can serve others.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 31 of 36 · Cluster 7 · Module 3 · slide 9 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is C.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing B because the winter crowd is memorable, even though it describes only an early stanza.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is C.

A **The poem starts with Grandpa's memory and ends with the speaker choosing a way to help.**
Too narrow. It names the frame and ending but leaves out the middle growth through shared work.

B **The poem describes a crowd that hears a speech in winter.**
Describes one stanza only. The crowd and winter are early details, not the full theme's movement.

C **The poem moves from a call to serve, to shared work, to the speaker's own decision to contribute. Correct.**
Correct. The poem develops from an invitation, through cooperation, to a personal choice to help.

D **The poem teaches that only people in faraway places can serve others.**
Opposite. Near the ending, the poem says service may start nearby, even at school desks.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 31 of 36 · Cluster 7 · Module 3 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 · The Answer, and Why

~4 min

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

"The answer is C. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what a poem is about, in a word or two.

The theme is the lesson or message the poem teaches, in a full sentence.

The strongest theme is supported by important details from the whole poem, not by an unrelated life lesson.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "What Will You Give?"

A **topic** is one or two words, like service or contribution. A **theme** is a lesson in a full sentence, like **ordinary people can help their communities through useful actions**. Defend the strongest theme with details from across the poem. STAAR asks: **Which theme is best supported by the whole poem, and why?** Trap this week: **Life lesson not supported by this text**.

This deck teaches **defending the strongest theme** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

⏰ ~5 min

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

"This week we are defending the strongest theme in a long poem. The topic is what the poem is about. The theme is the lesson it teaches."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will compare possible lessons, use evidence from the whole poem, and reject advice the text does not support."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 7 Module 4 . a class or student copy of "What Will You Give?" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to give a theme and two details that support it from a story or poem they know.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a theme that the whole poem supports."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice a theme worth defending.

Read the line. What does it teach about the power of ordinary actions?

"The world is often helped each day By ordinary hands that find a way."

I CAN | I can connect a broad message to details from many parts of a poem.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice a theme that the whole poem supports."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A strong theme is not just a nice idea. The poem must give us details that support it."

▸ *Students underline the lesson words and list two actions from the poem that support them.*

ANSWER KEY: Ordinary hands can help the world. Service, listening, and useful actions support this message.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask for one ordinary action from the poem.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose any positive life lesson. It must be supported by this poem's details.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why is evidence important? It proves that the theme belongs to this poem, not just to life in general.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about noticing a defendable theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask how the line connects to the speaker's own hands.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose the theme with the strongest evidence."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose the strongest supported theme.

STAAR asks: **Which theme is best supported by the whole poem, and why?** Choose the lesson that matches many details.

"They can collect what others need, And turn good thoughts into a deed."

A People can help their communities through ordinary, useful actions. • **B** Service and helping hands • **C** The speaker should become famous for helping people

I CAN | I can choose a supported message and reject positive ideas the poem does not prove.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose the theme with the strongest evidence."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Which choice matches the poem's many examples of hands, time, listening, and service?"

▸ *Students choose privately, then cite two details that defend the answer.*

ANSWER KEY: A. People can help their communities through ordinary, useful actions.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why C is not supported even though helping is important.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose C because the poem talks about important work. The poem does not teach that helpers should become famous.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What makes a theme strongest? It is a lesson supported by repeated and important details across the whole poem.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about choosing the best-supported theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to name two kinds of ordinary help in the poem.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can defend a theme with evidence from across a poem."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show why the theme is supported.

Defend the theme that ordinary people can help communities through useful actions. Name two details from different parts of the poem.

"They can help younger readers grow, By sharing words that I now know."

I CAN | I can explain how different actions support one message.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 ·

Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can defend a theme with evidence from across a poem."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Choose evidence from different places. Repeated kinds of help make the theme stronger."

▸ *Students record one action from the middle and one from the ending, then connect both to the theme.*

ANSWER KEY: Helping younger readers and choosing one useful thing to do both show ordinary actions building communities.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask students to explain why their two details support the same lesson.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may list actions without naming the connection. Add how the actions help people or communities.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why use details from different parts? They show that the message is repeated and supported across the poem.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about defending a theme with whole-poem evidence. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which detail shows the speaker turning an idea into action.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write and support the strongest theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own the strongest theme.

Write a theme for the whole poem in a full sentence. Then give two details that prove it is supported.

"For service grows when we begin. We change the world by helping in."

I CAN | I can state a life lesson and defend it with evidence from the whole poem.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write and support the strongest theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"The best theme is a lesson, and the best defense shows how the poem proves it."

▸ *Students write a theme and two evidence sentences on the OWN row.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Ordinary people can strengthen their communities by beginning with useful acts of service.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to identify evidence from two different sections.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write a general rule that sounds good but never appears in the poem. Return to the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How do I reject a nice but unsupported lesson? Ask whether the poem gives details that prove it.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about writing and defending the strongest theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to explain how their theme includes both small actions and community change.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can reject a life lesson that the poem does not support."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against an unsupported lesson.

A student wrote this theme: **People should always give away everything they own.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"Give something useful you can share."

I CAN | I can explain why a positive-sounding idea still needs evidence from the text.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can reject a life lesson that the poem does not support."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Life lesson not supported by this text means the advice may sound kind but the poem does not prove it."

▸ *Students name the trap and replace the unsupported rule with a theme the poem actually supports.*

ANSWER KEY: Life lesson not supported by this text. The poem says to share what is useful, not everything a person owns.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask which kinds of giving the poem names.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept the trap because the poem says give. The poem gives a careful list, not an extreme rule.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How can I test a positive answer? Find exact details that support its level of advice.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending against unsupported advice. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to revise the trap into a supported theme.

THEME

Defend the theme on your own.

Write the topic in one or two words. Write the strongest theme in a full sentence, then copy two details that support it.

Return to the poem.
Write the topic in one or two words.
Write the strongest theme and copy two supporting details.

I CAN | I can distinguish a supported theme from an unsupported life lesson.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Choose the message with the most evidence. Then copy two details and explain the connection."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **The line teaches that ordinary people can help through useful actions.** The poem supports this through service, listening, and small acts of care.

CHOOSE **A.** People can help their communities through ordinary, useful actions. B is Topic word, not theme. C is Life lesson not supported by this text.

SHOW **The poem lists small actions such as planting, cleaning, welcoming, and helping younger readers.** It also explains that communities grow when many people choose one useful thing to do.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Ordinary people can strengthen their communities by beginning with useful acts of service. Details include helping younger readers and choosing one helpful thing to do.

DEFEND **Life lesson not supported by this text.** The poem encourages sharing time, effort, talent, and care, but it never says people should give away everything they own.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Topic: service. Theme: Ordinary people can strengthen their communities through useful acts of service. Details: ordinary hands help each day; many people choose one helpful thing to do.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 ·

~4 min

Review the Answers

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"The world is often helped each day By ordinary hands that find a way. ... Not through one giant act we show, But many people choosing to Find one worthwhile and helpful thing to do."

Which statement best describes a theme of the poem?

A Ordinary people can help their communities through useful actions.

B People should always give away everything they own.

C The speaker has small hands and a notebook.

D A famous speech is the only way to change the world.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 32 of 36 · Cluster 7 · Module 4 · slide 9 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is A.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing B because it sounds generous, even though the poem never supports giving away everything.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is A.

A **Ordinary people can help their communities through useful actions.** **Correct.**
Correct. The poem names many ordinary acts and says communities grow when people choose helpful work.

B **People should always give away everything they own.**
Life lesson not supported by this text. The poem encourages useful sharing, not giving away everything.

C **The speaker has small hands and a notebook.**
Too narrow. These details belong to one moment and do not state the poem's message.

D **A famous speech is the only way to change the world.**
Opposite. The poem says many ordinary people can help through small, useful actions.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 32 of 36 · Cluster 7 · Module 4 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 · The Answer, and Why

⏰ ~4 min

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

"The answer is A. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is what a poem is about, in a word or two.

The theme is the lesson or message the poem teaches, in a full sentence.

When two poems share a theme, the lesson must fit both poems, not just one.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "A Dream Can Grow and What Will You Give?"

A **topic** is one or two words, like dreams or service. A **theme** is a lesson that fits the whole poem, like **people can help a better future grow through caring actions**. STAAR asks: **What theme do both poems share?** Traps this week: **One poem only, too narrow**, **Topic, not theme**, and **Too broad**.

This deck teaches **finding a shared theme across poems** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

⏰ ~5 min

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

"This week we will compare two poems. The topic names what they are about. The shared theme is a lesson both poems teach."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will look for evidence in both poems and reject answers that fit only one poem."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 8 Module 1 . a class or student copy of "A Dream Can Grow" and "What Will You Give?" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to name a topic and a lesson shared by two stories or poems.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a topic and a hint of a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice a shared lesson.

Read the line from A Dream Can Grow. Is **dream** the topic or the theme? Notice what the poem says about carrying a dream.

"The dream traveled. The dream grew."

I CAN | I can notice words that point to a lesson in a poem.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice a topic and a hint of a theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A topic names the subject. A theme tells what the poem teaches about that subject."

▸ *Students write TOPIC: dreams and circle the words that show the dream continues.*

ANSWER KEY: Dreams is the topic. Traveled and grew hint at the theme.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to name one topic word and one lesson hint.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write dreams as the theme. That is only the topic.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Can dream be the whole theme? No. It is a topic word, not a full lesson.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about spotting theme clues. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask what action helps the dream grow.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a theme shared by two poems."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose the shared theme.

STAAR asks: **What theme do both poems share?** Check that your answer fits both poems.

"They travel through the things we do, From one old dream to something new."

A Dreams and service • **B** A famous speech can change history • **C** People can help good hopes grow through caring actions

I CAN | I can compare two poems and choose a lesson that fits both.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose a theme shared by two poems."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Ask whether each choice fits both poems. A names topics, and B focuses on one poem's event."

▸ *Students choose privately, then label one wrong choice with its trap name.*

ANSWER KEY: C. People can help good hopes grow through caring actions.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why the correct answer needs evidence from both poems.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may pick B because one poem includes a speech. That detail does not fit both poems.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What makes an answer shared? Both poems must support the same lesson.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about comparing shared themes. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to name one detail from each poem.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can show how details from two poems support one theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show both poems support the theme.

Explain how both poems support the theme that people can help good hopes grow through caring actions.

"One thoughtful word, one caring deed, Can sometimes be a tiny seed."

I CAN | I can connect evidence from both poems to a shared lesson.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 ·

Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can show how details from two poems support one theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A shared theme needs a detail from each poem, not just your favorite poem."

▸ *Students write one supporting line from each poem and explain the connection.*

ANSWER KEY: The seed image and the ordinary hands both show caring actions growing into change.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to name evidence from both poems.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may use only the speech from the first poem. Require evidence from the second poem too.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Do both details have to say the same words? No. They must support the same lesson.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about supporting a shared theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask how the two poems show people passing hope to others.

THURSDAY • ADVANCED
THEME

THEME

WEEK 33 of 36
TEKS 3.8(A) · Slide 5 of 10

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a shared theme in my own words."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own the shared theme.

Write one theme shared by both poems in a full sentence. Make sure it fits each poem.

"For service grows when we begin. We change the world by helping in."

I CAN | I can write a theme that fits two whole poems.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a shared theme in my own words."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Name the big lesson, then test it against both poems."

▸ *Students write a shared theme and underline the words that make it a life lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Small caring actions can help hopeful ideas reach more people and create change.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to explain how the theme fits both poems.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may summarize one poem. A shared theme is a lesson, not a retelling.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What makes the theme too narrow? It fits only one poem or one small detail.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about writing a shared theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to revise a theme that names only one poem.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a shared theme and name a trap."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against the trap.

A student wrote this shared theme: **A famous speaker inspires one child to remember a speech.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"It entered classrooms, homes, and streets, And lived wherever kindness meets."

I CAN | I can explain why a theme fits both poems or fails to do so.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a shared theme and name a trap."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"One poem only, too narrow means the answer cannot explain the other poem."

▸ *Students write the trap name and one reason the answer fails to fit both poems.*

ANSWER KEY: One poem only, too narrow. It leaves out the second poem.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask for a line from the second poem that disproves the trap.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept the answer because it is true in one poem. A shared theme must fit both.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How can I spot this trap? Ask whether the answer still works for the other poem.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending a shared theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to repair the trap into a theme for both poems.

YOUR TURN
THEME

THEME

WEEK 33 of 36
TEKS 3.8(A) · Slide 7 of 10

Find the shared theme on your own.

Reread both poems. Write the topic in one or two words. Then write a shared theme in a full sentence and copy one line from each poem that supports it.

Reread both poems.
Write the topic in one or two words.
Write a shared theme in a full sentence.
Copy one supporting line from each poem.

I CAN | I can compare two poems, state a shared theme, and support it with evidence from both.

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TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 33 of 36 · Cluster 8 · Module 1 · slide 7 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Topic first. Then state one lesson that both poems support, and prove it with a line from each."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **Dream is a topic.** Traveled and grew hint that a hope can continue when people carry it forward.

CHOOSE **C.** People can help good hopes grow through caring actions. A is Topic, not theme. B is One poem only, too narrow.

SHOW **In A Dream Can Grow, a caring deed is like a seed that can grow.** In What Will You Give?, ordinary hands help communities grow. Both poems show that caring actions can carry hope forward.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Small caring actions can help hopeful ideas reach more people and create change.

DEFEND **One poem only, too narrow.** The answer focuses on the speaker and one child in A Dream Can Grow. It does not fit What Will You Give?, which shows ordinary people serving others.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Topic: service or hope. Theme: Caring actions can help hopeful ideas grow and reach others. Lines: One thoughtful word, one caring deed, Can sometimes be a tiny seed. / The world is often helped each day By ordinary hands that find a way.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 ·

Review the Answers

~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"One thoughtful word, one caring deed, Can sometimes be a tiny seed. ... The world is often helped each day By ordinary hands that find a way."

What theme do both poems share?

A Dreams are important to children.

B People should remember famous speeches.

C Service is something adults do in communities.

D Small caring actions can help hopeful ideas grow and reach others.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 33 of 36 · Cluster 8 · Module 1 · slide 9 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is D.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing A because dreams appear in one poem, without checking the second poem.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is D.

A **Dreams are important to children.**
One poem only, too narrow. The answer focuses on children and does not fit the service poem.

B **People should remember famous speeches.**
One poem only, too narrow. The second poem focuses on serving, not remembering a speech.

C **Service is something adults do in communities.**
Topic-adjacent statement as message. Service appears in the poems, but this does not state the shared lesson and is too limited to adults.

D **Small caring actions can help hopeful ideas grow and reach others.** **Correct.**
Correct. Both poems show hope traveling through the caring actions of ordinary people.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 33 of 36 · Cluster 8 · Module 1 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 · The Answer, and Why

~4 min

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

"The answer is D. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

A theme is a life lesson from a story or poem.

A message is the main lesson an informational text teaches.

A strong connection explains what both texts say about the same big idea.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "What Will You Give? and People Make the Difference: How Ideas and Actions Change Communities"

A **theme** is a lesson in a poem, and a **message** is a lesson in an informational text. Both texts teach that **people can improve communities through useful actions**. STAAR asks: **How does a theme from a poem connect to the message of the research text?** Trap this week: **Topic-adjacent statement as message**.

This deck teaches **connecting a poem theme to an informational message** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

⏰ ~5 min

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

"This week we will connect a poem's theme to an informational text's message. Both are lessons, not just topics."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"We will compare what each text teaches about how people can help communities."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 8 Module 2 . a class or student copy of "What Will You Give?" and "People Make the Difference: How Ideas and Actions Change Communities" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to tell the difference between a topic and a message.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice the lesson a poem teaches."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice a message, not just a topic.

Read the line from What Will You Give?. Is **hands** the message, or does the line teach something about hands?

"The world is often helped each day By ordinary hands that find a way."

I CAN | I can tell a message from a topic word.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice the lesson a poem teaches."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A message is not just the subject. It tells what the text teaches about the subject."

▸ *Students write HANDS as the topic and underline the words that show the lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: Hands is the topic. Ordinary hands that find a way point to the message.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to turn the line into a full lesson.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write hands as the message. That is only a topic.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What makes a message different from a topic? A message is a full lesson.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about finding a text message. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask what ordinary hands can do in the poem.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can connect a poem theme to an informational message."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose the connection.

STAAR asks: **How does a theme from the poem connect to the message of the research text?**

"Perhaps that's how communities grow, Not through one giant act we show, But many people choosing to Find one worthwhile and helpful thing to do."

A Both texts are about communities. • **B** People can improve communities through useful actions. • **C** Research texts give facts about famous people.

I CAN | I can choose a big idea that both texts support.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can connect a poem theme to an informational message."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A connection must be a lesson, not just a shared subject."

▸ *Students choose privately and label one wrong answer with its trap name.*

ANSWER KEY: B. People can improve communities through useful actions.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why both texts support B.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may pick A because both texts mention communities. Mentioning a topic is not the message.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why is A not enough? It names the subject but does not say what the texts teach.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about connecting theme and message. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to explain the connection in their own words.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can show how two texts support one big lesson."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show the connection with evidence.

Explain how the poem and the research text both support the lesson that people can improve communities through useful actions.

"Someone noticed something. Someone asked a question. Someone made a choice. Then an idea or action created change."

I CAN | I can use evidence from a poem and an informational text to explain a connection.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 ·

Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can show how two texts support one big lesson."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Use one detail from each text, then name the lesson they share."

▸ *Students write a poem detail, a research detail, and one sentence connecting them.*

ANSWER KEY: The poem shows many helpful choices. The research text shows ideas and actions creating change.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask for one piece of evidence from each text.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may list facts without explaining the shared lesson. Require a connection sentence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Do the texts need to use the same example? No. They need to support the same big idea.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about explaining a text connection. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask how the research examples strengthen the poem's lesson.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a connection between a theme and a message."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own the connection.

Write a full sentence explaining how the poem's theme connects to the research text's message.

"Today I have a voice and hands, A little time and simple plans."

I CAN | I can explain a shared lesson in my own words.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 · Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a connection between a theme and a message."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Name what the poem teaches, what the research text teaches, and the lesson they share."

▸ *Students write the connection on the OWN row and circle the shared lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Both texts show that people's useful actions can make communities stronger.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to point to the two texts in their response.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write a summary of only one text. A connection must include both.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How do I know I wrote a connection? I named an idea from each text and linked them.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about writing a theme-message connection. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to add evidence to the connection.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a message and explain a topic trap."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against the trap.

A student wrote this message for the research text: **Communities have roads, buildings, stores, schools, parks, and homes.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"But those things alone do not make a community strong."

I CAN | I can explain why a topic-adjacent statement is not the text's message.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a message and explain a topic trap."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A topic-adjacent statement may be true, but it does not state what the whole text teaches."

▸ *Students write the trap name and replace the weak message with a stronger one.*

ANSWER KEY: Topic-adjacent statement as message. The list names a topic, not the lesson.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask for a line that shows what makes a community strong.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept the statement because the text lists those things. A list is not always a message.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What should I ask? What does the author want me to understand about the topic?

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending a message. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to revise the trap into a full message.

THEME

Connect the two texts on your own.

Reread both texts. Write the topic in one or two words. Then state the poem's theme, the research text's message, and one connection sentence.

Reread both texts.
Write the topic.
State the poem's theme and the research text's message.
Write one sentence explaining the connection.

I CAN | I can connect a poem theme and an informational message with evidence.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Name the poem's lesson, the research message, and the big idea they share."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **Hands is a topic word.** The line teaches that ordinary people can help the world through their actions.

CHOOSE **B.** People can improve communities through useful actions. A is Topic-adjacent statement as message. C is Too narrow and not the shared message.

SHOW **The poem says many people can choose one helpful thing to do.** The research text explains that a person's idea or action can create change in a community. Together, they show that useful actions can improve communities.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: The poem encourages people to offer their time and help, while the research text shows how people's ideas and actions make communities stronger.

DEFEND **Topic-adjacent statement as message.** The statement lists things in a community, but the research text teaches that people and their actions make communities strong.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Topic: community action. Theme: People can help others by using their time and abilities. Message: Ideas and actions can create change in communities. Connection: Both texts teach that people strengthen communities by choosing useful actions.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 ·

Review the Answers

⏰ ~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"Perhaps that's how communities grow, Not through one giant act we show, But many people choosing to Find one worthwhile and helpful thing to do. ... Then an idea or action created change."

How does the theme of What Will You Give? connect to the message of People Make the Difference?

A Both texts list the parts of a community.

B The poem is about helping, but the research text is only about inventions.

C Both texts show that people's useful ideas and actions can strengthen communities.

D People should wait for leaders to solve community problems.

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TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 34 of 36 · Cluster 8 · Module 2 · slide 9 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is C.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing A because both texts mention communities, without stating what the texts teach about communities.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is C.

A **Both texts list the parts of a community.**
Topic-adjacent statement as message. The texts mention communities, but their shared lesson is about what people do.

B **The poem is about helping, but the research text is only about inventions.**
Not in the text. The research text includes inventions, laws, service, and other actions that change communities.

C **Both texts show that people's useful ideas and actions can strengthen communities.** **Correct.**
Correct. The poem shows people helping through ordinary actions, and the research text shows ideas and actions creating change.

D **People should wait for leaders to solve community problems.**
Opposite. Both texts show that ordinary people can choose actions that help communities.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 · The Answer, and Why

⏰ ~4 min

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

"The answer is C. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

A theme is a lesson that reaches beyond one story.

When two stories share a theme, each story must support it.

Evidence explains how characters' choices and results teach the lesson.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "Crash and The Recess Question"

A **theme** is a life lesson, not a summary or a topic word. Crash and The Recess Question both show that **honesty, responsibility, and thoughtful choices help a community solve problems**. STAAR asks: **Which theme connects two stories from this year, and what evidence proves it?** Trap this week: **Generic moral that fits many stories**.

This deck teaches **finding a theme across two stories** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

~5 min

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

"This week we will compare two stories and find a theme they share. We will use choices and results as evidence."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"A good answer is a specific life lesson supported by both stories, not just any positive saying."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 8 Module 3 . a class or student copy of "Crash" and "The Recess Question" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to explain why a topic is not a theme.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a character's important choice."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice the lesson in a choice.

Read the line from Crash. What choice points toward a bigger lesson?

"What mattered now was how she responded."

I CAN | I can notice a choice that hints at a theme.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice a character's important choice."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A theme often grows from a character's choice and what happens next."

▸ *Students write the choice Amina faces and circle the words that point to the lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: Amina must choose how to respond to the mistake.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what choice Amina makes next.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write accident as the theme. That is a topic or event, not a lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Is accident a theme? No. It names what happened, not what the story teaches.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about spotting a theme clue. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask how the choice affects the class.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a theme shared by two stories."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose the connecting theme.

STAAR asks: **Which theme connects the two stories?** Choose a lesson both stories support.

"Good citizens listen to one another, consider the reasons, and make decisions respectfully."

A Honesty and thoughtful choices help groups solve problems. • **B** Accidents happen in science classrooms. • **C** Everyone should always agree with a teacher.

I CAN | I can reject a generic moral and choose a lesson supported by both stories.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose a theme shared by two stories."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"The best theme should explain important choices in both stories."

▸ *Students choose privately, then underline the words that make the answer a life lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: A. Honesty and thoughtful choices help groups solve problems.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask how each story shows people solving a problem.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may pick C because it sounds positive. A positive sentence is not automatically a supported theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What makes a moral generic? It could fit many stories without using this text's important details.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about selecting a shared story theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to name one choice from each story.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can prove a shared theme with evidence from two stories."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show how both stories support the theme.

Explain how Amina's honesty and Beth's class discussion support the theme that thoughtful choices help people solve problems together.

"Instead of blaming her, her classmates understood that it was an accident."

I CAN | I can connect choices and results in two stories to one theme.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 · Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can prove a shared theme with evidence from two stories."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Name the choice and the result in each story."

▸ *Students write one choice and result from each story.*

ANSWER KEY: Amina tells the truth and the class helps. Beth's class listens and considers solutions.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask for evidence from both stories, not one.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may only retell the accidents. Require the choices and what those choices changed.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why include results? Results show how the choice helps the group.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about proving a shared theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask how the groups would be different without the characters' choices.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a shared theme in my own words."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own the shared theme.

Write a theme that fits both stories in a full sentence. Include the kind of choice the stories value.

"Recess had started as something simple."

I CAN | I can write a theme that fits the whole of two stories.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 35 of 36 · Cluster 8 · Module 3 · slide 5 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a shared theme in my own words."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Do not retell the plots. State the lesson the choices teach."

▸ *Students write a shared theme and list one supporting detail from each story.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Honest and thoughtful choices help groups solve problems and become stronger.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why the theme fits both stories.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write a rule that is too general. Connect the lesson to evidence from both stories.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How do I test the theme? Ask whether both stories show it through choices and results.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about writing a two-story theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to strengthen a theme by adding the group result.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme against a generic moral."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against the trap.

A student wrote this theme: **People should always do the right thing.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"Sometimes doing the right thing feels difficult."

I CAN | I can explain why a moral needs support from these stories.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a theme against a generic moral."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A generic moral sounds good but does not use what is special about the texts."

▸ *Students name the trap and revise the moral so it matches both stories.*

ANSWER KEY: Generic moral that fits many stories. It does not point to the specific choices in both stories.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask students to add evidence from both stories.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept any kind sentence as a theme. The best theme must be supported by the texts.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What should I ask about a generic moral? Could it fit almost any story?

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending a specific theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to make the moral more text-specific.

THEME

Find the two-story theme on your own.

Reread both stories. Write the topic in one or two words. State a shared theme in a full sentence and give one piece of evidence from each story.

Reread both stories.
Write the topic.
State a shared theme in a full sentence.
Give one detail from each story as evidence.

I CAN | I can state and defend a shared theme with evidence from two stories.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"State the shared lesson, then prove it with one choice and result from each story."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **Amina must decide how to respond after the accident.** This hints that a person's response to a mistake matters.

CHOOSE **A.** Honesty and thoughtful choices help groups solve problems. B is Too narrow and one event. C is Generic moral that fits many stories and is not supported.

SHOW **In Crash, Amina tells the truth and classmates help.** In The Recess Question, students listen and consider solutions. Both show thoughtful choices helping groups solve problems.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Honest and thoughtful choices help groups solve problems and become stronger.

DEFEND **Generic moral that fits many stories.** The sentence sounds positive, but it could fit almost any story. A stronger theme names the honest and thoughtful choices that help these groups solve problems.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Topic: community choices. Theme: Honest and thoughtful choices help groups solve problems. Evidence: Amina tells the truth and the class works together; Beth's class listens to different views and considers solutions.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 ·

~4 min

Review the Answers

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"What mattered now was how she responded. ... Good citizens listen to one another, consider the reasons, and make decisions respectfully."

Which theme connects Crash and The Recess Question?

A Honesty and thoughtful choices can help groups solve problems together.

B Students should always avoid making mistakes.

C People should never disagree with one another.

D Plants and recess are important parts of school.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is A.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing D because plants and recess appear in the stories, even though those are topics, not the lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is A.

A **Honesty and thoughtful choices can help groups solve problems together.** **Correct.**
Correct. Amina tells the truth and gets help, while Beth's class listens and considers solutions together.

B **Students should always avoid making mistakes.**
Opposite. Crash explains that everyone makes mistakes sometimes and should learn how to respond.

C **People should never disagree with one another.**
Opposite. The Recess Question says people may disagree but should listen respectfully.

D **Plants and recess are important parts of school.**
Generic moral that fits many stories. These are topics and settings, not the shared lesson.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 35 of 36 · Cluster 8 · Module 3 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 · The Answer, and Why

~4 min

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

"The answer is A. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

A topic is one or two words about a text.

A theme is a full-sentence life lesson supported by the whole text.

To defend a theme, name evidence and explain how it proves the lesson.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from "Student choice: The Good Citizen or Why We Need Laws"

For the capstone, choose a text and state its **theme**, not its topic. A theme is a life lesson such as **honest responsibility helps people repair mistakes and earn trust**. STAAR asks: **State a theme from a text read this year and defend it with evidence.** Trap this week: **Topic word, not theme**.

This deck teaches **state and defend a theme in writing** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 10 · Introduce the Week

⏰ ~5 min

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

"This week is our theme capstone. You will choose a text, state its theme, and defend it with evidence."

▸ *Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box in your own warm voice.*

"Remember: a topic is a word or two. A theme is a full life lesson supported by the whole text."

▸ *Point to the five thinking levels. Tell students that every day they will also hunt for one trap answer.*

PREP & MATERIALS: the Theme slide deck for Cluster 8 Module 4 . a class or student copy of "The Good Citizen" and "Why We Need Laws" . the student tracking sheet . pencils

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to turn a topic word into a theme sentence.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why a test might include answers that sound right but are wrong.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a full-sentence theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Notice theme words.

Read the line from The Good Citizen. Which words point to a life lesson instead of just naming the story's topic?

"Responsibility means admitting mistakes, correcting them, and learning from them."

I CAN | I can notice words that state a lesson about responsibility.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 10 · Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice a full-sentence theme."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A theme explains what a text teaches about its topic."

▸ *Students write RESPONSIBILITY as the topic and underline the action words in the line.*

ANSWER KEY: Responsibility is the topic. Admitting, correcting, and learning point to the theme.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to turn the line into a life lesson.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write responsibility as the theme. That is only a topic word.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Can one word be the theme? No. A theme is a lesson in a full sentence.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about noticing a theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask what someone can learn from a mistake.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a theme instead of a topic."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Choose a defensible theme.

STAAR asks: **Which statement best describes a theme of The Good Citizen?** Choose a full life lesson.

"Every dog had food and water."

A Dogs, food, and checklists at a shelter. • **B** Honest responsibility helps people fix mistakes and earn trust. • **C** Elena rides her bike to the shelter every Saturday.

I CAN | I can choose a theme that the whole story supports.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 10 · Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose a theme instead of a topic."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"The correct answer should be a lesson someone could use in life."

▸ *Students choose privately and label one wrong choice with its trap name.*

ANSWER KEY: B. Honest responsibility helps people fix mistakes and earn trust.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask why A is only a topic list.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may choose A because those details appear often. Details are not automatically the theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What makes B stronger? It teaches a life lesson and fits the whole story.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about choosing a defensible theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to point to two parts of the story that support B.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can defend a theme with evidence."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Show evidence for the theme.

Explain how Elena's mistake, her honest response, and her later checklist support the theme that honest responsibility helps people fix mistakes and earn trust.

"And Elena knew she had become a better volunteer, and a better citizen, because of the lesson she had learned."

I CAN | I can explain how several details support a theme.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 4 OF 10 · Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

⏰ ~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can defend a theme with evidence."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Do not just list details. Explain how each detail proves the lesson."

▸ *Students write two evidence details and a sentence explaining the connection.*

ANSWER KEY: Elena tells the truth, fixes the mistake, and uses a checklist to become dependable.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to explain why the checklist matters.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may repeat the theme without evidence. Require a detail from the story.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What does defend mean? Give evidence and explain how it supports the theme.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about defending a theme with evidence. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask how Elena changes from the mistake to the next Saturday.

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a theme in my own words."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Own the theme in writing.

Write a theme for The Good Citizen or Why We Need Laws. Make it a full sentence that fits the whole text.

"When citizens work together and obey, Communities become stronger every day."

I CAN | I can write a theme that fits the whole text, not one detail.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 10 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write a theme in my own words."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"Choose the text, name its topic, and ask what the whole text teaches about it."

▸ *Students write a theme and underline two words that make it a life lesson.*

ANSWER KEY: Example: Fair rules help communities protect people and solve problems together.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask which evidence supports the student's theme.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may summarize the plot or list laws. A theme tells the lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How is a summary different? A summary tells what happened; a theme tells what it teaches.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is about writing an independent theme. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to strengthen the theme so it fits the whole text.

FRIDAY • REFLECTIVE (Highly Independent)
THEME

THEME

WEEK 36 of 36
TEKS 3.8(A) · Slide 6 of 10

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme against a topic trap."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer the theme of a work, distinguishing theme from topic"

Defend against the trap.

A student wrote this theme for Why We Need Laws: **Laws and rules.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"The rules helped neighbors settle what was fair, And gave each person rights that all could share."

I CAN | I can explain why a topic word is not a theme.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 10 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

~4 min

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

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend a theme against a topic trap."

▸ *Read the I can statement aloud, then read the test-style question on the slide.*

"A topic names the subject. A theme teaches a lesson about the subject."

▸ *Students name the trap and turn the topic into a full theme sentence.*

ANSWER KEY: Topic word, not theme. Laws and rules is only the subject.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask students to add what laws do for communities.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may accept a topic because it is important in the text. Importance does not make it a theme.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How do I fix a topic answer? Add what the text teaches about the topic.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about defending a theme answer. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask students to revise the topic into a supported life lesson.

THEME

Complete the capstone response.

Choose one text. Write the topic in one or two words. State a theme in a full sentence. Then copy two lines that support it and explain the evidence.

Choose one text.
Write the topic.
State a theme in a full sentence.
Copy two supporting lines and explain how they prove it.

I CAN | I can state and defend a theme with evidence from a text.

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 10 · Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

~5 min

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

"Now it is your turn to use the question on your own."

▸ *Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.*

"Topic, theme, two proof lines, and an explanation. That is a strong theme response."

▸ *Circulate and note who proves the answer with text evidence.*

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an answer plus a quoted or pointed-to piece of evidence.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write an answer with no proof. Require the evidence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What counts as evidence? Words from the passage that you can point to.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the question type.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to write one trap answer and name its trap.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **Responsibility is the topic.** Admitting, correcting, and learning from mistakes point to the theme that responsible people face mistakes and learn from them.

CHOOSE **B.** Honest responsibility helps people fix mistakes and earn trust. A is Topic word, not theme. C is Too narrow and describes one event.

SHOW **Elena admits that she forgot Rusty's food, returns to fix the problem, and later uses a checklist so she can be dependable.** The manager thanks her for being honest, and Rusty can count on her. These details support the theme.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example for The Good Citizen: People show responsibility by admitting mistakes, fixing them, and learning from them. Example for Why We Need Laws: Fair rules help communities protect people and solve problems together.

DEFEND **Topic word, not theme.** Laws and rules names what the poem is about, but it does not state the lesson. A stronger theme is that fair rules help communities protect rights and solve disagreements.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Example from The Good Citizen: Topic: responsibility. Theme: Responsible people admit mistakes, fix them, and learn from them. Evidence: Responsibility means admitting mistakes, correcting them, and learning from them. / Rusty could count on her. Explanation: Elena tells the truth, corrects her mistake, and becomes dependable.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 10 · Review the Answers

⏰ ~4 min

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

"Let's check our work across the five thinking levels."

▸ *Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.*

"If you missed one, that is where your learning is. Go back to the passage and find the proof."

▸ *Celebrate students who named a trap, not only the right answer.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can give the answer and the proof.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Right answer, no proof. Ask where the passage says so.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why do I need proof? Because the test only rewards answers the passage supports.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask which trap fooled them most this week and why.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

"Responsibility means admitting mistakes, correcting them, and learning from them. ... To write fair rules that everyone would obey."

Which statement best describes a theme supported by the texts in this week's reading?

A Dogs and laws are important topics in the readings.

B People can strengthen communities by acting responsibly and following fair rules.

C Elena should use a checklist at the shelter every Saturday.

D Every problem can be solved quickly if people work hard.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 36 of 36 · Cluster 8 · Module 4 · slide 9 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 10 · Show What You Know

~4 min

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

"Here is a test-style question, worded the way the STAAR test words it."

▸ *Read the excerpt and the question aloud.*

"Read all four choices. Cross out each trap and say its name before you choose."

▸ *Give think time. Students choose privately and bubble their letter on the tracking sheet.*

ANSWER KEY: The answer is B.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students cross out traps by name, not by guessing.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing A because it names topics from the texts without stating a lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two answers seem close. How do I pick? Choose the one the whole passage proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action under test conditions.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name the trap in each wrong choice.

THEME

The answer is B.

A **Dogs and laws are important topics in the readings.**
Topic, not theme. Dogs and laws name subjects, but this choice does not state a life lesson.

B **People can strengthen communities by acting responsibly and following fair rules.** **Correct.**
Correct. Elena learns responsibility, and the poem explains how fair laws help communities grow stronger.

C **Elena should use a checklist at the shelter every Saturday.**
Too narrow. The checklist is one detail from one story, not a lesson supported by the whole reading.

D **Every problem can be solved quickly if people work hard.**
Too broad and Not in the text. The texts do not promise that every problem is solved quickly.

TEKS 3.8(A) · Theme · Week 36 of 36 · Cluster 8 · Module 4 · slide 10 of 10

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 10 ·

The Answer, and Why

~4 min

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

"The answer is B. The most important part is understanding why each other choice is a trap."

▸ *Reveal each choice's reason. Say the trap name aloud with the class.*

"Each wrong choice sounds possible. The trap name tells you why it fails."

▸ *Have students write one sentence explaining why the correct answer fits.*

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can match each wrong choice to a trap name.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why the others fail.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if a wrong choice is true? True is not enough. It must answer the question.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move of the week.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new trap answer for this question.