



THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC



# Module 1

## CREATURES Foundation

Grade 4 · Cluster 4

Tackling TEKS · Reading & Writing

4.11(B)(iii) · 4.12(C)(i) · 4.12(C)(ii) · 4.11(C)(i-v) · 4.11(D)(i) · 4.11(D)(vi)-(xvi) · 4.11(D)(xxxiii)-(xxxv)



# ★ Meet Our Week!

Week 1 • Low Stamina

★ Daily Deck

## I Will...

- Take a side I can defend.
- Tell why my side makes sense with logical reasons.
- Prove each reason with evidence from the text.
- Revise a claim when the available evidence cannot support it.

## I Can...

- Write a clear claim that directly answers an argumentative prompt.
- Give distinct, logical reasons that support my claim.
- Choose accurate, relevant evidence that proves each exact reason.
- Explain whether a C to R to E chain is defensible from the passage.



# Build a Foundation You Can Defend

★ Daily Deck

Day 1 · Gather & Reveal

**Passages: “The Wealth of Mansa Musa” & “Four Regions, One Big Adventure”**

nonfiction · Low Stamina · the CREATURES roadmap

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

A claim takes a position. A reason tells why that position makes sense.  
Evidence proves the reason from the text.

**When those three jobs are clear, the argument has a strong foundation.**





# 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!**





# CREATURES Starts with C, R, E

★ Daily Deck

Day 1 · Reveal

**C**

## CLAIM

The position you will defend.

**R**

## REASONS

The strongest logical supports  
for the claim.

**E**

## EVIDENCE

Exact or accurately paraphrased  
proof from the text.

CREATURES = Claim · Reasons · Evidence · Argument · Thinking ·  
Understanding Others · Rebuttal · Ending · Significance.

**Test every piece: Does it match the prompt? Does it support the claim? Can the passage prove it?**





# Read the Prompt, Build the Foundation

★ Daily Deck

Day 1 · Reveal (cont.)

## Test Every Part

**Claim** the position you will defend

**Reasons** the strongest logical supports for the claim

**Evidence** exact or accurately paraphrased proof from the text

Ask: *Does it match the prompt? Does it support the claim? Can the passage prove it?*

## Watch Me!

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

**R, Reason 1:** Safe routes encouraged more merchants to travel to Mali. **E, Evidence:** 'He made sure traders could move safely, which brought more people and goods into Mali.'

When those three jobs are clear, the argument has a strong foundation.



# ★ Build the Creature

Day 2 · Attempt · Partner Game

★ Daily Deck

Passages: “The Wealth of Mansa Musa” & “Four Regions, One Big Adventure”

## How to Play

- 1 Draw one Claim card.
- 2 Choose the Reason cards that logically support it.
- 3 Match the strongest Evidence card to each reason.
- 4 Reject distractors and explain why they do not belong.

**Success Check:** *Require students to explain the connection aloud before a team earns credit.*

## With Your Partner...

### Claim Card

Protecting trade had the greater impact on Mali.

### Match reasons and evidence

#### Reason + Evidence

Safe routes encouraged merchants to visit Mali. Proof: ‘He made sure traders could move safely, which brought more people and goods into Mali.’

## Strong writers do not grab the first fact they see.

How is a claim different from a topic?

What makes one reason stronger than another?

Why can a true detail still be weak evidence?

What should a writer do when a claim has little evidence available?

**Student Directions:** “Let’s talk about the matches that were easy and the ones that made you stop and think.”



# What Makes the Foundation Strong?

Day 3 · Discuss (cont.)

★ Daily Deck

**A claim takes a side; a topic only names the subject.**

**a claim that takes  
a defensible side**

**reasons that are  
logical and distinct**

**evidence that proves  
the exact reason**

**A true detail can be weak if it does not match the reason.**





# Try It On Your Own!

Day 3 · Use (Independent Practice) · Interactive Notebook

## CLAIM

Write one clear claim that takes a defensible position.

## REASONS

Write two distinct reasons that logically support the claim.

## EVIDENCE

Choose one piece of passage evidence for each reason. Under each evidence choice, write: 'This fits because...'

## SWEEP

Revise one C/R/E chain for sentence structure and word choice. Edit the assigned Cluster 4 conventions and make sure proper nouns such as Mansa Musa, Mali, and Timbuktu are capitalized.

**Add one idea that strengthens coherence, delete one idea that distracts, combine repeated ideas when useful.**



# ★ Award & Target!

Day 4 · Award & Target

★ Daily Deck

## Award 🏆

You built the part of the argument everything else depends on. Notice what you did well.

- Star your strongest C/R/E chain.
- Claim is clear and defensible.
- Reasons are distinct and logical.
- Evidence accurately and directly supports each reason.

## Target 🎯

“My argument foundation is stronger because \_\_\_\_\_.”

### Curiosity Questions

Name the evidence choice you are proudest of and explain why it fits.

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

“My claim is \_\_\_\_\_. One reason is \_\_\_\_\_. My evidence is ‘\_\_\_\_\_.’ Together, C, R, and E give the argument a strong foundation that the rest of CREATURES can build upon.”

**A clear claim tells the reader exactly what position the writer will defend.**



# Test the Coastal Plains Claim

★ Daily Deck

Small-Group Support

The Coastal Plains offer the strongest combination of work opportunities because the region supports farming, fishing, and jobs in large cities.

*“The region’s water, forests, farms, and cities create different kinds of work.”*

*“The passage explains that jobs in the Coastal Plains include farming, fishing, and working in big cities.”*

**Test every piece: Does it match the prompt? Does it support the claim? Can the passage prove it?**

**Say why it fits.**



## Reason 2

Enrichment · Write in your notebook

**Reason 2: Strong trade helped cities such as Timbuktu become busy and important.**

**The passage explains that increased trade helped Timbuktu become an important place for commerce and learning.**

Test it.

Pick the stronger  
claim.

Defend it.

# ★ 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 |
|-----------------------------------------------------|---------|-------------|-------------|
| Write a clear, defensible claim.                    | Not yet | Getting set | I can do it |
| Give distinct, logical reasons.                     | Not yet | Getting set | I can do it |
| Choose relevant evidence from the text.             | Not yet | Getting set | I can do it |
| Explain why evidence fits a reason.                 | Not yet | Getting set | I can do it |
| Reject a true detail that does not prove the claim. | Not yet | Getting set | I can do it |

# ★ Citizenship Connection

Good Citizens · Our Community & Country

## ★ Citizenship in Action

“He made sure traders could move safely, which brought more people and goods into Mali.” “During this journey, he gave away large amounts of gold to people in need.”

# Let's Look at an Answer!

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

**LOW**

**“Mansa Musa was good and trade was good.”**

**What Is Working:** The response names Mansa Musa and trade.

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

# Let's Look at Another Answer!

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

## MEDIUM

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

**What Is Working:** The response takes a position and includes a relevant passage detail.

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

# Our Strongest Answer!

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

## HIGH

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

**What Is Working:** The claim is clear and defensible, the reason is logical, and the evidence accurately and directly supports the reason.

★ **This is our target!**