

THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC.

Student Interactive Workbook

Grade 3

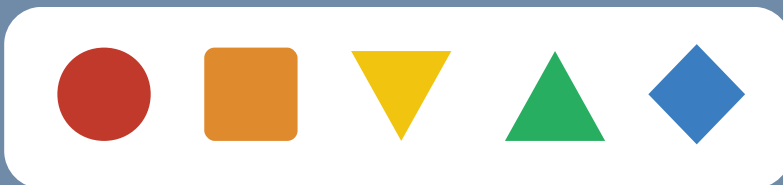
Cluster 2 - Modules 1 to 4

Module 1: TREES and Shaping the Prompt

Module 2: Writing the Thesis (central idea) (The Trunk of the Tree)

Module 3: Reason/Way (The First Branch of the Tree)

Module 4: Evidence (The Second Branch of the Tree)



Name: _____



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THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC.

Student Interactive Workbook

Grade 3

Cluster 2 - Module 1

TREES and Shaping the Prompt



Name: _____



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Grade 3 • Cluster 2 • Module 1

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How to Use My Workbook

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

My Name and My Goal for This Module

Pocket Practice

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



Meet My Week

TREES and Shaping the Prompt



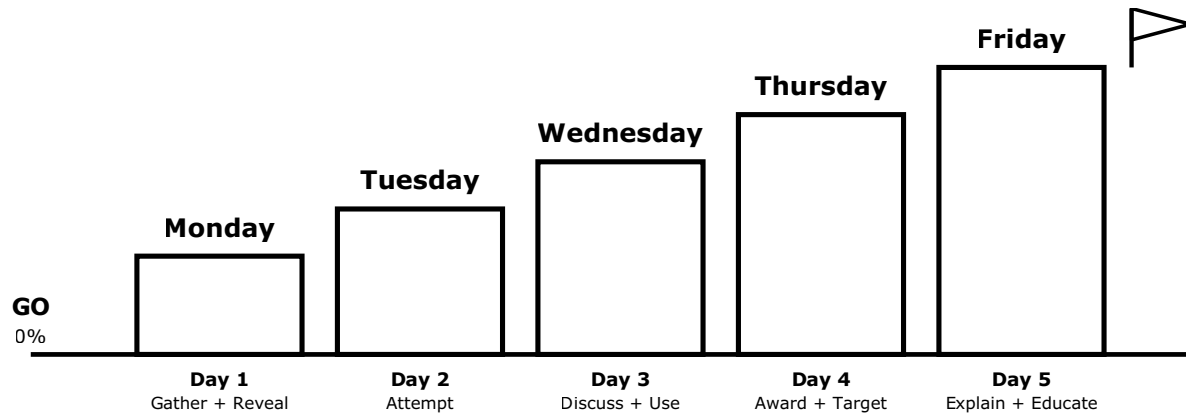
Why This Matters to Me

Nothing else in this cluster works until I can tell what a prompt is asking. I will learn to find the topic, charge, and clue word. Then I can choose WHY or HOW thinking before I write.

Essential Question

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

My Week Tracker



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

My First Thinking

I Can

- I can find the topic, charge, and clue word in an extended constructed response prompt.
- I can tell whether a prompt asks WHY or HOW.
- I can explain what job the prompt gives me.

I Will

- I will read the whole prompt before I mark it.
- I will use the clue word to choose the kind of answer I need.

The I Can I want to reach first, and why

My Week at a Glance

What I learn	What I read	What I make
How prompts give a writer a topic, a charge, and a clue word.	Two nonfiction passages about Laura Ingalls Wilder and Carmen Lomas Garza.	Marked prompts, a prompt practice page, a short response, and a next step.

Where We Are Going

I will move from noticing the parts of a prompt to marking four prompts on my own. I will finish by teaching someone else how to shape a prompt.

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

- ☐ I mark all three parts on the prompt.
- ☐ I circle the topic, box the charge, and triangle the clue word.
- ☐ I name the prompt type as WHY or HOW.
- ☐ I explain the job without changing what the prompt asks.

Check Myself

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

How I Will Show What I Know

I will show what I know with four shaped prompts, a short writing response, a partner explanation, and the Day 5 exit ticket.

My GRADUATE Learning Path

Stage	Day	What I do
Gather	Day 1	I connect to what I already know.
Reveal	Day 1	I learn how the tree and prompt fit together.
Attempt	Day 2	I practice with BOOM BOOM GRAB.
Discuss	Day 3	I explain why my choices work.
Use Again	Day 3	I shape four prompts on my own.
Award	Day 4	I name evidence of my growth.
Target	Day 4	I choose my next step.
Explain/Educate	Day 5	I teach prompt shaping to a partner.

Say It Together!

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

3.11B(i):

TEKS says: 3.11B develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by: (i) organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction and a conclusion; and (ii) developing an engaging idea with relevant details.

How I say it: I first identify the prompt's topic, charge, and clue word to organize a focused informational response. WHY is a reason and HOW is a way.

3.12B:

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

How I say it: I apply the narrower sentence, noun, capitalization, and spelling focus during additional writing. The official TEKS wording stays the same.

Call and Response

Read this together as a class before we start.

Teacher asks: "Read with prosody, leave some tracks. Shape the prompt and answer back. Write the thesis (central idea), then convince."

Class answers: "Show them proof called evidence. Bring together, signals find, from the text and from my mind! Relate it to all who read. Let my writing meet a need!"

One TEKS I want to practice today



Get Ready

Before I begin



Before We Begin: What Do I Already Know?

I already know that a question or prompt gives me a job. I can find details in a passage and tell the difference between proof and what proof shows.

A connection I can make

Remember It!

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

One idea I remember

Ready Check

- ☐ I can name the person or thing a sentence is about.
- ☐ I can find the verb that tells what the topic does.
- ☐ I can read a whole sentence before I choose an answer.

Watch Out! Common Mix-Up

Watch out! Explain is the direction given to the writer. The charge is what the topic does. In the model prompt, the stories help.

Where This Fits in My Writing

Shaping the prompt is the first step before I write a thesis (central idea), reasons, evidence, and explanation.

What I want to remember before I start

Where I Am Starting

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

Part 1: Prompt Analysis

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

Explain why Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories help readers understand history.

Part 2: Thesis (Central Idea)

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

My thesis (central idea)

Part 3: Informative Organization

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

Number	Sentence
_____	The passage says families traveled by wagon and lived in small houses.
_____	Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories help readers understand history.
_____	This shows readers what daily life really looked like long ago.
_____	One reason is that she wrote about frontier travel.

Part 4: Introduction

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

My first sentence

Part 5: Relevant Details and Evidence

Reason: Laura Ingalls Wilder wrote about hard work on the frontier. Copy one sentence from the passage that proves this reason. Then explain in one sentence why it proves the reason.

The sentence I copied from the passage

Why it proves the reason

Part 6: Passage-Based Paragraph

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

My paragraph



Words I Need

Tier 1, everyday words



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

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
tree	TREE	A tall plant with a trunk and branches.	A tree grows from the _____.
branch	BRANCH	A part that grows out from the trunk of a tree.	A branch grows out of the _____.
grow	GROH	To get bigger or develop over time.	My thinking can _____ like a tree.
reason	REE-zun	Why something happened or why something is true.	One _____ is _____.
proof	PROOF	Something that shows an idea is true.	My _____ comes from the passage.
explain	ik-SPLAYN	To tell about something so others understand it.	I can _____ what the evidence shows.
answer	AN-sur	What you say or write to respond to a question.	My _____ must match the prompt.
word	WURD	A group of letters that means something.	The clue _____ tells me why or how.
shape	SHAYP	To give something a clear form.	First I _____ the prompt.
mark	MARK	To make a sign on something so you can find it again.	I _____ the topic with a red circle.
story	STOR-ee	A telling of what happened.	Laura wrote a _____ about the prairie.
family	FAM-uh-lee	The people you live with and belong to.	Garza painted her _____.

Use one Tier 1 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 2, academic words

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

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
prompt	PROMPT	The writing task that tells you what to write about.	The _____ tells me what to prove.
analyze	AN-uh-lyze	To look closely at the parts of something.	I _____ the prompt before I write.
topic	TOP-ik	The noun of importance, what the prompt is about.	The _____ is _____.
charge	CHARJ	The verb of importance, the job the prompt gives you.	The _____ tells me to _____.
clue word	KLOO wurd	The word that shows whether the prompt wants why or how.	The clue word is _____, so this is a _____ prompt.
thesis (central idea)	THEE-sis	The sentence that gives your answer to the prompt.	My thesis (central idea) answers the _____.
evidence	EV-uh-dens	Proof taken straight from the passage.	My _____ comes from paragraph _____.
explanation	ek-spluh-NAY-shun	Telling what the evidence shows.	This _____ means _____.
significance	sig-NIF-uh-kuns	Why something matters.	The _____ of this idea is _____.
structure	STRUK-cher	The way the parts of writing are put together.	Good _____ helps my reader.
statement	STAYT-munt	A sentence that tells rather than asks.	An ECR prompt is usually a _____.
informative	in-FOR-muh-tiv	Writing that gives true information about a topic.	This is an _____ response.

Use one Tier 2 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 3, passage words

These words come from our passages about Laura Ingalls Wilder and Carmen Lomas Garza.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
prairie	PRAIR-ee	A wide, flat area of land covered with grass.	Laura's family lived in small houses on the _____.
frontier	frun-TEER	Land at the edge of a settled area.	Laura shared stories about her childhood on the American _____.
wagon	WAG-un	A vehicle with wheels pulled by animals.	The family traveled by _____.
storytelling	STOR-ee-tel-ing	Sharing events as a story so others can picture them.	Laura's _____ made readers feel part of the story.
traditions	truh-DISH-uns	Ways of doing things passed down in a family or group.	Garza's paintings show family _____.
tamales	tuh-MAH-lays	A Mexican food made of dough steamed in a corn husk.	Families made _____ during the holidays.
culture	KUL-cher	The customs, beliefs, and ways of life of a group.	Garza's art shares Mexican-American _____.
artwork	ART-wurk	Something made by an artist, such as a painting.	Garza's _____ tells stories about family life.
celebration	sel-uh-BRAY-shun	A special event held to honor something.	A holiday can be a family _____.
adventures	ad-VEN-churs	Exciting or unusual experiences.	Laura remembered many interesting _____.
neighbors	NAY-burs	People who live near you.	Laura's stories described helping _____.
Mexican-American	MEK-si-kun uh-MER-i-kun	Describing people of Mexican heritage who live in the United States.	Carmen Lomas Garza is a _____ artist.

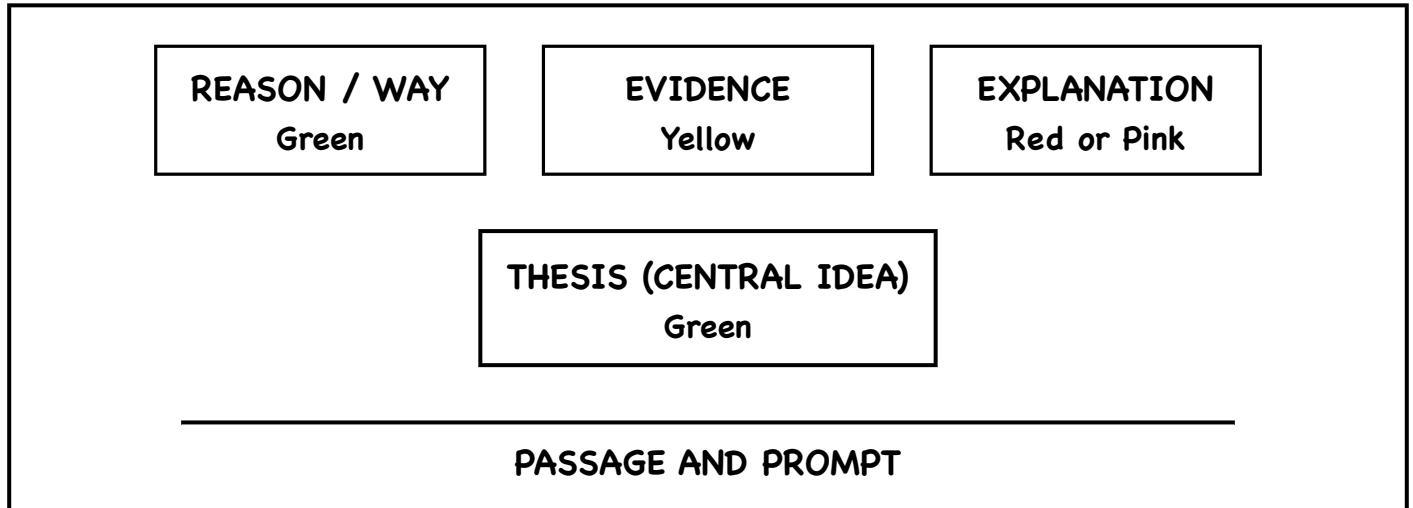
Use one Tier 3 word in a sentence



The Growing Tree



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



Nothing grows until the ground is ready.

Shaping an ECR Prompt

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

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

How this strategy works for me

WHY and HOW

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

The clue word decides the shape of my answer.

How I Say the Standard!

3.11B(i):

TEKS says: 3.11B develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by: (i) organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction and a conclusion; and (ii) developing an engaging idea with relevant details.

How I say it: I first identify the prompt's topic, charge, and clue word to organize a focused informational response. WHY is a reason and HOW is a way.

3.12B:

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

How I say it: I apply the narrower sentence, noun, capitalization, and spelling focus during additional writing. The official TEKS wording stays the same.

Check My Writing

- ☐ My sentence has a subject and a verb.
- ☐ I use a capital letter for Laura Ingalls Wilder and Wisconsin.
- ☐ I use a period or another ending mark.

A WHY or HOW sentence I can try

The Progression of Thinking

Read the chart from Reflective at the top to Foundational at the bottom. Name the thinking I already do, then ask the question one level above it.

Level	Symbol	Hidden Question	Student Thinking	Thinking Focus
Level 5 Reflective		Why is it important to everyone?	Student explains a universal lesson.	Stories can keep the past alive for everyone.
Level 4 Independent		Why is it important to the reader?	Student explains personal meaning or application.	Laura's books show that ordinary days are worth remembering.
Level 3 Visible		Why is it important in the passage?	Student explains significance within the text.	Laura's descriptions let readers picture the prairie.
Level 2 Emergent		Why was it done?	Student explains purpose.	Garza wanted family traditions remembered.
Level 1 Foundational		Why did it happen?	Student explains cause.	Laura's family moved to find land to farm.

Each level has a color label: Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue. WHY asks about reasons, purpose, or importance.

A WHY thinking level I understand

Five Thinking Levels

Use the same five thinking levels when a prompt asks HOW. HOW asks about methods or relationships.

Level	Symbol	Hidden Question	Student Thinking	Thinking Focus
Level 5 Reflective	◇	Why is it important to everyone?	Student explains a universal lesson.	Stories can keep the past alive for everyone.
Level 4 Independent	△	Why is it important to the reader?	Student explains personal meaning or application.	Laura's books show that ordinary days are worth remembering.
Level 3 Visible	▽	Why is it important in the passage?	Student explains significance within the text.	Laura's descriptions let readers picture the prairie.
Level 2 Emergent	□	Why was it done?	Student explains purpose.	Garza wanted family traditions remembered.
Level 1 Foundational	○	Why did it happen?	Student explains cause.	Laura's family moved to find land to farm.

The Difference Between WHY and HOW

Prompt type	What it asks me to do	Example
WHY	Explain a reason, a purpose, or why something matters.	Explain why Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories help readers understand history.
HOW	Analyze how parts work together or how something happens.	Explain how Carmen Lomas Garza's artwork tells stories about family life.

Naming a detail is not the same as explaining why it matters. Cluster 2 prompts are WHY or HOW.

A thinking level I want to try



Read & Interact

Read with a purpose



Dot, Discover, Drop

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

TRACKS Legend

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

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

Connect It to Our World

Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories and Carmen Lomas Garza's pictures help communities remember ordinary experiences and family traditions.

Background I Need

Laura wrote about childhood on the American frontier. Carmen creates art about Mexican-American family life and traditions.

Words I dotted while reading

Laura Ingalls Wilder

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

My
marks

1 Laura Ingalls Wilder was a writer who shared stories about her childhood on the American frontier. She was born in 1867 in Wisconsin. When Laura was a little girl, her family moved many times as they looked for places to live and farm. They traveled by wagon and lived in small houses on the prairie. Life was often difficult, but Laura remembered many interesting adventures.

2 As Laura grew older, she began to write about the experiences she had as a child. She wanted people to understand what life was like for families living long ago. Her stories described building homes, growing food, going to school, and helping neighbors. She also wrote about the challenges families faced, such as cold winters, long journeys, and hard work.

3 Laura Ingalls Wilder became famous for writing the Little House books. These books told stories about her life and her family. Many readers enjoyed learning about Laura, her sisters, and her parents. The books helped people imagine what it was like to live on the prairie many years ago.

4 Laura's storytelling was special because she wrote in a way that made readers feel as if they were part of the story. People could picture the wide fields, the small homes, and the busy days on the farm. Her books helped children and adults learn about history through stories.

5 Today, Laura Ingalls Wilder is remembered as an important author. Her books continue to inspire readers and show how storytelling can keep history alive.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Carmen Lomas Garza

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

My
marks

1 Carmen Lomas Garza is a Mexican-American artist who is well known for creating paintings that show everyday life in Mexican-American families. She was born in 1948 in Kingsville, Texas. As a child, Carmen enjoyed drawing and paying attention to the special moments she shared with her family and community. Many of those memories later became the inspiration for her artwork.

2 Garza's paintings often show scenes from family life, such as cooking together, celebrating holidays, visiting neighbors, or spending time outside. One common scene she paints is families making tamales during the holidays. These simple moments may seem ordinary, but Garza believed they were important parts of culture and should be remembered and celebrated.

3 Her artwork uses bright colors and clear details to tell stories. When people look at her paintings, they can often imagine what the people in the picture are doing and how they feel. In this way, Garza's art works almost like storytelling through pictures.

4 Carmen Lomas Garza has also written and illustrated children's books. Many of her books are written in both English and Spanish so that more readers can enjoy them. Her books and paintings help people learn about Mexican-American traditions, family life, and community celebrations.

5 Today, Garza's artwork is shown in museums and schools across the United States. Through her paintings and books, she has helped preserve important cultural stories and share them with new generations.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Annotate: Laura Ingalls Wilder

People, places, times, and actions that make Laura Ingalls Wilder's life a story worth telling.

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

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

My best TRACKS phrase and why I chose it

Annotate: Carmen Lomas Garza

People, traditions, places, and effects that make Carmen Lomas Garza's art meaningful.

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

? STOP & THINK

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

My thinking

My Prompt Marking Notes

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

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

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

Explain why Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories help readers understand history.

My three marks in words



Day 1: Gather + Reveal



I prepare the ground for my ideas

Our Question for Today

What is a prompt really asking a writer to do?

1. Gather: Seed or Sunlight

Hold up one finger for seed and two fingers for sunlight. Think about this: sunlight is wonderful, but it cannot grow anything by itself. Today I will grow ideas.

Why cannot sunlight grow anything by itself?

2. Reveal: The Growing Tree

The passage and prompt are the dirt. The thesis (central idea) is the trunk. Reasons, evidence, and explanations are branches.

- ☐ Ground: Passage and Prompt
- ☐ Trunk: Thesis (central idea)
- ☐ Branches: Reason / Way, Evidence, Explanation

3. Reveal: Shape the Prompt

SCR is usually a question. ECR is usually a statement. ECR prompts usually contain the word why or the word how.

STOP & THINK

What must be ready before the tree can grow?

My answer

Day 1: Reveal, continued

4. Model the Three Marks

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

Explain why Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories help readers understand history.

Mark	The model shows
Red circle, topic	Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories
Yellow box, charge	help
Green triangle, clue word	why
Prompt type	WHY, the answer must give a reason

5. Listen and Circle

Listen for each description. Circle one answer.

Listen for	Circle one
The noun of importance	Topic, Charge, Clue word
The verb of importance that tells what to do	Topic, Charge, Clue word
The word that signals WHY or HOW thinking	Topic, Charge, Clue word
A task that is usually a question	SCR, ECR
A task that is usually a statement	SCR, ECR

I can explain the three marks to a partner

Day 1: Reveal, continued

6. Hear, Extract, Act, Retrieve

Compare your choices with a partner. Then say what a charge word tells you about the task.

7. Fill In What You Hear

Sentence	My word
An SCR is usually a _____.	
An ECR is usually a _____.	
The topic is the _____ of importance.	
The charge is the _____ of importance.	
The clue word tells me _____ or _____ thinking.	

STOP & THINK

Which mark goes on the verb of importance?

My answer



Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards

Cut on the dashed lines. Keep the 3 tree cards in the middle of the table and the 5 sentence cards in a stack. Store all cards in your Pocket Practice.

 THESIS (CENTRAL IDEA)	 EVIDENCE
 EXPLANATION	Laura Ingalls Wilder wrote stories about her early life on the American frontier.
This shows that Laura wanted people to understand what life was like long ago.	Laura Ingalls Wilder helped readers learn about history through storytelling.
Garza's paintings show families cooking together and celebrating holidays.	This helps people understand Mexican-American traditions.

Self-Check (back of cards)

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

EVIDENCE a branch. It comes straight from the passage.	THESIS (CENTRAL IDEA) the trunk. It answers the prompt.
Evidence	EXPLANATION a branch. It tells what the evidence shows.
Thesis (central idea)	Explanation
Explanation	Evidence

Day 2: Attempt, continued

Our Question for Today: How can a reader tell the difference between a thesis (central idea), evidence, and an explanation?

1. Play It

- Sit facing your partner. Place the three tree cards face up between you. Stack the sentence cards face down.
- One partner reads a sentence card aloud. Listen to the whole sentence. Do not touch a tree card until you hear BOOM BOOM GRAB.
- Grab the tree card that best matches what the sentence is doing.
- The first person to grab the correct tree card gets one point.
- If you grab the wrong card, put it back and your partner gets the point.
- Play all five sentence cards. The player with the most points wins.
- Check each answer against the Self-Check key on the back of the cards.
- Put every card back in Pocket Practice.

2. Show My Score

Round	1	2	3	4	5
My partner					
My point					

3. Talk About It

Say why one card matched one sentence.

My reason

4. Mark the Partner Prompt

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

Explain how Carmen Lomas Garza's artwork tells stories about family life.

This is a WHY or HOW prompt because...



Day 3: Discuss + Use

I explain my thinking



Our Question for Today

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

1. Discuss

Explain your reasoning, not just your answer.

Question	My thinking
What helped you know that a sentence was evidence?	
How did you know when something was explanation?	
What does a thesis (central idea) do?	
Why do prompts use words like why and how?	
Compare prompt 1 and prompt 2. Which one needs because, and how do you know?	

My discussion notes

2. My Personal Connection

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

My connection and the detail that made me think of it

Retell how Laura Ingalls Wilder and Carmen Lomas Garza keep memories alive.

My retelling

Tell one way a written story and a picture are alike.

My comparison



? STOP & THINK

The charge is what the topic does. In the model prompt, what do the stories do?

My answer

3. Use: Try It On Your Own!

Work alone. Read each prompt. Circle the topic in red. Draw a yellow box around the charge. Draw a green triangle around the clue word. Then write WHY or HOW.

1

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

Explain why Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories help readers understand history.

WHY or HOW: _____

2

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

Explain how Carmen Lomas Garza's artwork tells stories about family life.

WHY or HOW: _____

Why does the clue word matter?

Prompt Shaping Practice, continued



Finish the last two prompts on your own. Then check each mark and type.

1

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

Explain why Laura Ingalls Wilder became an important author.

WHY or HOW: _____

2

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

Explain how Carmen Lomas Garza preserves cultural traditions through art.

WHY or HOW: _____

Embedded Check

Did I mark the topic, charge, and clue word? Did I name WHY or HOW?

- ☐ I can point to each mark.
- ☐ I can use the clue word as my proof.
- ☐ I did not change the prompt.

What makes my strongest prompt analysis work?



Day 4: Award + Target



I notice evidence of my growth

Our Question for Today

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

1. Award the Best Parts

Draw a small tree. On the roots write, I understood the prompt. On the trunk write, I wrote my thesis (central idea). On the branches write, Evidence and Explanation. Place a star on the trunk.

My Award Tree (draw it here)

Roots and ground

Something I did well, and where I did it

2. Target My Next Step

Choose one goal grounded in my four prompt practice pages.

- ☐ Next time I will find the noun of importance faster.
- ☐ Next time I will look for clue words first.
- ☐ Next time I will read the whole prompt before I mark anything.

My target: Next time I will...



Day 5: Explain/Educate

I teach someone else



Our Question for Today

How would I teach someone else to shape a prompt?

1. Explain to Others

Teach a partner one thing you learned. Use the frames below.

- The noun of importance is _____ because _____.
- The verb of importance is _____ because _____.
- This is a WHY prompt because the clue word is _____.
- This is a HOW prompt because the clue word is _____.
- WHY prompts use the word why or a word that means why, so my answer must give a _____.

My partner taught me...

2. Educate with the Writing Process Poem

Read each line after my teacher, army chant style.

Read with prosody, leave some tracks.
 Shape the prompt and answer back.
 Write the thesis (central idea), then convince,
 Show them proof called evidence.
 Bring together, signals find,
 From the text and from my mind!
 Relate it to all who read.
 Let my writing meet a need!

One line of the poem I can explain

3. Transfer: Day 5 Exit Ticket

Complete each part on your own.

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

Explain why Carmen Lomas Garza painted everyday family moments.

My WHY or HOW

One sentence telling a friend what this prompt is asking me to do

Check My Exit Ticket

- ☐ I circled the topic in red.
- ☐ I drew a yellow box around the charge.
- ☐ I drew a green triangle around the clue word.
- ☐ I wrote whether the prompt is WHY or HOW.
- ☐ My sentence tells what the prompt is asking me to do.

? STOP & THINK

I can teach the three marks: circle the topic in red, box the charge in yellow, and triangle the clue word in green.

My final Day 5 thought



Write More

Plan, draft, revise, edit, and share



My Writing Assignment

Write a short response to this prompt:

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

Explain why Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories help readers understand history.

My Plan

- Shape the prompt. Mark the topic, charge, and clue word.
- Write the prompt type: WHY or HOW.
- List two things from the passage that could become a reason.
- Circle the stronger one.

Two possible reasons from the passage

The stronger reason is...

Color Words I Can Use

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

My Draft



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

Draft, page 1

A sentence I want to keep

Revise, Edit, and Share

Revise

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

Edit

- ☐ Every sentence is complete.
- ☐ Laura Ingalls Wilder and Wisconsin begin with capital letters.
- ☐ Prairie and wagon are common nouns unless they begin a sentence.
- ☐ Singular nouns are spelled correctly.
- ☐ High-frequency words are spelled correctly.

My improved sentence

Share

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

My sharing plan

Before I Turn It In

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

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

Study the Samples

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

Explain why Laura Ingalls Wilder became an important author.

Low

Example analysis: the student circles Laura and boxes Explain, then states that the prompt is about Laura Ingalls Wilder.

What is missing: the charge should be became. The green triangle is absent, and the explanation names only the topic.

Medium

Topic: Laura Ingalls Wilder.
Charge: became. Clue: why. The student explains only that the writing is about why she is important.

What is missing: the final sentence does not explicitly identify the task as giving a reason.

High

Topic: Laura Ingalls Wilder.
Charge: became. Clue: why. WHY; the answer must give a reason. The student explains that the prompt requires a reason and predicts a connector such as because.

Why it works: the analysis names the topic, charge, clue word, answer type, and required thinking.

What improves from Low to High?



Look Back & Look Forward

I own my learning



My Progress Tracker

I can...	Not yet	Growing	Got it
Find the topic.	☐	☐	☐
Find the charge.	☐	☐	☐
Find the clue word.	☐	☐	☐
Name WHY or HOW.	☐	☐	☐
Tell that an ECR prompt is usually a statement.	☐	☐	☐
Tell a thesis (central idea), evidence, and explanation apart.	☐	☐	☐
Use the clue word as evidence for WHY or HOW.	☐	☐	☐
Explain the prompt job.	☐	☐	☐
Name my next step.	☐	☐	☐

Something I Did Well...

What I did well, and where I did it

My Next Step...

Why this is my next step

Essential Question Answered

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

The answer

A writer can tell exactly what an ECR prompt is asking by marking its three parts: the topic in a red circle, the charge in a yellow box, and the clue word in a green triangle. Together these words name the subject, the job, and the kind of thinking the response must use. WHY calls for a reason; HOW calls for a way or method.

My Final Thinking (in my own words)

What Changed in My Thinking?

At first I thought...

Now I think...

Try It Another Way

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

My new prompt

Take It Further! Tree Builder Challenge

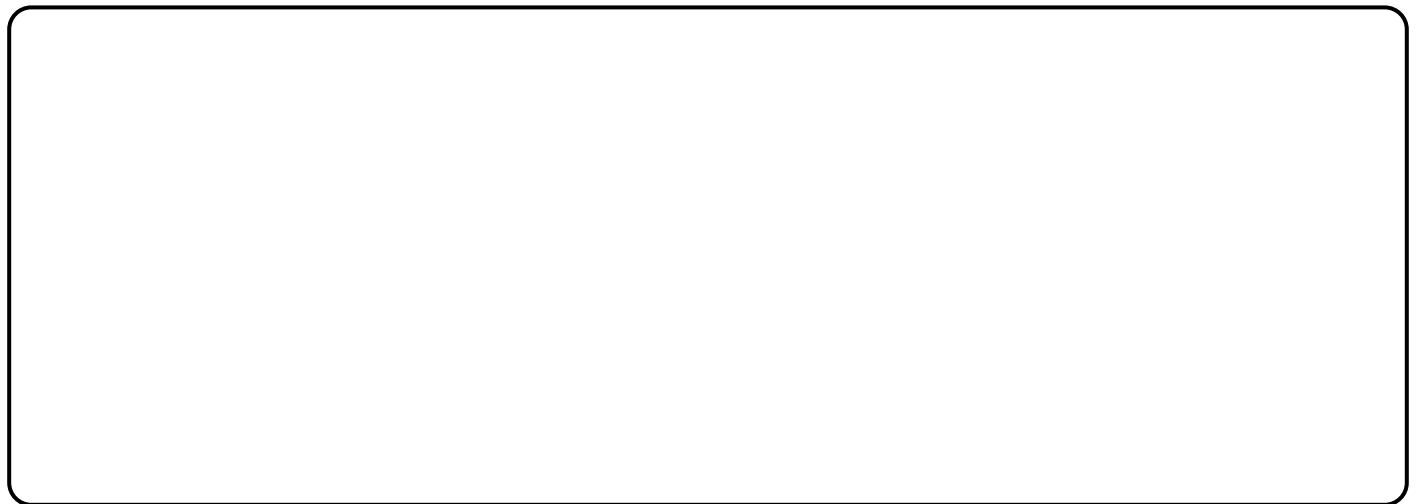
Grow the whole tree from one prompt: Explain how Laura Ingalls Wilder's storytelling helps readers imagine life on the prairie.

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

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

My Tree Builder Challenge

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



At-Home Connection

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

Teach the Three Marks

Teach someone at home the three marks: red circle for the topic, yellow box for the charge, green triangle for the clue word. Ask that person a question about their day. Say which words would get each mark. Write one sentence: The clue word in my question was _____, so it was a _____ question.

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

Family member signature: _____

Ordinary Day Detective

Look around your home for one ordinary thing that would be worth writing about a hundred years from now. Write two sentences about it. Use one proper noun with a capital letter. Read your two sentences out loud to someone at home.

Ask them: what ordinary thing from when you were my age do you still remember?

Family member signature: _____

Say It, Then Write It

Look at the word bank: topic, charge, clue word, why, how. Say this sentence out loud three times before you write it: The clue word tells me if the question wants why or how. You may talk about this card in any language you speak at home first. Then write or draw one prompt with a red circle, a yellow box, and a green triangle. Drawing the marks counts.

Ask them: can you find a question somewhere in our home, on a package or a sign? Point to its topic.

Family member signature: _____

My Family Conversation Notes

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

Notes

Track My Progress

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

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

Why This Helps Me

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

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

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

My Module 1 Snapshot

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

The most useful word I learned

The prompt part I can find fastest

My Strong Roots

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

A note to my future writer self

My Proud Moment This Week

THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC.

Student Interactive Workbook

Grade 3

Cluster 2 - Module 2

Writing the Thesis (central idea) (The Trunk of the Tree)



Name: _____



The Writing Academy®, LLC

Grade 3 • Cluster 2 • Module 2

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How to Use My Workbook

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

My Name and My Goal for This Module

Pocket Practice

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



Meet My Week



Writing the Thesis (central idea) (The Trunk of the Tree)

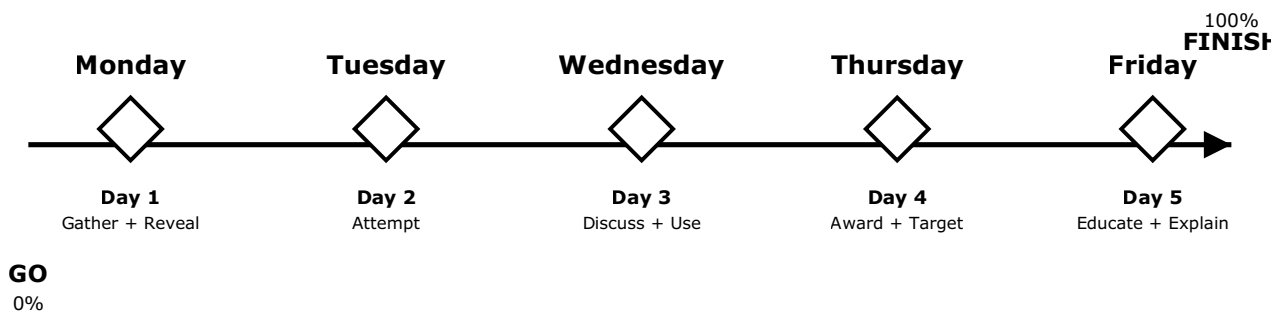
Why This Matters to Me

A thesis (central idea) is the trunk of my writing tree. It holds the response together. I will learn to keep the prompt's noun and verb, then add my own answer so my reader learns something new.

Essential Question

How does a writer turn a prompt into a sentence that gives the reader the answer?

My Week Tracker



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

My First Thinking

I Can

- I can find the noun of importance and verb of importance in a prompt.
- I can add my own answer from the passage.
- I can write a thesis (central idea) that fits WHY or HOW.

I Will

- I will use because for a WHY thesis (central idea) and through or by for a HOW thesis (central idea).
- I will make sure my answer adds information beyond the prompt.

The I Can I want to reach first, and why

My Week at a Glance

What I learn	What I read	What I make
How to build a thesis (central idea) with three parts: noun, verb, and my own answer.	Two nonfiction passages about Laura Ingalls Wilder and Carmen Lomas Garza.	Matched prompt/thesis (central idea) pairs, two independent theses, a trunk drawing, and an exit ticket.

Where We Are Going

I will move from seeing the three parts to building a thesis (central idea) that answers the prompt with passage support. I will finish by teaching a partner and completing the exit ticket.

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

- ☐ My thesis (central idea) contains the noun of importance.
- ☐ My thesis (central idea) contains the verb of importance.
- ☐ Part three adds my own answer from the passage.
- ☐ My connecting word matches WHY or HOW.

Check Myself

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

How I Will Show What I Know

I will show what I know with matched prompt/thesis (central idea) pairs, two independent theses, a Strong Trunk Award, and a Day 5 exit ticket.

My GRADUATE Learning Path

Stage	Day	What I do
Gather	Day 1	I see a Trunkless Tree and discover why a thesis (central idea) matters.
Reveal	Day 1	I learn the three parts and the WHY/HOW connecting words.
Attempt	Day 2	I practice with Memory Match.
Discuss	Day 3	I explain why part three must add information.
Use Again	Day 3	I write two independent theses on my own.
Award	Day 4	I underline my original answer and name my strength.
Target	Day 4	I choose my next step.
Explain/Educate	Day 5	I teach a partner and complete the exit ticket.

Say It Together!

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

3.11B(i):

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

How I say it: I retain the prompt's noun and verb, add an answer supported by the passage, and select a subordinator for WHY or a preposition for HOW. Revise and edit the sentence.

3.12B:

TEKS says: 3.12B compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea and genre characteristics and craft; 3.11B(i) organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction and a conclusion.

How I say it: I keep the noun and verb of importance from the prompt and add an original answer supported by the passage.

Call and Response

Read this together as a class before we start.



Get Ready

Before I begin



Before We Begin: What Do I Already Know?

I can shape a prompt with circle, box, and triangle. I can tell whether a prompt asks WHY or HOW. I know the noun of importance and the verb of importance.

A connection I can make

Remember It!

- ☐ A thesis (central idea) answers the prompt.
- ☐ The noun and verb come from the prompt.
- ☐ The answer comes from my thinking about the passage.

One idea I remember

Ready Check

- ☐ I can find the noun of importance in a prompt.
- ☐ I can find the verb of importance in a prompt.
- ☐ I can tell the difference between WHY and HOW.

Watch Out! Common Mix-Up

Watch out! A thesis (central idea) must add information beyond the prompt. If I only repeat the noun and verb, my reader learns nothing new.

Where This Fits in My Writing

The thesis (central idea) is the trunk of the TREE. Reasons and evidence will grow as branches. This module builds the trunk.

What I want to remember before I start

Where I Am Starting

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

Part 1: Prompt Analysis

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

Explain why Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories help readers understand history.

Part 2: Thesis (Central Idea)

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

My thesis (central idea)

Part 3: Informative Organization

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

Number	Sentence
_____	Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories help readers understand history.
_____	Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories help readers understand history because they describe daily life on the prairie.
_____	Carmen Lomas Garza painted everyday family moments.
_____	Laura Ingalls Wilder wrote stories.

Part 4: Introduction

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

My first sentence

Part 5: Relevant Details and Evidence

Reason: Laura Ingalls Wilder wanted to share her experiences. Copy one sentence from the passage that supports this reason. Then explain in one sentence how it proves the thesis (central idea).

The sentence I copied from the passage

Why it proves the reason

Part 6: Passage-Based Paragraph

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

My paragraph



Words I Need

Tier 1, everyday words



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

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
trunk	TRUNK	The thick main stem of a tree.	The trunk holds the tree up.
strong	STRONG	Not weak; able to hold a lot.	A strong thesis (central idea) holds the writing up.
build	BILD	Put parts together to make something.	Build the thesis (central idea) from three parts.
part	PART	One piece of a whole thing.	A thesis (central idea) has three parts.
sentence	SEN-tens	A group of words that tells a complete idea.	A thesis (central idea) is one sentence.
answer	AN-sur	What is said back to a question or task.	The answer comes from thinking about the passage.
match	MACH	Go together correctly.	The thesis (central idea) must match the prompt.
understand	un-der-STAND	Know what something means.	Readers understand history through stories.
history	HIS-tuh-ree	Events that happened in the past.	Laura wrote about history.
paint	PAYNT	Make a picture with color.	Garza paints family scenes.
daily	DAY-lee	Happening every day.	Laura described daily life.
author	AW-ther	A person who writes books.	Laura became an important author.

Use one Tier 1 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 2, academic words

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

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
thesis (central idea)	THEE-sis	The sentence that directly answers the prompt.	My thesis (central idea) answers the _____.
subordinator	sub-OR-din-ay-ter	A connecting word for WHY, such as because, since, or when.	I use a _____ for a WHY thesis (central idea).
preposition	prep-oh-ZIH-shun	A word showing a relationship, such as through, by, or with.	I use a _____ for a HOW thesis (central idea).
prompt	PROMPT	The writing task that tells you what to write about.	The _____ gives me the noun and verb.
noun of importance	NOWN uv im-POR-tens	The topic word or phrase in the prompt.	The _____ is _____.
verb of importance	VURB uv im-POR-tens	The action or relationship the prompt gives the topic.	The _____ tells me to _____.
structure	STRUK-cher	The way the parts of a sentence are put together.	The clue word guides the _____.
restate	ree-STAYT	Say the same thing again in a new way.	A thesis (central idea) must do more than _____ the prompt.
support	suh-PORT	Hold up or prove an idea.	Reasons _____ the thesis (central idea).

Use one Tier 2 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 3, passage words

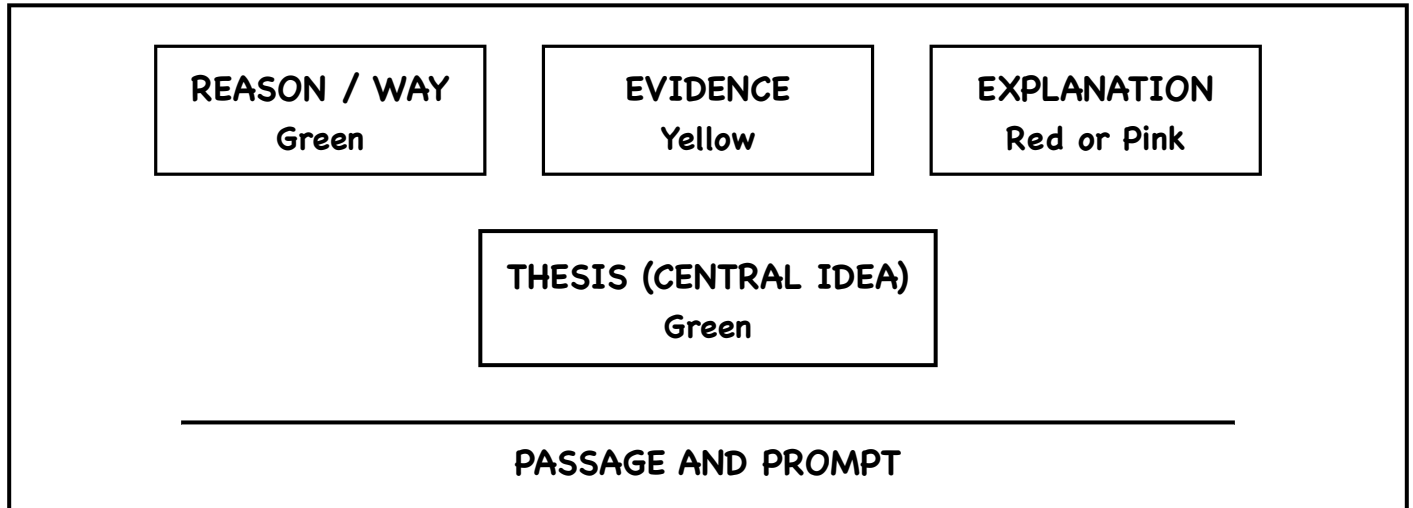
These words come from our passages about Laura Ingalls Wilder and Laura Ingalls Wilder (continued).

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
frontier	frun-TEER	Land at the edge of a settled area.	Laura's family lived on the American _____.
prairie	PRAIR-ee	A wide, flat area of land covered with grass.	Laura's family lived in small houses on the _____.
grasslands	GRASS-lands	Large open areas covered mostly in grass.	Sometimes the family lived on wide, open _____.
chores	chorz	Small jobs done regularly around a home or farm.	Laura helped her family with _____.
settled	SET-uld	Moved to a place and made a home there.	The family _____ in a new place and made a home.
Kingsville	KINGZ-vil	The Texas city where Carmen Lomas Garza was born.	Carmen Lomas Garza was born in _____, Texas.
illustrated	IL-us-tray-ted	Made pictures for a book.	Garza wrote and _____ children's books.
heritage	HAIR-i-tij	Traditions and history passed down in a family.	Garza's paintings show her family's cultural _____.
techniques	tek-NEEKS	Special ways of doing something skillfully.	She learned new _____ for creating paintings.
community	kuh-MYOO-ni-tee	A group of people who live in the same place.	Carmen shared special moments with her family and _____.
gatherings	GATH-er-ings	Times when people come together.	Her books show family _____ and celebrations.
museums	myoo-ZEE-ums	Buildings where art or history is displayed.	Garza's artwork is shown in _____ and schools.

Use one Tier 3 word in a sentence



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



Nothing grows until the ground is ready.

Shaping an ECR Prompt

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

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

How this strategy works for me

WHY and HOW

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

The clue word decides the shape of my answer.

How I Say the Standard!

3.11B(i):

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

How I say it: I retain the prompt's noun and verb, add an answer supported by the passage, and select a subordinator for WHY or a preposition for HOW. Revise and edit the sentence.

3.12B:

TEKS says: 3.12B compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea and genre characteristics and craft; 3.11B(i) organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction and a conclusion.

How I say it: I keep the noun and verb of importance from the prompt and add an original answer supported by the passage.

Check My Writing

- ☐ My sentence has a subject and a verb.
- ☐ I use a capital letter for Laura Ingalls Wilder and Carmen Lomas Garza.
- ☐ I use a period or another ending mark.

A WHY or HOW sentence I can try

The Progression of Thinking

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

Level	Symbol	Hidden Question	Student Thinking	Thinking Focus
Foundational (Red)	○	Why did it happen?	Student explains a cause using because, since, or when.	Reason or cause
Emergent (Orange)	◻	Why was it done?	Student explains a purpose or motive.	Purpose and motivation
Visible (Yellow)	▽	Why is it important in the passage?	Student explains text-based importance.	Evidence and relevance
Independent (Green)	△	How do the ideas connect?	Student uses through the use of Strategy and technique	
Reflective (Blue)	◊	Why does it matter beyond one text?	Student explains how everyday stories preserve history.	Broader meaning

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

A WHY thinking level I understand

Five Thinking Levels

Use the same five levels when a prompt asks HOW.

Level	Symbol	Hidden Question	Student Thinking	Thinking Focus
Foundational (Red)	○	Why did it happen?	Student explains a cause using because, since, or when.	Reason or cause
Emergent (Orange)	◻	Why was it done?	Student explains a purpose or motive.	Purpose and motivation
Visible (Yellow)	▽	Why is it important in the passage?	Student explains text-based importance.	Evidence and relevance
Independent (Green)	△	How do the ideas connect?	Student uses through the use of Strategy and technique	
Reflective (Blue)	◊	Why does it matter beyond one text?	Student explains how everyday stories preserve history.	Broader meaning

The Difference Between WHY and HOW

Prompt type	What it asks me to do	Example
WHY	Explain a reason, a purpose, or why something matters.	Explain why Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories help readers understand history.
HOW	Analyze how parts work together or how something happens.	Explain how Carmen Lomas Garza's artwork tells stories about family life.

A WHY thesis (central idea) uses because and gives a reason. A HOW thesis (central idea) uses through or by and gives a way. The clue word tells me which connecting word to choose.

A thinking level I want to try



Read & Interact

Read with a purpose



Dot, Discover, Drop

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

TRACKS Legend

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

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

Connect It to Our World

Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories and Carmen Lomas Garza's paintings both preserve everyday moments. A clear thesis (central idea) helps a writer explain why those moments matter.

Background I Need

Laura wrote about frontier childhood. Carmen creates art about Mexican-American family life. Module 1 taught prompt shaping. Module 2 turns that analysis into a thesis (central idea).

Words I dotted while reading

Laura Ingalls Wilder

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

My
marks

1 Laura Ingalls Wilder was a writer who shared stories about her childhood on the American frontier. She was born in 1867 in Wisconsin. When Laura was a little girl, her family moved many times as they looked for places to live and farm. They traveled by wagon and lived in small houses on the prairie. Life was often difficult, but Laura remembered many interesting adventures.

2 When Laura was growing up, there were not many towns on the prairie. Families had to work hard to build homes and take care of their farms. Many people grew their own food and made things they needed at home. Laura helped her family with chores and learned many skills that were important for frontier life.

3 The Ingalls family moved several times during Laura's childhood. They lived in Wisconsin, Kansas, Minnesota, Iowa, and South Dakota. Each place was different, and Laura experienced many new things. Sometimes the family lived near forests. Other times they lived on wide, open grasslands. Moving was not always easy, but it gave Laura many stories to remember.

4 As Laura grew older, she began to write about the experiences she had as a child. She wanted people to understand what life was like for families living long ago. Her stories described building homes, growing food, going to school, and helping neighbors. She also wrote about the challenges families faced, such as cold winters, long journeys, and hard work.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Laura Ingalls Wilder (continued)

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

My
marks

5 Laura believed that everyday life could tell an important story. She wrote about simple moments that helped readers understand the past. Her books described family gatherings, school lessons, holiday celebrations, and daily chores. Through her writing, readers could learn about history while enjoying a story.

6 Laura Ingalls Wilder became famous for writing the Little House books. These books told stories about her life and her family. Many readers enjoyed learning about Laura, her sisters, and her parents. The books helped people imagine what it was like to live on the prairie many years ago.

7 The Little House books became popular because they shared details about frontier life. Readers learned how families traveled, worked, and solved problems. The books showed how people depended on one another and worked together during difficult times.

8 Laura's storytelling was special because she wrote in a way that made readers feel as if they were part of the story. People could picture the wide fields, the small homes, and the busy days on the farm. Her books helped children and adults learn about history through stories.

9 Today, Laura Ingalls Wilder is remembered as an important author. Her books continue to inspire readers and show how storytelling can keep history alive. Even many years after they were written, her stories help people understand what life was like on the American frontier.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Carmen Lomas Garza

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

My
marks

1 Carmen Lomas Garza is a Mexican-American artist who is well known for creating paintings that show everyday life in Mexican-American families. She was born in 1948 in Kingsville, Texas. As a child, Carmen enjoyed drawing and paying attention to the special moments she shared with her family and community. Many of those memories later became the inspiration for her artwork.

2 Garza's paintings often show scenes from family life, such as cooking together, celebrating holidays, visiting neighbors, or spending time outside. One common scene she paints is families making tamales during the holidays. These simple moments may seem ordinary, but Garza believed they were important parts of culture and should be remembered and celebrated.

3 Her artwork uses bright colors and clear details to tell stories. When people look at her paintings, they can often imagine what the people in the picture are doing and how they feel. In this way, Garza's art works almost like storytelling through pictures.

4 Carmen Lomas Garza has also written and illustrated children's books. Many of her books are written in both English and Spanish so that more readers can enjoy them. Her books and paintings help people learn about Mexican-American traditions, family life, and community celebrations.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Carmen Lomas Garza (continued)

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

My
marks

5 Today, Garza's artwork is shown in museums and schools across the United States. Through her paintings and books, she has helped preserve important cultural stories and share them with new generations.

6 As Carmen grew older, she continued to develop her artistic skills. She studied art in school and learned different ways to create paintings. Even as she learned new techniques, she remained focused on showing the experiences and traditions that were important to her family and community. She wanted her artwork to reflect real memories and everyday life.

7 Many people enjoy looking at Garza's paintings because they recognize activities that are similar to experiences in their own families. Others learn about traditions they may not have known before. Her artwork helps people understand how families celebrate, work together, and spend time with one another.

8 Museums often display Garza's paintings because they tell stories about culture and history. Teachers also use her books and artwork to help students learn about different communities. Through her work, Carmen Lomas Garza has helped people appreciate the importance of family traditions and cultural heritage.

9 Today, her paintings continue to inspire new audiences. People of all ages can learn from the scenes she created and the stories they tell. By sharing her memories through art, Carmen Lomas Garza has helped preserve an important part of history for future generations.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Annotate: Laura Ingalls Wilder

People, places, times, and actions that make Laura Ingalls Wilder's life a story worth telling.

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

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

My best TRACKS phrase and why I chose it

Annotate: Laura Ingalls Wilder (continued)

People, places, times, and actions that make Laura Ingalls Wilder's life a story worth telling.

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

? STOP & THINK

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

My thinking

My Prompt Marking Notes

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

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

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

Explain why Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories help readers understand history.

My three marks in words

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 1: Gather + Reveal



I prepare the ground for my ideas

Our Question for Today

What happens when a tree has no trunk? What happens when a response has no thesis (central idea)?

1. Gather: Trunkless Tree

A tree without a trunk cannot hold its branches. A response without a thesis (central idea) cannot hold its reasons and evidence.

Why does a response need a thesis (central idea)?

3. Model: WHY and HOW Theses

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

Explain why Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories help readers understand history.

Mark	The model shows
Red circle, noun of importance	Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories
Yellow box, verb of importance	help
Green triangle, clue word	why
Prompt type	WHY, the answer must give a reason

WHY model: Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories help readers understand history because they describe daily life on the prairie.

HOW model: Carmen Lomas Garza's artwork tells stories about family life through colorful paintings of everyday moments.

4. WHY Needs a Subordinator, HOW Needs a Preposition

Prompt Type	Connecting Word	Examples
WHY	Subordinator	because, since, when
HOW	Preposition	through, by, with

5. Fill In What You Hear

Sentence	My word
A thesis (central idea) has _____ parts.	
Part one is the _____ of importance.	
Part two is the _____ of importance.	
Part three is the _____.	
WHY uses a _____ such as because.	
HOW uses a _____ such as through.	

I can name the three parts and the connecting words

6. Practice: Restatement or Thesis (central idea)?

Read each sentence. Write T for a complete thesis (central idea) or R for a restatement that only repeats the prompt.

Sentence	T or R?
Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories help readers understand history.	
Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories help readers understand history because they describe daily life on the prairie.	
Carmen Lomas Garza's artwork tells stories about family life.	
Carmen Lomas Garza's artwork tells stories about family life through colorful paintings of everyday moments.	

How did I know which sentences were restatements?

? STOP & THINK

What must a thesis (central idea) have that a restatement does not?

My answer

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Thesis (central idea) / Prompt Memory Match

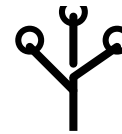
Day 2: Attempt

✂ **Cut out these cards (sheet 1 of 2)**

Match each prompt card to its thesis (central idea) card. Name the original answer before keeping the pair.



THESIS (CENTRAL IDEA)



EVIDENCE



EXPLANATION

Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories help readers understand history because they describe daily life on the prairie.

Carmen Lomas Garza's artwork tells stories about family life through colorful paintings of everyday moments.

Laura Ingalls Wilder became an important author because she shared real experiences from life on the frontier.

Self-Check (sheet 1 of 2)

Does my thesis (central idea) have three parts: noun, verb, and my own answer?

EVIDENCE

a branch. It comes straight from the passage.

THESIS (CENTRAL IDEA)

the trunk. It answers the prompt.

Thesis (central idea): WHY

EXPLANATION

a branch. It tells what the evidence shows.

Thesis (central idea): WHY

Thesis (central idea): HOW

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Thesis (central idea) / Prompt Memory Match

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards (sheet 2 of 2)

Match each prompt card to its thesis (central idea) card. Name the original answer before keeping the pair.

Carmen Lomas Garza painted everyday family moments because she believed cultural traditions should be remembered and celebrated.	Carmen Lomas Garza preserves cultural traditions through paintings that show family celebrations and traditions.
Laura Ingalls Wilder made readers feel like they were part of her stories by describing wide fields, small homes, and busy days on the farm.	Laura Ingalls Wilder's books continue to inspire readers because they show how storytelling can keep history alive.
Carmen Lomas Garza shares Mexican-American culture with others through paintings and books about family traditions and celebrations.	

Self-Check (sheet 2 of 2)

Does my thesis (central idea) have three parts: noun, verb, and my own answer?

Thesis (central idea): HOW	Thesis (central idea): WHY
Thesis (central idea): WHY	Thesis (central idea): HOW
	Thesis (central idea): HOW

Day 2: Attempt

Our Question for Today: Can I match a prompt to its thesis (central idea) and name the original answer?

1. Memory Match

- Shuffle eight prompt cards and eight thesis (central idea) cards face down in four rows of four.
- Turn over two cards. If they match, name the original answer and keep the pair.
- If they do not match, turn them back. Switch players.
- The player with more pairs wins.
- Check your pairs against the answer key.

Round	1	2	3	4	5
My partner					
My point					

2. Mark the Garza Prompt

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

Explain how Carmen Lomas Garza's artwork tells stories about family life.

Noun: _____ Verb: _____ Clue word: _____ My answer: _____

My thesis (central idea) for this prompt

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 3: Discuss + Use

I explain my thinking



Our Question for Today

Why must part three add information beyond the prompt?

1. Discuss

Question	My thinking
Which two parts can I take from the prompt?	
Which part must come from my thinking about the passage?	
How does the clue word help me choose a connecting word?	
What is the difference between restating the prompt and answering it?	
Why does the reader need part three?	

My discussion notes



2. Write Two Independent Theses

Shape each prompt. Find the noun, verb, and clue word. Add your own answer from the passage. Use the matching connecting word.

3

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

Explain why Carmen Lomas Garza's artwork is important to culture.

Noun: _____ Verb: _____ Clue word: _____

4

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

Explain how Laura Ingalls Wilder helps readers imagine life on the prairie.

Noun: _____ Verb: _____ Clue word: _____

My thesis (central idea) for prompt 1

My thesis (central idea) for prompt 2

Embedded Check

- ☐ My thesis (central idea) has three parts: noun, verb, and answer.
- ☐ My answer adds information from the passage.
- ☐ My connecting word matches WHY or HOW.

3. My Personal Connection

Describe a family memory that a story or picture could preserve. Tell which passage detail made you think of it.

My connection and the detail that made me think of it

Compare how Laura Ingalls Wilder and Carmen Lomas Garza preserve everyday moments.

My comparison

4. Underline Part Three

Go back to your two independent theses. Underline the original answer in green. Check that it adds information beyond the prompt.

What did part three tell my reader that the prompt did not?

5. Defend Your Thesis (central idea)

Choose one of your theses. Find the passage paragraph that supports your answer. Write the paragraph number and explain the connection.

Paragraph number and how it supports my answer

- ☐ My answer adds information from the passage.
- ☐ I can point to the paragraph that supports it.
- ☐ A reader who sees only my thesis (central idea) learns something new.

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 4: Award + Target



I notice evidence of my growth

Our Question for Today

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

1. Strong Trunk Award

Draw a trunk. Underline your original answer in green. Point to the passage detail that supports it.

My Award Tree (draw it here)

Roots and ground

My original answer and the passage detail that supports it

2. Target My Next Step

- ☐ Next time I will check WHY or HOW before choosing a connecting word.
- ☐ Next time I will make sure my answer adds information beyond the prompt.
- ☐ Next time I will find the passage paragraph that supports my answer.

My target: Next time I will...

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 5: Explain/Educate



I teach someone else

Our Question for Today

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

1. Turn and Teach

Teach a partner how to build a thesis (central idea). Name noun, verb, and original answer in order. Explain why you chose because, through, or by.

- First, find the _____ of importance.
- Second, find the _____ of importance.
- Third, add your own _____ from the passage.
- Use _____ for WHY.
- Use _____ or _____ for HOW.

My partner taught me...

2. Transfer: Day 5 Exit Ticket

Complete each part on your own.

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

Explain why Laura Ingalls Wilder's books continue to inspire readers.

Noun of importance

Verb of importance

My original answer from the passage

My complete thesis (central idea)

Connecting word and prompt type (WHY or HOW)

Check My Exit Ticket

- ☐ I named the noun and verb of importance.
- ☐ My answer adds information from the passage.
- ☐ My connecting word matches WHY or HOW.



Write More

Plan, draft, revise, edit, and share



My Writing Assignment

Write a short response to this prompt:

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

Explain why Carmen Lomas Garza believed everyday family moments were important enough to paint.

My Plan

- Shape the prompt. Find the noun, verb, and clue word.
- Write the prompt type: WHY or HOW.
- Find an answer from the passage.
- Choose the matching connecting word: because for WHY or through for HOW.

Two possible reasons from the passage

The stronger reason is...

Color Words I Can Use

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

My Draft



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

Draft, page 1

A sentence I want to keep

Revise, Edit, and Share

Revise

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

Edit

- ☐ Every sentence is complete.
- ☐ Laura Ingalls Wilder and Carmen Lomas Garza begin with capital letters.
- ☐ Prairie and traditions are common nouns unless they begin a sentence.
- ☐ Singular nouns are spelled correctly.
- ☐ High-frequency words are spelled correctly.

My improved sentence

Share

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

My sharing plan

Before I Turn It In

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

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

Study the Samples

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

Explain why Carmen Lomas Garza painted everyday family moments.

Low

Carmen Lomas Garza painted everyday family moments.

What is missing: the original answer and subordinator are missing. The sentence only restates the prompt.

Medium

Carmen Lomas Garza painted everyday family moments because she liked them.

What is missing: the answer is a guess instead of the belief stated in the passage.

High

Carmen Lomas Garza painted everyday family moments because she believed cultural traditions should be remembered and celebrated.

Why it works: the noun, verb, and answer are present. Because joins a reason grounded in the passage.

What improves from Low to High?



Look Back & Look Forward

I own my learning



My Progress Tracker

I can...	Not yet	Growing	Got it
Find the topic.	☐	☐	☐
Find the charge.	☐	☐	☐
Find the clue word.	☐	☐	☐
Name WHY or HOW.	☐	☐	☐
Tell that an ECR prompt is usually a statement.	☐	☐	☐
Tell a thesis (central idea), evidence, and explanation apart.	☐	☐	☐
Use the clue word as evidence for WHY or HOW.	☐	☐	☐
Explain the prompt job.	☐	☐	☐
Name my next step.	☐	☐	☐

Something I Did Well...

What I did well, and where I did it

My Next Step...

Why this is my next step

Essential Question Answered

How does a writer turn a prompt into a sentence that gives the reader the answer?

The answer

A writer keeps the noun of importance and the verb of importance from the prompt, then adds an original answer supported by the passage, using a subordinator for a WHY prompt or a preposition for a HOW prompt.

My Final Thinking (in my own words)

What Changed in My Thinking?

At first I thought...

Now I think...

Try It Another Way

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

My new prompt

Take It Further! Double Thesis (central idea) Challenge

Synthesize both passages in one central idea: Explain how Laura Ingalls Wilder and Carmen Lomas Garza both tell stories about everyday life.

- Reread both passages and find one idea that is true of both sources.
- Write one HOW thesis (central idea) that fits both passages.
- Model: Laura Ingalls Wilder and Carmen Lomas Garza tell stories about everyday life through writing and artwork that show family experiences.
- Rewrite the same idea with a stronger preposition: Laura Ingalls Wilder and Carmen Lomas Garza tell stories about everyday life through the use of detailed scenes drawn from their own families.
- Partners hear both versions, choose the clearer sentence, and explain how the connecting phrase works.
- Name the thinking level on the HOW writing-rigor chart.

My double thesis (central idea), then my stronger preposition version

My Double Thesis (central idea) Challenge

Write your first thesis (central idea), then rewrite it with a stronger preposition.

At-Home Connection

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

Teach the Three Parts

Teach someone at home the topic, the action, and your original answer. Answer a WHY question using because. Write your sentence and underline the original answer.

Ask them: which part of your sentence was your own answer, and why?

Family member signature: _____

Because and Through

Write one family sentence using because and one using through. Check present tense and capital letters in names.

Ask families: which sentence is easier to believe, and why?

Family member signature: _____

Frame It First

Use the word bank topic, action, answer, because, through. Read this frame: _____ is important to my family because _____. Say it twice, then write it in English.

Invite a conversation about a family tradition and why it continues.

Family member signature: _____

My Family Conversation Notes

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

Notes

Track My Progress

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

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

Why This Helps Me

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

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

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

My Module 2 Snapshot

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

The most useful word I learned

The prompt part I can find fastest

My Strong Roots

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

A note to my future writer self

My Proud Moment This Week

THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC.

Student Interactive Workbook

Grade 3

Cluster 2 - Module 3

Reason/Way (The First Branch of the Tree)



Name: _____



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Grade 3 • Cluster 2 • Module 3

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How to Use My Workbook

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

My Name and My Goal for This Module

Pocket Practice

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



Meet My Week

Reason/Way (The First Branch of the Tree)



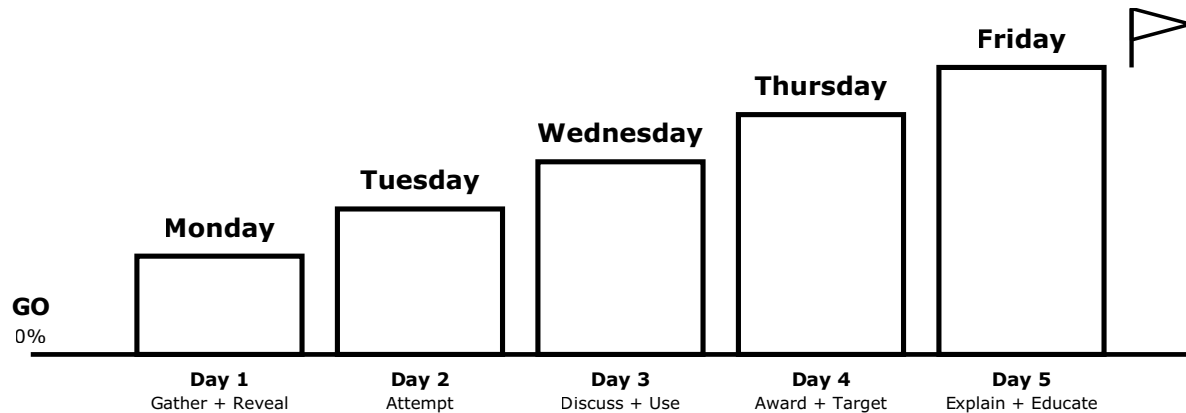
Why This Matters to Me

Reasons are the first branch of the tree that connect the thesis (central idea) to evidence. Strong reasons must be different from one another and directly support the central claim.

Essential Question

How does a writer organize details into distinct reasons that support the thesis (central idea)?

My Week Tracker



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

My First Thinking

I Can

- I can find details in a passage that connect to my thesis (central idea).
- I can sort details into groups that make sense.
- I can name what a group of details has in common.
- I can write three reasons that are different from each other.

I Will

- I will magnify the passage to find many details.
- I will put details that belong together into the same basket.
- I will give each basket a name.
- I will turn each basket name into a reason or way statement.

The I Can I want to reach first, and why

[illegible]

My Week at a Glance

What I learn	What I read	What I make
How to sort details into named baskets and write three distinct reasons.	Two High stamina passages: Laura Ingalls Wilder and Carmen Lomas Garza.	Basket Builder cards, three reason statements, an award, and an exit ticket.

Where We Are Going

I will move from finding details to writing three distinct reason statements, then teach a partner how.

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

- ☐ Each basket holds at least two details that truly belong together, and no detail could sit equally well in two baskets.
- ☐ Each reason statement is a complete sentence that supports the thesis (central idea). A WHY reason uses a subordinator; a HOW reason uses a preposition.
- ☐ I can explain why two reasons are different or collapse two that are not.

Check Myself

- ☐ I sorted by meaning, not by paragraph.
- ☐ Each basket name fits every card inside it.
- ☐ I covered one reason and read the next to check it is new.

How I Will Show What I Know

I will show what I know with my Basket Builder sort, three independent reason statements, a Strong Branch Award, and the Day 5 exit ticket.

My GRADUATE Learning Path

Stage	Day	What I do
Gather	Day 1	I stand tall like a tree and start the first branch.
Reveal	Day 1	I magnify the passage and watch a basket sort.
Attempt	Day 2	I play Basket Builder with my group.
Discuss	Day 3	I explain why reasons must be distinct.
Use Again	Day 3	I build three baskets and write reason statements.
Award	Day 4	I earn a Strong Branch Award.
Target	Day 4	I choose one next step.
Explain/Educate	Day 5	I teach reason statements and complete the exit ticket.

Say It Together!

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

3.11B(i):

3.11B(i) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction and a conclusion.

3.12B:

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

Call and Response

Read this together as a class before we start.

Teacher asks: "What does the name of the basket tell us about the reason?"

Class answers: "It tells us the reason."

One TEKS I want to practice today



Get Ready

Before I begin



Before We Begin: What Do I Already Know?

I can shape a prompt and find its clue word. I can write a thesis (central idea) with all three parts. I know the trunk holds the branches.

A connection I can make

Remember It!

- ☐ Red circle for the topic, yellow box for the charge, green triangle for the clue word.
- ☐ WHY needs a reason. HOW needs a way.
- ☐ The thesis (central idea) is the trunk of the tree. Evidence supports an answer.

One idea I remember

Ready Check

- ☐ I can write a complete sentence.
- ☐ I can use Dot, Discover, Drop and TRACKS.
- ☐ I can find the TREE trunk.

Watch Out! Common Mix-Up

Watch out! A reason statement that repeats the thesis (central idea) is not finished. Cover part three and ask what the reader still needs to learn. The answer must come from the passage.

Where This Fits in My Writing

The thesis (central idea) is the TREE trunk. Reasons and evidence develop the answer; explanation connects their meaning.

What I want to remember before I start

Where I Am Starting

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

Part 1: Shape the Prompt

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

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

Explain why Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories help readers understand history.

Is this a WHY or HOW prompt? Does it need a reason or a way?

Part 2: Magnify

List at least six details from the Wilder passage that could help answer the prompt.

My details

Part 3: Distinct or the Same?

Label each sentence: Distinct Reason or Same Idea Twice.

Label	Sentence
_____	She helped people.
_____	She made things better.
_____	One reason is that she described daily chores.
_____	Another reason is that she showed how families traveled by wagon.

Part 4: Name the Basket

These details go together: gathered firewood, cared for animals, planted gardens, prepared meals. Write a basket name that fits every detail.

My basket name and why it fits

Part 5: Details That Fit

Frontier Life, Daily Work, and Family and Community are three baskets. Copy one detail from the Wilder passage that belongs in the Daily Work basket. Then tell in one sentence why it fits.

The detail I copied

Why it fits the basket

Part 6: My Reason Statements

Answer the prompt from Part 1 with a thesis (central idea) and three reason statements that are different from each other.

My thesis (central idea) and three reasons



Words I Need

Tier 1, everyday words



Tier 1 words are the everyday words you use without thinking about them. Basket. Group. Sort. They are not hard words, but this week they carry big ideas, because you are going to sort your thinking into baskets. Say each word, then show with your hands what sorting looks like.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
basket	BAS-kit	A container used to hold things together.	Each _____ holds ideas that go together.
group	GROOP	A set of things that belong together.	I put the details into a _____.
sort	SORT	To put things into groups.	I _____ the cards into baskets.
detail	DEE-tayl	A small piece of information.	One _____ from the passage is specific.
same	SAYM	Not different; alike.	These details belong to the _____ basket.
different	DIF-er-ent	Not the same.	My three reasons must be _____.
name	NAYM	The word we call something.	The _____ of this basket is clear.
work	WURK	Jobs that people do.	Frontier families did hard _____.
food	FOOD	What people eat.	Families grew their own _____.
home	HOHM	The place where a family lives.	They built a _____ on the prairie.
neighbor	NAY-ber	A person who lives near you.	Laura's family helped a _____.
holiday	HOL-ih-day	A special day people celebrate.	Garza painted a _____ celebration.

Use one Tier 1 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 2, academic words

These are academic thinking words that help us understand questions and explain answers. Say categorize, clapping the syllables: cat-e-go-rize. Now turn to your partner and use the word in a sentence about the cards on your table.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
reason	REE-zun	A statement that tells why something is true.	One _____ is _____.
way	WAY	A statement that tells how something happens.	One _____ is _____.
categorize	KAT-uh-guh-ryz	To put ideas into groups that share something.	I _____ the details.
organize	OR-guh-nyz	To arrange ideas so they make sense.	I _____ my ideas before writing.
support details	suh-PORT DEE-taylz	Details that hold up a bigger idea.	My _____ prove my reason.
topic	TOP-ik	What a group of ideas is about.	The _____ of this basket is _____.
magnify	MAG-nih-fy	To look very closely so small things become visible.	I _____ the passage to find details.
distinct	dih-STINGKT	Clearly different from the others.	My reasons must be _____.
relevant	REL-uh-vunt	Closely connected to the idea being discussed.	This detail is _____ because _____.
coherence	koh-HEER-uns	The quality of ideas holding together.	Grouping ideas gives my writing _____.
topic sentence	TOP-ik SEN-tens	The sentence that names what a paragraph is about.	Each basket becomes a _____.
thesis (central idea)	THEE-sis	The sentence that gives your answer to the prompt.	Every basket must support my thesis (central idea).

Use one Tier 2 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 3, passage words

These words are connected to the historical topics in our passages. When you understand them, the passages become easier to understand.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
frontier	frun-TEER	Land at the edge of a settled area.	Laura grew up on the _____.
harvest	HAR-vest	The crops gathered at the end of a growing season.	A good _____ meant food for winter.
blizzard	BLIZ-erd	A severe snowstorm with strong wind.	A _____ made travel hard.
arithmetic	uh-RITH-muh-tik	The study of numbers; math.	Students learned _____ at school.
fiddle	FID-ul	A stringed instrument played with a bow; a violin.	Pa played the _____.
one-room school	wun-room skool	A small school where all ages learn in a single classroom.	Laura attended a _____.
adapted	uh-DAPT-ed	Changed in order to fit a new situation.	The family _____ to new places.
generations	jen-uh-RAY-shuns	Groups of people born and living about the same time.	Stories pass through _____.
heritage	HAIR-i-tij	Traditions and history passed down in a family.	Garza's art shows her _____.
gatherings	GATH-er-ings	Times when people come together.	She painted family _____.
exhibits	eg-ZIB-its	Displays of art or objects for people to view.	Her art appeared in _____.
overlook	oh-ver-LOOK	To fail to notice something.	Do not _____ small moments.

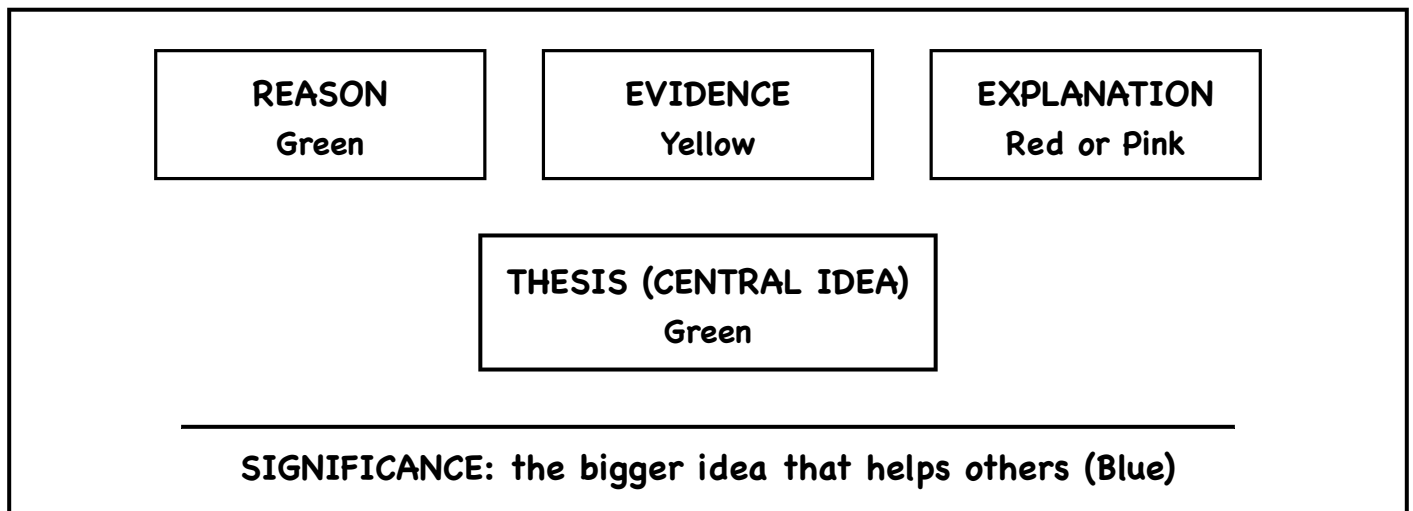
Use one Tier 3 word in a sentence

My Strategy Tools

Three Baskets: Sort, Name, Reason



A basket is a category. The name of the category becomes the reason. Each basket holds details that share a topic.



Reasons and ways are the first branch of the tree. They connect the thesis (central idea) to evidence.

Reason or Way?

Mark	What it means
REASON	Answers a WHY prompt; begins with One reason is.
WAY	Answers a HOW prompt; begins with One way is.
Distinct	Cover one reason and read the next. If nothing new appears, it is the same idea twice.

Magnify the passage. Find details that belong together. Name the basket. Write a reason statement.

How I sort details into baskets

Thinking Type and Clue Words

Thinking Type	Clue Words	Model
WHY	because, since, when, so that	Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories help readers understand history because they describe daily life on the prairie.
HOW	through, by, with, during	Carmen Lomas Garza's artwork tells stories about family life through colorful paintings of everyday moments.

WHY needs a subordinator. HOW needs a preposition.

How I Say the Standard!

3.11B(i):

3.11B(i) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction and a conclusion.

3.12B:

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

Check My Writing

- ☐ Each basket name fits every card inside it.
- ☐ My baskets are sorted by meaning, not by paragraph.
- ☐ My three reasons are distinct.

A reason or way statement from one of my baskets

Five Thinking Levels

Move from locating details to naming categories and explaining why they matter.

Level	Symbol	Hidden Question	Student Thinking	Thinking Focus
Reflective (Level 5)		Why does it matter beyond one text?	I explain how everyday stories preserve history.	Broader meaning
Independent (Level 4)		How do the ideas connect?	I use through the use of or in connection with.	Strategy and technique
Visible (Level 3)		Why is it important in the passage?	I explain text-based importance.	Evidence and relevance
Emergent (Level 2)		Why was it done?	I explain a purpose or motive.	Purpose and motivation
Foundational (Level 1)		Why did it happen?	I explain a cause using because, since, or when.	Reason or cause

Each level has a color label and a symbol: Red circle, Orange square, Yellow inverted triangle, Green triangle, Blue diamond.

A thinking level I understand

Five Thinking Levels

Move from locating details to naming categories and explaining why they matter.

Level	Symbol	Hidden Question	Student Thinking	Thinking Focus
Reflective (Level 5)	◇	Why does it matter beyond one text?	I explain how everyday stories preserve history.	Broader meaning
Independent (Level 4)	△	How do the ideas connect?	I use through the use of or in connection with.	Strategy and technique
Visible (Level 3)	▽	Why is it important in the passage?	I explain text-based importance.	Evidence and relevance
Emergent (Level 2)	□	Why was it done?	I explain a purpose or motive.	Purpose and motivation
Foundational (Level 1)	○	Why did it happen?	I explain a cause using because, since, or when.	Reason or cause

The Difference Between WHY and HOW

Prompt type	What it asks me to do	Example
WHY	Explain a reason, a purpose, or why something matters.	Explain why Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories help readers understand history.
HOW	Analyze how parts work together or how something happens.	Explain how Carmen Lomas Garza's artwork tells stories about family life.

Reasons answer WHY prompts; ways answer HOW prompts. Both live on the same branch of the tree, and the clue word decides which word you use.

A thinking level I want to try



Read & Interact

Read with a purpose



Dot, Discover, Drop

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

TRACKS Legend

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

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

Connect It to Our World

You can learn about a community through its stories and artwork. Which detail helps you understand how families lived or celebrated?

Background I Need

Laura Ingalls Wilder describes frontier life. Carmen Lomas Garza depicts Mexican-American traditions and family celebrations. A basket is a category, and the name of the category becomes the reason. If you cannot name the basket, it is not a real category yet.

Words I dotted while reading

Laura Ingalls Wilder

Two nonfiction passages at High Stamina. Use Dot, Discover, Drop: place a small dot above details that seem to belong together, discover the connection, then drop the dot when you group them into a basket.

My
marks

1 Laura Ingalls Wilder was a writer who shared stories about her childhood on the American frontier. She was born in 1867 in Wisconsin. When Laura was a little girl, her family moved many times as they looked for places to live and farm. They traveled by wagon and lived in small houses on the prairie. Life was often difficult, but Laura remembered many interesting adventures.

2 When Laura was growing up, much of the American frontier was still being settled. Families often moved to new places hoping to find good land for farming. There were few stores, roads, or towns in many areas. People had to depend on their families and neighbors to help them solve problems. Laura's family worked hard to build homes and create a life on the prairie.

3 The Ingalls family moved several times during Laura's childhood. They lived in Wisconsin, Kansas, Minnesota, Iowa, and South Dakota. Each place offered new opportunities and new challenges. Sometimes the family lived near forests where trees provided wood for homes and fires. Other times they lived on wide grasslands where there were very few trees. Laura experienced many different environments as she traveled with her family.

4 Traveling during the late 1800s was not easy. Families often rode in wagons pulled by horses or oxen. Trips could take many days or even weeks. Roads were rough, and travelers sometimes had to cross rivers or travel through bad weather. Families packed only the supplies they needed because there was limited space in their wagons.

5 Life on the frontier required hard work every day. Laura and her family helped with many chores around the home. They gathered firewood, cared for animals, planted gardens, and helped prepare meals. Children were expected to contribute to the family by helping with daily tasks. Everyone's work was important to the success of the household.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Carmen Lomas Garza

Two nonfiction passages at High Stamina. Use Dot, Discover, Drop: place a small dot above details that seem to belong together, discover the connection, then drop the dot when you group them into a basket.

My
marks

1 Carmen Lomas Garza is a Mexican-American artist who is well known for creating paintings that show everyday life in Mexican-American families. She was born in 1948 in Kingsville, Texas. As a child, Carmen enjoyed drawing and paying attention to the special moments she shared with her family and community. Many of those memories later became the inspiration for her artwork.

2 Growing up in South Texas, Carmen spent time with family members, friends, and neighbors who were part of a close community. She enjoyed family gatherings, holiday celebrations, and special traditions that brought people together. These experiences helped shape the stories she would later tell through her paintings.

3 When Carmen was young, she often noticed details that other people might overlook. She paid attention to the foods families prepared, the games children played, and the ways neighbors helped one another. She remembered these moments because they were important parts of everyday life. Years later, she used these memories to create artwork that showed the experiences of many Mexican-American families.

4 Garza's paintings often show scenes from family life, such as cooking together, celebrating holidays, visiting neighbors, or spending time outside. One common scene she paints is families making tamales during the holidays. Family members often gather around a table to prepare the ingredients and wrap the tamales together. While this may seem like a simple activity, it is also an important tradition that helps bring families together.

5 Her paintings also show people celebrating birthdays, attending community events, and spending time with relatives. Many of the scenes are based on real memories from her childhood. By painting these moments, Garza helps preserve traditions that have been passed down from one generation to the next.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Laura Ingalls Wilder (continued)

Two nonfiction passages at High Stamina. Use Dot, Discover, Drop: place a small dot above details that seem to belong together, discover the connection, then drop the dot when you group them into a basket.

6 Building a home on the frontier often took time and effort. Families sometimes lived in small cabins built from logs. In places where there were few trees, some families built homes from sod, which was made from thick pieces of grass-covered soil. These homes helped protect families from strong winds and cold weather.

7 Weather often affected life on the prairie. Summers could be hot and dry, while winters could be long and cold. Laura wrote about powerful snowstorms that made travel difficult. Sometimes families stayed inside for days while they waited for storms to pass. The weather could affect crops, animals, and daily activities.

8 Even though frontier life could be challenging, Laura also remembered many happy moments. Families celebrated holidays, visited neighbors, and enjoyed spending time together. Laura loved listening to her father play music on his fiddle. She also enjoyed playing games and spending time with her sisters, Mary, Carrie, and Grace.

9 Education was important to Laura's family. Laura attended school whenever one was available nearby. However, frontier schools were often small and simple. One teacher might teach students of many different ages in a single classroom. Students learned reading, writing, spelling, and arithmetic. Getting to school sometimes required walking long distances.

10 As Laura grew older, she became interested in writing about her experiences. She wanted people to understand what life was like for families living long ago. Her stories described building homes, growing food, going to school, and helping neighbors. She also wrote about the challenges families faced, such as cold winters, long journeys, and hard work.

11 Laura believed that ordinary people could tell important stories. She wrote about everyday events that helped readers understand the past. Her books described family dinners, school lessons, holiday celebrations, and daily chores. These details helped readers imagine what life was like on the frontier.

My
marks

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Laura Ingalls Wilder (continued)

Two nonfiction passages at High Stamina. Use Dot, Discover, Drop: place a small dot above details that seem to belong together, discover the connection, then drop the dot when you group them into a basket.

My
marks

12 Laura Ingalls Wilder became famous for writing the Little House books. These books told stories about her life and her family. Many readers enjoyed learning about Laura, her sisters, and her parents. The books helped people imagine what it was like to live on the prairie many years ago.

13 The Little House series includes several books that follow Laura as she grows up. Readers learn about the places where her family lived and the challenges they faced. The stories show how families adapted to different environments and worked together to solve problems. Many readers felt connected to Laura because her experiences seemed real and believable.

14 Laura's books became popular because they mixed history with storytelling. Readers could learn about the past while enjoying an interesting story. The books helped people understand how transportation, farming, education, and family life were different during the late 1800s.

15 Laura's storytelling was special because she wrote in a way that made readers feel as if they were part of the story. People could picture the wide fields, the small homes, and the busy days on the farm. Her books helped children and adults learn about history through stories.

16 Over the years, Laura's books reached readers around the world. Teachers often used the stories to help students learn about frontier life. Families enjoyed reading the books together because they showed the importance of hard work, determination, and family support.

17 Today, Laura Ingalls Wilder is remembered as an important author. Her books continue to inspire readers and show how storytelling can keep history alive. Even many years after they were written, her stories help people understand what life was like on the American frontier.

18 Through her writing, Laura preserved memories of a time when much of the United States was still being settled. Her stories allow readers to learn about history through the eyes of a child who lived it. Because of her books, people today can better understand the challenges, opportunities, and adventures of frontier life.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Carmen Lomas Garza (continued)

Two nonfiction passages at High Stamina. Use Dot, Discover, Drop: place a small dot above details that seem to belong together, discover the connection, then drop the dot when you group them into a basket.

My
marks

6 These simple moments may seem ordinary, but Garza believed they were important parts of culture and should be remembered and celebrated. She wanted people to understand that everyday experiences can tell meaningful stories about families and communities. Her artwork reminds viewers that history is not only about famous people or important events. History is also about the daily lives of ordinary people.

7 Her artwork uses bright colors and clear details to tell stories. When people look at her paintings, they can often imagine what the people in the picture are doing and how they feel. Viewers may notice smiling faces, busy kitchens, colorful decorations, and families working together. These details help bring the scenes to life.

8 In this way, Garza's art works almost like storytelling through pictures. Instead of writing long descriptions, she uses paint to show events and experiences. Each painting captures a moment in time and allows viewers to learn something about the people in the scene.

9 Many people enjoy looking at Garza's artwork because it feels familiar and welcoming. Some viewers recognize traditions that are part of their own lives. Others learn about customs and celebrations they may never have experienced before. Her paintings help people appreciate both the similarities and differences that exist among communities.

10 Carmen Lomas Garza has also written and illustrated children's books. Many of her books are written in both English and Spanish so that more readers can enjoy them. She believed it was important for children to see stories that reflected their own experiences and cultures.

11 Her books and paintings help people learn about Mexican-American traditions, family life, and community celebrations. Readers can learn about holidays, foods, family gatherings, and other customs that are important to many families. Through her stories and illustrations, Garza helps share cultural knowledge with younger generations.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Carmen Lomas Garza (continued)

Two nonfiction passages at High Stamina. Use Dot, Discover, Drop: place a small dot above details that seem to belong together, discover the connection, then drop the dot when you group them into a basket.

My
marks

12 As Carmen grew older, she continued to develop her artistic skills. She studied art in school and learned new techniques that helped her become a stronger artist. She spent many years practicing and improving her work. Even as she learned new methods, she stayed focused on the memories and experiences that inspired her artwork.

13 Garza understood that art can be a powerful way to communicate ideas. People from different backgrounds can look at the same painting and learn something new. Art can help people understand one another and build connections across communities. Garza hoped her work would encourage people to learn about cultures that might be different from their own.

14 Museums across the United States have displayed Carmen Lomas Garza's artwork. Visitors of all ages come to see her paintings and learn about the stories they tell. Her artwork has also been featured in schools, libraries, and cultural centers. These displays help introduce new audiences to her work.

15 Teachers often use Garza's paintings to help students learn about culture, history, and community life. Students can study the details in her artwork and discuss what they notice. They may identify traditions, customs, and activities shown in the paintings. This helps students better understand how art can preserve history.

16 Garza's work is important because it captures moments that might otherwise be forgotten. Family gatherings, holiday celebrations, neighborhood events, and daily activities are all valuable parts of history. By painting these scenes, she helps ensure that future generations can learn about them.

17 Her artwork also encourages people to share their own stories and traditions. Many viewers leave exhibitions thinking about their own family memories and experiences. In this way, Garza's work helps people recognize the importance of preserving their own cultural heritage.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Carmen Lomas Garza (continued)

Two nonfiction passages at High Stamina. Use Dot, Discover, Drop: place a small dot above details that seem to belong together, discover the connection, then drop the dot when you group them into a basket.

18 Today, Carmen Lomas Garza is recognized as an important artist, author, and storyteller. Her paintings and books continue to reach new audiences across the country. People admire her ability to capture everyday moments and transform them into meaningful works of art.

19 Through her paintings and books, she has helped preserve important cultural stories and share them with new generations. Her work teaches people about Mexican-American life while also reminding them of the importance of family, community, and tradition.

20 Carmen Lomas Garza's legacy continues to grow as more people discover her artwork. Her paintings show that even the simplest moments can have meaning. By sharing her memories and experiences, she has helped preserve an important part of American history and culture. Her work demonstrates how artists can contribute to cultural heritage by recording stories, traditions, and experiences that might otherwise be lost over time.

My
marks

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Annotate: Laura Ingalls Wilder

Look for details about daily work, travel, homes, school, weather, and family life. Dot the details that seem to belong together.

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

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

My best TRACKS phrase and why I chose it

Annotate: Carmen Lomas Garza

Look for the family traditions Garza paints, how she shares them, and why her work matters. Dot the details that seem to belong together.

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

STOP & THINK

Which details belong in the same basket? Which details are different enough to need their own basket?

My thinking

My Prompt Marking Notes

Three Baskets: details that share a topic go into one basket.

Shape	Word	Question I ask myself
Magnify	Look closely for small details	Find at least six relevant details.
Sort and Name	Group details that share a topic	The name must fit every card inside the basket.
Reason or Way	Turn the basket name into a sentence	One reason is... / One way is...

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

Explain why Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories help readers understand history.

My three marks in words

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 1: Gather + Reveal



Build the first branch

1. Gather: Stand Tall Like a Tree

Today you build the first branch, which holds your reasons or ways. To build this branch, you must sort details into baskets. Without sorted details, your branch has no support.

Use Dot, Discover, Drop on the passages. Then retell how Wilder's stories and Garza's art preserve everyday experiences.

One everyday experience a passage preserves

2. Reveal: Magnify the Passage

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

Explain why Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories help readers understand history.

Your thesis (central idea) needs support. Magnify the passage to find details that prove your answer. Look closely for small pieces of information about daily work, travel, and family life.

Details I found (list at least three)

3. The Modeled Basket Sort

Three named baskets: Frontier Life, Daily Work, and Family and Community. A basket name must fit every card inside it. Sort by what details have in common, not by paragraph.

Frontier Life	Daily Work	Family and Community

REASON	WAY
Answers a WHY prompt; begins with One reason is.	Answers a HOW prompt; begins with One way is.

4. Fill In What You Hear

Word bank: DETAIL, GROUP, NAME, REASON, WAY, SUPPORT. Say each missing word and record it.

#	The word I heard
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	

Ⓢ STOP & THINK

Which part of sorting is hardest? Name two details that belong in the same basket.

My answer

STUDENT WORKBOOK



BASKET BUILDER

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards

Cut on the dashed lines. Spread the detail cards face up. Sort them into baskets that share a common topic, not a paragraph. Name each basket before you check. Store all cards in your Practice Pocket.

gathered firewood, cared for animals, planted gardens, prepared meals	traveled by wagon, crossed rivers, rough roads, packed supplies
visited neighbors, celebrated holidays, played games, listened to fiddle	built homes from logs, made sod houses, protected from wind
attended school, learned arithmetic, one- room classroom, walked long distances	painted family moments, showed traditions, celebrated culture, used bright colors
snowstorms, hot summers, cold winters, bad weather affected crops	wrote stories, preserved memories, inspired readers, kept history alive

Self-Check (back of cards)

This page prints on the back of the card page. Sort the detail cards into baskets that share a common topic before you check. Flip a detail card over to check the basket name against this key. Store all cards in your Practice Pocket when you finish.

Frontier Travel	Daily Work / Chores
Housing / Shelter	Family and Community
Cultural Heritage / Art	Education
Storytelling / Legacy	Weather Challenges

Day 2: Attempt

Our Question for Today: Which details belong in the same basket?

1. Play Basket Builder

- Set up: spread the detail cards face up so every group member can see them.
- Sort: move cards into three groups that share a common topic or idea. No card sits in two baskets; no basket is empty.
- Name: write a name for every basket that covers all cards inside it. Names must be specific, not just "Paragraph 1" or "Things."
- Check: compare your baskets to the anchor chart. Keep at least two details per basket and distinct categories.

Round	1	2	3
My partner			
My point			

2. My Three Baskets

Basket name	Cards inside

Check: read the name of Basket 2, then read every card inside it. If a card does not fit, move it or rename the basket.

What my details have in common, beyond their paragraph

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 3: Discuss + Use

Three distinct reasons



1. Discuss

Question	My thinking
Which details belong in the same basket? Which details are different enough to need their own basket?	
Compare your REASON and WAY statements. How does the clue word help you choose the correct starter?	
If two reasons say the same thing in different words, what must you do?	

2. Distinct Reason or Restatement?

Sample	Distinct or the same idea twice?
She helped people.	
She made things better.	

3. Personal Connection

Describe two different ways your family spends time together. Compare Wilder's chores and Garza's celebrations as examples of daily life. Then return to the passages.

My two ways and the passage details they connect to

4. Use: Build Three Baskets on My Own

- Step 1: Review your thesis (central idea) and name the clue word.
- Step 2: Sort details into three baskets that support the thesis (central idea).
- Step 3: Name each basket and write one reason or way statement per basket.
- Step 4: Check that no two baskets overlap and that each statement is a complete sentence.

Use new vocabulary from this module where it fits. Do not add unrelated words just to meet a count.

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

Explain why Carmen Lomas Garza's artwork is important to culture.

Reason 1, Reason 2, Reason 3 (One reason is... Another reason is... A third reason is...)

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

Explain how Laura Ingalls Wilder helps readers imagine life on the prairie.

Way 1, Way 2, Way 3 (One way is... Another way is... A third way is...)

Cover one reason and read the other. If nothing new appears, rewrite it. Each statement is worth 3 points: 9 points in all.

- ☐ My baskets are distinct.
- ☐ My details come from the passage.
- ☐ Each statement is a complete sentence.

Why two of my reasons are different

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 4: Award + Target

Strong Branch Award



1. Award

You built three baskets that hold your reasons. Underline the basket names in green. Point to the passage details that support each name.

My Strong Branch Award

The words that name my category, and the passage details that support them...

2. Target

How do distinct reason statements support the thesis (central idea) and keep a writer focused? Choose one goal.

- ☐ Next time I will check if two reasons are distinct before writing them.
- ☐ Next time I will generate at least three distinct reasons before selecting.
- ☐ Next time I will make sure each basket name covers all details inside it.
- ☐ Next time I will write a complete reason statement that supports the thesis (central idea).

Next time I will...

3. Revise to Hit My Target

- Find the supporting details.
- Say the category name.
- Write it.
- Underline it in green. It must be your own basket name, not words copied from the prompt.

My basket name and its details

My revised reason statement

- ☐ My basket names are underlined in green.
- ☐ My revision acts on my target.

Draw my first branch with three baskets

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 5: Explain/Educate



I teach reason statements

1. Turn and Teach

Teach your partner how to build a reason statement. First, magnify the passage to find details. Second, group those details into a basket and name it. Third, turn that name into a complete sentence that supports the thesis (central idea). Explain why you chose because or through.

- ☐ My partner used details from the passage.
- ☐ My partner's transition word matches WHY or HOW.

My partner taught me...

2. Return to the Citizenship Connection

How do stories and artwork help a community preserve its history and traditions?

My thinking

3. Transfer: Wilder WHY Prompt

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

Explain why Laura Ingalls Wilder's books continue to inspire readers.

Work on your own. Each part is worth 20 points.

1. Noun of importance

2. Verb of importance

3. My own passage-supported reason statement

4. My complete thesis (central idea) as one sentence

5. Circle your connecting word and mark the prompt type: [] WHY [] HOW

4. Return to the Overarching Question

Compare your thinking from Monday with your thinking now. Then rate your tracker honestly and point to work that supports each rating.

On Monday I thought... Now I think...



Write More

Plan, draft, revise, edit, and share



My Writing Assignment

Write a short response to this prompt:

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

Explain why Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories help readers understand history.

My Plan

- Magnify the passage to find details that connect to your thesis (central idea).
- Sort those details into groups that share a common topic, and name each group.
- Turn each basket name into a reason or way statement. Make sure the three reasons are distinct.
- Draft the reason statements as complete sentences that support the thesis (central idea).
- Reread for clarity and module vocabulary.

Two possible reasons from the passage

The stronger reason is...

Color Words I Can Use

My Draft



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

Draft, page 1

A sentence I want to keep

Revise, Edit, and Share

Revise

- ☐ I read my thesis (central idea) aloud and part three adds meaning.
- ☐ I improved the transition word that opens each reason statement.
- ☐ I checked complete simple sentences, singular and plural nouns, common and proper nouns, and spelling.

Edit

- ☐ Every sentence is complete.
- ☐ Laura Ingalls Wilder, Carmen Lomas Garza, Wisconsin, and Kingsville begin with capital letters.
- ☐ Prairie, wagon, and tamales are common nouns unless they begin a sentence.
- ☐ Singular nouns are spelled correctly.
- ☐ High-frequency words are spelled correctly.

My improved sentence

Share

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

My sharing plan

Before I Turn It In

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

Part	I can show...	Check
Noun and verb of importance	Both keep the prompt's topic and action.	
Original answer	Adds a clear, passage-supported reason.	
WHY structure	One complete complex sentence with a subordinator.	
Supporting sentence	A relevant detail clearly supports the thesis (central idea).	
Clarity, conventions, vocabulary	Clear sentences with correct editing and module vocabulary.	

Study the Samples

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

Explain why Carmen Lomas Garza painted everyday family moments.

Low

Carmen Lomas Garza painted family traditions.

What is missing: a subordinator and a connection to the main claim. Identify what makes this tradition important, then add a reason using because or since.

Medium

Carmen Lomas Garza painted everyday family moments because she wanted to share them.

What is missing: the answer is a guess instead of the belief stated in the passage. Return to paragraph 2 and find the statement that traditions should be remembered and celebrated.

High

Carmen Lomas Garza painted everyday family moments because she believed cultural traditions should be remembered and celebrated.

Why it works: the noun, verb, and answer are present; because joins a reason grounded in the passage.

What improves from Low to High?



Look Back & Look Forward

I own my learning



My Progress Tracker

I can...	Not yet	Growing	Got it
Magnifies the passage to find relevant details.	☐	☐	☐
Sorts details into groups that make sense.	☐	☐	☐
Names a category for each group of details.	☐	☐	☐
Writes a reason statement for each basket.	☐	☐	☐
Ensures reasons are distinct from one another.	☐	☐	☐
Selects evidence that directly supports the reason.	☐	☐	☐
Connects the reason back to the thesis (central idea).	☐	☐	☐
Uses transition words from the REASONS and WAYS charts.	☐	☐	☐
Revises a reason statement to improve clarity or word choice.	☐	☐	☐

Something I Did Well...

What I did well, and where I did it

My Next Step...

Why this is my next step

Essential Question Answered

How does a writer organize details into distinct reasons that support the thesis (central idea)?

The answer

A writer magnifies the passage to find relevant details, groups those details into named baskets based on what they have in common, and writes a reason or way statement for each basket. These statements must be distinct from one another and directly support the thesis (central idea) established in Module 2.

My Final Thinking (in my own words)

What Changed in My Thinking?

At first I thought...

Now I think...

Try It Another Way

Choose a new prompt. Magnify the passage, sort details into three baskets, and write a reason or way statement for each.

My new prompt

Take It Further! Double Reason Challenge

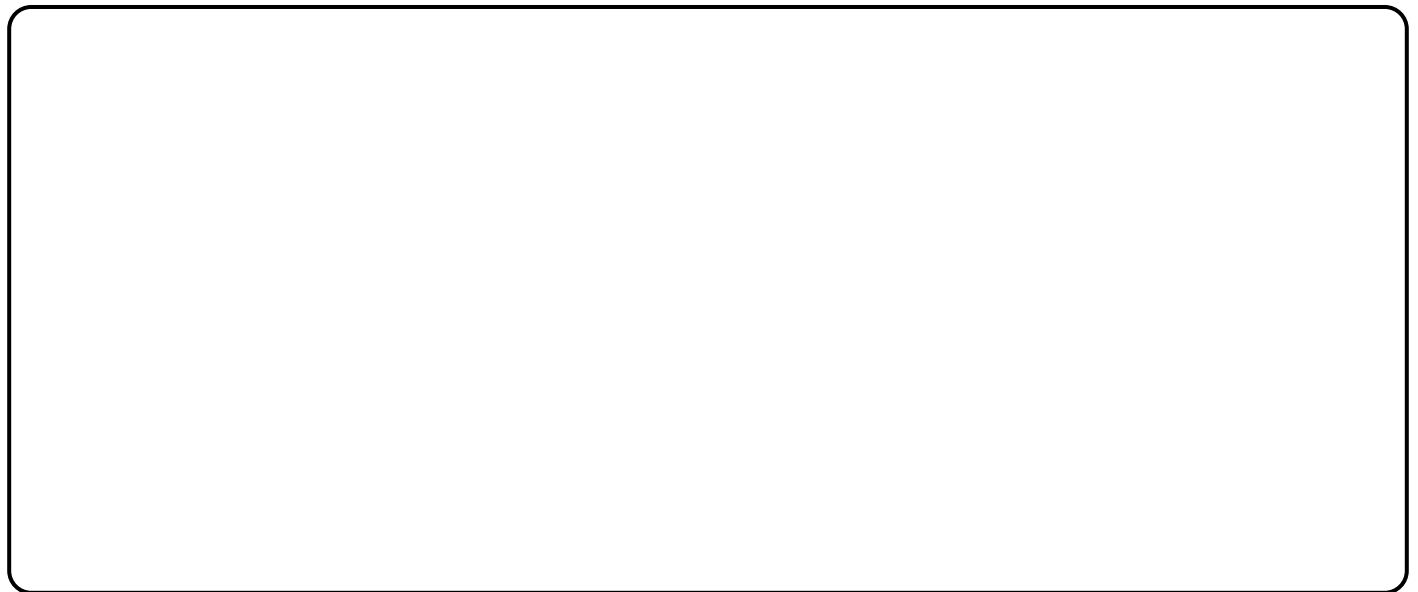
Combine Wilder and Garza in one HOW response: Explain how Laura Ingalls Wilder and Carmen Lomas Garza help people remember everyday life.

- Write one HOW thesis (central idea) that is true of both texts.
- Magnify both passages for details.
- Sort the details into three distinct baskets.
- Write one way statement for each basket.
- Revise the transition word.

My double reason response

My First Branch

Draw a tree. Label the trunk with your thesis (central idea) and the first branch with your three basket names.



At-Home Connection

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

Teach the Baskets

Teach topic, reason, and evidence to someone at home. Answer a WHY question using because, write it, and underline your original answer.

Ask them: what reason would you give?

Family member signature: _____

Because and Through

Write one family sentence using because and one using through. Check present tense and capital letters in names.

Ask them: which sentence is easier to believe, and why?

Family member signature: _____

Frame It First

Use the word bank topic, reason, evidence, because, through and the frame _____ is important to my family because _____. Say it twice, then write it and draw it if you like.

Ask them: what family tradition do we keep, and why does it continue?

Family member signature: _____

My Family Conversation Notes

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

Notes

Track My Progress

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

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

Why This Helps Me

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

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

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

My Module 3 Snapshot

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

The most useful word I learned

The prompt part I can find fastest

My First Branch

I sort details into distinct baskets and turn each name into a reason.

A note to my future writer self

My Proud Moment This Week

THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC.

Student Interactive Workbook

Grade 3

Cluster 2 - Module 4

Evidence (The Second Branch of the Tree)



Name: _____



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Grade 3 • Cluster 2 • Module 4

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How to Use My Workbook

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

My Name and My Goal for This Module

Pocket Practice

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



Meet My Week

Evidence (The Second Branch of the Tree)



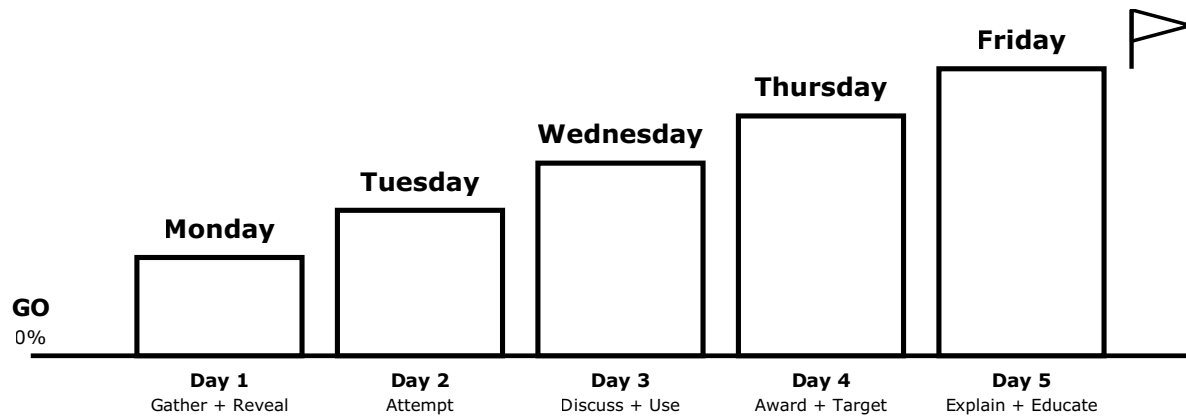
Why This Matters to Me

Evidence is the second branch of the tree that supports the reason. A reason is just an idea until you prove it. Evidence must prove the exact reason it sits under, not just be true or come from the passage.

Essential Question

How does a writer select evidence that proves the reason it supports?

My Week Tracker



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

My First Thinking

I Can

- I can tell the difference between a reason and evidence.
- I can find evidence that proves a specific reason.
- I can explain why my evidence matches my reason.
- I can use CSI to write a response.

I Will

- I will read my reason before I look for evidence.
- I will find proof in the passage that matches my reason.
- I will connect my proof to the prompt.
- I will infer what my proof shows.

The I Can I want to reach first, and why

[illegible]

My Week at a Glance

What I learn	What I read	What I make
How to select evidence that proves a stated reason and write a CSI response: Connect, Support, Infer.	Two Very High stamina passages: Laura Ingalls Wilder and Carmen Lomas Garza.	Matched reason and evidence cards, two CSI responses, a Strong Evidence Award, and an exit ticket with an Infer sentence.

Where We Are Going

I will move from telling a claim from its proof to writing a CSI response on my own. I will finish by teaching a partner Connect, Support, and Infer.

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

- ☐ The evidence comes from the passage and can be located by paragraph number.
- ☐ The evidence proves the exact reason it sits under, not a different reason.
- ☐ The response contains all three CSI moves: Connect, Support, Infer.

Check Myself

- ☐ My evidence comes from the passage and I can find it by paragraph number.
- ☐ My evidence proves the exact reason it sits under, not a different reason.
- ☐ My response has all three CSI moves: Connect, Support, Infer.

How I Will Show What I Know

I will show what I know with matched reason and evidence pairs, two independent CSI responses, a Strong Evidence Award, and the Day 5 exit ticket.

My GRADUATE Learning Path

Stage	Day	What I do
Gather	Day 1	I stand tall like a tree and add the Evidence Branch.
Reveal	Day 1	I learn the difference between a claim and its proof.
Attempt	Day 2	I play Evidence Grab with a partner.
Discuss	Day 3	I explain why evidence must prove the reason.
Use Again	Day 3	I write two CSI responses on my own.
Award	Day 4	I earn a Strong Evidence Award.
Target	Day 4	I choose one next step.
Explain/Educate	Day 5	I teach CSI and complete the exit ticket.

Say It Together!

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

3.11B(i):

TEKS says: 3.11B develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by: (i) organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction and a conclusion; and (ii) developing an engaging idea with relevant details.

How I say it: I select evidence from the passage that proves a stated reason. Use the CSI framework to Connect ideas, Support them with textual proof, and Infer meaning.

3.12B:

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

How I say it: I revise by deleting evidence that does not prove its reason and adding the missing Infer sentence. Edit using past verb tense, future verb tense, comparative adjectives, and superlative adjectives.

Call and Response

Read this together as a class before we start.

Teacher asks: "What are the three CSI moves?"

Class answers: "Connect, Support, Infer!"

One TEKS I want to practice today



Get Ready

Before I begin



Before We Begin: What Do I Already Know?

I can shape a prompt with topic, charge, and clue word. I can identify WHY and HOW. I know evidence comes from the text and explanation comes from the writer.

A connection I can make

Remember It!

- ☐ Red circle for the topic, yellow box for the charge, green triangle for the clue word.
- ☐ WHY needs a reason. HOW needs a way.
- ☐ The thesis (central idea) is the trunk of the tree. Evidence supports an answer.

One idea I remember

Ready Check

- ☐ I can write a complete sentence.
- ☐ I can use Dot, Discover, Drop and TRACKS.
- ☐ I can find the TREE trunk.

Watch Out! Common Mix-Up

Watch out! A response that stops at the quotation is not finished. Ask the reader's question: so what does that show? If the page does not answer it, the response is not complete.

Where This Fits in My Writing

The thesis (central idea) is the TREE trunk. Evidence develops the answer; CSI connects, supports, and infers meaning.

What I want to remember before I start

Where I Am Starting

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

Part 1: Shape the Prompt

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

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

Explain why Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories help readers understand history.

Is this a WHY or HOW prompt? What does it need?

Part 2: Thesis (Central Idea)

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

My thesis (central idea)

Part 3: Name the Moves

Label each sentence: Thesis (central idea), Connect, Support, or Infer.

Label	Sentence
_____	It says they traveled by wagon and built homes on the prairie.
_____	Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories help readers understand history because they describe daily life on the prairie.
_____	This helps readers understand what daily life was like.
_____	The passage explains frontier travel.

Part 4: Claim or Proof?

Reason: Laura's family moved often to find better land. Which sentence proves it: "She was born in 1867" or "When Laura was a little girl, her family moved many times as they searched for places to live and farm"? Tell why.

My choice and why

Part 5: Evidence That Proves a Reason

Laura's family moved often to find better land. Copy one sentence from the passage that proves this reason. Write the paragraph number. Then explain in one sentence what the proof shows.

The sentence I copied and its paragraph number

What the proof shows

Part 6: My CSI Response

Answer the prompt from Part 1. Write a Connect move, a Support move with evidence, and an Infer sentence.

My CSI response



Words I Need

Tier 1, everyday words



Tier 1 words are the everyday words that already belong to you. Proof. Show. Match. This week those three little words do heavy work, because finding proof and making it match your reason is the whole job. Say each word, then tell your partner one thing you could prove right now about this classroom.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
proof	PROOF	Something that shows an idea is true.	My _____ comes from the passage.
show	SHOH	To let someone see something.	This sentence _____s that _____.
match	MACH	To go together correctly.	My evidence must _____ my reason.
find	FYND	To discover where something is.	I _____ my proof in paragraph _____.
copy	KOP-ee	To write something exactly as it appears.	I _____ the sentence from the passage.
true	TROO	Correct; not made up.	Evidence must be _____.
mean	MEEN	To have a certain meaning.	This _____s that _____.
strong	STRAWNG	Powerful; hard to argue against.	_____ evidence proves my reason.
build	BILD	To put parts together.	I _____ my answer piece by piece.
paragraph	PAIR-uh-graf	A group of sentences about one idea.	My proof is in _____ 3.
wagon	WAG-un	A vehicle with wheels pulled by animals.	Families traveled by _____.
picture	PIK-cher	An image that shows something.	Her _____s tell stories.

Use one Tier 1 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 2, academic words

These are academic thinking words that help us understand questions and explain answers. Say infer: in-FUR. Infer means you figured it out even though the passage did not say it in those words. Turn to your partner and infer one thing about Laura's family from what you read.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
evidence	EV-uh-dens	Proof taken straight from the passage.	My _____ is _____.
support	suh-PORT	To hold up or prove an idea.	This evidence _____s my reason.
quote	KWOHT	Words copied exactly from a text.	I used a _____ from paragraph _____.
textual evidence	TEKS-choo-ul EV-uh-dens	Proof that comes from the words of the text.	My _____ comes from paragraph _____.
details	DEE-taylz	Small pieces of information in a text.	The _____ prove my point.
relevant	REL-uh-vunt	Closely connected to the idea being proved.	This evidence is _____ because _____.
connect	kuh-NEKT	To join one idea to another.	I _____ my proof to the prompt.
infer	in-FUR	To figure out something the text does not say directly.	I can _____ that _____.
claim	KLAYM	A statement a writer is trying to prove.	My _____ is my thesis (central idea).
significance	sig-NIF-ih-kuns	Why something matters.	The _____ of this proof is _____.
thesis (central idea)	THEE-sis	The sentence that gives your answer to the prompt.	All my evidence supports my thesis (central idea).
coherence	koh-HEER-uns	The quality of ideas holding together.	Deleting an unrelated detail improves _____.

Use one Tier 2 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 3, passage words

These words are connected to the historical topics in our passages. When you understand them, the passages become easier to understand.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
oxen	OK-sen	Strong cattle used to pull heavy loads.	Wagons were pulled by horses or _____.
covered wagon	KUV-erd WAG-un	A wagon with a cloth top used for long journeys.	Families rode in a _____.
drought	drowt	A long period with very little rain.	A _____ could damage crops.
Long Winter	long WIN-ter	The name given to a season of severe storms Laura wrote about.	During the _____, trains could not reach the town.
perseverance	per-suh-VEER-uns	Continuing to try even when something is hard.	Readers admired the _____ in the books.
adaptations	ad-ap-TAY-shuns	Versions of a story made for television, film, or another form.	Her books had _____ for television.
translated	TRANS-lay-ted	Changed into another language.	The books were _____ into many languages.
symbolic	sim-BOL-ik	Standing for something larger than itself.	A painting can be _____.
cultural heritage	KUL-cher-ul HAIR-i-tij	The traditions and history a group passes down.	Garza's art shows _____.
preserve	pre-ZERV	To keep something safe so it is not lost.	Stories and art _____ history.
influential	in-floo-EN-shul	Having the power to affect others.	Her work is _____.
documented	DOK-yoo-men-ted	Recorded so it can be remembered.	Garza _____ family traditions.

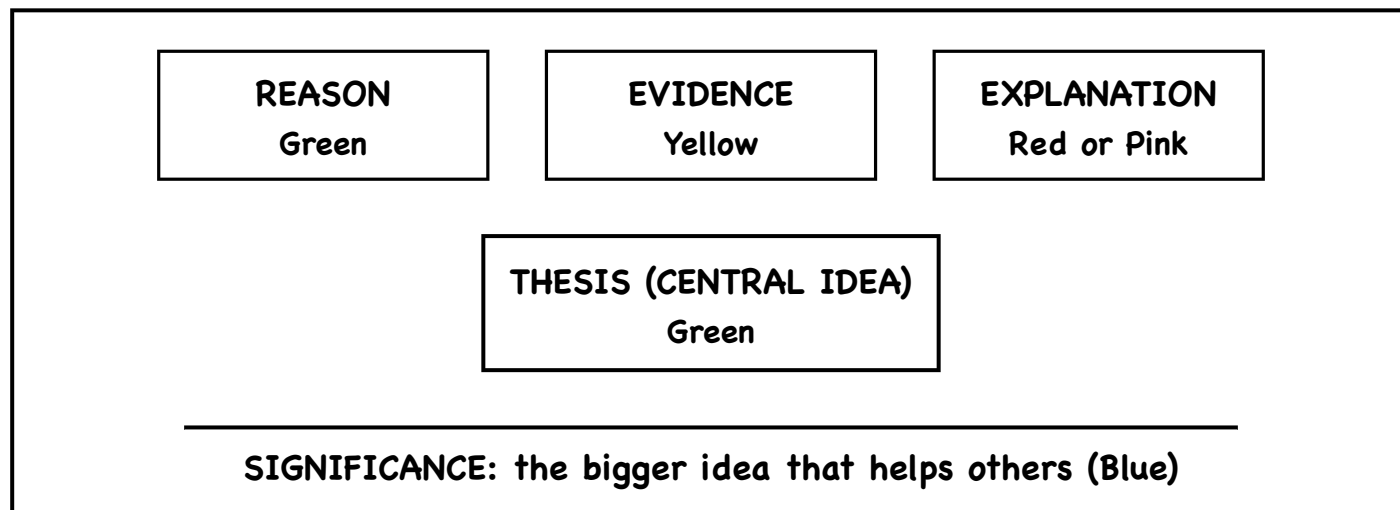
Use one Tier 3 word in a sentence

My Strategy Tools

CSI: Connect, Support, Infer



CSI is three moves: Connect names what the passage is doing, Support gives the proof, and Infer says what it shows.



Evidence is the second branch of the tree. It holds up the reason; explanation connects their meaning.

Relevant or Irrelevant?

Mark	What it means
Relevant	The evidence proves the specific reason stated on the card.
Irrelevant	The evidence is true but does not prove that specific reason.
Frame	This shows that _____.

Read the reason. Scan the passage for matching details. Select the sentence that proves the reason. Write an Infer sentence explaining what the proof shows.

How I choose evidence that proves my reason

Thinking Type and Clue Words

Thinking Type	Clue Words	Model
WHY	because, since, when, so that	Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories help readers understand history because they describe daily life on the prairie.
HOW	through, by, with, during	Carmen Lomas Garza's artwork tells stories about family life through colorful paintings of everyday moments.

WHY needs a subordinator. HOW needs a preposition.

How I Say the Standard!

3.11B(i):

TEKS says: 3.11B develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by: (i) organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction and a conclusion; and (ii) developing an engaging idea with relevant details.

How I say it: I select evidence from the passage that proves a stated reason. Use the CSI framework to Connect ideas, Support them with textual proof, and Infer meaning.

3.12B:

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

How I say it: I revise by deleting evidence that does not prove its reason and adding the missing Infer sentence. Edit using past verb tense, future verb tense, comparative adjectives, and superlative adjectives.

Check My Writing

- ☐ My evidence proves this exact reason.
- ☐ I used the shortest part that still proves the reason.
- ☐ My Infer sentence says something the passage never said in those words.

An Infer sentence that says what my proof shows

Five Thinking Levels

Move from locating proof to judging relevance and inferring meaning.

Level	Symbol	Hidden Question	Student Thinking	Thinking Focus
Reflective (Level 5)		Why does it matter?	I explain the significance of the evidence and its role in the overall thesis (central idea).	Significance
Independent (Level 4)		What does it show?	I write an Infer sentence that states meaning not explicitly found in the text.	Inference
Visible (Level 3)		How does it connect?	I use Connect and Support moves to link proof to the prompt.	CSI structure
Emergent (Level 2)		Does this prove it?	I judge whether a specific detail supports the stated claim.	Relevance check
Foundational (Level 1)		What does the text say?	I locate and copy a sentence that matches the reason.	Literal evidence

Each level has a color label and a symbol: Red circle, Orange square, Yellow inverted triangle, Green triangle, Blue diamond.

A thinking level I understand

Five Thinking Levels

HOW asks about methods or relationships.

Level	Symbol	Hidden Question	Student Thinking	Thinking Focus
Reflective (Level 5)	◇	Why does it matter?	I explain the significance of the evidence and its role in the overall thesis (central idea).	Significance
Independent (Level 4)	△	What does it show?	I write an Infer sentence that states meaning not explicitly found in the text.	Inference
Visible (Level 3)	▽	How does it connect?	I use Connect and Support moves to link proof to the prompt.	CSI structure
Emergent (Level 2)	◻	Does this prove it?	I judge whether a specific detail supports the stated claim.	Relevance check
Foundational (Level 1)	○	What does the text say?	I locate and copy a sentence that matches the reason.	Literal evidence

The Difference Between WHY and HOW

Prompt type	What it asks me to do	Example
WHY	Explain a reason, a purpose, or why something matters.	Explain why Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories help readers understand history.
HOW	Analyze how parts work together or how something happens.	Explain how Carmen Lomas Garza's artwork tells stories about family life.

A sentence can be true but still not prove your point. Evidence must match the exact reason it sits under.

A thinking level I want to try



Read & Interact

Read with a purpose



Dot, Discover, Drop

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

TRACKS Legend

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

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

Connect It to Our World

You can learn about a community through its stories and artwork. Which detail helps you understand how families lived or celebrated?

Background I Need

Laura Ingalls Wilder described frontier survival. Carmen Lomas Garza depicts Mexican-American traditions. Relevance, not accuracy, decides evidence: a true sentence that does not prove the stated reason is not evidence for that reason.

Words I dotted while reading

Laura Ingalls Wilder

Two nonfiction passages at Very High Stamina, the longest reading of the cluster. Use Dot, Discover, Drop on unfamiliar words. Mark TRACKS details that could supply proof.

1 Laura Ingalls Wilder was a writer who shared stories about her childhood on the American frontier. She was born on February 7, 1867, in a small log cabin near Pepin, Wisconsin. When Laura was a little girl, her family moved many times as they searched for places to live and farm. They traveled by wagon and lived in small homes on the prairie. Life was often difficult, but Laura remembered many adventures and experiences that later became the basis for her famous books.

2 When Laura was growing up, much of the United States was still being settled. Families moved west in search of land and opportunities. Many people believed they could build better lives by moving to new areas. However, life on the frontier required courage, determination, and hard work. There were few towns, stores, or roads in many places. Families often had to build everything they needed themselves.

3 Laura's parents were Charles and Caroline Ingalls. Laura often called her father "Pa" and her mother "Ma" in her books. Pa was known for his adventurous spirit and willingness to move to new places. Ma worked hard to care for the family and create a comfortable home wherever they lived. Laura also had sisters named Mary, Carrie, and Grace. The family remained close and depended on one another throughout many challenges.

4 The Ingalls family moved several times during Laura's childhood. They lived in Wisconsin, Kansas, Minnesota, Iowa, and South Dakota. Each move brought new experiences. Sometimes they lived near forests where trees provided wood for building homes and fires. Other times they lived on wide grasslands where the horizon seemed to stretch forever. Laura learned to adapt to different environments and ways of life.

My
marks

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Carmen Lomas Garza

Two nonfiction passages at Very High Stamina, the longest reading of the cluster. Use Dot, Discover, Drop on unfamiliar words. Mark TRACKS details that could supply proof.

1 Carmen Lomas Garza is a Mexican-American artist who is well known for creating paintings that show everyday life in Mexican-American families. She was born in 1948 in Kingsville, Texas. As a child, Carmen enjoyed drawing and paying attention to the special moments she shared with her family and community. Many of those memories later became the inspiration for her artwork.

2 Growing up in South Texas, Carmen was surrounded by family traditions and community celebrations. She spent time with relatives, neighbors, and friends who gathered for holidays, birthdays, and other special occasions. These experiences became an important part of her childhood. Although she may not have realized it at the time, many of these memories would later appear in her paintings.

3 As a young girl, Carmen enjoyed observing the world around her. She noticed the colors, sounds, and activities that filled each day. She watched family members prepare meals, tell stories, and work together. She saw children playing outside and neighbors visiting one another. These everyday moments helped her understand the importance of family and community.

4 Carmen also enjoyed drawing from an early age. She often used art to express her thoughts and ideas. As she grew older, she continued practicing and developing her artistic skills. She learned that art could be used to tell stories and share experiences with others.

5 When Carmen became an artist, she decided to focus on subjects that were meaningful to her. Instead of painting famous people or large historical events, she chose to paint scenes from everyday life. She believed that ordinary experiences were important and deserved to be remembered.

My
marks

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Laura Ingalls Wilder (continued)

Two nonfiction passages at Very High Stamina, the longest reading of the cluster. Use Dot, Discover, Drop on unfamiliar words. Mark TRACKS details that could supply proof.

My
marks

5 Traveling during the late 1800s was very different from traveling today. Families often rode in covered wagons pulled by horses or oxen. Roads were rough, and some areas had no roads at all. Travelers crossed rivers, traveled through mud, and faced changing weather conditions. A journey that takes only a few hours today might have taken days or weeks during Laura's childhood.

6 Life on the frontier required constant work. Families could not simply visit a store whenever they needed something. Instead, they often made many items themselves. They grew food, sewed clothing, built furniture, and repaired tools. Every family member had responsibilities. Children helped with chores and learned skills that would help them as adults.

7 Laura often wrote about the importance of farming. Families planted crops such as corn, wheat, and vegetables. The success of a harvest could determine whether a family had enough food for the winter. Farmers watched the weather carefully because droughts, floods, insects, and storms could damage crops. Growing food required patience and effort throughout the year.

8 The Ingalls family sometimes faced difficult conditions. One challenge was dealing with harsh weather. Winters on the prairie could be extremely cold. Snowstorms sometimes lasted for days and made travel

9 impossible. Families stayed inside their homes and depended on stored food and firewood to survive until conditions improved.

10 Laura later wrote about a series of severe winter storms that became known as the Long Winter. During this time, trains carrying supplies could not reach the town because of deep snow. Food became scarce, and families had to be careful about how much they used each day. These experiences showed how important planning and preparation were for frontier families.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Laura Ingalls Wilder (continued)

Two nonfiction passages at Very High Stamina, the longest reading of the cluster. Use Dot, Discover, Drop on unfamiliar words. Mark TRACKS details that could supply proof.

11 The prairie itself was both beautiful and challenging. Laura described endless grasslands filled with wildflowers and wildlife. She enjoyed watching animals and exploring nature. At the same time, prairie fires, blizzards, and other natural events could create dangerous situations. People had to learn how to live with the environment around them.

12 Education was important to Laura's family. Laura attended school whenever one was available nearby. Frontier schools were often simple one-room buildings. Students of different ages learned together in the same classroom. A single teacher might teach reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, geography, and history to all students.

13 Getting to school was not always easy. Some children walked long distances each day. Weather conditions sometimes made travel difficult. Despite these challenges, many families believed education was important because it helped children prepare for the future.

14 Laura enjoyed learning, but she also understood the responsibilities of helping her family. Children on the frontier often balanced schoolwork with chores. Before and after school, they might help feed animals, gather wood, carry water, or assist with farm work.

15 Family life was an important part of Laura's childhood. Even though frontier life was difficult, families found ways to enjoy time together. Laura loved listening to Pa play his fiddle. Music, storytelling, and games helped families relax after long days of work. Holidays and special celebrations brought communities together and created lasting memories.

16 Neighbors often depended on one another for help. When a family needed assistance building a barn, harvesting crops, or caring for someone who was sick, neighbors frequently worked together. Cooperation helped communities survive and grow. Laura learned the importance of helping others and being part of a strong community.

My
marks

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Laura Ingalls Wilder (continued)

Two nonfiction passages at Very High Stamina, the longest reading of the cluster. Use Dot, Discover, Drop on unfamiliar words. Mark TRACKS details that could supply proof.

My
marks

17 As Laura grew older, she continued to remember the experiences of her childhood. Many years later, she decided to write about them. She wanted readers to understand what life had been like on the frontier. Her stories described everyday activities such as building homes, attending school, growing food, and helping neighbors. She also wrote about challenges such as cold winters, long journeys, crop failures, and hard work.

18 Laura's writing was different from many history books. Instead of simply listing facts, she told stories from a child's point of view. Readers could experience events alongside Laura and her family. This approach made history feel more personal and easier to understand.

19 Her first Little House book was published in 1932. More books followed, creating the popular Little House series. The books told stories about Laura's life from early childhood through young adulthood. Readers enjoyed following her adventures and learning about life during the late 1800s.

20 The Little House books became popular because they combined historical information with engaging storytelling. Readers learned about transportation, farming, education, family life, and frontier communities while enjoying interesting stories. Many people felt connected to Laura because she faced challenges, made mistakes, and learned important lessons.

21 Teachers often used Laura's books to help students learn about American history. The stories provided details about daily life that were not always included in textbooks. Students could better understand what it was like to travel by wagon, attend a one-room school, or live without modern technology.

22 Over time, the books became famous around the world. They were translated into many languages and introduced new generations of readers to frontier life. Television programs and other adaptations also helped share Laura's stories with larger audiences.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Laura Ingalls Wilder (continued)

Two nonfiction passages at Very High Stamina, the longest reading of the cluster. Use Dot, Discover, Drop on unfamiliar words. Mark TRACKS details that could supply proof.

23 Laura's storytelling was special because she helped readers picture the past. People could imagine the wide prairie, the small cabins, the fields of crops, and the busy days filled with chores. Her descriptions helped bring history to life.

24 Readers often admired the values shown in the books. Hard work, perseverance, responsibility, and family support were important themes throughout the series. Laura's stories showed how people could overcome difficulties by working together and remaining hopeful.

25 Today, Laura Ingalls Wilder is remembered as one of America's most important children's authors. Her books continue to inspire readers of all ages. Even though the events took place more than a century ago, the stories still connect with modern readers because they focus on family, determination, and personal growth.

26 Historians, teachers, and students continue to study Laura's work because it provides a window into the past. Her books help readers understand how geography, weather, transportation, and community shaped life on the American frontier.

27 Through her writing, Laura preserved memories of a time when much of the United States was still developing. Her stories allow people today to learn about history through the experiences of someone who lived it. Because of her books, generations of readers have been able to explore the challenges, opportunities, and adventures of frontier life.

28 Laura Ingalls Wilder's legacy continues to live on through her stories. Her books remind readers that history is not only about important events and famous leaders. It is also about ordinary families who worked hard, faced challenges, and built communities. By sharing her experiences, Laura helped keep an important part of American history alive for future generations.

My
marks

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Carmen Lomas Garza (continued)

Two nonfiction passages at Very High Stamina, the longest reading of the cluster. Use Dot, Discover, Drop on unfamiliar words. Mark TRACKS details that could supply proof.

My
marks

6 Garza's paintings often show scenes from family life, such as cooking together, celebrating holidays, visiting neighbors, or spending time outside. One common scene she paints is families making tamales during the holidays. Family members often gather around a table to prepare ingredients, wrap tamales, and spend time together. While this activity may seem simple, it represents an important tradition shared by many families.

7 Her artwork also includes scenes of children playing games, families attending celebrations, and neighbors helping one another. These paintings show how people connect through shared experiences and traditions. By capturing these moments, Garza helps preserve memories that might otherwise fade over time.

8 Many of the events shown in her artwork are based on real memories from her childhood. She often painted scenes that reminded her of family gatherings and special occasions. Through her work, she wanted to share these experiences with others and help people understand their importance.

9 These simple moments may seem ordinary, but Garza believed they were valuable parts of culture and history. She understood that history is not only found in textbooks or museums. History can also be found in family traditions, community celebrations, and everyday experiences. Her paintings remind viewers that the actions of ordinary people help shape the story of a community.

10 One reason many people enjoy Garza's artwork is that it feels familiar. Viewers often recognize activities that are similar to those in their own lives. Some remember family traditions they experienced as children. Others learn about customs and celebrations that are new to them. In both cases, the artwork creates opportunities for learning and understanding.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Carmen Lomas Garza (continued)

Two nonfiction passages at Very High Stamina, the longest reading of the cluster. Use Dot, Discover, Drop on unfamiliar words. Mark TRACKS details that could supply proof.

11 Her artwork uses bright colors and clear details to tell stories. When people look at her paintings, they can often imagine what the people in the picture are doing and how they feel. Viewers may notice smiling faces, colorful decorations, and busy family gatherings. These details help bring each scene to life.

12 Garza carefully includes objects and activities that help tell the story of a painting. A table full of food, children playing a game, or family members working together can reveal important information about the people in the picture. These details allow viewers to learn about traditions and customs through observation.

13 In this way, Garza's art works almost like storytelling through pictures. Instead of writing long descriptions, she uses paint to communicate ideas and experiences. Each painting captures a moment that helps viewers better understand a culture, a family, or a community.

14 Storytelling has always been an important way for people to share information. Long before books and computers existed, people passed stories from one generation to the next. These stories helped preserve traditions, values, and important events. Garza's artwork continues this tradition by telling stories through visual images.

15 Many people visit museums to see Garza's paintings. Museums display her work because it helps visitors learn about Mexican-American life and culture. Through her paintings, viewers gain insight into experiences that may be different from their own.

16 Students often study Garza's artwork in school. Teachers use her paintings to start discussions about traditions, families, and communities. Students may examine details in the artwork and talk about what they notice. They might compare the traditions shown in the paintings to traditions in their own families.

My
marks

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Carmen Lomas Garza (continued)

Two nonfiction passages at Very High Stamina, the longest reading of the cluster. Use Dot, Discover, Drop on unfamiliar words. Mark TRACKS details that could supply proof.

My
marks

17 Garza's work encourages people to think about their own experiences and memories. After viewing her paintings, some people remember family celebrations, special meals, or community events from their childhood. Others begin asking relatives questions about family traditions and history.

18 In addition to painting, Carmen Lomas Garza became an author. She wrote and illustrated children's books that shared many of the same themes found in her artwork. Her books help readers learn about traditions, family life, and community experiences.

19 Many of her books are written in both English and Spanish. This allows more readers to enjoy the stories and connect with the experiences being shared. Bilingual books can help readers develop language skills while also learning about different cultures.

20 Garza believed that children should see themselves reflected in books and artwork. She wanted young readers to recognize familiar experiences and traditions. At the same time, she hoped her books would introduce other readers to customs and celebrations they had never encountered before.

21 Her books and paintings work together to tell stories about culture and community. Both forms of art help preserve traditions and pass them on to future generations. Readers and viewers learn about family life while also gaining a greater appreciation for cultural diversity.

22 As Carmen continued her education, she studied art and learned new techniques. She spent years practicing and improving her skills. Becoming a successful artist required dedication, patience, and hard work. Like many artists, she experimented with different ideas before developing her own style.

23 Even as her career grew, Garza remained committed to the subjects that mattered most to her. She continued painting scenes from everyday life because she believed they contained important stories worth sharing. Her focus on family and community became a defining feature of her work.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Carmen Lomas Garza (continued)

Two nonfiction passages at Very High Stamina, the longest reading of the cluster. Use Dot, Discover, Drop on unfamiliar words. Mark TRACKS details that could supply proof.

24 Over time, museums, schools, and cultural organizations began recognizing the value of Garza's contributions. Her artwork was displayed in exhibitions across the United States. Visitors appreciated the way her paintings celebrated family traditions and community experiences.

25 Many people view Garza as both an artist and a historian. Although she does not record history through written documents, she preserves historical experiences through her artwork. Her paintings provide a visual record of customs, celebrations, and everyday life.

26 Future generations can learn from her work because it captures moments that might otherwise be forgotten. A family preparing food together, children playing outside, or neighbors gathering for a celebration all become part of a larger story about community life. These scenes help preserve important cultural knowledge.

27 Garza's artwork also demonstrates the importance of representation. When people see their experiences reflected in books and artwork, they feel recognized and valued. Representation helps individuals understand that their stories matter and deserve to be shared.

28 Her paintings remind viewers that every community has traditions worth preserving. Whether a tradition involves food, music, celebrations, or family gatherings, it contributes to the identity of a group of people. By documenting these traditions, Garza helps ensure they remain part of the historical record.

29 Today, Carmen Lomas Garza is a well-known Mexican-American artist whose work is shown in major museums. Her paintings and books continue to inspire students, teachers, families, and museum visitors. People of all ages learn from the stories she tells through her artwork.

30 Through her paintings and books, she has helped preserve important cultural stories and share them with new generations. Her work teaches people about Mexican-American life while also highlighting the importance of family, community, and tradition.

My
marks

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Carmen Lomas Garza (continued)

Two nonfiction passages at Very High Stamina, the longest reading of the cluster. Use Dot, Discover, Drop on unfamiliar words. Mark TRACKS details that could supply proof.

31 Carmen Lomas Garza's legacy continues to grow as more people discover her artwork. Her paintings show that history can be found in everyday experiences and that even simple moments can have lasting meaning. By sharing her memories through art, she has preserved an important part of American cultural history and helped future generations better understand the lives, traditions, and experiences of Mexican-American communities.

My
marks

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Annotate: Laura Ingalls Wilder

Look for how the family lived, moved, farmed, and survived on the frontier, and why readers value her books. Mark TRACKS details that could prove a reason.

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

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

My best TRACKS phrase and why I chose it

Annotate: Carmen Lomas Garza

Look for the family traditions Garza paints, how her books reach readers, and why her work preserves culture. Mark TRACKS details that could prove a reason.

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

STOP & THINK

Which sentence proves a reason, and which sentence is only true?

My thinking

My Prompt Marking Notes

CSI: three moves, not three sentences by law.

Shape	Word	Question I ask myself
Connect	Names what the passage is doing	The passage describes family traditions.
Support	Gives the proof from the text	It says families make tamales at the holidays.
Infer	Says what the proof shows	This shows that Garza values cultural heritage.

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

Explain why Laura Ingalls Wilder's stories help readers understand history.

My three marks in words

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 1: Gather + Reveal



Add the Evidence Branch

1. Gather: Stand Tall Like a Tree

Today you add the second branch, the Evidence Branch. A reason is just an idea until you prove it. Without proof, your branch has no leaves.

Use Dot, Discover, Drop on the passages. Then retell how Wilder's stories and Garza's art give details you could use as evidence.

One detail I could use as evidence

2. Reveal: Claim or Proof?

Reason card: Laura's family moved often to find better land.

Your evidence must prove your exact reason. A sentence can be true but still not prove your point. Which sentence proves this reason?

Sentence from paragraph 1	Proves the reason? Why?
When Laura was a little girl, her family moved many times as they searched for places to live and farm.	
She was born in 1867.	

? STOP & THINK

Why is the birth year true but not evidence for this reason?

My answer

3. Relevant or Irrelevant?

Relevant	Irrelevant
The evidence proves the specific reason stated on the card.	The evidence is true but does not prove that specific reason.

Choose a short, precise quotation. Relevance is more important than length.

4. The CSI Anchor Chart

Move	What It Does
Connect	Names what the passage is doing.
Support	Gives the proof from the text. Your evidence fits here.
Infer	Says what the proof shows.

- Read the reason.
- Scan the passage for matching details.
- Select the sentence that proves the reason.
- Write an Infer sentence explaining what the proof shows.

5. Fill In What You Hear

Word bank: REASON, EVIDENCE, PROOF, MATCH, PARAGRAPH, RELEVANT. Say each missing word and record it.

#	The word I heard
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	

Evidence holds up the reason. In my own words, CSI means...

STUDENT WORKBOOK



EVIDENCE GRAB

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards

Cut on the dashed lines. Shuffle the four reason cards and four evidence cards face down in two rows of four. That is eight cards total. Turn over two cards at a time. If a reason card matches its evidence card, keep the pair. Store all cards in your Practice Pocket.

Families traveled by wagon and lived in small homes on the prairie.	The Ingalls family moved several times during Laura's childhood.
Families often had to build everything they needed themselves.	Laura's writing was different from many history books.
They traveled by wagon and lived in small homes on the prairie. (Paragraph 1)	They lived in Wisconsin, Kansas, Minnesota, Iowa, and South Dakota. (Paragraph 4)
Families often had to build everything they needed themselves. (Paragraph 2)	Instead of simply listing facts, she told stories from a child's point of view. (Paragraph 17)

Self-Check (back of cards)

This page prints on the back of the card page. Flip a reason card over to see its matching evidence and paragraph number.

They lived in Wisconsin, Kansas, Minnesota, Iowa, and South Dakota. (Paragraph 4)	They traveled by wagon and lived in small homes on the prairie. (Paragraph 1)
Instead of simply listing facts, she told stories from a child's point of view. (Paragraph 17)	Families often had to build everything they needed themselves. (Paragraph 2)
The Ingalls family moved several times during Laura's childhood.	Families traveled by wagon and lived in small homes on the prairie.
Laura's writing was different from many history books.	Families often had to build everything they needed themselves.

Day 2: Attempt
Our Question for Today: Which evidence proves each reason?

1. Play Evidence Grab

- Shuffle four reason cards and four evidence cards face down in two rows of four. That is eight cards total.
- Player 1 turns over two cards. Name the original proof before you keep a pair.
- A correct reason and evidence pair is kept, and the player takes another turn.
- No match: return both cards to the same places face down, then switch players.
- Check pairs against the answer key. More matched pairs wins. Return all cards to the Practice Pocket.

Before the model is shown, mark the yellow box and the green triangle on each reason card.

Round	1	2	3	4	5
My partner					
My point					

2. My Matched Pairs

If you matched only by a familiar name, compare the full action. Make sure the evidence proves the specific reason.

Reason card	Evidence I matched	Paragraph
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

Check: point to the paragraph number in Evidence 1. Where does the proof come from?

My best pair, and why the evidence proves that exact reason

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 3: Discuss + Use

Evidence must prove the reason



1. Discuss

Question	My thinking
Which two parts can you take from the passage? Which part must come from your thinking about what the evidence shows?	
Compare your evidence choices. How does the reason help you choose the right sentence?	
If your response only repeats the quotation, what inference do you still need to add?	

2. Strong or Weak Evidence?

Defend whether each sample is relevant or just true for the reason: Laura's family moved often to find better land.

Sample	Relevant or Just True?
When Laura was a little girl, her family moved many times as they searched for places to live and farm.	
She was born in 1867.	

3. Personal Connection

Describe a family memory that a story or picture could preserve. Compare Wilder's writing and Garza's paintings as ways of sharing everyday life. Then return to the passages for evidence.

My family memory and the passage evidence it connects to

4. Use: Write Two CSI Responses

- Step 1: Read the reason and name what kind of proof is needed.
- Step 2: Find a supporting paragraph. Write your own Connect and Support moves.
- Step 3: Choose an Infer sentence that explains what the evidence shows about the reason.
- Step 4: Underline the Infer move. Reread to check that it adds information beyond the quotation.

Use new vocabulary from this module where it fits. Do not add unrelated words just to meet a count.

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

Explain why Carmen Lomas Garza's artwork is important to culture.

Connect, Support (paragraph _____), Infer: This shows that...

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

Explain how Laura Ingalls Wilder helps readers imagine life on the prairie.

Connect, Support (paragraph _____), Infer: This shows that...

Each move is worth 3 points: 6 points per prompt, 12 points in all.

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 4: Award + Target

Strong Evidence Award



1. Award

You added the second branch to your tree. Underline the evidence you selected in yellow. Point to the paragraph number where it lives.

My Strong Evidence Award

The exact words that prove my reason, and the paragraph where they live...

2. Target

Why does relevant evidence prove a reason and keep your writing focused on the thesis (central idea)? Choose one goal.

- ☐ Next time I will check if the evidence proves THIS reason before I write it down.
- ☐ Next time I will select a shorter quote that proves the reason.
- ☐ Next time I will make sure the evidence comes from the correct paragraph.
- ☐ Next time I will add an Infer sentence to explain what the proof shows.

Next time I will...

3. Revise to Hit My Target

- Find the supporting paragraph.
- Say the proof.
- Write it.
- Underline it in yellow. It must be original proof from the passage, not words from a different reason card.

My reason

My evidence and paragraph number

My revision that acts on my target

- ☐ I deleted evidence that does not prove its reason.
- ☐ I added a missing Infer sentence.
- ☐ My proof is underlined in yellow.

Draw my evidence branch

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 5: Explain/Educate

I teach CSI



1. Turn and Teach

Teach your partner how to write a CSI response. First, Connect by naming what the passage is doing. Second, Support by giving proof from the text. Third, Infer by saying what the proof shows about the reason.

Point to the evidence branch on the tree as you teach.

- ☐ My partner's proof matches the specific reason.
- ☐ My partner's inference goes beyond the text.

My partner taught me...

2. Return to the Citizenship Connection

How do stories and artwork help a community preserve its history and traditions?

My thinking

3. Transfer: Wilder WHY Prompt

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

Explain why Laura Ingalls Wilder's books continue to inspire readers.

Work on your own. Each part is worth 20 points.

1. The reason statement I am supporting

2. The evidence that proves the reason (paragraph ____)

3. Connect: where my proof came from

4. Infer: what the evidence shows (not stated directly)

5. Circle your connecting word and mark the prompt type: [] WHY [] HOW

4. Return to the Overarching Question

Compare your thinking from Monday with your thinking now. Then rate your tracker honestly and point to work that supports each rating.

On Monday I thought... Now I think...



Write More

Plan, draft, revise, edit, and share



My Writing Assignment

Write a short response to this prompt:

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

Explain why Carmen Lomas Garza believed everyday family moments were important enough to paint.

My Plan

- Use Dot, Discover, Drop and shape the prompt.
- Identify WHY and select a subordinator.
- Record the paragraph that supports an answer, and jot your own answer in three or four words.
- Combine noun, verb, and answer into one thesis (central idea). Draft one supporting sentence and explain its relevance.
- Reread for clarity and module vocabulary.

Two possible reasons from the passage

The stronger reason is...

Color Words I Can Use

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

My thesis (central idea) starter

[illegible]

My Draft



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

Draft, page 1

A sentence I want to keep

Revise, Edit, and Share

Revise

- ☐ I read my thesis (central idea) aloud and part three adds meaning.
- ☐ I deleted evidence that does not prove its reason.
- ☐ I added my missing Infer sentence.
- ☐ I checked past and future verb tense and comparative and superlative adjectives.

Edit

- ☐ Every sentence is complete.
- ☐ Laura Ingalls Wilder, Carmen Lomas Garza, Wisconsin, and Kingsville begin with capital letters.
- ☐ Prairie, wagon, and tamales are common nouns unless they begin a sentence.
- ☐ Singular nouns are spelled correctly.
- ☐ High-frequency words are spelled correctly.

My improved sentence

Share

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

My sharing plan

Before I Turn It In

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

Part	I can show...	Check
Noun and verb of importance	Both keep the prompt's topic and action.	
Original answer	Adds a clear, passage-supported reason.	
WHY structure	One complete complex sentence with a subordinator.	
Supporting sentence	A relevant detail clearly supports the thesis (central idea).	
Clarity, conventions, vocabulary	Clear sentences with correct editing and module vocabulary.	

Study the Samples

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

Explain why Carmen Lomas Garza painted everyday family moments.

Low

The passage states that families make tamales together during the holidays.

What is missing: the reason statement and the Infer move. Identify which reason this evidence proves. Write the reason first, then add the evidence using the frame This shows that.

Medium

The evidence is a quote from the passage about Laura's family making bread.

What is missing: the response stops at Support. Add a sentence that begins with This shows that and explains what the bread-making proves about family traditions.

High

Carmen Lomas Garza painted everyday family moments because she believed cultural traditions should be remembered and celebrated.

Why it works: the noun, verb, and answer are present; because joins a reason grounded in the passage.

What improves from Low to High?



Look Back & Look Forward

I own my learning



My Progress Tracker

I can...	Not yet	Growing	Got it
Selects evidence that proves the stated reason.	☐	☐	☐
Locates proof in a specific paragraph of the passage.	☐	☐	☐
Distinguishes between a claim and its proof.	☐	☐	☐
Uses CSI to connect ideas, support with evidence, and infer meaning.	☐	☐	☐
Writes an Infer sentence that goes beyond the text.	☐	☐	☐
Matches evidence cards to reason cards accurately.	☐	☐	☐
Rejects true but irrelevant evidence for a reason.	☐	☐	☐
Cites evidence using paragraph numbers in the response.	☐	☐	☐
Revises a CSI response by deleting unrelated details.	☐	☐	☐

Something I Did Well...

What I did well, and where I did it

My Next Step...

Why this is my next step

Essential Question Answered

How does a writer select evidence that proves the reason it supports?

The answer

A writer reads the stated reason first, then searches the passage for specific proof that matches that exact idea. The writer uses the CSI framework to Connect the proof to the prompt, Support the claim with textual details, and Infer the significance of the evidence.

My Final Thinking (in my own words)

What Changed in My Thinking?

At first I thought...

Now I think...

Try It Another Way

Choose a new reason. Find proof that matches it, write the paragraph number, and add an Infer sentence.

My new prompt

Take It Further! Double Evidence Challenge

Combine Wilder and Garza in one CSI response: Explain how Laura Ingalls Wilder and Carmen Lomas Garza both tell stories about everyday life.

- Write one thesis (central idea) that is true of both texts.
- Connect: name what each passage is doing.
- Support: give proof from each passage with paragraph numbers.
- Infer: say what the proof shows.
- Revise the Infer sentence for clarity.

My double evidence response

My Evidence Branch

Draw a tree. Label the trunk with your thesis (central idea) and the second branch with your evidence and its paragraph number.

At-Home Connection

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

Teach CSI

Teach Connect, Support, and Infer to someone at home using a reason from your notebook. When they ask for proof, point to the exact sentence in the passage that supports the reason.

Ask them: what proof would you want to see?

Family member signature: _____

Proof or Claim?

Share one reason you wrote this week. Ask a family member for two sentences from a book or article: one that proves the reason and one that is true but does not prove it. Tell which sentence is the evidence and explain why using the word match.

Ask them: which sentence proves my reason, and how can you tell?

Family member signature: _____

What Does It Show?

Find one piece of evidence in a short passage. Write an Infer sentence that explains what the evidence shows about the character or topic without using words directly from the text.

Ask them: how does knowing what something shows help us understand it better?

Family member signature: _____

My Family Conversation Notes

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

Notes

Track My Progress

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

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

Why This Helps Me

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

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

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

My Module 4 Snapshot

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

The most useful word I learned

The prompt part I can find fastest

My Evidence Branch

I find proof that matches my reason and say what it shows.

A note to my future writer self

My Proud Moment This Week
