

THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

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

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

A theme must fit the whole story, not just one event.

THIS WEEK’S FOCUS

Theme

from “Dream”

A **topic** is one or two words, like a march or a dream.

A **theme** is a lesson that fits the whole story, like **fairness should belong to everyone**. STAAR asks: **Is the march the topic or the theme of the story?**

Traps this week: **Topic word, not theme, Too narrow, and Too broad.**

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

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a topic and look for a bigger lesson."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Notice the topic.

Read the line. Is **the march** a topic or a theme? Look for the bigger lesson behind the event.

"Everywhere I looked, people stood shoulder to shoulder."

I CAN | I can tell what the story is about from what it teaches.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a full-sentence theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Choose the theme.

STAAR asks: **Is the march the topic or the theme of the story?** Choose the best answer.

"I imagined schools where every child was welcomed."

A The march • **B** Fairness should include everyone • **C** A hot August day

I CAN | I can skip a topic word and choose a lesson that fits the whole story.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can show how details support a theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show the theme with evidence.

How does the story support the theme that fairness should include everyone? Name two details.

“His voice was strong and steady.”

I CAN | I can use more than one detail to prove the lesson.

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write a theme in my own words.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Own the lesson.

Write a theme for the whole story in a full sentence. Do not name the march or a character.

“I imagined neighborhoods where people were judged by their kindness instead of the color of their skin.”

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

THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme with text evidence."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend against the trap.

A student wrote this theme: **The crowd waited near the Lincoln Memorial.** Explain why it is wrong and name the trap.

"It was not only about grown-ups or laws or things that had happened before I was born."

I CAN | I can explain why a trap does not express the whole lesson.



Find the theme on your own.

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

Go back to the reading.

Write the topic in one or two words.

Write the theme in a full sentence and copy one supporting line.

I CAN | I can tell the topic from the theme and prove the theme with a line from the text.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE The march is a topic or event. The crowd standing together hints at a lesson about people working toward fairness.

CHOOSE B. Fairness should include everyone. A is Topic word, not theme. C is Too narrow because it names one detail.

SHOW Mama says people want America to be fair, and the narrator imagines every child welcomed. These details support fairness for everyone.

OWN Answers vary. Example: People should judge others by their character, not by their differences.

DEFEND Topic word, not theme. The answer gives a setting and event, not a life lesson. The story reaches toward fairness and hope for all people.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Topic: fairness. Theme: Fairness should belong to everyone. Line: I imagined schools where every child was welcomed.



THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“‘Because they want America to be fair for everyone,’ she said. ... I thought for a moment. ‘That a dream can belong to everyone,’ I said.”

Which statement best describes a theme of the story?

- A** The march near the Lincoln Memorial
- B** People should work toward fairness for everyone
- C** The narrator's feet hurt
- D** The speech happened in August



THEME

The answer is B.

- A The march near the Lincoln Memorial**
Topic word, not theme. It names the event and setting, not a life lesson.
- B People should work toward fairness for everyone Correct.**
Correct. Mama explains why people came, and the narrator imagines fairness for children.
- C The narrator's feet hurt**
Too narrow. This is one small detail, not a lesson for life.
- D The speech happened in August**
Setting or event, not theme. A time and event do not explain the story's message.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

A story's theme is a lesson that reaches beyond its events.

The ending often shows what the narrator has learned.

Evidence from the beginning, middle, and ending helps prove the lesson.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from “Dream”

The narrator learns a lesson by noticing a crowd, hearing a dream, and deciding to help. STAAR asks: **What lesson does the narrator learn by the end of the story?** Look for a global message, not a setting or event. Traps this week: **Setting or event, not theme, Too narrow, and Topic word, not theme.**

This deck teaches **finding what the narrator learns** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a change in the narrator."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Notice the narrator's learning.

Read the line. What does the narrator begin to understand? Look for a lesson, not just the event.

"Even though there were so many people, I did not feel afraid."

I CAN | I can connect the narrator's experiences to a lesson.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose the lesson the narrator learns.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose the lesson learned.

STAAR asks: **What lesson does the narrator learn by the end of the story?**

“Big changes can begin with a dream, and even a child can help carry it forward.”

A Even young people can help make a fairer future • **B** The day was very hot • **C** The crowd had many people

I CAN | I can use the ending to choose a theme and avoid an event trap.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can connect a character's learning to evidence.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show the learning with evidence.

Explain how the narrator's experiences support the lesson that a dream can belong to everyone.

“I imagined children playing together at recess without anyone being left out.”

I CAN | I can explain how details build the narrator's lesson.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write a theme from a narrator's learning.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Own the lesson.

Write the lesson the narrator learns in a full sentence that could guide people beyond this story.

“I was only eight years old, but that day I learned something I would never forget.”

I CAN | I can turn a character's new understanding into a global lesson.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme about what a narrator learns."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend against the trap.

A student wrote this theme: **The narrator went to hear a speech near a memorial.** Explain why it is a trap.

"I was only eight years old, and I had never seen so many people gathered in one place."

I CAN | I can reject a true event that does not state the story's lesson.



Find the lesson on your own.

Write what the narrator learns in a full-sentence theme. Then copy one line from the ending that supports it.

Go back to the reading.
Write the narrator's lesson in a full sentence.
Copy one ending line that supports it.

I CAN | I can find what a narrator learns and support it with ending evidence.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE The narrator changes from feeling unsure to feeling connected and hopeful. That change can point to the story's theme.

CHOOSE A. Even young people can help make a fairer future. B is Setting or event, not theme. C is Too narrow because it names one observation.

SHOW The crowd includes many families, and the narrator imagines children included at school. At the end, the narrator says the dream can belong to everyone.

OWN Answers vary. Example: Even young people can help make a fairer future.

DEFEND Setting or event, not theme. The sentence tells where the narrator went and what happened, but not the lesson the narrator learns.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Theme: Even young people can help make a fairer future. Line: I think I will try to help it come true.



THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“What will you remember most about today? ... ‘That a dream can belong to everyone,’ I said. ... Big changes can begin with a dream, and even a child can help carry it forward.”

What lesson does the narrator learn by the end of the story?

- A** The speech took place at the Lincoln Memorial
- B** The narrator traveled to a speech
- C** Crowds can be very large
- D** Even children can help make a fairer future



THEME

The answer is D.

- A The speech took place at the Lincoln Memorial**
Setting or event, not theme. It tells where the story happened, not what the narrator learned.
- B The narrator traveled to a speech**
Setting or event, not theme. It tells what happened, not what was learned.
- C Crowds can be very large**
Too narrow. It describes one observation instead of a life lesson.
- D Even children can help make a fairer future Correct.**
Correct. The narrator learns that a child can help carry a dream forward.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

A theme is a complete lesson, not a single topic word.

A strong theme can guide choices in many situations.

Text evidence shows how a story develops its message.

THIS WEEK’S FOCUS

Theme

from “Serve”

A theme must be written as a full sentence. In Grandpa's story, service means choosing to give and help. STAAR asks: **What theme does the author express through Grandpa's story?** Traps this week: **Topic word, not theme, Too narrow, and Generic moral that fits many stories.**

This deck teaches **writing theme as a full sentence** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a clue to theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Notice the message.

Read the line. What topic does Grandpa discuss, and what bigger lesson might it teach?

"He wanted us to consider what we could give."

I CAN | I can turn a topic like service into a full-sentence lesson.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose a theme written as a sentence.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose the full-sentence theme.

STAAR asks: **What theme does the author express through Grandpa's story?**

“Service begins whenever you notice someone who needs help and decide to do something.”

A Service • **B** Grandpa's interview • **C** Giving to others can make communities better

I CAN | I can reject a topic word and choose a lesson supported by the whole interview.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can connect several details to a theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show the theme with lines.

How do Grandpa's words support the theme that giving to others can make communities better?

“Serving our country can also mean serving people.”

I CAN | I can explain how a speaker's words and actions support the message.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a global theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Own the theme.

Write the story's theme in a full sentence. Make it a life lesson, not a summary of the interview.

"A better world begins when we ask, What can I give?"

I CAN | I can write a theme that fits Grandpa's history and his advice about children.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme against an overgeneralization."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend against the trap.

A student wrote this theme: **Everyone should join the Peace Corps.** Name the trap and explain why the story does not prove it.

"Young Americans volunteered to travel to other countries, where they worked alongside communities as teachers, helpers, and friends."

I CAN | I can explain when a moral is too broad or not supported by the text.



Find the theme on your own.

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

Go back to the reading.
Write the topic in one or two words.
Write a full-sentence theme and copy one support line.

I CAN | I can write a theme about service and support it with Grandpa's words.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **Service is the topic.** The words consider what we could give hint that helping others is a choice anyone can make.

CHOOSE **C.** Giving to others can make communities better. A is Topic word, not theme. B is Too narrow because it names the interview.

SHOW **Kennedy asks people what they can give, and the Peace Corps serves communities.** Grandpa also says service starts when someone notices a need and acts.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Serving others begins when people choose to give their time and help.

DEFEND **Generic moral that fits many stories.** The passage shows one way to serve, but it does not say everyone should join that program.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Topic: service. Theme: Serving others begins when people choose to give their time and help. Line: Service begins whenever you notice someone who needs help and decide to do something.



THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“He wanted us to consider what we could give. ... Serving our country can also mean serving people. ... Service begins whenever you notice someone who needs help and decide to do something.”

What theme does the author express through Grandpa's story?

A People can help others by choosing to serve

B Service

C Grandpa worked for President Kennedy

D Everyone should join the Peace Corps



THEME

The answer is A.

- A** **People can help others by choosing to serve **Correct.****
Correct. Grandpa connects giving, service, and noticing someone who needs help.
- B** **Service**
Topic word, not theme. It names the subject but gives no lesson.
- C** **Grandpa worked for President Kennedy**
Too narrow. This is one person's experience, not the whole message.
- D** **Everyone should join the Peace Corps**
Generic moral that fits many stories. The text supports serving, not one required program.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

A theme is a message supported by the whole text.

The best evidence connects directly to the lesson.

A detail can be true and still fail to prove the theme.

THIS WEEK’S FOCUS

Theme

from “Serve”

A theme needs proof from the whole interview. STAAR asks: **Which detail best supports the theme of the story?** Choose the detail that most clearly shows people choosing to help and give. Trap this week: **Generic moral that fits many stories.** Also watch for **Too narrow** and **Topic word, not theme.**

This deck teaches **proving a theme with evidence** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice evidence that points to theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Notice strong evidence.

Read the line. How does this detail point to a theme about serving others?

"He wanted us to think about what we could give."

I CAN | I can connect a specific line to the story's message.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose evidence that best supports a theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose the strongest support.

STAAR asks: **Which detail best supports the theme of the story?** Theme: People make the world better by choosing to serve others.

“Young Americans volunteered to travel to other countries, where they worked alongside communities as teachers, helpers, health workers, and friends.”

A Volunteers worked alongside communities as teachers and helpers • **B** Grandpa remembered a cold day • **C** The recorder sat on the table

I CAN | I can select the detail with the clearest connection to the lesson.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can explain why evidence supports a theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show why the evidence works.

Explain how the Peace Corps detail supports the theme that people make the world better by choosing to serve others.

“A speech is only words unless people decide to live by the ideas in it.”

I CAN | I can connect an action in the text to a global message.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write a theme and choose proof.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Own the proof.

Write a theme for the whole interview and copy one detail that best supports it.

“You can help a classmate, welcome someone new, pick up litter, share what you have, or notice when someone needs encouragement.”

I CAN | I can match a global lesson with the detail that best supports it.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend the best theme evidence."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend against a weak choice.

A student says this is the theme: **People should always be kind.** Name the trap and explain why it is weak here.

"Sometimes service is helping one person."

I CAN

I can explain why a nice-sounding moral may not be the text's message.



Prove the theme on your own.

Write a theme for the interview. Then copy the detail that best supports it and explain the connection.

Go back to the reading.

Write a global theme.

Copy the best supporting detail and explain the connection.

I CAN | I can choose evidence that directly supports my theme.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE This line directly points to giving, which is the main idea Grandpa explains through service.

CHOOSE A. Volunteers worked alongside communities as teachers and helpers. B is Too narrow because it gives the weather. C is Topic word, not theme because it names an object.

SHOW The volunteers do not only hear an idea about service. They travel and work as teachers, helpers, and friends, showing that service helps communities.

OWN Answers vary. Example: Anyone can improve a community by choosing to help others. Support: You can help a classmate, welcome someone new, pick up litter, share what you have, or notice when someone needs encouragement.

DEFEND Generic moral that fits many stories. Kindness is related, but this interview specifically teaches choosing to give time and help through service.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Theme: Anyone can improve a community by choosing to help others. Detail: You can help a classmate, welcome someone new, pick up litter, share what you have, or notice when someone needs encouragement.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“He wanted us to think about what we could give. ... Young Americans volunteered to travel to other countries, where they worked alongside communities as teachers, helpers, health workers, and friends.”

Which detail best supports the theme that people make the world better by choosing to serve others?

A People must join the Peace Corps to help others.

B The interview was for a school project.

C The weather in Washington, D.C., was cold.

D Volunteers worked alongside communities as teachers and helpers.



THEME

The answer is D.

People must join the Peace Corps to help others.

- A** Generic moral that fits many stories. The text shows one service program, but it does not require everyone to join it.

The interview was for a school project.

- B** Too narrow. This explains why the narrator asks questions, not the theme about serving.

The weather in Washington, D.C., was cold.

- C** Topic word, not theme. Weather is a setting detail, not evidence of the message.

Volunteers worked alongside communities as teachers and helpers. Correct.

- D** Correct. This detail shows people choosing to serve communities through helpful work.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

A character's problem can reveal what the story teaches.

A theme is a life lesson, not a place or an event.

Use the character's choices and the whole story to prove the lesson.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from “Morning in the Village”

A character's problem can point to a theme. Tayanita does not understand everything about farming, but she keeps learning from her family and community. STAAR asks: **What problem does Tayanita face, and what does it teach?** Trap this week: **Setting or event, not theme.** Also watch for **Too narrow** and **Topic word, not theme.**

This deck teaches **finding a lesson in a character's problem** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

“I can notice a problem that points to theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Notice the character's problem.

Read the line. What problem is Tayanita facing, and what bigger lesson might it suggest?

“Tayanita didn’t understand all of it, but she knew they needed all three to have enough food.”

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



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a theme from a character's problem."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Choose the lesson.

STAAR asks: **What problem does Tayanita face, and what does it teach?**

"That afternoon, visitors came from another village."

A The Piney Woods are dark in the morning • **B** Tayanita pulls weeds in the field • **C** People learn by paying attention to how things work together

I CAN | I can skip a setting or event and choose the lesson supported by the whole story.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can use actions as theme evidence.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show what the problem teaches.

Explain how Tayanita's problem supports the theme that people can learn by listening and helping.

“Tayanita just nodded and kept pulling weeds.”

I CAN | I can explain how a character's response supports a lesson.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write a theme from the whole story.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Own the lesson.

Write a theme for the whole story. Make it a full sentence that fits Tayanita's work, family, and village.

“As the day ended, she looked around her village.”

I CAN | I can write a global lesson instead of naming one event.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme with evidence."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend against the trap.

A student says this is the theme: **The village has a large mound.** Name the trap and explain why it is weak.

"People gathered there for important events."

I CAN | I can explain why a place or event is not a life lesson.



Find the theme on your own.

Write the character's problem, then write a theme in a full sentence and copy one line that supports it.

Go back to the reading.
Write Tayanita's problem.
Write a global theme and copy one support line.

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

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE Tayanita does not understand how the plants help each other, but she sees that all three are needed. This points to a lesson about learning how people and things work together.

CHOOSE C. People learn by paying attention to how things work together. A is Setting or event, not theme. B is Too narrow because it names one action.

SHOW Tayanita does not understand her uncle yet, but she keeps helping in the field. Her action shows that people can learn while they work and listen.

OWN Answers vary. Example: People can learn important lessons by paying attention and taking part in their community.

DEFEND Setting or event, not theme. The mound is a place where events happen, but the story teaches about learning, cooperation, and community.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Problem: Tayanita does not understand everything about farming. Theme: People can keep learning by listening and helping. Line: Although she did not understand everything her uncle was saying, she enjoyed listening to the adults talk about farming.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“Tayanita didn’t understand all of it, but she knew they needed all three to have enough food. ... Tayanita liked watching the trades. It felt like everyone was connected somehow.”

What problem does Tayanita face, and what does it teach?

- A** The village is surrounded by tall pine trees.
- B** Tayanita watches people trade pottery and tools.
- C** People can learn by paying attention and taking part in their community.
- D** Tayanita should never ask questions about farming.



THEME

The answer is C.

- A The village is surrounded by tall pine trees.**
Setting or event, not theme. The trees describe where the story happens, not its life lesson.
- B Tayanita watches people trade pottery and tools.**
Too narrow. This is one event, while the story includes learning, work, and community.
- C People can learn by paying attention and taking part in their community. Correct.**
Correct. Tayanita helps in the fields, listens to adults, and notices how people work together.
- D Tayanita should never ask questions about farming.**
Opposite. Tayanita is curious and hopes to learn what the adults know.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

A character's repeated actions can reveal a theme.

The best theme fits the character and the whole community in the story.

Do not turn one character's personal feeling into the whole story's lesson.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from “Morning in the Village”

Tayanita's actions show that she values learning, work, and community. STAAR asks: **What theme do Tayanita's actions express?** Trap this week: **One character's view, too narrow.** Also watch for **Too narrow** and **Topic word, not theme.**

This deck teaches **finding theme in a character's actions** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

“I can notice actions that reveal theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Notice what the character does.

Read the line. What does Tayanita's action show she values?

“Tayanita often helped by pulling weeds or carrying baskets filled with vegetables.”

I CAN | I can connect a character's actions to a lesson for many people.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose a theme shown by actions.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose the theme in the actions.

STAAR asks: What theme do Tayanita's actions express?

“Tayanita felt proud to be part of a community where people worked together and helped one another.”

A Tayanita feels proud of her village • **B** People make communities stronger by helping one another • **C** The village has fields and a river

I CAN | I can avoid one character's view and choose a lesson supported by the community.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can explain how several actions support a theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show how actions build the theme.

Explain how Tayanita's actions support the theme that people make communities stronger by helping one another.

“She had helped in the fields, visited the mound, watched traders arrive, and learned more about her community.”

I CAN | I can connect a character's actions to the story's larger message.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write a theme from character actions.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Own the action-based theme.

Write a theme for the whole story. Use Tayanita's actions and the actions of others as evidence.

“Tayanita helped carry food while her mother prepared dinner.”

I CAN | I can write a whole-story lesson instead of one character's opinion.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme from actions."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend against a narrow view.

A student says this is the theme: **Tayanita likes her village.** Name the trap and explain why it is too narrow.

"Her family believed that trade and cooperation helped communities stay strong."

I CAN

I can explain why one character's view does not express the whole message.



Find the action-based theme.

List two actions from the story. Then write a theme in a full sentence and copy one line that supports it.

Go back to the reading.
List two important actions.
Write a global theme and copy one support line.

I CAN | I can use several actions to write and support a theme.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE Tayanita helps with important work. Her action hints at a theme about contributing to a community.

CHOOSE B. People make communities stronger by helping one another. A is One character's view, too narrow. C is Topic word, not theme.

SHOW Tayanita helps in the fields and takes part in community life. Her actions join the work and learning that help the village stay strong.

OWN Answers vary. Example: Communities grow stronger when people take responsibility and help one another.

DEFEND One character's view, too narrow. Tayanita's pride is a clue, but the story focuses on how many people work together and help the community.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Actions: Tayanita helps in the fields and carries food. Theme: Communities grow stronger when people help one another. Line: Tayanita felt proud to be part of a community where people worked together and helped one another.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“Tayanita often helped by pulling weeds or carrying baskets filled with vegetables. ... Tayanita felt proud to be part of a community where people worked together and helped one another.”

What theme do Tayanita's actions express?

- A** People make communities stronger by helping one another.
- B** Tayanita feels proud when she helps her family.
- C** Farming is the only important work in a village.
- D** Everyone should live in the same kind of village.



THEME

The answer is A.

A

People make communities stronger by helping one another. Correct.

Correct. Tayanita helps with work, and the story shows many people contributing to the village.

B

Tayanita feels proud when she helps her family.

One character's view, too narrow. Her feeling is one clue, but the message includes the whole community.

C

Farming is the only important work in a village.

Too narrow. The story also shows trading, teaching, cooking, travel, and caring for traditions.

D

Everyone should live in the same kind of village.

Not in the text. The story values cooperation, not one required kind of home.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

A theme is a life lesson supported by the whole story.

A true life lesson is not always the theme of a particular text.

Use repeated ideas about work, respect, cooperation, and community as evidence.

THIS WEEK’S FOCUS

Theme

from “Morning in the Village”

A theme is a life lesson that the whole story supports. This story repeatedly shows people learning, working, sharing, and respecting traditions. STAAR asks: **Which sentence best states a theme of the story?** Trap this week: **Life lesson not supported by this text.** Also watch for **Too broad** and **One character's view, too narrow.**

This deck teaches **telling theme from a life lesson** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

“I can notice a life lesson supported by the story.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Notice a supported lesson.

Read the line. What lesson does this detail support, and how does the rest of the story build it?

“Her family believed that cooperation helped communities grow stronger.”

I CAN | I can connect a repeated idea to a whole-story theme.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose a theme supported by the whole story.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose the supported theme.

STAAR asks: Which sentence best states a theme of the story?

“Her grandfather often said that people should care for the land because the land cared for them.”

A Tayanita listens to her grandfather's words • **B** Always tell the truth, even when it is hard • **C** People grow stronger when they cooperate and respect one another

I CAN | I can reject a true-sounding lesson that the text does not support.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can explain how repeated details support theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show the theme across the story.

Explain how the story supports the theme that communities grow stronger through cooperation.

“Trade also helped people build friendships and maintain relationships with neighboring groups.”

I CAN

I can connect an event to the larger lesson without choosing the event as the theme.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write a theme supported by the whole story.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Own a supported theme.

Write a theme for the whole story. Then copy one detail that proves it.

“They helped her understand why certain traditions remained important.”

I CAN | I can match a global lesson with evidence from more than one part of the text.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme with whole-story evidence."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend against an unsupported lesson.

A student says this is the theme: **People should never make mistakes.** Name the trap and explain why it is not supported.

"Children learned by watching adults and helping with small tasks."

I CAN | I can explain why a true-sounding life lesson may not belong to this text.



Find the theme on your own.

Write a theme for the whole story. Copy one support line and name another detail that matches it.

Go back to the reading.
Write a whole-story theme.
Copy one support line and name another matching detail.

I CAN | I can choose a life lesson supported by the whole text.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE The line supports a lesson about **cooperation**. Farming, trading, and family traditions also show people helping communities grow stronger.

CHOOSE C. People grow stronger when they cooperate and respect one another. A is One character's view, too narrow. B is Life lesson not supported by this text.

SHOW Trade is more than an exchange of objects. It helps villages build relationships, which supports the theme that cooperation makes communities stronger.

OWN Answers vary. Example: Communities grow stronger when people cooperate and respect their shared traditions. Support: Her family believed that cooperation helped communities grow stronger.

DEFEND Life lesson not supported by this text. The story shows children learning through practice and help, not a rule that people must never make mistakes.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Theme: Communities grow stronger when people cooperate and respect one another. Line: Her family believed that cooperation helped communities grow stronger. Another detail: Families work together in the fields.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“Her family believed that cooperation helped communities grow stronger. ... Trade also helped people build friendships and maintain relationships with neighboring groups.”

Which sentence best states a theme of the story?

A The best place to live is always near a river.

B People can become stronger by working together and respecting their communities.

C Tayanita feels thankful for her village.

D People should never make mistakes while learning.



THEME

The answer is B.

- A** **The best place to live is always near a river.**
Too broad. The story describes one village near a river but does not say it is always best.
- B** **People can become stronger by working together and respecting their communities. Correct.**
Correct. Farming, trade, family work, and traditions all support cooperation and respect.
- C** **Tayanita feels thankful for her village.**
One character's view, too narrow. Her feeling is one detail, not the lesson for the whole story.
- D** **People should never make mistakes while learning.**
Life lesson not supported by this text. The story shows children learning through watching and helping.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

A theme must be a global lesson supported by text evidence.

Strong evidence shows the same message in more than one part of the story.

A generic moral may be true but still may not be this story's theme.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from “Morning in the Village”

A theme needs evidence from the full story. The fields, mound, trade, family, and traditions all show how cooperation and responsibility support the community. STAAR asks: **Short response: What is a theme of the story? Support it with evidence.** Trap this week: **Generic moral that fits many stories.** Also watch for **Too narrow** and **Topic word, not theme.**

This deck teaches **supporting theme with evidence** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a line that supports theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Notice evidence for theme.

Read the line. What lesson does this detail support?

"The Caddo people worked hard to provide for their families."

I CAN | I can connect a direct detail to a global message.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose a theme that I can prove with evidence.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose the theme to prove.

STAAR asks: **What is a theme of the story? Support it with evidence.**

“The fields were important to the village.”

A The village has a mound, fields, and a river • **B** People should help one another and share responsibility • **C** Everyone should be happy all the time

I CAN | I can skip a generic moral and choose the message repeated across the story.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can connect two details to a theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show the evidence connection.

Explain how the mound and the fields support the theme that communities grow strong when people work together.

“Each generation had added to it little by little.”

I CAN | I can explain how evidence from different parts of a story proves a message.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write a theme and support it with evidence.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Own the evidence-based theme.

Write a theme for the story and copy two details that support it.

“Her grandfather explained that traditions connected people to those who came before them.”

I CAN | I can match a global lesson to evidence from more than one part of the text.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a specific theme with evidence."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend against a generic moral.

A student says this is the theme: **Always be nice to everyone.** Name the trap and explain why it is weak for this story.

"Her family believed that cooperation helped communities grow stronger."

I CAN | I can explain why a nice-sounding moral may not be the author's message.



Prove the theme on your own.

Write a theme in a full sentence. Copy two lines that support it and explain how they connect.

Go back to the reading.
Write a global theme.
Copy two support lines and explain the connection.

I CAN | I can write a theme and support it with evidence from the whole story.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE This line directly supports the theme that **people take responsibility and work to support their communities.**

CHOOSE B. People should help one another and share responsibility. A is Topic word, not theme. C is Generic moral that fits many stories.

SHOW The mound grew through the work of many generations, and the fields depend on families working together. Both details show that shared effort strengthens a community.

OWN Answers vary. Example: Communities stay strong when people work together and honor the knowledge passed down to them. Supports: Each generation had added to it little by little. The community depended on cooperation.

DEFEND Generic moral that fits many stories. Being nice is related, but this story specifically supports cooperation, responsibility, and shared traditions.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Theme: Communities grow strong when people cooperate and take responsibility. Lines: The community depended on cooperation. Each generation had added to it little by little. Both show shared work strengthening the community.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“The community depended on cooperation. ... Each generation had added to it little by little.”

What is a theme of the story? Support it with evidence.

- A** People should help one another and take responsibility for their communities.
- B** The story includes a mound, fields, and pottery.
- C** Everyone should be nice to everyone they meet.
- D** Tayanita wants to travel far from home.



THEME

The answer is A.

A **People should help one another and take responsibility for their communities. Correct.**
Correct. The fields, mound, trade, and family traditions all show shared responsibility and cooperation.

B **The story includes a mound, fields, and pottery.**
Topic word, not theme. These are details in the story, not a life lesson.

C **Everyone should be nice to everyone they meet.**
Generic moral that fits many stories. The text specifically teaches cooperation and responsibility, not just niceness.

D **Tayanita wants to travel far from home.**
Too narrow. This is one small thought and does not explain the full story.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

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

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

A good theme fits the whole story and is supported by what the narrator learns and does.

THIS WEEK’S FOCUS

Theme

from “Dream”

A **topic** is one or two words, like a dream or kindness.

A **theme** is a lesson that fits the whole story, like **small kind choices can help make a better future.**

STAAR asks: **What does the author want readers to learn from the narrator's day?** Traps this week:

Topic word, not theme, Too narrow, and Too broad.

This deck teaches **finding theme from a story we know** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a theme hint in a story I know."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Notice the bigger lesson.

Read the line. Is **dream** the topic or the theme? Notice the words that point to a bigger lesson.

"That a dream can belong to everyone,"

I CAN | I can notice when a story moves from a topic to a lesson.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose a theme from a story I have read before.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose the theme.

Which statement best describes the lesson the narrator learns from the day?

“Those did not seem like enormous actions, but maybe they were important anyway.”

A Small kind choices can help make a better future • **B** The speech and the dream • **C** The narrator stands near a memorial

I CAN | I can choose the lesson instead of a topic word or a small detail.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can show how details support a theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show the theme with evidence.

How does the story support the theme that small kind choices can help make a better future?

“Perhaps that was how a dream moved forward.”

I CAN | I can use the narrator's choices and thoughts as evidence.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write a theme in my own words.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Write the theme yourself.

Write a theme for the whole story in a full sentence. Make sure it fits the narrator's thoughts and actions.

“I think I will try to help it come true,”

I CAN | I can write a lesson that fits the whole story, not just the speech.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme with evidence."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend against the trap.

A student wrote: **Dreams and speeches**. Explain why this answer is a trap and name the trap.

"They believed that the future could become brighter when people worked together."

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



Find the theme on your own.

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

Go back to the reading.

Write the topic in one or two words.

Write the theme in a full sentence. Copy one line that supports it.

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

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **Dream is a topic.** The line hints that hopes can belong to many people, which points toward a theme.

CHOOSE **A.** Small kind choices can help make a better future. B is Topic word, not theme, and C is Too narrow.

SHOW **The narrator learns that small choices matter, then invites James to sit down.** The story shows a dream moving forward through everyday kindness.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Small acts of kindness can help people build a more hopeful community.

DEFEND **Topic word, not theme.** Dreams and speeches name subjects in the story, but they do not state the lesson the narrator learns.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Topic: hope and kindness.
Theme: Small kind choices can help make a better future.
Line: A strong community begins when people decide to contribute.



THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“I can notice when someone is alone. I can include people. ... Perhaps that was how a dream moved forward. Not only through famous speeches or enormous gatherings, but also through ordinary people making thoughtful choices every day.”

Which statement best describes a theme of the story?

- A** A speech can happen near a memorial.
- B** The narrator is eight years old.
- C** Small kind choices can help make a better future.
- D** People should always attend large gatherings.



THEME

The answer is C.

A A speech can happen near a memorial.

Topic word, not theme. It names an event detail instead of a life lesson.

B The narrator is eight years old.

Too narrow. This is one fact about the narrator, not the whole story's lesson.

C Small kind choices can help make a better future. Correct.

Correct. The narrator includes James and learns that everyday choices can move a dream forward.

D People should always attend large gatherings.

Too broad and Not in the text. The story values daily choices, not always attending gatherings.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

A fact is something the reader learns about the story.

A theme is a life lesson that can be true beyond the story.

A fact may support a theme, but a fact by itself is not the theme.

THIS WEEK’S FOCUS

Theme

from “Morning in the Village”

A **fact** tells something true in the story, like the Caddo village had a mound. A **theme** teaches a life lesson, like **communities grow strong when people work together**. STAAR asks: **How is a story's theme different from a fact the reader learns?** Trap this week: **Topic-adjacent statement as message**. Also watch for **Too narrow** and **Topic word, not theme**.

This deck teaches **theme or fact?** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can tell a fact from a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Notice fact versus lesson.

Read the line. Is it a fact, or does it teach a theme about how people live together?

"The work was not easy, but everyone understood its importance."

I CAN | I can notice when a story detail points to a bigger life lesson.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose a theme instead of a story fact.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose the life lesson.

Which statement is a theme, not just a fact from the village?

“That is how communities become strong,”

A The village has fields and a mound • **B** Families gather around cooking fires • **C** Communities grow strong when people work together

I CAN | I can choose the life lesson and skip topic-adjacent facts.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can use facts as evidence for a theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show how facts build a theme.

How do facts about the village support the theme that communities grow strong when people work together?

“Families shared meals, laughed together, and prepared for the next day.”

I CAN | I can connect more than one detail to the story's life lesson.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write a theme and support it with a fact.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Write the theme yourself.

Write a theme for the whole story in a full sentence. Then name one fact that supports it.

“Each generation had added to it little by little.”

I CAN | I can write a life lesson that fits the village's work, history, and family life.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme and name a trap."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend against the trap.

A student wrote: **The village has a river for travel.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"People respected the mound because it connected them to their history."

I CAN | I can explain why a true story fact is not the story's message.



Find the theme on your own.

Write one fact from the story. Then write the theme in a full sentence and explain how the fact supports it.

Go back to the reading.
Write one fact from the story.
Write the theme and explain how the fact supports it.

I CAN | I can tell a fact from a theme and use the fact as evidence.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE This is a story idea that points toward a theme: **communities need people to cooperate.**

CHOOSE C. Communities grow strong when people work together. The other choices are facts, including a Topic-adjacent statement as message.

SHOW Families cooperate in the fields, neighbors help with work, and people share meals. These facts together support the theme about strong communities.

OWN Answers vary. Example: Communities become stronger when people share work and responsibility. Fact: Neighbors help build homes and gather food.

DEFEND Topic-adjacent statement as message. The river is part of the setting and helps the village, but the whole story teaches about cooperation and community.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Fact: Each generation helped build the mound. Theme: Communities grow strong when people work together. The fact shows shared work over time.



THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“The community depended on cooperation. ... ‘That is how communities become strong,’ her grandfather said. ‘People work together.’”

Which statement best describes a theme of the story?

- A** The village has a mound in its center.
- B** Tayanita works in the fields before midday.
- C** The river helps people travel to nearby villages.
- D** Communities grow strong when people work together.



THEME

The answer is D.

- A The village has a mound in its center.**
Too narrow. This is one fact about the setting, not the lesson of the whole story.
- B Tayanita works in the fields before midday.**
Too narrow. It tells one event, but it does not teach a global life lesson.
- C The river helps people travel to nearby villages.**
Topic-adjacent statement as message. It is a true fact, not the story's message.
- D Communities grow strong when people work together. Correct.**
Correct. Farming, building, trading, and family life all show people sharing work and responsibility.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

A character's change can help reveal the theme.

The theme is a lesson that reaches beyond one character.

Look at what the narrator believed at first and what the narrator understands by the end.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from “Serve”

A character's change can reveal a **theme**. In this interview, the narrator moves from thinking service belongs to leaders to understanding that anyone can help. STAAR asks: **How does the narrator's view change, and what theme does that show?** Trap this week: **One character's view, too narrow**. Also watch for **Topic word, not theme** and **Too narrow**.

This deck teaches **theme from a character's change** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a character's first view."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Notice the narrator's first view.

Read the line. What does the narrator believe about service at this point? Is it a theme or one character's view?

"Those things do not sound very presidential."

I CAN | I can notice what a narrator believes before the lesson changes that view.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose a theme from a character's change.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose the theme from the change.

Which statement best explains what the narrator learns about service?

“Service does not need a microphone, a government building, or a famous speech.”

A People can serve others through small, thoughtful actions • **B** Grandpa's interview is about President Kennedy • **C** The narrator's school has a new student

I CAN | I can choose the bigger lesson instead of one character's view or detail.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can show how a character's change supports a theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show how the view changes.

How does the narrator's view change, and what theme does that show?

“But if service could happen anywhere, then I did not have to wait at all.”

I CAN | I can compare the narrator's first idea with what she understands at the end.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write a theme from a character's change.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Write the theme yourself.

Write a theme for the whole interview. Use the narrator's change as your evidence.

“I learned that service can start anywhere.”

I CAN | I can write a life lesson that explains what the narrator learns and does.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme against a too-narrow answer."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend against the trap.

A student wrote: **The narrator thinks service is presidential.** Explain why this is a trap and name it.

"A strong community begins when people decide to contribute."

I CAN | I can explain why one character's view is not the whole theme.



Find the theme on your own.

Write what the narrator believes at first. Then write the changed view and a theme in a full sentence. Copy one line as evidence.

Go back to the reading.
Write the narrator's first view.
Write the changed view and a theme. Copy one proof line.

I CAN | I can trace a character's change and turn it into a theme with evidence.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE This is the narrator's first view. She thinks service should sound presidential, but that view will change.

CHOOSE A. People can serve others through small, thoughtful actions. B is Topic word, not theme, and C is Too narrow.

SHOW At first, the narrator thinks service belongs to presidents and adults. Later, she realizes children can help too and sits with a new student. This shows that small actions can strengthen a community.

OWN Answers vary. Example: Anyone can strengthen a community by noticing a need and choosing to help.

DEFEND One character's view, too narrow. This tells what the narrator thinks at first, but the narrator changes and learns that anyone can serve.

YOUR TURN First view: service sounds presidential. Changed view: service can start anywhere. Theme: Anyone can strengthen a community by choosing to help. Line: I learned that service can start anywhere.



THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“If service only belonged to presidents, leaders, or adults, then children would have to wait to participate. ... I learned that service can start anywhere.”

Which statement best describes a theme of the interview?

- A** The narrator interviews Grandpa for a school project.
- B** Service is a word the narrator writes in a notebook.
- C** Anyone can strengthen a community by choosing to help.
- D** The narrator should become a president someday.



THEME

The answer is C.

- A The narrator interviews Grandpa for a school project.**
Too narrow. It describes one event, not the lesson from the narrator's change.
- B Service is a word the narrator writes in a notebook.**
Topic word, not theme. It names a repeated word, not a life lesson.
- C Anyone can strengthen a community by choosing to help. Correct.**
Correct. The narrator learns service can start anywhere and welcomes a student at lunch.
- D The narrator should become a president someday.**
One character's view, too narrow. The story does not say the narrator should become president.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

When two stories share a theme, each story supports the lesson in its own way.

The best shared theme fits both whole stories, not one detail.

Use evidence from both stories before choosing a shared theme.

THIS WEEK’S FOCUS

Theme

from “**Dream and Serve**”

This week we compare **Dream** and **Serve**. Both stories show people making a hopeful idea real through action. STAAR asks: **What theme do both stories share?** Trap this week: **Plausible life lesson, unsupported**. Also watch for **One poem only, too narrow** and **Topic word, not theme**.

This deck teaches **compare themes across two stories** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

“I can notice an idea shared by two stories.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Notice a shared idea.

Read the line from **Dream**. What action turns a hopeful idea into something real?

“Perhaps that was how a dream moved forward.”

I CAN | I can notice how a character turns a belief into an action.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose a theme shared by two stories.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose the shared theme.

Which statement best describes a theme shared by both **Dream** and **Serve**?

“A strong community begins when people decide to contribute.”

A The stories include famous speeches • **B** Small actions can help people build stronger communities • **C** People should always agree with one another

I CAN | I can check that a theme is supported by both whole stories.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can compare evidence from two stories.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show evidence from both stories.

How do both stories support the theme that small actions can help people build stronger communities?

“Not only through famous speeches or enormous gatherings, but also through ordinary people making thoughtful choices every day.”

I CAN | I can explain how each story supports the same theme in a different way.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write a shared theme and support it with both texts.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Write the shared theme.

Write one theme that fits both stories. Then write one supporting detail from **Dream** and one from **Serve**.

“A better world begins when we stop asking only what we can receive and start asking, What can I give?”

I CAN | I can write a life lesson that fits two whole stories, not one detail.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a shared theme with two-text evidence."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend the shared theme.

A student wrote: **Everyone should become a leader.** Explain why this is a trap and name it.

"Service begins when you decide that you can be part of the solution."

I CAN

I can explain why a plausible lesson is unsupported by both stories.



Find the shared theme on your own.

Write one theme that fits both stories. Copy one supporting line from Dream and one from Serve.

Read both stories again.
Write the shared theme.
Copy one line from each story that supports it.

I CAN | I can compare two stories and support a shared theme with evidence from both.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE The narrator starts at school by including **people**. This connects to Serve, where service begins with a small choice to help.

CHOOSE B. Small actions can help people build stronger communities. A is Topic word, not theme, and C is Plausible life lesson, unsupported.

SHOW In Dream, the narrator welcomes James at **lunch**. In Serve, the narrator learns that helping one person counts as service and sits with a new student. Both show ordinary choices strengthening community.

OWN Answers vary. Example: Communities grow stronger when ordinary people choose to help and include others. Dream: the narrator invites James to sit down. Serve: service can start anywhere.

DEFEND Plausible life lesson, unsupported. Both stories show ordinary people helping, but neither says everyone must become a leader.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Theme: Ordinary people can strengthen communities through thoughtful choices. Dream line: You can sit here! Serve line: I learned that service can start anywhere.



THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“I can include people. ... A strong community begins when people decide to contribute. ... It can start in a country, a community, a school, or even at one table in the cafeteria.”

Which statement best describes a theme shared by both stories?

- A** Ordinary people can strengthen communities through thoughtful choices.
- B** Famous speeches are important parts of history.
- C** People should always travel to help others.
- D** The narrators both interview their grandfathers.



THEME

The answer is A.

Ordinary people can strengthen communities through thoughtful choices. Correct.

- A** Correct. Dream shows inclusion at school, and Serve shows service beginning with an everyday choice to help.

Famous speeches are important parts of history.

- B** Topic word, not theme. Speeches appear, but they are not the shared life lesson.

People should always travel to help others.

- C** Plausible life lesson, unsupported. Serve includes faraway work, but both stories value help close to home too.

The narrators both interview their grandfathers.

- D** One story only, too narrow. Only Serve has an interview, and this is a plot fact, not a shared theme.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The topic is the subject a poem names, such as Texas or war.

The theme is the larger life lesson the whole poem teaches.

Use the poem's lines to prove that the theme fits beyond one event.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from “A Lone Star Choice”

This poem follows Texas through a choice, a conflict, and lasting change. A **theme** is the lesson, not just the topic. STAAR asks: **What theme does the poet express in the poem?** Trap this week: **Topic word, not theme.**

This deck teaches **find a theme in a poem** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

“I can notice a possible theme in a poem.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Notice the poem's bigger idea.

Read the line. What topic does it name, and what bigger lesson might the poem teach?

“For Texas, the choice had shaped its way,”

I CAN | I can look past a topic word to find the poem's life lesson.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose a theme that fits a whole poem.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose the poem's theme.

What theme does the poet express in the poem? Choose the statement that fits the whole poem.

“Texas joined the U.S., a choice that stayed.”

A Texas became part of the U.S. • **B** A war changed the map. • **C** Choices can change the course of history.

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



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can show how poem lines support a theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show the theme with poem evidence.

Explain how two parts of the poem support the theme that choices can change the course of history.

“But its effects were strong and vast.”

I CAN | I can connect more than one detail to the poem's life lesson.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

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

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Write the poem's lesson.

Write a theme for the whole poem in a full sentence. Do not name only Texas, war, or the map.

"Changing the map and passing the test."

I CAN | I can write a global lesson that fits the poem from beginning to end.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme and name a trap."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend against the topic trap.

A student wrote: **Texas**. Explain why this answer is a trap and name the trap.

"Its story still helps people see"

I CAN | I can explain why a topic word does not answer a theme question.



Find the poem's theme on your own.

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

Read the poem again.

Write the topic in one or two words.

Write the theme in a full sentence and copy one supporting line.

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

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE The topic is **Texas and its choice**. The words shaped its way hint that choices can change what happens later.

CHOOSE **C**. Choices can change the course of history. A and B name events or topics, not a life lesson.

SHOW **Texas chose to join the U. S.**, and the poem says the choice led to war and changed the map. Those effects show that choices can reshape history.

OWN **Answers vary**. Example: Important choices can affect many people and shape what happens next.

DEFEND **Topic word, not theme**. Texas is what the poem is about, but it does not state a lesson about life.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary**. Topic: choices. Theme: Important choices can shape history and affect many people. Line: How choices reshape history.



THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“In 1845, a change was made, ... Its story still helps people see How choices reshape history.”

Which statement best describes a theme of the poem?

A Texas joined the U.S. in 1845.

B Wars always lead to good results.

C Maps show how countries are arranged.

D Important choices can change history.



THEME

The answer is D.

A Texas joined the U.S. in 1845.

Topic word, not theme. This is an event from the poem, not a life lesson.

B Wars always lead to good results.

Too broad. The poem shows effects of one war, not that all wars have good results.

C Maps show how countries are arranged.

Topic word, not theme. The map is one detail, not the poem's lesson.

D Important choices can change history. Correct.

Correct. The choice led to conflict, changed the map, and shaped Texas's future.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

A theme needs evidence from more than one part of a poem.

A line can support a theme when its meaning connects to the whole poem.

Do not choose lines only because they repeat a word from the theme.

THIS WEEK’S FOCUS

Theme

from “A Lone Star Choice”

This week we trace lines that build the theme of **A Lone Star Choice**. STAAR asks: **Which lines best support the theme of the poem?** Trap this week: **Word association from the lines.**

This deck teaches **use lines to support a poem's theme** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

“I can notice a line that supports a poem's theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Notice a line that carries meaning.

Read the line. What does it reveal about the choice and its importance?

“Leaders talked both day and night,”

I CAN | I can connect a line's meaning to the poem's larger lesson.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose lines that support a theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose the strongest supporting lines.

Which lines best support the theme of the poem? Choose the pair that shows a decision and its lasting effects.

“In 1845, a change was made,”

A Texas joined the U.S. ... The choice before them was not small, • **B** Texas stood beneath wide skies. ... A young republic in people’s eyes. • **C** Leaders talked both day and night, ... About joining the U.S.

I CAN | I can choose evidence by meaning, not just by shared words.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can explain how lines build a theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show how lines build the theme.

How do the lines about the decision and its effects support the theme that important choices can change history?

“The choice before them was not small,”

I CAN | I can connect an early line and a later line to the same lesson.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write a theme and support it with lines.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Write the theme with proof.

Write a theme for the whole poem. Then name two lines that support it and explain their connection.

“Its story still helps people see”

I CAN | I can explain why evidence fits the whole poem, not one stanza.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend evidence by explaining its meaning."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend against word association.

A student chose the line **With soldiers marching under open skies.** because the theme says history can change. Explain why that is a trap.

"With soldiers marching under open skies."

I CAN | I can reject a line that only shares a word or image with a theme.



Find the strongest lines on your own.

Write a theme for the poem. Copy two lines that support it and explain how each line helps prove the theme.

Read the poem again.

Write the theme.

Copy two supporting lines and explain what each one proves.

I CAN | I can support a poem's theme with lines chosen for meaning, not word association.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE The line shows that the choice required serious discussion. It supports the idea that important choices need thought.

CHOOSE A. These lines name the decision and connect it to the poem's lesson about its effects on people. B describes the setting, and C shows discussion before the choice without its lasting effects.

SHOW The poem first shows people considering a choice, then shows that the choice led to war and changed the map. Together, the lines show that choices can reshape history.

OWN Answers vary. Example: Choices made by leaders can affect many people and change history. The discussion lines show the decision, and the ending lines show its effects.

DEFEND Word association from the lines. The word skies does not explain how choices change history. The line mainly describes soldiers moving.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Theme: Important choices can reshape history. Lines: The choice before them was not small, and How choices reshape history. These lines show that the decision had lasting importance.



THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“Texas joined the U.S., a choice that stayed. ... The choice before them was not small, Since it could affect the lives of all.”

Which lines best support the theme that important choices can affect many people and change history?

A Leaders talked both day and night, ... About joining the U.S. and what was right.

B Texas stood beneath wide skies. ... A young republic in people’s eyes.

C Texas joined the U.S. ... affect the lives of all.

D With soldiers marching under open skies. ... Each side showing who they are.



THEME

The answer is C.

- A** **Leaders talked both day and night, ... About joining the U.S. and what was right.**
Too narrow. These lines show discussion before the choice, but not its lasting effects.
- B** **Texas stood beneath wide skies. ... A young republic in people's eyes.**
Word association from the lines. The wide skies describe the setting, not the poem's lesson.
- C** **Texas joined the U.S. ... affect the lives of all. Correct.**
Correct. The first quoted fragment names the choice, and the ending fragment explains that it could affect everyone's lives.
- D** **With soldiers marching under open skies. ... Each side showing who they are.**
Word association from the lines. Soldiers and skies appear, but these lines do not explain the choice's effects.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

A drama's theme is the lesson shown through dialogue and events.

A setting or event can be important without being the theme.

Look across the whole drama to see what the characters learn.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from “Making It Happen”

In **Making It Happen**, people turn ideas into reality through effort and support. STAAR asks: **What is a theme of the drama?** Trap this week: **Setting or event, not theme.**

This deck teaches **find a theme in a drama** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a theme in a drama."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Notice the drama's lesson.

Read the line. What does it suggest about how ideas become real?

"It wasn't just the bracelets. It was the support too."

I CAN | I can use a character's words to notice a lesson that fits the whole drama.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose a theme for a whole drama.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose the drama's theme.

What is a theme of the drama? Choose a lesson supported by the classroom, store, and fair scenes.

“People may have great ideas, but support helps those ideas become reality.”

A The students walk home after school. • **B** The class visits a community fair. • **C** People can turn ideas into reality through effort and support.

I CAN | I can choose a life lesson instead of a setting or event.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can explain how drama details support a theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show the theme across scenes.

How do the people in the drama show that effort and support can help ideas become real?

“With effort, opportunity, and help from others, those ideas can grow into something meaningful.”

I CAN | I can connect examples from several scenes to one lesson.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write a theme for a drama in my own words.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Write the drama's lesson.

Write a theme for the whole drama in a full sentence. Include the ideas of effort, support, or persistence if they fit your evidence.

“Most successful businesses have people supporting them behind the scenes.”

I CAN | I can write a lesson that fits the characters, examples, and ending.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme against a setting or event trap."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend against the detail trap.

A student wrote: **The community fair happens at school.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"A few days later, the school hosts a community fair."

I CAN

I can explain why a scene detail is not the drama's global lesson.



Find the drama's theme on your own.

Write the theme of the drama in a full sentence. Copy one line from the drama and explain how it supports your theme.

Read the drama again.
Write the theme in a full sentence.
Copy one supporting line and explain it.

I CAN | I can identify a drama's theme and support it with dialogue or narration.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE The line suggests that support helped the business grow. The drama may teach that people often need help to turn ideas into reality.

CHOOSE C. People can turn ideas into reality through effort and support. A and B name settings or events, not a lesson.

SHOW Mr. Patel works through slow business with help from his family, customers, and bank. At the fair, students also get help with their projects. These examples support the theme.

OWN Answers vary. Example: Good ideas can grow when people work hard and accept support from others.

DEFEND Setting or event, not theme. The fair is where characters show support, but the event itself is not a life lesson.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Theme: Ideas grow through effort and support. Line: People may have great ideas, but support helps those ideas become reality.



THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“People may have great ideas, but support helps those ideas become reality. ... With effort, opportunity, and help from others, those ideas can grow into something meaningful.”

Which statement best describes a theme of the drama?

- A** The class meets in a classroom and at a fair.
- B** People can make ideas succeed through effort and support.
- C** Mr. Patel gets a loan from a bank.
- D** Every new idea will become successful quickly.



THEME

The answer is B.

- A** **The class meets in a classroom and at a fair.**
Setting or event, not theme. These are places and events, not the drama's lesson.
- B** **People can make ideas succeed through effort and support. Correct.**
Correct. The drama shows artists, businesses, and students using effort and support to grow ideas.
- C** **Mr. Patel gets a loan from a bank.**
Setting or event, not theme. The loan is one example of support in one character's story.
- D** **Every new idea will become successful quickly.**
Opposite. Mr. Patel says success rarely happens overnight, and the drama shows challenges.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

An ending can show what characters understand after a conflict or challenge.

A theme must fit the whole drama, including how the problem ends.

A general saying is not a theme unless this drama supports it.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from “**Making It Happen**”

This week we use the ending of **Making It Happen** to confirm its theme about ideas, determination, and support. STAAR asks: **How does the ending help develop the theme?** Trap this week: **Generic moral that fits many stories.**

This deck teaches **use the ending to find a theme** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

“I can notice how an ending develops a theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Notice what the ending teaches.

Read the ending line. What lesson does it make clear about accomplishments?

“Sometimes the biggest accomplishments start with the smallest idea, and someone willing to help make it happen.”

I CAN | I can use the final words to check what the whole drama teaches.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose a theme supported by a drama's ending.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose the theme the ending confirms.

How does the ending help develop the theme? Choose the statement that matches the whole drama and its final idea.

“Those ideas may take years to develop.”

A Ideas grow through time, effort, and support. • **B** Always believe in yourself. • **C** The students plan a small business at a picnic table.

I CAN | I can reject a general saying and choose the lesson this drama proves.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can explain how an ending develops a theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show how the ending develops the theme.

How does the ending build on the characters' earlier challenges to show that ideas need time, effort, and support?

“With effort, opportunity, and help from others, those ideas can grow into something meaningful.”

I CAN | I can connect the final lesson to the conflict and examples that came before it.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write a theme and explain how the ending supports it.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Own the ending's lesson.

Write a theme for the whole drama and explain how the ending confirms it. Use one earlier detail as well.

“Some students dream of becoming artists.”

I CAN | I can use the ending and an earlier challenge to prove a drama's lesson.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a text-supported theme against a generic moral."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend against a generic moral.

A student wrote: **Always believe in yourself.** Explain why this is a trap and name the trap.

"People may have great ideas, but support helps those ideas become reality."

I CAN | I can explain why a wise-sounding statement may not fit this drama.



Find the ending's theme on your own.

Write a theme for the drama. Copy one ending line and one earlier line that show how the theme develops.

Read the drama's ending again.

Write the theme.

Copy one ending line and one earlier line that support it.

I CAN | I can use an ending and earlier evidence to explain a drama's theme.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE The ending says a small idea can grow into a big accomplishment when someone helps. It brings together ideas and support.

CHOOSE A. Ideas grow through time, effort, and support. B is a generic saying, and C names only one event.

SHOW Earlier, Mr. Patel faces slow business and worries about bills, but he keeps working with help. The ending broadens that example by saying small ideas can become accomplishments through help and effort.

OWN Answers vary. Example: Meaningful accomplishments grow from small ideas when people persist and accept support. The ending says accomplishments start small, and Mr. Patel's story shows him continuing through challenges.

DEFEND Generic moral that fits many stories. The drama does value belief, but its ending specifically shows ideas growing through effort and help from others.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Theme: Small ideas can grow into meaningful accomplishments through effort and support. Ending line: But every accomplishment begins somewhere. Earlier line: Success rarely happens overnight.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“Those ideas may take years to develop. ... Sometimes the biggest accomplishments start with the smallest idea, and someone willing to help make it happen.”

How does the ending help develop the theme of the drama?

- A** It shows that small ideas can grow into accomplishments through time, effort, and support.
- B** It teaches that every person should start a business.
- C** It proves that success happens quickly when people have ideas.
- D** It shows that school fairs are the best place for new ideas.



THEME

The answer is A.

- A** **It shows that small ideas can grow into accomplishments through time, effort, and support. Correct.**

Correct. The ending gathers the drama's examples of ideas growing through time, effort, and help.

- B** **It teaches that every person should start a business.**
Generic moral that fits many stories. The ending discusses accomplishments, not one required career or business.

- C** **It proves that success happens quickly when people have ideas.**
Opposite. The drama says ideas may take years and success rarely happens overnight.

- D** **It shows that school fairs are the best place for new ideas.**
Setting or event, not theme. The fair is one example, not the ending's life lesson.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

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

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

A strong theme fits the whole story, not just one place or fact.

THIS WEEK’S FOCUS

Theme

from “**Four Regions, One Big Adventure**”

A **topic** names what a story is about, like Texas regions. A **theme** is a lesson that fits the whole story, like **different places can all have value**. STAAR asks: **What is the theme, not the topic, of the story?** Trap this week: **Topic-adjacent statement as message**.

This deck teaches **finding a theme beyond the topic** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a theme beyond the topic."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Notice the bigger lesson.

Read the line. Notice how Xavier moves from seeing different regions to thinking about what they mean together.

"His mom explained that people in this region often work in mining and oil because of the natural resources found underground."

I CAN | I can notice when a text turns facts about a topic into a bigger lesson.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose a lesson instead of a topic-adjacent statement.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose the theme, not the topic.

STAAR asks: What is the theme, not the topic, of the story?

“Finally, they arrived at the Coastal Plains near the Gulf of Mexico.”

A The four regions of Texas • **B** Different places can all be valuable • **C** Xavier travels with his family

I CAN | I can choose a theme that fits the whole trip.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can show how details support a theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show the theme with evidence.

Explain how the story supports the theme that different places can all be valuable.

“The land looked wide and flat with rolling hills.”

I CAN | I can connect facts from more than one region to one lesson.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write a theme in my own words.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Own the theme.

Write a theme for the whole story in a full sentence. Make sure it teaches more than a fact about Texas.

“As they headed home, Xavier rethought about what he had seen.”

I CAN | I can write a lesson that fits every region in the story.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme with text evidence."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend against the trap.

A student wrote this theme: **Texas has four regions.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"Each region looked different, but all were important parts of Texas."

I CAN | I can explain why a topic-adjacent statement is not the story's message.



Find the theme on your own.

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

Go back to the reading.

Write the **topic in one or two words.**

Write the **theme in a full sentence and copy one support line.**

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

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE The line compares all four regions and says **each matters**. It points toward the theme that differences do not make a place less valuable.

CHOOSE B. Different places can all be valuable. A is the topic, and C is one event, not the lesson.

SHOW The Great Plains have open land that supports ranching and farming, while the Coastal Plains have water, forests, beaches, and many jobs. The different details show that each region offers something useful.

OWN Answers vary. Example: Different places can have different strengths, and each can be important.

DEFEND Topic-adjacent statement as message. Texas having four regions is a fact near the topic, but it does not teach the lesson that different places can all matter.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Topic: Texas regions. Theme: Different places can have different strengths, and each can be important. Line: Each region looked different, but all were important parts of Texas.



THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“Their first stop was the Mountains and Basins in far West Texas. ... Finally, they arrived at the Coastal Plains near the Gulf of Mexico.”

Which statement best describes a theme of the story?

- A** Texas has four regions.
- B** Different places can have different strengths, and each can be important.
- C** Xavier takes a road trip with his family.
- D** The Coastal Plains are near the Gulf of Mexico.



THEME

The answer is B.

A Texas has four regions.

Topic-adjacent statement as message. It gives a fact about the topic, not a lesson.

B Different places can have different strengths, and each can be important. Correct.

Correct. The story shows useful resources, land, and jobs in every region.

C Xavier takes a road trip with his family.

Too narrow. This describes the event, but it does not state what the story teaches.

D The Coastal Plains are near the Gulf of Mexico.

Topic-adjacent statement as message. This is one location fact, not a global lesson.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

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

The theme is a lesson that fits the whole story in a full sentence.

A character's words can reveal a theme when they connect to what happens across the text.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from “Four Regions, One Big Adventure”

The topic is Texas regions. The **theme** is the lesson Xavier learns as he sees them, such as **seeing something firsthand can deepen learning**. STAAR asks: **What theme do Xavier's words to his family suggest?** Trap this week: **Word association from the lines.**

This deck teaches **learning more by seeing** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

“I can notice a theme in a character's words.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Notice what Xavier learns.

Read Xavier's words. Notice how his observations build toward an idea about learning.

“Instead of only reading about them in books, Xavier would get to see each region with his own eyes.”

I CAN | I can connect what a character says to the lesson of the whole story.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose the lesson suggested by dialogue.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose the theme in Xavier's words.

STAAR asks: What theme do Xavier's words to his family suggest?

“Everything looks greener and more colorful!”

A Seeing something firsthand can deepen learning • **B** Green places are the best places • **C** Xavier enjoys looking at scenery

I CAN | I can avoid choosing a word association from a character's line.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can show how dialogue and actions support a theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show how the words build meaning.

Explain how Xavier's words and actions support the idea that seeing can deepen learning.

“He understood why so many people lived and worked in this region.”

I CAN | I can use more than one detail to explain what a character learns.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a theme from a character's growth."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Own the theme.

Write a theme for the whole story. Use Xavier's words as a clue, but make your answer a life lesson.

"He realized that learning about the regions from a textbook was helpful, but seeing them in person made the information easier to remember."

I CAN | I can turn a character's realization into a lesson that fits the whole story.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

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

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend against word association.

A student wrote this theme: **Green places are the best places.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"Each region looked different, but all were important parts of Texas."

I CAN | I can explain why one word from a line does not prove a whole theme.



Find the lesson on your own.

Write the topic, then a theme in a full sentence. Copy one line from Xavier that supports your theme.

Return to the reading.

Write the topic.

Write a full-sentence theme and copy one support line.

I CAN | I can infer a theme from a character's words and support it with evidence.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **Zavier will not only read facts.** He will see the regions, compare them, and understand them more clearly.

CHOOSE **A.** Seeing something firsthand can deepen learning. B is a word association from the line, and C is too narrow.

SHOW **Zavier sees the land, jobs, plants, and climate in person.** Later he understands why people live and work there, so the trip makes the facts easier to understand.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Seeing and experiencing something can help people understand and remember what they learn.

DEFEND **Word association from the lines.** Zavier says one region looks greener, but the story does not say green places are best. It shows that every region has value.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Topic: learning about regions. Theme: Seeing and experiencing something can deepen understanding. Line: seeing them in person made the information easier to remember.



THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“Instead of only reading about them in books, Xavier would get to see each region with his own eyes. ... He realized that learning about the regions from a textbook was helpful, but seeing them in person made the information easier to remember.”

Which statement best describes a theme suggested by Xavier's words?

A Learning about Texas regions is useful.

B Green places are the best places.

C Seeing and experiencing something can deepen understanding.

D Road trips are exciting ways to spend time.



THEME

The answer is C.

A Learning about Texas regions is useful.

Topic-adjacent statement as message. It names the subject but misses the lesson about firsthand learning.

B Green places are the best places.

Word association from the lines. It copies greener from one observation and is not supported by the whole story.

C Seeing and experiencing something can deepen understanding. Correct.

Correct. Xavier says seeing the regions made the information easier to remember.

D Road trips are exciting ways to spend time.

Too narrow. The trip is the setting for Xavier's learning, not the global lesson.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

A character's change can help reveal a theme.

A theme is a lesson that fits the whole text, not one character's preference.

Use beginning, middle, and ending evidence to prove the lesson.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from “**Four Regions, One Big Adventure**”

Zavier begins curious and ends understanding why the regions matter. His growth points to a theme such as **learning about differences can build understanding and appreciation**. STAAR asks: **What theme is shown by how Xavier changes during the trip?** Trap this week: **One character's view, too narrow.**

This deck teaches **following a character's growth to a theme** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

“I can notice how character growth reveals a theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Notice Xavier's change.

Read the ending line. Compare it with Xavier's earlier questions and observations.

“Zavier smiled as they loaded the last bags into the car.”

I CAN | I can compare a character's thinking at the beginning and end.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose a theme shown by a character's change.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose the theme shown by growth.

STAAR asks: What theme is shown by how Xavier changes during the trip?

“Each region has its own story.”

A Traveling with family can be fun. • **B** Xavier learns about the Coastal Plains. • **C** Learning about differences can build understanding and appreciation.

I CAN | I can reject a one-character detail that is too narrow for the whole story.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can show how character growth supports a theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show the change with evidence.

Explain how Xavier changes from the start of the trip to the ending.

“His notebook was filled with facts, but the trip had taught him even more than he had written down.”

I CAN | I can connect an early thought and a later realization.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write a theme from a character's growth.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Own the growth theme.

Write a theme shown by Xavier's growth. It must be a full lesson that fits the whole story.

“As they headed home, Xavier rethought about what he had seen.”

I CAN | I can turn a character's new understanding into a lesson for readers.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a broad theme with growth evidence."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend against a narrow view.

A student wrote this theme: **Zavier likes the Coastal Plains best.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"Each region looked different, but all were important parts of Texas."

I CAN | I can explain why one character's view is too narrow.



Trace the growth yourself.

Write the topic and a theme. Copy one early line and one later line that show how Xavier changes.

Trace the character's growth.
Write the topic and a full-sentence theme.
Copy one early line and one later line.

I CAN | I can infer a theme from beginning and ending evidence.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE Xavier stops looking only for a favorite place and understands that each region has something important to teach.

CHOOSE C. Learning about differences can build understanding and appreciation. A is a general event, and B is one region, not the whole journey.

SHOW At first Xavier wonders which region will be his favorite. After seeing all four, he understands that each looks different and all are important. His change supports learning to appreciate differences.

OWN Answers vary. Example: Learning about differences can help people understand and appreciate what each place or person offers.

DEFEND One character's view, too narrow. Xavier says the Coastal Plains might be his favorite, but the ending teaches that every region is important.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Topic: learning about regions. Theme: Learning about differences can build appreciation. Early line: Xavier wondered which region would become his favorite. Later line: Each region looked different, but all were important parts of Texas.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“Zavier smiled as they loaded the last bags into the car. He wondered which region would become his favorite. ... As they headed home, Zavier rethought about what he had seen. Each region looked different, but all were important parts of Texas.”

Which statement best describes a theme shown by how Zavier changes?

- A** Zavier enjoys taking notes during a trip.
- B** The Coastal Plains have many kinds of jobs.
- C** Every family should take a road trip across Texas.
- D** Learning about differences can build understanding and appreciation.



THEME

The answer is D.

- A** **Zavier enjoys taking notes during a trip.**
One character's view, too narrow. This is one action by Zavier, not the lesson of the whole story.
- B** **The Coastal Plains have many kinds of jobs.**
Too narrow. It describes one region instead of Zavier's growth across all four.
- C** **Every family should take a road trip across Texas.**
One character's view, too narrow. The story shows one learning experience, not a rule for every family.
- D** **Learning about differences can build understanding and appreciation. Correct.**
Correct. Zavier ends by understanding that different regions can all be important.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

A theme is a global life lesson, not a summary or a fact.

Evidence should come from more than one part of the text.

A strong response states the lesson and explains how the evidence proves it.

THIS WEEK’S FOCUS

Theme

from “**Four Regions, One Big Adventure**”

A theme must be a full life lesson supported by the whole story. For this trip, a strong theme is **differences can make each part of a larger whole valuable**. STAAR asks: **State a theme of the story and support it with evidence**. Trap this week: **Life lesson not supported by this text**.

This deck teaches **state and support a theme** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

“I can notice a theme and its strongest evidence.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Notice the theme in the ending.

Read the final line. Notice how it states a lesson about different regions belonging together.

“Each region looked different, but all were important parts of Texas.”

I CAN | I can use an ending statement to identify a lesson supported by the whole story.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose a theme supported by the whole story.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose a theme with evidence.

State the theme that the whole story supports. Then point to two details that prove it.

“The land changes from place to place, and that changes how people live and work.”

A Different places can make a larger whole stronger. • **B** People should travel across every state. • **C** Texas has mountains, farms, and beaches.

I CAN | I can reject a life lesson that the text does not support.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can support a theme with evidence and explanation.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show the evidence chain.

Explain how two details from the story support the theme that differences can make each part of a larger whole valuable.

“There were rivers, forests, and even beaches.”

I CAN | I can connect details from different regions to one global lesson.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can state a theme and support it."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

State and support your theme.

Write a theme in a full sentence. Then name two details from different parts of the story that support it.

"He traced their route with his finger and smiled."

I CAN | I can write a global lesson and explain evidence from the text.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme with evidence from the text."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend the theme against unsupported advice.

A student wrote this theme: **People should travel across every state.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"That's exactly what makes each region important."

I CAN

I can explain why a plausible life lesson is not supported by this story.



Build your own response.

State a theme of the story. Copy two lines from different regions and explain how each supports your theme.

State a full-sentence theme.
Copy two evidence lines from different regions.
Explain how each line supports the theme.

I CAN | I can state a theme and prove it with evidence from the whole story.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE The ending says difference and importance can exist together. It gives a theme about each part having value in a larger whole.

CHOOSE A. Different places can make a larger whole stronger. B is Life lesson not supported by this text, and C is a topic list.

SHOW The Mountains and Basins provide resources for jobs, while the Coastal Plains have rivers, beaches, farms, fishing, and cities. These different features show that each region contributes something valuable.

OWN Answers vary. Example: Differences can make each part of a larger whole valuable. The story shows useful resources in the Mountains and Basins and many jobs and natural features in the Coastal Plains.

DEFEND Life lesson not supported by this text. The story teaches that regions can differ and still matter, but it never says people should travel across every state.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Theme: Differences can make each part of a larger whole valuable. Evidence may include the natural resources in the Mountains and Basins and the many jobs and features of the Coastal Plains, with an explanation of each.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“The land changes from place to place, and that changes how people live and work. ... Each region looked different, but all were important parts of Texas.”

Which statement best describes a theme of the story?

A People should travel across every state to learn about it.

B Differences can make each part of a larger whole valuable.

C Texas has mountains, farms, rivers, and beaches.

D Xavier's favorite place is the Coastal Plains.



THEME

The answer is B.

- A** **People should travel across every state to learn about it.**
Life lesson not supported by this text. The story describes one trip but never gives this rule to readers.
- B** **Differences can make each part of a larger whole valuable. Correct.**
Correct. The regions differ, yet the ending says all are important parts of Texas.
- C** **Texas has mountains, farms, rivers, and beaches.**
Topic word, not theme. This lists facts about the setting instead of stating a life lesson.
- D** **Zavier's favorite place is the Coastal Plains.**
Too narrow. It is one character's preference, not a lesson supported by the whole story.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

A character's noticing can reveal what the story is teaching.

A theme is a life lesson in a full sentence, not a detail from one scene.

I use what the character notices and the whole passage to prove the theme.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from “**Looking Back to Move Forward**”

Ava notices that the painting shows more than a group of people. A **theme** is a lesson that fits the whole story, such as **new ideas can change how people see the world**. STAAR asks: **What theme does Ava's discovery about the painting express?**
Traps this week: **Setting or event, not theme, Too narrow, and Topic word, not theme.**

This deck teaches **finding theme from what a character notices** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

“I can use a character's noticing to find a theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Notice what Ava discovers.

Read the line. What does Ava notice about the painting? Ask what bigger lesson her noticing suggests.

“It showed more than a group of people.”

I CAN | I can notice when a character's thinking points to a bigger life lesson.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose a theme supported by what a character notices.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose the theme from Ava's discovery.

The scope question asks: **What theme does Ava's discovery about the painting express?** Choose the full-sentence lesson, not the setting or event.

“They showed people with clear details and expressions.”

A A painting in a large building • **B** Studying the past can change how people see the world • **C** Ava studies a painting in class

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



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can use evidence from a character's noticing to support a theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show how Ava's noticing supports the theme.

Explain how the passage supports this theme: **Studying ideas from the past can change how people understand the world.**

“It showed a hopeful time when ideas were changing.”

I CAN | I can connect two details about Ava's thinking to a life lesson.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write a theme that grows from a character's discovery.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Write the theme in your own words.

Write a theme for the passage. Make it a full life lesson that fits Ava's discovery and the changes described in the passage.

“Some people began to think in new ways about government and fairness.”

I CAN | I can write a whole-text lesson instead of naming a scene or event.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme by naming the trap and using evidence."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend against the trap.

A student wrote this theme: **Ava looks at a painting in her classroom.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"Ava looked back at the painting."

I CAN | I can explain why a setting or event is not a life lesson.



Find the theme on your own.

Return to the passage. Write what Ava notices, turn that noticing into a theme, and copy one line that supports your theme.

Go back to the reading.
Write what Ava notices.
Write the theme as a life lesson. Then copy one line that supports it.

I CAN | I can use a character's noticing to infer and support a theme.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE Ava notices that the painting has a deeper **message**. It suggests that people can see new meaning when they look closely and think.

CHOOSE **B**. Studying the past can change how people see the world. A is Setting or event, not theme. C is Setting or event, not theme.

SHOW Ava first sees only people in a building, then **notices readers and thinkers**. Later, she understands that the past can teach people important lessons. These details show that looking closely and studying old ideas can change understanding.

OWN **Answers vary**. Example: Studying the past can help people create better ideas for the future.

DEFEND **Setting or event, not theme**. The sentence tells where Ava is and what she does. It does not teach a lesson about how people can learn from ideas or the past.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary**. Ava notices that the painting shows thinkers and changing ideas. Theme: Studying the past can help people make better choices in the future. Line: Sometimes, looking back can help people move forward.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“It showed more than a group of people. ... Some people began to think in new ways about government and fairness. ... It showed a hopeful time when ideas were changing.”

Which statement best describes a theme of the story?

A A painting can hang in a large building.

B Ava learns about the Renaissance in class.

C Studying the past can help people understand and improve the present.

D People in paintings can read and talk.



THEME

The answer is C.

- A** **A painting can hang in a large building.**
Setting or event, not theme. This describes a detail about the painting's setting, not a life lesson.
- B** **Ava learns about the Renaissance in class.**
Setting or event, not theme. This tells what happens in the story, but it does not teach a lesson.
- C** **Studying the past can help people understand and improve the present. Correct.**
Correct. Ava learns that old ideas can teach people important lessons and help them think about change.
- D** **People in paintings can read and talk.**
Topic word, not theme. This names what the painting shows instead of stating a global lesson.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

A title can point toward the lesson a story develops.

A theme is a global life lesson, not one word from the title.

I connect the title to repeated ideas and evidence from the whole passage.

THIS WEEK’S FOCUS

Theme

from “**Looking Back to Move Forward**”

The title **Looking Back to Move Forward** points to the theme that **learning from the past can help people make better choices**. STAAR asks: **How does the title connect to the theme?** Traps this week: **Topic word, not theme, Too narrow, and Setting or event, not theme.**

This deck teaches **connecting a title to theme** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can use a title as a clue to theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Notice the title clue.

Read the line. Notice how the words in the title connect to the lesson Ava learns.

"Looking back did not mean people wanted everything to stay the same."

I CAN | I can connect the title's words to a lesson supported by the whole passage.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can explain how a title points to a theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose how the title connects to theme.

STAAR asks: **How does the title connect to the theme?** Choose the statement that explains both parts of the title and the passage's lesson.

“Sometimes people studied the past so they could make better choices in the future.”

A Looking back can help people move forward. • **B** The title names two parts of the story. • **C** Ava looks at a painting during class.

I CAN | I can choose the title connection that states a life lesson, not a topic.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can use evidence to explain a title's connection to theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show how the title is developed.

Explain how two details develop the title's idea that looking back can help people move forward.

“Sometimes, looking back can help people move forward.”

I CAN | I can show how repeated ideas develop the lesson named by the title.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write a theme and connect it to the title.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Own the title's lesson.

Write a theme for the passage and explain in one phrase how the title points to it.

“It helped her understand that the past can teach people important lessons.”

I CAN | I can explain a title without turning its topic words into a theme.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme when an answer only repeats title words."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend against the trap.

A student wrote this theme: **The past and the future.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"Ava realized that old ideas could become useful again."

I CAN | I can explain why a topic phrase is not a life lesson.



Find the title connection on your own.

Write a theme for the passage. Then explain what looking back and moving forward mean and copy one supporting line.

Go back to the reading.

Write the **theme as a life lesson.**

Explain both parts of the title and copy one line that supports it.

I CAN | I can use the title and evidence to explain a theme.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE The title does not mean staying in the past. It suggests that people can study old ideas and use them to make new choices.

CHOOSE A. Looking back can help people move forward. B is Topic word, not theme. C is Setting or event, not theme.

SHOW The passage says people studied ideas from Greece and Rome, then used them to ask new questions about art and government. Ava also learns that the past can teach important lessons. These details explain both looking back and moving forward.

OWN Answers vary. Example: People can use lessons from the past to make thoughtful changes in the future. The title connects because looking back means studying the past and moving forward means using what is learned.

DEFEND Topic word, not theme. The answer names ideas from the title but does not explain what the story teaches about them. A theme must say that lessons from the past can help people make better choices.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Theme: Studying the past can help people make wiser choices in the future. Looking back means studying old ideas; moving forward means using them in new ways. Line: Sometimes, looking back can help people move forward.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“Ava realized that old ideas could become useful again. ... Sometimes people studied the past so they could make better choices in the future. ... Sometimes, looking back can help people move forward.”

How does the title *Looking Back to Move Forward* connect to the theme of the story?

- A** It names the past and the future, which are the story's main topics.
- B** It shows that the story takes place in a history class.
- C** It explains that Ava looks backward at a painting before class ends.
- D** It suggests that studying the past can help people make better choices in the future.



THEME

The answer is D.

- A** **It names the past and the future, which are the story's main topics.**
Topic word, not theme. The answer names topics but does not state the lesson connecting them.
- B** **It shows that the story takes place in a history class.**
Setting or event, not theme. The classroom is a setting, not what the title teaches.
- C** **It explains that Ava looks backward at a painting before class ends.**
Too narrow. This focuses on one event instead of the lesson developed across the story.
- D** **It suggests that studying the past can help people make better choices in the future. Correct.**
Correct. The passage says old ideas became useful again and helped people think in new ways.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

The best theme explains the most important ideas across the whole story.

A global life lesson is stronger than a saying that could fit almost any story.

I compare each choice with the text and reject generic morals.

THIS WEEK’S FOCUS

Theme

from “**Looking Back to Move Forward**”

This passage develops a theme about using the past to create new ideas about art, learning, and government. STAAR asks: **Which sentence best states a theme of the story?** The trap to watch for is **Generic moral that fits many stories**, along with **Too narrow** and **Topic word, not theme**.

This deck teaches **choosing the best whole-text theme** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a theme that brings together the whole story."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Notice the whole-text idea.

Read the line. Notice how it brings together the passage's ideas about art, learning, and government.

"The Renaissance showed that people could study the past to create new ideas about art, learning, and government."

I CAN | I can notice when a sentence connects several important ideas instead of one small detail.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose the strongest theme from several possible answers.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose the best theme.

STAAR asks: **Which sentence best states a theme of the story?** Choose the lesson supported by the most important ideas, not a generic saying.

“Because some old ideas can still help people think in new ways,”

A The School of Athens is a painting. • **B** People should always work hard. • **C** People can use ideas from the past to create new ways of thinking.

I CAN | I can reject a generic moral and choose the lesson this whole story supports.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can show that a theme fits the whole passage.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show why the best theme fits.

Explain how the story supports this theme: **People can use ideas from the past to create new ways of thinking.**

“The Renaissance was not only about copying the past. It was about using the past to create something new.”

I CAN | I can connect evidence from different parts of a story to the best theme.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write a theme that fits the whole story.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Own the whole-text theme.

Write the best theme for the story in your own words. Then name two areas of the passage that support it.

“The painting was not only about ancient Greece and Rome. It was also about the Renaissance itself.”

I CAN

I can avoid a generic moral and write the lesson this text actually teaches.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

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

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend against the trap.

A student wrote this theme: **People should always be kind.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"He was showing respect for knowledge, thinking, and discussion."

I CAN | I can explain why a nice saying is not automatically the lesson of a text.



Find the best theme on your own.

Write the topic in one or two words. Then write the best theme for the whole story and copy two lines that support it.

Go back to the reading.
Write the topic in one or two words.
Write the best theme and copy two lines that support it.

I CAN | I can choose a specific theme and prove it with evidence from across the text.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE The sentence links studying the past with creating new ideas in several areas. It sounds like a whole-text theme, not a detail about one painting.

CHOOSE C. People can use ideas from the past to create new ways of thinking. A is Topic word, not theme. B is Generic moral that fits many stories.

SHOW The class learns that old ideas shaped new art and new questions about government. The passage also says people studied history and used it in new ways. These details support the theme across several subjects.

OWN Answers vary. Example: Learning from the past can help people develop new ideas about how to live and work together.

DEFEND Generic moral that fits many stories. The passage focuses on studying the past to create new ideas about art, learning, and government. It does not develop a lesson about kindness.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Topic: learning from the past. Theme: People can use old ideas to create new ways of thinking. Lines: Because some old ideas can still help people think in new ways. / The Renaissance was not only about copying the past. It was about using the past to create something new.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“The Renaissance was not only about copying the past. ... It was about using the past to create something new. ... It helped her understand that the past can teach people important lessons.”

Which sentence best states a theme of the story?

A Paintings can show people and buildings.

B Learning from the past can help people create new ideas.

C People should always be kind to one another.

D Ava's class studies the Renaissance.



THEME

The answer is B.

- A Paintings can show people and buildings.**
Topic word, not theme. This describes an art detail but gives no life lesson.
- B Learning from the past can help people create new ideas. Correct.**
Correct. The passage repeats that old ideas can help people think in new ways and create something new.
- C People should always be kind to one another.**
Generic moral that fits many stories. The passage does not develop kindness as its message.
- D Ava's class studies the Renaissance.**
Too narrow. This names one event and does not express the lesson of the whole story.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

A strong theme is a life lesson supported by the whole passage.

One character's thought can be evidence, but it may be too narrow to be the whole theme.

I write a theme, support it with details, and check that it goes beyond one person's view.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from “**Looking Back to Move Forward**”

Write a theme about how the passage develops ideas through Ava, her classmates, and the lesson. Use evidence to prove it. STAAR asks: **Short response: What theme does the author develop? Use evidence.** Trap to avoid: **One character's view, too narrow, plus Topic word, not theme and Life lesson not supported by this text.**

This deck teaches **writing and defending a theme independently** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

“I can tell a character's view from the author's whole theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Notice more than Ava's view.

Read the line. Notice that Ava's thought is important evidence, but ask whether it states the whole author's lesson.

“Maybe the biggest change was that people started believing humans could do more,”

I CAN

I can use one character's thought as evidence without making it the whole lesson.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose a theme broad enough for the whole passage.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose the whole-text theme.

The short response asks: **What theme does the author develop? Use evidence.** Before writing, choose the lesson that includes more than one character's view.

“The past could give people clues, but people still had to think for themselves.”

A Ava believes people can think for themselves. • **B** People can learn from the past and use ideas to make positive changes. • **C** The Renaissance is a time in history.

I CAN | I can avoid making one character's view the entire theme.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can use evidence from different characters and events to support a theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show evidence for the theme.

Explain how the author develops this theme: **People can learn from the past and use ideas to make positive changes.**

“Looking back did not always mean staying stuck in the past.”

I CAN | I can show how the author's details build a theme beyond one character's view.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write and support a theme independently.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Own your short response.

Write a theme for the passage in a full sentence. Then name two details, from at least two voices or moments, that support it.

“The past could become a guide, not because it had every answer, but because it helped people ask better questions.”

I CAN

I can write a global lesson and prove it with details beyond one character's view.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can explain why one character's view may be too narrow."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend against the trap.

A student wrote this theme: **Ava believes people can think for themselves.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"Like they could think for themselves?"

I CAN | I can defend a whole-text theme against a narrow answer.



Write the theme on your own.

Answer the short response: What theme does the author develop? Write the theme, then use two pieces of evidence from different voices or moments.

Answer the short response.

Write a full-sentence theme.

Use two pieces of evidence and explain how they support it.

I CAN | I can write a whole-text theme and support it with evidence from different parts of the passage.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE **Ava thinks people began believing humans could do more.** This is a helpful clue, but the whole passage also develops ideas about learning, art, government, and using the past.

CHOOSE **B.** People can learn from the past and use ideas to make positive changes. A is One character's view, too narrow. C is Topic word, not theme.

SHOW **Mrs.** Lopez explains that old ideas helped people ask new questions about art and government. Ava realizes that the past can guide people without having every answer. Together, these details develop the theme.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Learning from the past can help people ask better questions and create positive changes. Evidence: Mrs. Lopez says old ideas can help people think in new ways, and Ava understands that the past can guide people.

DEFEND **One character's view, too narrow.** The idea comes from Ava's conversation, but the passage also develops learning from the past, art, discussion, and government. The answer needs to include the larger lesson.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Theme: Studying the past can help people create new ideas and make better choices. Evidence: Mrs. Lopez says old ideas can help people think in new ways. Ava realizes that the past can guide people and help them ask better questions.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“Maybe the biggest change was that people started believing humans could do more, ... The past could become a guide, not because it had every answer, but because it helped people ask better questions. ... Sometimes, looking back can help people move forward.”

Which statement best answers the short-response question, What theme does the author develop?

- A** Ava believes people can think for themselves.
- B** The Renaissance includes art, science, and government.
- C** People should never disagree with one another.
- D** Learning from the past can help people ask better questions and make positive changes.



THEME

The answer is D.

Ava believes people can think for themselves.

- A** One character's view, too narrow. This is one idea from Ava, but it does not include the whole author's message.

The Renaissance includes art, science, and government.

- B** Topic word, not theme. This lists subjects in the passage without stating a life lesson.

People should never disagree with one another.

- C** Life lesson not supported by this text. The passage says respectful disagreement can help people think more clearly.

Learning from the past can help people ask better questions and make positive changes. Correct.

- D** Correct. The teacher, classmates, and Ava connect past ideas with new thinking about art, learning, and government.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

A theme is a life lesson that fits the whole passage.

A turning point can show what a character begins to understand.

I use the change in the story and the details around it as evidence for the theme.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from “A Day That Changed”

A turning point is a moment when something changes and a character learns. Use the storm and Jayden's realization to infer a lesson that fits the whole story. STAAR asks: **What theme does the storm help develop?** Trap to avoid: **Setting or event, not theme.**

This deck teaches **finding a theme from a turning point** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

“I can notice a turning point that helps develop a theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Notice the turning point.

Read the line. Notice what changes and ask what Jayden begins to understand because of it.

“But just before lunch, the conditions began to change.”

I CAN | I can connect a change in the story to a lesson.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose a theme that grows from a turning point.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose the theme from the turning point.

STAAR asks: **What theme does the storm help develop?** Choose a lesson, not the event itself.

“Jayden realized that while the weather had changed throughout the day, the climate where he lived stayed consistent over time.”

A A storm changed the field day. • **B** Weather and climate are science words. • **C** People should observe carefully before making guesses.

I CAN | I can choose the lesson instead of naming the storm or setting.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can show how a turning point supports a theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show the lesson in the change.

Explain how the storm supports this theme: **People should observe carefully before making guesses.**

“Jayden misjudged the weather and assumed the day would continue like this.”

I CAN | I can connect a character's mistake and learning to a life lesson.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write a theme and support it with a turning point.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Own the turning-point theme.

Write a theme for the passage in a full sentence. Use the turning point and Jayden's realization as evidence.

“Jayden thought about how different the morning had been.”

I CAN | I can turn a story event into a whole-text life lesson.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a theme against a setting or event trap."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend against the event trap.

A student wrote this theme: **The storm interrupted field day.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"Soon, light rain began to fall, and teachers quickly moved everyone inside."

I CAN | I can explain why an important event is not automatically a theme.



Find the theme independently.

Answer the question: What theme does the storm help develop? Write the theme and copy two lines that support it.

Answer the STAAR question.
Write a full-sentence theme.
Copy two lines that support the lesson.

I CAN | I can infer a theme from a turning point and support it with text evidence.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE The weather changes from clear and warm to windy, cool, and rainy. This turning point begins Jayden's learning about weather and climate.

CHOOSE C. People should observe carefully before making guesses. A is Setting or event, not theme. B is Topic word, not theme.

SHOW At first Jayden assumes the clear morning will last. Later, he notices that weather can change quickly and realizes that climate stays consistent over time. These details show why people should observe before guessing.

OWN Answers vary. Example: People should observe carefully before making conclusions. Evidence: Jayden assumes clear weather will last, but later learns weather can change quickly and climate takes time to describe.

DEFEND Setting or event, not theme. The storm interrupts field day, but the story uses that event to teach that weather can change and people should observe before making guesses.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Theme: People should observe carefully before making guesses. Evidence: Jayden misjudges the weather at first, and later he realizes that weather can change while climate stays consistent over time.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“Jayden misjudged the weather and assumed the day would continue like this. ... Jayden realized that while the weather had changed throughout the day, the climate where he lived stayed consistent over time. ... After school, the clouds cleared, and the sun returned.”

Which statement best describes a theme of the story?

- A** People should observe carefully before making guesses.
- B** A rainy storm can interrupt a field day.
- C** Weather and climate are words used in science.
- D** Field day should always happen in sunny weather.



THEME

The answer is A.

- A** **People should observe carefully before making guesses. Correct.**
Correct. Jayden first guesses incorrectly, then learns to observe and think about time.
- B** **A rainy storm can interrupt a field day.**
Setting or event, not theme. This describes what happened, not the lesson the story teaches.
- C** **Weather and climate are words used in science.**
Topic word, not theme. This names ideas in the story without stating a life lesson.
- D** **Field day should always happen in sunny weather.**
Not in the text. The story explains weather and climate instead of giving this rule.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

A character's choice can reveal what the character is learning.

A theme is a life lesson supported by the whole passage, not a lesson invented outside it.

I use Jayden's choices and the results of those choices as evidence.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from “A Day That Changed”

Jayden chooses to observe, compare, and think about time instead of guessing. Use his choices and their results to infer a lesson supported by the whole story. STAAR asks: **What theme do Jayden's choices express?** Trap to avoid: **Life lesson not supported by this text.**

This deck teaches **finding theme through a character's choice** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice how a character's choice reveals a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Notice Jayden's choice.

Read the line. Notice the action Jayden chooses and ask what it shows about his new understanding.

"At recess, Jayden looked up at the sky again."

I CAN | I can connect what a character chooses to do with a lesson.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a theme supported by a character's choices."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Choose the lesson in Jayden's choices.

STAAR asks: **What theme do Jayden's choices express?** Pick a lesson that the passage supports.

"He would remember to observe carefully before making guesses about the sky each day."

A People should win every game they play. • **B** Careful observation can lead to better understanding. • **C** Jayden learned about weather and climate.

I CAN | I can reject a life lesson that the text never teaches.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can show how a character's choices support a theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show what the choices teach.

Explain how Jayden's choices support this theme: **Careful observation can lead to better understanding.**

“This time, he noticed the clouds, the wind, and the temperature.”

I CAN | I can use the character's actions and learning as evidence.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write a supported theme from a character's choices.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Own the choice-based theme.

Write a theme for the passage in a full sentence. Include a detail about what Jayden chooses to do.

“Jayden began to understand that both ideas were connected, but they were not the same.”

I CAN | I can explain how a character's learning becomes a life lesson.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

“I can defend a theme with evidence from the text.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Defend against an unsupported lesson.

A student wrote this theme: **People should always become experts before having fun.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

“Field day had not gone as planned, but it helped him learn something important about Earth's changing patterns.”



I can reject a life lesson that the character's choices do not support.



Find the theme independently.

Answer the question: What theme do Jayden's choices express? Write the theme and cite two choices.

Answer the STAAR question.
Write a full-sentence theme.
Name two choices that support it.

I CAN | I can infer a theme from a character's choices and support it with evidence.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE Jayden chooses to observe, compare, and think about time. He no longer trusts one quick guess, so his choice shows that careful thinking leads to better understanding.

CHOOSE B. Careful observation can lead to better understanding. A is Life lesson not supported by this text. C is Topic word, not theme.

SHOW At first Jayden assumes the clear morning will continue. Later he notices clouds, wind, and temperature, and he understands the difference between weather and climate. His change from guessing to observing supports the theme.

OWN Answers vary. Example: Careful observation and comparison can help people understand complicated ideas. Evidence: Jayden studies the sky and later compares weather with climate instead of treating them as the same.

DEFEND Life lesson not supported by this text. Jayden learns to observe weather and climate, not to become an expert before having fun. The proposed lesson adds an idea the passage never teaches.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Theme: Careful observation can lead to better understanding. Evidence: Jayden studies clouds, wind, and temperature, and he compares short-term weather with long-term climate.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“At recess, Jayden looked up at the sky again. This time, he noticed the clouds, the wind, and the temperature. ... Jayden began to understand that both ideas were connected, but they were not the same. ... He would remember to observe carefully before making guesses about the sky each day.”

Which statement best describes a theme of the story?

- A** People should win every game they play.
- B** Careful observation can lead to better understanding.
- C** Jayden learned weather and climate vocabulary.
- D** People should avoid outdoor activities when clouds appear.



THEME

The answer is B.

- A** **People should win every game they play.**
Life lesson not supported by this text. Jayden learns about observing weather, not winning games.
- B** **Careful observation can lead to better understanding. Correct.**
Correct. Jayden changes from guessing to observing, comparing, and thinking about time.
- C** **Jayden learned weather and climate vocabulary.**
Topic word, not theme. This tells what he studied, not the lesson his choices express.
- D** **People should avoid outdoor activities when clouds appear.**
Opposite. The class observes the outdoors, and clouds do not always mean dangerous weather.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

A true statement is not always the best theme for a passage.

A generic moral can fit many stories without explaining this story's important ideas.

I test a theme by matching it to the character's learning and the text's specific details.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from “A Day That Changed”

The passage teaches more than a quick rule about checking the sky. It develops ideas about weather, climate, time, and evidence. STAAR asks: **Why is "Always check the weather" not the best theme?**
Trap to avoid: **Generic moral that fits many stories.**

This deck teaches **testing a theme against a generic moral** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

“I can notice details that make a theme specific to the passage.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Notice the whole lesson.

Read the line. Notice that Jayden learns a science idea about time and patterns, not only a rule about checking the weather.

“To describe climate, we would need information from many years.”

I CAN | I can tell a whole-text theme from a generic moral.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose a specific theme instead of a generic moral."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Choose the specific theme.

STAAR asks: **Why is "Always check the weather" not the best theme?** Choose the lesson that explains the whole passage.

"Scientists study weather information for many years before describing a place's climate."

A Careful use of evidence helps people understand patterns over time. • **B** Always check the weather. • **C** Weather and climate are science topics.

I CAN | I can explain why a true but general rule is not the best theme.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can use evidence to test a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Show why the generic moral falls short.

Explain why **Always check the weather** is not the best theme and support a stronger theme with two details.

"One week of notes helps us describe recent weather."

I CAN | I can explain why a generic moral does not cover the whole passage.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a passage-specific theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Own a specific theme.

Write a theme for the passage in a full sentence. Make it specific enough to explain the lessons about weather, climate, and time.

"Jayden looked back at his field day notes."

I CAN | I can write a theme that is stronger than a generic moral.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

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

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend against the generic moral trap.

A student wrote this theme: **Always check the weather.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"A single rainy day does not mean the climate has changed."

I CAN | I can explain what a generic answer leaves out.



Find the specific theme independently.

Answer the question: Why is "Always check the weather" not the best theme? Write a stronger theme and cite two details.

Answer the STAAR question.

Write a specific theme.

Use two details to show why the generic moral falls short.

I CAN | I can reject a generic moral and support a more specific theme with evidence.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE The line adds the idea of long-term evidence.

It shows that the passage teaches how weather and climate differ, not only that people should check the sky.

CHOOSE A. Careful use of evidence helps people understand patterns over time. B is Generic moral that fits many stories. C is Topic word, not theme.

SHOW The class learns that one week of notes describes weather, while climate needs information from many years. These details show that the passage teaches readers to use time and evidence to understand patterns, not only to check the weather.

OWN Answers vary. Example: Comparing observations over time helps people understand patterns. Jayden compares weather notes with climate patterns, and Ms. Rios explains that climate takes many years to describe.

DEFEND Generic moral that fits many stories.

Checking the weather is reasonable advice, but this passage specifically teaches that weather changes quickly while climate describes patterns over a long time.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Theme: Comparing observations over time helps people understand patterns. Evidence: one week of notes shows recent weather, while climate requires information from many years.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“A single rainy day does not mean the climate has changed. ... One week of notes helps us describe recent weather. ... To describe climate, we would need information from many years.”

Which statement best describes a theme of the story?

- A** One week of notes can explain every climate pattern.
- B** Always check the weather before leaving home.
- C** The class kept weather journals for one week.
- D** Comparing weather observations with long-term patterns helps people understand climate.



THEME

The answer is D.

A One week of notes can explain every climate pattern.

Too broad. The story says climate requires information from many years, not one week of notes.

B Always check the weather before leaving home.

Generic moral that fits many stories. It is reasonable advice, but it misses the lesson about weather, climate, and time.

C The class kept weather journals for one week.

Topic word, not theme. This names an event instead of a life lesson.

D Comparing weather observations with long-term patterns helps people understand climate. Correct.

Correct. The class compares short-term weather notes with long-term patterns to understand climate.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

A strong theme response states a life lesson and proves it with text evidence.

Evidence should come from important details that develop the message, not just nearby topic words.

I explain how each detail supports the theme so my answer is convincing.

THIS WEEK’S FOCUS

Theme

from “A Day That Changed”

Write a theme about how careful observation and evidence help Jayden understand weather and climate. Defend it with two details. STAAR asks:

Short response: What is a theme of the story? Defend it with two details. Trap to avoid: **Topic-adjacent statement as message.**

This deck teaches **defending a theme with two details** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

“I can notice a detail that supports a theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Notice evidence for the message.

Read the line. Notice that it names a way of thinking, which can support a theme about careful evidence.

“Instead, he knew to observe, compare, and think about time.”

I CAN | I can tell a supporting detail from a complete theme statement.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose a theme that I can defend with evidence.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose a defensible theme.

The short response asks: **What is a theme of the story? Defend it with two details.** Choose the statement that can be proved by two important details.

“Jayden reviewed his field day notes.”

A Jayden kept notes in a notebook. • **B** Careful observation and evidence help people understand patterns. • **C** The weather was warm and sunny sometimes.

I CAN | I can avoid a topic-adjacent statement and choose a global lesson.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can defend a theme with two details and explanations.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show two pieces of evidence.

Defend this theme with two details: **Careful observation and evidence help people understand patterns.**

“The line helped him remember that climate is measured over many years.”

I CAN | I can explain how separate details work together to prove a message.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write and defend a theme with evidence.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Own the evidence response.

Write a theme for the story in a full sentence. Then defend it with two details and explain each one.

“People use weather to make daily choices, such as carrying an umbrella or wearing a jacket.”

I CAN | I can state a global lesson and explain two supporting details.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can explain why a topic statement is not a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend against a topic-adjacent answer.

A student wrote this theme: **The weather can be sunny, cloudy, and rainy.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"They show the weather for this week,"

I CAN | I can defend a life lesson against a topic-adjacent statement.



Write and defend the theme.

Answer the short response: What is a theme of the story? Defend it with two details.

Write a full-sentence theme.
Use two details from the story.
Explain how each detail supports the theme.

I CAN | I can write a theme and defend it with two explained details.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE The line shows Jayden's new way of **thinking**. It supports the theme that careful observation and comparison help people understand patterns, but the line itself is evidence, not the whole theme.

CHOOSE B. Careful observation and evidence help people understand patterns. A and C are Topic word, not theme answers.

SHOW Jayden observes clouds, wind, and **temperature instead of only asking whether the sky is sunny**. He also learns that climate is measured over many years. These details show that evidence reveals patterns.

OWN **Answers vary.** Example: Careful observation and long-term evidence help people make better choices. Evidence: Jayden observes weather details instead of guessing, and Ms. Rios explains that people use climate information when making choices.

DEFEND **Topic-adjacent statement as message.** The answer lists weather conditions, but it does not tell a life lesson. The story teaches readers to use observations and long-term evidence to understand patterns.

YOUR TURN **Answers vary.** Theme: Careful observation and long-term evidence help people understand patterns. Evidence: Jayden observes the sky's details, and the class learns that climate requires information from many years.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“Jayden felt warm sunlight on his arms. ... The line helped him remember that climate is measured over many years. ... People use weather to make daily choices, such as carrying an umbrella or wearing a jacket.”

Which statement best answers the short-response question, What is a theme of the story? Defend it with two details.

- A** The weather includes clouds, wind, and temperature.
- B** Jayden learned about weather and climate at school.
- C** Careful observation and evidence help people understand patterns.
- D** People should stay inside whenever the weather changes.



THEME

The answer is C.

- A** **The weather includes clouds, wind, and temperature.**
Topic-adjacent statement as message. This lists topic details but does not state a life lesson.
- B** **Jayden learned about weather and climate at school.**
Topic word, not theme. This summarizes the subject instead of explaining what the story teaches.
- C** **Careful observation and evidence help people understand patterns. Correct.**
Correct. Jayden observes weather details, and the class compares short-term notes with long-term climate patterns.
- D** **People should stay inside whenever the weather changes.**
Not in the text. The class goes outside to observe, and the story never teaches this rule.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

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

The theme is the life lesson or message the poem teaches in a full sentence.

The test may use a word from the lines as a trap, so I prove the theme with details from the whole poem.

THIS WEEK’S FOCUS

Theme

from “The Roads Between Us”

This poem is about **connections across distances**. A **theme** is a lesson that fits the whole poem, such as **sharing across distances can help people understand one another**. STAAR asks: **What theme does the poet express in the poem?** Trap this week: **Word association from the lines**.

This deck teaches **finding a poem's theme the STAAR way** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

“I can notice details that hint at a poem's theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Notice the poem's big idea.

Read the lines. Notice how the poet shows things and ideas moving from place to place. What bigger lesson might those details suggest?

“A basket, story, song, or seed Can travel far to meet a need.”

I CAN | I can notice when a poem points to a lesson bigger than one object.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose a theme that fits a whole poem.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose the poem's theme.

STAAR asks: **What theme does the poet express in the poem?** Choose the lesson that fits the roads, rivers, deserts, and water together.

“For when two different pathways meet, New thoughts can travel with our feet.”

A Rivers, deserts, and ships • **B** People should never leave home • **C** Sharing across distances can help people understand one another

I CAN | I can choose a life lesson and avoid a word association trap.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can show how several poem details support a theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show the theme with evidence.

Explain how the poem supports the theme that sharing across distances can help people understand one another. Use details from more than one stanza.

“Neighbors meet and goods are shared, And friendships grow because they cared.”

I CAN | I can connect evidence from different parts of a poem to its lesson.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write a theme in my own words.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Own the poem's message.

Write a theme for the whole poem in a full sentence. Make it a life lesson, not a list of roads or goods.

“A road is more than dirt or stone; It reaches farther than we've known.”

I CAN | I can turn a poem's repeated details into a global life lesson.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

“I can defend a strong theme and reject a word trap.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Defend against the trap.

A student wrote this theme: **Gold, salt, and pottery travel on roads.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

“New thoughts can travel with our feet.”

I CAN | I can explain why a choice with poem words may still miss the theme.



Find the theme on your own.

Return to the poem. Write the topic in one or two words. Then write a theme in a full sentence and copy two lines that support it.

Go back to the poem.
Write the topic in one or two words.
Write the theme in a full sentence.
Copy two lines that support it.

I CAN | I can infer a theme and prove it with evidence from a longer poem.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE The basket, story, song, and seed all travel to meet a need. These details hint that sharing can connect people and help them.

CHOOSE C. Sharing across distances can help people understand one another. A is Word association from the lines. B is Opposite of the poem's message.

SHOW The poem says neighbors meet and share goods, and it shows travelers sharing news, views, and stories. These details support the theme that connections spread understanding and can build relationships.

OWN Answers vary. Example: Connections between people can carry ideas and understanding across great distances.

DEFEND Word association from the lines. Gold, salt, and pottery appear in the poem, but the poem's message is about ideas and connections traveling between people.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Topic: connections. Theme: Connections can carry ideas and understanding between people. Lines: Neighbors meet and goods are shared, And friendships grow because they cared.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“Neighbors meet and goods are shared, And friendships grow because they cared. ... For when two different pathways meet, New thoughts can travel with our feet.”

Which statement best describes a theme of the poem?

- A** Sharing across distances can help people understand one another.
- B** People should travel only by ship.
- C** A traveler should carry a basket.
- D** Gold and salt are valuable goods.



THEME

The answer is A.

A

Sharing across distances can help people understand one another. Correct.

Correct. The poem shows goods, news, stories, and ideas moving between people and building connections.

B

People should travel only by ship.

Opposite. The poem shows rivers, deserts, roads, and water as ways people connect.

C

A traveler should carry a basket.

Too narrow. A basket is one detail, not the lesson of the whole poem.

D

Gold and salt are valuable goods.

Word association from the lines. These are poem details, not the message they help express.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

Images are word pictures that help readers imagine an idea.

A theme is a life lesson that fits the whole poem, not one image.

I can connect river and road images to the message they build about people and ideas.

THIS WEEK’S FOCUS

Theme

from “The Roads Between Us”

The river and road images show **connections** that move goods, stories, knowledge, and people. A theme is a full-sentence lesson supported by the whole poem. STAAR asks: **How do the river and road images support the theme?** Trap this week: **Topic word, not theme.**

This deck teaches **using imagery to prove a poem's theme** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice images that support a poem's theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Notice the images that carry ideas.

Read the lines. Picture the river and pathway. Notice what travels along them and ask what that movement teaches.

"A river bends, a pathway turns, A traveler watches, listens, learns."

I CAN | I can connect a word picture to the bigger lesson it helps show.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can explain how images support a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Choose what the images support.

STAAR asks: **How do the river and road images support the theme?** Choose the statement that explains their message, not just their topic.

"A road is more than where we roam; It links a distant place to home."

A Rivers and roads • **B** Travel can connect distant people and carry ideas between them • **C** Ships are made of wood

I CAN | I can skip a topic word and choose the message shown by the images.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can use image details as evidence for a theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show what the images mean.

Explain how the river and road images support the theme that travel can connect distant people and carry ideas. Use two details.

“It links a distant place to home.”

I CAN | I can explain what a repeated image means across a poem.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write a theme and connect it to imagery.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Own the image-based theme.

Write a theme for the whole poem. Then explain in one sentence how the river or road image supports it.

“Ideas can journey with our feet.”

I CAN | I can explain a poem's message without confusing its topic words with its theme.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

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

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend against the topic trap.

A student wrote this theme: **Roads and rivers**. Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"Our highways, railways, ports, and skies Still keep communities tied."

I CAN | I can explain why an image name is not a complete theme.



Find the message on your own.

Return to the poem. Write its topic in one or two words, a theme in a full sentence, and one river or road image that supports your theme.

Go back to the poem.
Write the topic in one or two words.
Write the theme in a full sentence.
Name one river or road image that supports it.

I CAN | I can infer a theme and explain how imagery supports it.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE The bending river and turning pathway make travel seem active and connected. The traveler learns while moving, hinting that contact with others can bring new ideas.

CHOOSE B. Travel can connect distant people and carry ideas between them. A is Topic word, not theme. C is Not in the text's message.

SHOW The road image links a distant place to home, while the riverways, markets, ports, and skies carry goods and knowledge. Together, these images show that routes connect communities and spread ideas.

OWN Answers vary. Example: Connections can carry ideas between communities, and travel can change how people understand one another.

DEFEND Topic word, not theme. Roads and rivers are subjects and images in the poem, but the lesson is about how routes connect people and carry ideas.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Topic: connection. Theme: Travel can connect communities and carry ideas. Image: A road links a distant place to home.



THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“A road is more than where we roam; It links a distant place to home. ... Our highways, railways, ports, and skies Still keep communities tied.”

How do the river and road images support the theme of the poem?

- A** They show that every journey is easy.
- B** They show that travel can connect people and carry ideas between communities.
- C** They prove that roads are more useful than rivers.
- D** They name the main topic of transportation.



THEME

The answer is B.

- A They show that every journey is easy.**
Opposite. The poem mentions long trips, storms, conflict, loss, and difficult journeys.
- B They show that travel can connect people and carry ideas between communities. Correct.**
Correct. Roads, rivers, ports, and skies link places while goods, knowledge, and stories move between people.
- C They prove that roads are more useful than rivers.**
Not in the text. The poem presents many routes as ways communities can connect.
- D They name the main topic of transportation.**
Topic word, not theme. Transportation names the subject but does not explain the lesson about connection.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

A stanza is a group of lines that works like a paragraph in a poem.

A theme across stanzas grows as new examples add, deepen, or change the message.

I can use evidence from the beginning, middle, and end to prove the poem's whole lesson.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from “What We Carry Forward”

The poem shows that people can carry ideas forward while questioning and improving them. STAAR asks:

How does the theme build from stanza to stanza?

Trap this week: **Describes one stanza only.**

This deck teaches **tracing a theme across stanzas** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice the first part of a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Notice the poem's beginning idea.

Read the stanza. Notice how an old rule, song, or story can travel into new hands. Save this first idea to compare with later stanzas.

"A song is sung, a story told; New hands can carry what is old."

I CAN | I can track an idea as it develops across a poem.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose a theme that grows across stanzas.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose the developing theme.

STAAR asks: **How does the theme build from stanza to stanza?** Choose the lesson that can include the poem's examples and its final advice.

“We question, strengthen, change, and mend, Then pass our learning to a friend.”

A People should remember old songs. • **B** The Renaissance changed art. • **C** People can learn from the past while improving what they pass on

I CAN | I can choose the whole message instead of an answer about one example.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can show how stanzas add to a theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show how the theme grows.

Explain how the poem builds its theme from an inherited idea to a thoughtful choice about the future. Use evidence from at least two parts.

“We study history so we know What should remain and what should go.”

I CAN | I can explain how the beginning, middle, and ending work together.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write a theme that fits the whole poem.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Own the whole-poem theme.

Write a theme for the whole poem. In a second sentence, explain how one early stanza and one late stanza work together.

“We keep the wisdom, face mistakes, And choose the future that each choice makes.”

I CAN

I can explain how an ending deepens an idea introduced at the beginning.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend a whole-poem theme against a one-stanza trap."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend against the one-stanza trap.

A student wrote this theme: **The Renaissance helped artists study ancient skills.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"They questioned, studied, changed, and tried, Then carried older thought outside."

I CAN | I can explain why one example cannot stand for the poem's entire message.



Trace the theme on your own.

Return to the poem. Write a full-sentence theme, then copy one line from the first half and one line from the last half that show how the theme develops.

Go back to the poem.
Write the theme in a full sentence.
Copy one line from the first half.
Copy one line from the last half.

I CAN | I can trace a theme from the beginning of a poem to its ending.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE The opening introduces the idea that people inherit knowledge and traditions from earlier generations. Later stanzas will show that carrying something forward can also involve changing it.

CHOOSE C. People can learn from the past while improving what they pass on. A is Too narrow. B is Describes one stanza only.

SHOW Early stanzas show people carrying rules, songs, skills, and books forward. Later stanzas warn that some customs and laws were harmful, so the final stanzas teach readers to question, repair, and choose wisely.

OWN Answers vary. Example: We should learn from the past, question what is wrong, and improve what we give to the future.

DEFEND Describes one stanza only. The Renaissance is one example of learning from the past, but the whole poem also discusses law, tradition, scholarship, music, mistakes, and future choices.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Theme: We should learn from the past and thoughtfully improve what we pass on. Lines: New hands can carry what is old. We keep the wisdom, face mistakes, And choose the future that each choice makes.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“We study history so we know What should remain and what should go. ... We question, strengthen, change, and mend, Then pass our learning to a friend.”

Which statement best describes a theme of the poem?

A People should remember old songs.

B The Renaissance changed art.

C People can learn from the past while improving what they pass on.

D Learning history is useful for school.



THEME

The answer is C.

A People should remember old songs.

Too narrow. Songs are one kind of legacy, but the poem covers many kinds of learning and choice.

B The Renaissance changed art.

Describes one stanza only. The Renaissance is one example, not the lesson of all nineteen stanzas.

C People can learn from the past while improving what they pass on. Correct.

Correct. The poem shows people carrying ideas forward, questioning mistakes, and choosing what to keep or change.

D Learning history is useful for school.

Too narrow. The poem connects history to laws, culture, choices, and future generations, not just school.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

A strong theme is a global life lesson supported by the whole poem.

Evidence can show what people inherited, questioned, changed, and shared.

I can defend the strongest theme by checking every part of the poem, including its warnings and final question.

THIS WEEK’S FOCUS

Theme

from “What We Carry Forward”

The whole poem teaches that we should learn from the past, question what we inherit, and help shape the future. STAAR asks: **Which theme is best supported by the whole poem, and why?** Trap this week: **Life lesson not supported by this text.**

This deck teaches **defending the strongest theme** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

“I can notice the choice at the heart of a poem's theme.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Notice the poem's central choice.

Read the lines. Notice that the poem does not tell readers to keep everything old. It asks them to make thoughtful choices about what moves forward.

“We do not carry all things blind; We question, learn, and change our mind.”

I CAN | I can notice when a poem asks readers to think before accepting a tradition.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose the strongest theme and defend it with evidence.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose and defend the strongest theme.

STAAR asks: **Which theme is best supported by the whole poem, and why?** Choose the lesson that matches the poem's history, culture, warnings, and ending.

“The past can offer us a map, But we decide the forward path.”

A Everything from the past should be preserved exactly. • **B** We should learn from the past and shape the future wisely • **C** People should enjoy songs about history

I CAN | I can choose the lesson that fits the whole poem, including its cautions.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can defend a theme with evidence from the whole poem.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show why the strongest theme fits.

Explain why the whole poem supports a theme about learning from the past and shaping the future wisely. Use evidence from two different sections.

“We keep what's wise, repair what's wrong, and add our voices to the song.”

I CAN | I can use both supporting and warning details to prove a theme.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write and defend a theme that fits a complex poem.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Own your strongest theme.

Write the strongest theme for the whole poem. Then name two details that make your theme stronger than a simple lesson about preserving history.

“The past may place things in our hands, But we help shape where the future stands.”

I CAN | I can include a poem's praise, warning, and final choice in my theme thinking.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can reject a life lesson that the text does not support."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend against an unsupported lesson.

A student wrote this theme: **People should follow every tradition because old ways are always best.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"Not everything that's passed along Deserves to stay because it's long."



I can defend a theme by checking it against the poem's whole message.



Defend the theme on your own.

Return to the poem. Write its strongest theme in a full sentence. Then copy one line that supports preserving knowledge and one line that supports questioning it.

Go back to the poem.
Write the strongest theme in a full sentence.
Copy one line about preserving.
Copy one line about questioning or changing.

I CAN | I can defend a whole-poem theme with evidence that includes a warning.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE The lines show that carrying the past requires questioning and learning. The poem's message is not to accept everything blindly, but to choose wisely.

CHOOSE B. We should learn from the past and shape the future wisely. A is Life lesson not supported by this text. C is Too narrow.

SHOW The poem shows that old laws, skills, books, songs, and hopes can guide people, but it also names harmful customs and missing voices. The final advice is to keep what is wise, repair what is wrong, and add new voices.

OWN Answers vary. Example: We should learn from the past, question what is harmful, and use our choices to shape a better future.

DEFEND Life lesson not supported by this text. The poem values useful knowledge, but it clearly says some customs and laws caused harm and must be questioned or changed.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Theme: We should learn from the past, question what is harmful, and shape the future wisely. Lines: A copied book, protected well, Held more than words that ink could tell. We do not carry all things blind; We question, learn, and change our mind.



THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“The past can offer us a map, But we decide the forward path. ... We keep what's wise, repair what's wrong, and add our voices to the song.”

Which statement best describes a theme of the poem?

- A** People should study the past, question what they inherit, and shape the future wisely.
- B** People should preserve every tradition exactly as it was.
- C** Songs can help people feel that they belong.
- D** History is important.



THEME

The answer is A.

- A** **People should study the past, question what they inherit, and shape the future wisely. Correct.**
Correct. The whole poem shows learning from the past, examining evidence, repairing harm, and choosing what to share forward.
- B** **People should preserve every tradition exactly as it was.**
Life lesson not supported by this text. The poem says some customs and laws were harmful and should change.
- C** **Songs can help people feel that they belong.**
Too narrow. Songs are one example within a poem about many kinds of inheritance and future choices.
- D** **History is important.**
Topic word, not theme. This names a broad topic but does not state the poem's specific lesson about using history wisely.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

A shared theme is a life lesson that both texts support.

Two poems may use different examples to develop one connected message.

I can compare evidence from both poems before choosing a shared theme.

THIS WEEK’S FOCUS

Theme

from “The Roads Between Us and What We Carry Forward”

The two poems show that connections carry ideas, culture, and choices across time and distance.

STAAR asks: **What theme do both poems share?**

Trap this week: **One poem only, too narrow.**

This deck teaches **comparing a theme across two poems** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice an idea that may connect two poems."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Notice what travels in both poems.

Read the line. Notice that roads and pathways carry more than objects. Hold this idea while you look for a matching idea in the second poem.

"But every road can carry more Than boxes stacked from floor to floor."

I CAN | I can look for a shared theme instead of a detail from one poem.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose a theme that both poems support.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose the shared theme.

STAAR asks: **What theme do both poems share?** Choose the life lesson supported by the roads poem and the poem about carrying ideas forward.

“It carries language, thought, and art, And pieces of the human heart.”

A Connections can carry ideas and culture that shape people over time. • **B** The Caddo used rivers to trade pots and baskets. • **C** People should travel on roads to learn about history.

I CAN | I can choose a shared lesson instead of a detail from one poem.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can prove a shared theme with two texts.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show how both poems support it.

Explain how each poem develops the shared theme. Use one evidence line from the roads poem and one from the poem about carrying ideas forward.

“A student listened, read, and learned, Then carried knowledge when returned.”

I CAN | I can connect evidence from separate poems to one life lesson.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write and support a theme shared by two poems.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Own the shared theme.

Write a full-sentence theme for both poems. Then explain how one detail from each poem supports your theme.

“The past may place things in our hands, But we help shape where the future stands.”

I CAN | I can use two texts to defend one global life lesson.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can reject a theme that fits only one poem."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend against a narrow choice.

A student wrote this theme: **Trade routes helped people move goods across the land.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"A road is more than dirt or stone; Its greatest reach may stay unknown."

I CAN | I can explain why a true detail may still be too narrow for two texts.



Defend the shared theme on your own.

Return to both poems. Write a shared theme in a full sentence. Copy one line from each poem that proves the theme.

Go back to both poems.
Write a shared theme in a full sentence.
Copy one line from each poem that supports it.

I CAN | I can defend a shared theme with evidence from both poems.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE The first poem says that roads carry language, thought, and art, not only goods. This gives us an idea to compare with the second poem's examples of ideas and traditions traveling forward.

CHOOSE A. Connections can carry ideas and culture that shape people over time. B is One poem only, too narrow. C is a life lesson the poems do not support.

SHOW The roads poem shows pathways carrying language, thought, and art. The second poem shows a student carrying knowledge forward. Together, they show that connections help ideas and culture reach new people and times.

OWN Answers vary. Example: Connections can carry knowledge and culture forward, and people help decide how those ideas shape the future. The roads carry thought and art, while the second poem shows people choosing what to preserve or change.

DEFEND One poem only, too narrow. The statement describes trade in the roads poem, but it leaves out the second poem's ideas about knowledge, culture, and choices carried forward.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Theme: Connections can carry ideas and culture forward, shaping people across time and distance. Lines: It carries language, thought, and art, And pieces of the human heart. A student listened, read, and learned, Then carried knowledge when returned.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“It carries language, thought, and art, And pieces of the human heart. ... We do not carry all things blind; We question, learn, and change our mind.”

Which statement best describes a theme shared by both poems?

- A** Trade routes help people move goods from place to place.
- B** Connections can carry ideas and culture forward, shaping people over time.
- C** People should preserve every tradition exactly as it was.
- D** Roads and rivers are useful ways to travel.



THEME

The answer is B.

- A Trade routes help people move goods from place to place.**
One poem only, too narrow. It describes goods in the roads poem but not the second poem's larger lesson.
- B Connections can carry ideas and culture forward, shaping people over time. Correct.**
Correct. Both poems show ideas, knowledge, culture, and choices moving to new people and future times.
- C People should preserve every tradition exactly as it was.**
Not in the text. The second poem says people should question and change harmful traditions.
- D Roads and rivers are useful ways to travel.**
Topic word, not theme. This names ways to travel instead of stating the shared life lesson.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

A poem's theme and an informational text's message can express a related life lesson.

A topic tells what a text discusses, but a message tells what readers should understand.

I can compare the big ideas in two genres and support the connection with evidence.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from “What We Carry Forward and What Shapes a Society? Ideas, Choices, and Culture”

The poem and the informational text show that people can use ideas from the past to make thoughtful changes. STAAR asks: **Both are big life lessons: how does the poem's theme connect to the message of the informational text?** Trap this week: **Topic-adjacent statement as message.**

This deck teaches **connecting a literary theme to an informational message** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a poem's big life lesson."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Notice the poem's lesson about the past.

Read the line from the poem. Notice that carrying the past includes making choices. Keep that idea ready to compare with the informational text.

"The past may place things in our hands, But we help shape where the future stands."

I CAN | I can separate a poem's theme from a topic word.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose a message that connects two texts.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose the connected message.

The poem's theme and the informational text's message should connect. Choose the statement that fits both the poem and the article about ideas, choices, and culture.

“People can study old ideas, reconsider them, and apply them in new situations.”

A People in the Renaissance studied ancient Greece and Rome. • **B** The past can help people make wiser choices for the future. • **C** History includes old ideas and important names.

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



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can connect a poem's theme to an article's message.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show the connection across genres.

Explain how the poem's theme connects to the informational text's message. Use one line from the poem and one sentence from the article.

“They studied, questioned, then combined old learning with a changing mind.”

I CAN | I can explain how two genres teach a related life lesson.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write and defend a connection between two texts.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Own the connected life lesson.

Write a life lesson supported by both texts. Then explain how the poem and the informational text each develop it.

“The past does not have to remain behind us.”

I CAN | I can use evidence from a poem and an article to support one lesson.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

“I can reject a topic statement that is not a message.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Defend against a nearby topic statement.

A student wrote this message: **The texts are about history and old ideas.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

“An idea does not need to solve every problem immediately to become important.”

I CAN | I can explain why a nearby topic is not a supported life lesson.



Connect the texts on your own.

Write a life lesson shared by the poem and the informational text. Copy one line from the poem and one sentence from the article that support your connection.

Go back to both texts.
Write a shared life lesson.
Copy one line from the poem.
Copy one sentence from the article.

I CAN | I can defend a cross-genre message with two pieces of evidence.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE The poem teaches that people receive ideas and traditions from the past, but they still choose how to use, repair, or change them for the future.

CHOOSE B. The past can help people make wiser choices for the future. A is Too narrow. C is Topic-adjacent statement as message.

SHOW The poem says people should decide what to preserve, question, or repair. The article says people can study old ideas, reconsider them, and apply them in new situations. Both show that the past can guide better choices.

OWN Answers vary. Example: People should study the past, question what they inherit, and use useful ideas to make thoughtful changes. The poem describes preserving and repairing; the article shows old ideas used in new ways.

DEFEND Topic-adjacent statement as message. The statement names subjects in both texts, but it does not explain the lesson that people should study, question, and use ideas thoughtfully.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Lesson: People should learn from the past and use its ideas thoughtfully to shape the future. Lines: We keep what's wise, repair what's wrong, and add our voices to the song. People can study old ideas, reconsider them, and apply them in new situations.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

**“The past may place things in our hands, But we help shape where the future stands. ...
People can study old ideas, reconsider them, and apply them in new situations.”**

Which statement best connects the poem's theme to the informational text's message?

- A** History is made of old ideas and important names.
- B** The Renaissance brought back interest in ancient Greece and Rome.
- C** People can learn from the past and use ideas thoughtfully to shape the future.
- D** People should repeat old ideas exactly as earlier generations used them.



THEME

The answer is C.

History is made of old ideas and important names.

- A** Topic-adjacent statement as message. It names subjects from the texts but gives no lesson about what people should do.

The Renaissance brought back interest in ancient Greece and Rome.

- B** Too narrow. This is one example from the informational text and does not connect to the poem's whole theme.

People can learn from the past and use ideas thoughtfully to shape the future. Correct.

- C** Correct. The poem teaches wise choosing, and the article shows people reconsidering old ideas and applying them in new situations.

People should repeat old ideas exactly as earlier generations used them.

- D** Opposite. Both texts show questioning, changing, and applying ideas rather than copying everything exactly.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

A shared theme is a life lesson that two complete stories both support.

The strongest comparison explains how different events develop a related idea.

I can use evidence from each story to prove a theme rather than choose a generic moral.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Theme

from “**Dream and A Day That Changed**”

The two stories show that careful attention helps people understand more and make thoughtful choices. STAAR asks: **Which theme connects both stories, and what evidence proves it?** Trap this week: **Generic moral that fits many stories.**

This deck teaches **finding a theme across two stories** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

“I can notice a lesson that may connect two stories.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Notice the narrator learning to pay attention.

Read the line from Dream. Notice how listening and observing help the narrator understand a larger idea. Compare that kind of attention with Jayden's learning in the second story.

“Maybe I could simply listen, observe, and remember.”

I CAN | I can compare how different characters learn through attention.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose a theme supported by two stories.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose the theme that connects both stories.

STAAR asks: **Which theme connects both stories, and what evidence proves it?** Choose the lesson that fits the child's experience in Dream and Jayden's science lesson.

“Instead, he knew to observe, compare, and think about time.”

A Careful attention helps people understand and choose wisely. • **B** People should always be kind to everyone they meet. • **C** Weather changes quickly during a school day.

I CAN | I can choose a connected lesson instead of a generic moral or one-story detail.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can prove a shared theme with evidence from two stories.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show what both characters learn.

Explain how the two stories develop the same theme. Use one detail from Dream and one detail from A Day That Changed.

“Some of his words were unfamiliar to me.”

I CAN | I can explain how different events support one connected lesson.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write and defend a theme shared by two stories.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Own the connected theme.

Write a full-sentence theme for both stories. Then explain how one detail from each story proves it.

“Those did not seem like enormous actions, but maybe they were important anyway.”

I CAN

I can connect literary evidence and science-story evidence to one lesson.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

“I can reject a generic moral that does not use both stories.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Defend against a generic moral.

A student wrote this theme: **People should always do their best.** Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

“Field day had changed, but it had helped him understand an important science idea.”



I can explain why a pleasant rule may still be weak evidence-based thinking.



Defend the shared theme on your own.

Return to both stories. Write a shared theme, then copy one line from each story that proves careful attention leads to understanding.

Go back to both stories.
Write the shared theme.
Copy one line from Dream.
Copy one line from A Day That Changed.

I CAN | I can defend a shared theme with evidence from two different stories.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE The narrator realizes that listening, observing, and remembering can help a person understand an important moment. The second story also shows Jayden learning by observing details and comparing information over time.

CHOOSE A. Careful attention helps people understand and choose wisely. B is Generic moral that fits many stories. C is Too narrow because it fits only the science story.

SHOW In Dream, the narrator listens to Dr. King and Mama, then sees how small choices can help a dream. In A Day That Changed, Jayden observes weather and compares it with climate. Both show that attention leads to understanding.

OWN Answers vary. Example: People should pay close attention because listening and observing can help them understand situations and make wiser choices. The narrator listens before acting, and Jayden learns to observe and compare.

DEFEND Generic moral that fits many stories. Doing your best sounds positive, but it does not explain the narrator's listening and the character's careful observation in these stories.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Theme: Careful attention can help people understand more and make wiser choices. Lines: Maybe I could simply listen, observe, and remember. Instead, he knew to observe, compare, and think about time.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“Maybe I could simply listen, observe, and remember. ... Instead, he knew to observe, compare, and think about time.”

Which statement best describes a theme shared by both stories?

- A** Careful attention helps people understand and choose wisely.
- B** People should always do their best, even when a task is difficult.
- C** Weather can change quickly during a school day.
- D** Children can help make their communities more welcoming.



THEME

The answer is A.

Careful attention helps people understand and choose wisely. Correct.

- A** Correct. One story values listening before acting, and the other shows observation and comparison leading to better understanding.

B People should always do their best, even when a task is difficult.

- B** Generic moral that fits many stories. It sounds positive but does not explain the specific shared evidence.

C Weather can change quickly during a school day.

- C** One story only, too narrow. It describes an important fact in the science story but not Dream.

D Children can help make their communities more welcoming.

- D** Too narrow. This is one idea in Dream and does not explain Jayden's lesson about observation and time.



THEME

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

A strong theme is a global life lesson, not a topic word or title.

A written defense states the lesson and explains how several details support it.

I can choose a theme from a text I read this year and prove it with evidence.

THIS WEEK’S FOCUS

Theme

from “**Student choice: Looking Back to Move Forward or The Roads Between Us**”

In the capstone story, looking back helps people ask better questions and move forward. STAAR asks:

Short response: State a theme from a text read this year and defend it with evidence. Trap this week: **Topic word, not theme.**

This deck teaches **defending a theme in writing** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

“I can notice a global life lesson in a story.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Notice the story's final lesson.

Read the ending. Notice that looking back is not the final action. The story explains how the past can help people think and change.

“Sometimes, looking back can help people move forward.”

I CAN | I can separate a theme from a topic word.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose a global theme instead of a topic word.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Choose the strongest theme.

For the capstone, choose the full-sentence life lesson that explains Ava's changing understanding of the painting and the past.

“The past could become a guide, not because it had every answer, but because it helped people ask better questions.”

A The School of Athens is a painting by Raphael. • **B** Ava learns about the Renaissance in class. • **C** People can study the past and create new ideas.

I CAN | I can choose the lesson that explains the whole story.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can defend a theme with evidence from across a story.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Show how the theme develops.

Defend the theme with evidence from the beginning, middle, and ending. Explain how Ava's thinking changes.

“The Renaissance was not only about copying the past.”

I CAN | I can explain how beginning, middle, and ending details build a lesson.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write a theme and defend it with evidence.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“infer basic themes supported by text evidence”

Own the written defense.

Write a theme from the story in one sentence. In two more sentences, use evidence to explain how the story supports it.

“Ava realized that old ideas could become useful again.”

I CAN | I can build a short written response that explains a whole-story lesson.



THEME

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can reject a topic word and replace it with a theme."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"infer basic themes supported by text evidence"

Defend against a topic answer.

A student answered the theme question with: **The Renaissance**. Explain why it is a trap and name the trap.

"It showed more than a group of people."

I CAN | I can explain why a subject is not a complete life lesson.



Write the capstone response on your own.

Return to Looking Back to Move Forward. State a theme in a full sentence. Then copy two details and explain how each supports your theme.

Go back to the story.
State a full-sentence theme.
Copy two details.
Explain how each detail supports the theme.

I CAN | I can defend a theme in a short written response.

THEME

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE The story teaches that studying the past can help people make new ideas and better choices for the future.

CHOOSE C. People can study the past and create new ideas. A and B are Topic word, not theme answers.

SHOW At first, Ava sees a group of people in a building. In the middle, she learns that Renaissance thinkers used old ideas to create something new. At the end, she understands that the past can guide better questions and forward movement.

OWN Answers vary. Example: People can study the past and create new ideas. Ava learns that Renaissance thinkers used old knowledge without simply copying it. At the end, she understands that the past can guide people forward.

DEFEND Topic word, not theme. The Renaissance is the historical topic of the story, but it does not tell what people can learn about using the past to move forward.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Theme: People can study the past to ask better questions and create new ideas. Evidence: The Renaissance was not only about copying the past. The past can become a guide, not because it had every answer, but because it helped people ask better questions.

THEME

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT.

“The past could become a guide, not because it had every answer, but because it helped people ask better questions. ... Sometimes, looking back can help people move forward.”

Which statement best describes a theme of the story?

- A** The Renaissance was an important period in European history.
- B** Raphael painted The School of Athens.
- C** Learning can happen when people share different ideas.
- D** People can study the past to ask better questions and create new ideas.



THEME

The answer is D.

- A The Renaissance was an important period in European history.**
Topic word, not theme. It names a subject and gives no life lesson about what people should learn or do.
- B Raphael painted The School of Athens.**
Not in the text. The story says Raphael painted it, but this fact is not the story's global lesson.
- C Learning can happen when people share different ideas.**
Too narrow. This is one detail in the story, while the whole text develops a larger lesson about using the past to move forward.
- D People can study the past to ask better questions and create new ideas. Correct.**
Correct. Ava learns that old ideas can guide new thinking, art, questions, and choices without being copied blindly.

