



THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC



Module 2

Build a Strong Thesis (Central Idea)

Grade 4 • Cluster 1

Tackling TEKS • Reading & Writing



4.11(B)(i) • 4.12(B)(i) • 4.12(B)(ii) • 4.12(B)(iii) • 4.11(C)(i) • 4.11(C)(ii) • 4.11(D)(vi) • 4.11(D)(viii) • 4.11(D)(x) • 4.11(D)
(xxxiii)



★ Meet Our Week!

Week 2 · Medium Stamina · Cluster 1 (SCR)

★ Daily Deck

I Will...

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

I Can...

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



The Question Tells You How to Begin

Day 1 · Gather & Reveal

★ Daily Deck

Passage 2: “Morning in the Village”

historical fiction · Tayanita’s village · setting focus

How can the wording of a prompt help us build a strong thesis (central idea)?

Which is WHAT? WHY? HOW? What word helped you decide?

The question tells you how to begin.



★ Dot the Tricky Words

Day 1 · Gather & Reveal

★ Daily Deck

D

Dot

Place a small dot above any word you are not sure about yet.

O

Discover

Discover the meaning as we learn together through our lessons.

T

Drop

Erase the dot once you know what the word means.

A little dot above a word means:
“I’m not sure about this word yet.”

Dot the word. Discover the meaning. Drop the dot, then celebrate when you own it!



The Three Pieces to a Thesis (central idea)

★ Daily Deck

Day 1 · Reveal

1

TOPIC

the important noun.

2

CHARGE

what the prompt asks you to do.

3

ANSWER

your clear response.

WHAT = simple sentence (facts). WHY = complex sentence (because + reason). HOW = simple sentence (through/by + method).

TOPIC + CHARGE + ANSWER = Strong Thesis (Central Idea).



★ Match the Sentence to the Prompt

Day 1 · Reveal (cont.)

★ Daily Deck

WHAT / WHY / HOW

WHAT The setting is important.

WHY The setting is important because it shows how the village works together.

HOW The author shows the setting through details about farming and trading.

Watch Me!

Prompt: Why is the setting important in Tayanita's village?

Model: TOPIC = setting; CHARGE = explain why it is important; ANSWER = it shows how people work together to grow food and trade goods. The setting is important because it shows how people work together to grow food and trade goods.



Build-A-Thesis (central idea) Race!

★ Daily Deck

Day 2 · Attempt · Partner Game

Passage: “Morning in the Village” (setting focus)

How to Play

- 1 Spin WHAT, WHY, or HOW.
- 2 Draw a task card.
- 3 Identify the TOPIC.
- 4 Identify the CHARGE.
- 5 Add an ANSWER.
- 6 Build the matching sentence type.

Quick Check: *Did we include TOPIC + CHARGE + ANSWER? Did we answer the exact prompt?*

With Your Partner...

Card 1 · Prompt

“What is the setting of Tayanita’s village?”

Answer

Answer · WHAT (simple)

“The setting is a Caddo village near a river where people live and work together.”

How to Play (continued)

- 7 Explain why your sentence matches the prompt.
- 8 Save two of your strongest thesis (central idea) statements.



What did the prompt tell you to do?

Where did you find the topic?

What words revealed the charge?

What sentence structure matched
the prompt?

How did the prompt help you
decide how to begin?

Student Directions: “Connect to the Overarching Question: How does the wording of the prompt guide the thesis (central idea)?”



What Makes a Thesis (central idea) Strong?

Day 3 · Discuss (cont.)

★ Daily Deck

What did the prompt tell you to do?

**all three pieces:
TOPIC + CHARGE + ANSWER**

**a sentence type that
matches the prompt**

**an answer that fits
the exact charge**

The question tells you how to begin.



★ Try It On Your Own!

Day 3 · Use (Independent Practice) · Interactive Notebook

WHAT

What is the setting of the village? *The setting is a Caddo village near a river where people grow food and live together.*

WHY

Why is the setting important to the people in the village? *The setting is important because 'Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows,' which shows how people depend on farming for survival.*

HOW

How does the author show the setting of the village? *The author shows the setting through details like 'Corn, beans, and squash grew in long rows' and 'They brought pottery and tools to trade.'*

SWEEP

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

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

★ Award & Target!

Day 4 · Award & Target

★ Daily Deck

Award 🏆

Write “I built a strong thesis (central idea)!” in your notebook.

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

Target 🎯

“My next thesis (central idea) goal is _____ because _____.”

Curiosity Questions

Can one missing piece weaken your whole response? How do authors use strong beginnings in their writing?



Exit Ticket

Day 5 · Educate & Explain to Others

★ Daily Deck

How can the wording of a prompt help us build a strong thesis (central idea)?

“The prompt helps me build my thesis (central idea) because _____. First I find _____. Then I find _____. Finally, I _____.”

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



★ Build the Thesis (central idea) in Three Pieces

★ Daily Deck

Small-Group Support

Build the sentence in three pieces: **TOPIC** + **CHARGE** + **ANSWER**. Color or label each strip before you combine them.

“TOPIC: setting”

“CHARGE: explain why it is important”

“ANSWER: it shows how people work together to grow food and trade goods”

Support Frame: “The [TOPIC] is important because [ANSWER].”

If your sentence is missing one piece, it is not complete.

★ Multi-Level Thesis (central idea) Challenge

Enrichment · Write in your notebook

Challenge: Choose one prompt and write a Level 1 thesis (central idea), a Level 3 thesis (central idea), and a Level 5 thesis (central idea).

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

What changed in your word choice?

What changed in the precision of your thinking?

Which version answers the charge most clearly?

★ My Progress Tracker

This tracker is for YOU! As you read and write this week, look at each skill. If you can do it all by yourself, color in the box that matches how you feel. Be honest, this helps you see how much you are growing!

I Can...	Not yet	Getting set	I can do it
Find the TOPIC and CHARGE in a prompt.	Not yet	Getting set	I can do it
Label a prompt WHAT, WHY, or HOW.	Not yet	Getting set	I can do it
Write a thesis (central idea) with all three pieces.	Not yet	Getting set	I can do it
Match my sentence structure to the prompt.	Not yet	Getting set	I can do it
Check my sentence for conventions.	Not yet	Getting set	I can do it

★ Citizenship Connection

Good Citizens · Our Community & Country

★ Morning in the Village · A Promise Written Long Ago

“The Magna Carta was important because it limited the king’s power and protected rights.” “Tayanita’s village is a Caddo community near a river in the Piney Woods.” “The setting matters because the land, river, and community support daily life.”

Let's Look at an Answer!

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

LOW Level 1

"The setting is important." (Level 1)

What Is Working: The student names the topic and gives a general statement.

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

What Needs Improvement: Add the answer and a reason with "because" to match the WHY prompt.

Let's Look at Another Answer!

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

MEDIUM Level 2-3

"The setting is important because people grow food there." (Level 2-3)

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

Teacher Notes: The answer is accurate but general and does not yet point to specific setting details.

What Needs Improvement: Sharpen the answer to name how the setting supports the community.

Our Strongest Answer!

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

HIGH Level 3-4

"The setting is important because it shows how people work together to grow food and trade goods." (Level 3-4)

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

Teacher Notes: All three pieces are present and the sentence structure matches the WHY prompt exactly.

★ **This is our target!**