

THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC.

Student Interactive Workbook

Grade 4

Cluster 2 - Modules 1 to 4

Module 1: Growing the Tree

Module 2: Writing Thesis (Central Idea) Statements

Module 3: Organizing Reasons and Ways

Module 4: Choosing Evidence



Name: _____



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THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC.

Student Interactive Workbook

Grade 4

Cluster 2 - Module 1

Growing the Tree



Name: _____



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Grade 4 • Cluster 2 • Module 1

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How to Use My Workbook

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

My Name and My Goal for This Module

Pocket Practice

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



Meet My Week

Growing the Tree



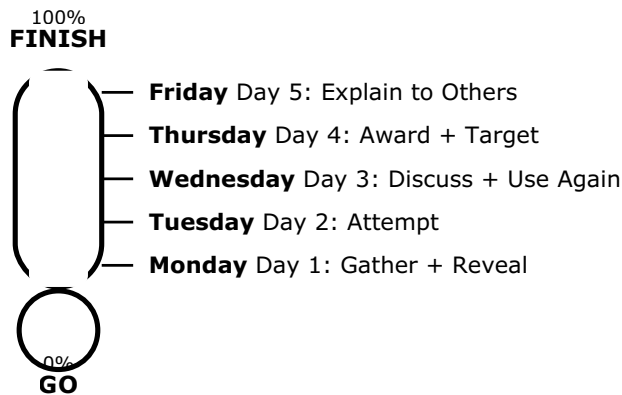
Why This Matters to Me

I learn that an Extended Constructed Response (ECR) grows like a tree: the roots are the passage and the prompt, the trunk is the thesis (central idea), and the branches are the reason or way, the evidence, and the explanation.

Essential Question

How does understanding the passage, the prompt, and the parts of an ECR help us build a strong informative response?

My Week Tracker



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

My First Thinking

I Can

- I can name the parts of an informative ECR: roots, trunk, and branches.
- I can read an ECR prompt as a statement and mark the NOI, VOI, and WHY/HOW clue.
- I can write a thesis (central idea) that answers the prompt with a clear central idea.
- I can support my thesis (central idea) with evidence and an explanation that connects back to it.

I Will

- I will use the passage and the prompt as the roots of my thinking.
- I will speak about my thinking, record my work, and explain how my choices strengthen the response.
- I will tell evidence apart from explanation and use both.
- I will make sure every branch connects back to the trunk.

The I Can I want to reach first, and why

My Week at a Glance

What I learn	What I read	What I make
How an ECR grows from a passage and prompt (roots) to a thesis (central idea) (trunk) to a reason or way, evidence, and explanation (branches).	Two nonfiction passages: "The Energy We Use Everyday," about renewable and nonrenewable resources, and "Columbus's Arrival," about Columbus's 1492 voyage.	An ECR tree for an informative prompt: the NOI circled, the VOI boxed, the WHY/HOW clue in a triangle, and a thesis (central idea) grown with one evidence detail and one explanation that connects back to the thesis (central idea).

Where We Are Going

I will move from listening to how an ECR tree grows, to looking for the prompt's NOI, VOI, and WHY/HOW clue, to marking a prompt and building my own tree with a thesis (central idea), evidence, and explanation. I will finish by teaching a partner one part of the ECR tree.

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

- ☐ I can label the roots, trunk, and three branches of an ECR tree.
- ☐ I can mark the NOI, VOI, and WHY/HOW clue in a prompt.
- ☐ I can build a thesis (central idea) and grow it with evidence and explanation.
- ☐ I can check my sentence for conventions.

Check Myself

- ☐ I read the prompt as a statement, not a question.
- ☐ I can tell the difference between evidence and explanation.
- ☐ I know ECR only has two types: WHY or HOW.
- ☐ I make sure every branch on my tree connects back to the trunk.

How I Will Show What I Know

I will show what I know with a sorted set of Thesis (Central Idea), Evidence, and Explanation cards from BOOM BOOM GRAB, an independent ECR tree with the NOI, VOI, and clue marked and the three branches filled in, and a Turn-and-Teach explanation of one part of the ECR tree.

My GRADUATE Learning Path

Stage	Day	What I do
Gather	Day 1	Pencils down first, I listen to the whole explanation without writing, then sketch the ECR tree from memory: roots equal passage and prompt, trunk equals thesis (central idea), and three branches equal reason or way, evidence, and explanation, adding an arrow to show every branch connects back to the trunk. Then I cover my sketch and name the roots, trunk, and three branches aloud from memory, remembering roots strong, trunk tall, branches growing.
Reveal	Day 1	I learn that an ECR prompt is a statement, not a question, and that ECR only has two types, WHY and HOW. I practice marking the NOI (Noun of Importance) in a red circle, the VOI (Verb of Importance) in a blue box, and the WHY/HOW clue in a green triangle, using the ECR Tree chart and the SCR vs. ECR chart glued into my Interactive Notebook.
Attempt	Day 2	I play BOOM BOOM GRAB: Tree Style with a partner: three tree cards sit between us, I listen to a sentence from The Energy We Use Everyday or Columbus's Arrival, the first person to grab the matching tree card wins a point, and I justify why it is a Thesis (Central Idea), Evidence, or Explanation card, then I record the sorted sets in my Interactive Notebook.
Discuss	Day 3	I discuss why evidence alone is not enough (it does not explain anything), what happens if a response skips the thesis (central idea) (no trunk, no tree), and why ECR prompts require WHY or HOW thinking instead of a short answer, connecting my discussion back to the module's overarching question about how a strong informative response is built.
Use Again	Day 3	I build my own ECR tree for an informative prompt: I circle the NOI, box the VOI, triangle the clue, then grow a thesis (central idea) with one piece of exact-words evidence and one explanation that connects the evidence back to the thesis (central idea). I also run a 90-second conventions check on one of my sentences, checking subject-verb agreement, nouns, spelling patterns, and high-frequency words.
Award	Day 4	I give myself credit for the parts of my ECR tree that are growing strong today, such as a clear thesis (central idea) on the trunk, a correctly marked prompt, or evidence I connected to my thesis (central idea), and I complete the sentence: one part of my ECR tree that is growing strong is ____ because _____. I might even draw a leaf on my tree for each part I got right.
Target	Day 4	I choose one precise next goal, prompt analysis, thesis (central idea), evidence, or explanation, and I write a sentence explaining why that goal will help my tree grow taller, thinking about curiosity questions like how stronger explanations make writing more powerful and what happens when evidence is weak.
Explain/Educate	Day 5	I teach a partner one part of the ECR tree using a sentence frame: the ____ of an ECR is ____, it matters because ____, for example ____, and then I answer the module's overarching question about how understanding the passage, the prompt, and the parts of an ECR help build a strong informative response.

Say It Together!

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

4.12B(i):

I can compose an informative text that conveys information about a topic using a clear central idea.

4.11B(i):

I can develop my draft into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing with purposeful structure.

Call and Response

Read this together as a class before we start.

Teacher asks: "What are the parts of an ECR tree?"

Class answers: "Roots, trunk, branches!"

One TEKS I want to practice today



Get Ready

Before I begin



Before We Begin: What Do I Already Know?

I already know how to find details in a passage and tell the difference between a fact and what the fact shows.

A connection I can make

Remember It!

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

One idea I remember

Ready Check

- ☐ I can find the NOI (Noun of Importance) in a prompt.
- ☐ I can find the VOI (Verb of Importance) in a prompt.
- ☐ I can read the whole prompt before I choose an answer.

Watch Out! Common Mix-Up

Watch out! Evidence is not the same as explanation. Quoting the text is not enough: you must also explain what it proves.

Where This Fits in My Writing

Growing an ECR tree is the goal of this whole module: mark the prompt, then build a thesis (central idea), evidence, and explanation that connects back to it.

What I want to remember before I start

Where I Am Starting

This shows my teacher what I already know. It is not for a grade. Work on your own. You may reread *The Energy We Use Everyday* passage in Read and Interact as often as you want.

Part 1: Prompt Analysis

Read the prompt. Circle the NOI (Noun of Importance) in red. Box the VOI (Verb of Importance) in blue. Draw a green triangle around the clue word.

Explain how renewable and nonrenewable resources affect decisions about energy use.

Part 2: Thesis (Central Idea)

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

My thesis (central idea)

Part 3: Informative Organization

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

Number	Sentence
_____	The text states, "Renewable energy sources are not always available."
_____	Renewable and nonrenewable resources both affect energy decisions because each has advantages and limitations.
_____	This shows that people must plan carefully and weigh advantages and limitations when they choose an energy resource.
_____	Renewable and nonrenewable resources affect decisions about energy use.

Part 4: Introduction

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

My first sentence

Part 5: Relevant Details and Evidence

Reason: Renewable resources have several advantages, but they also have limitations. Copy one sentence from the passage that proves this reason. Then explain in one sentence why it proves the reason.

The sentence I copied from the passage

Why it proves the reason

Part 6: Passage-Based Paragraph

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

My paragraph



Words I Need

Tier 1, everyday words



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

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
idea	IH-dee-uh	a thought about something	My idea about the passage is ____.
reason	REE-zun	why something is true or happens	One reason is ____.
show	SHOH	to make something known	The text shows that ____.
explain	ik-SPLAYN	to make an idea clear	I explain my idea by ____.
answer	AN-sur	what you say to a prompt	My answer to the prompt is ____.
prove	PROOV	to show something is true	I can prove my idea by ____.
build	BILD	to make something part by part	I build my response by ____.
plan	PLAN	to think out before writing	My plan is to ____.
connect	kuh-NEKT	to link two things together	I connect the evidence to my thesis (central idea) by ____.
support	suh-PORT	to hold up or back up an idea	I support my thesis (central idea) with ____.

Use one Tier 1 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 2, academic words

Say each word. Then use it to talk about the thesis (central idea), evidence, and explanation in an ECR.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
thesis (central idea)	THEE-sis	the clear central idea a response will prove	My thesis (central idea) is ____.
evidence	EV-uh-duns	proof from the text (often exact words)	My evidence is ____.
explanation	ek-spluh-NAY-shun	the writer's thinking about what the evidence means	My explanation shows ____.
prompt	PROMPT	the statement that tells you what to write about	The prompt asks me to ____.
analyze	AN-uh-lyz	to look closely at parts to understand the whole	I analyze the prompt by ____.
response	ree-SPONS	the writing you build to answer the prompt	My response includes ____.
inform	in-FORM	to give information about a topic	This response informs the reader about ____.
structure	STRUK-chur	the way the parts are organized	The structure of my ECR is ____.
central idea	SEN-truhl eye-DEE-uh	the main point the whole response is about	The central idea is ____.
transition	tran-ZISH-un	a word that links ideas (because, however, in addition)	I use the transition ____ to ____.

Use one Tier 2 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 3, passage words

These words come from *The Energy We Use Everyday* and *Columbus's Arrival*.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
renewable	rih-NOO-uh-buhl	able to be replaced over time and used again	A renewable resource is ____.
nonrenewable	non-rih-NOO-uh-buhl	not able to be replaced quickly once it is used	A nonrenewable resource is ____.
resource	REE-sorss	a material or supply that people use	One resource we use is ____.
pollution	puh-LOO-shun	harmful materials that damage the environment	Pollution can ____.
environment	en-VY-run-ment	the natural world around us	The environment is affected when ____.
exploration	eks-plur-AY-shun	the act of traveling to learn about new places	Exploration led to ____.
influence	IN-floo-uhns	the power to change or affect something	Columbus's arrival had an influence on ____.
conflict	KON-flikt	a serious disagreement or struggle	A conflict developed when ____.
missionaries	MISH-uh-nair-eez	people who travel to teach a religion	Missionaries traveled to ____.
expedition	eks-puh-DISH-un	a journey taken for a special purpose	An expedition is ____.

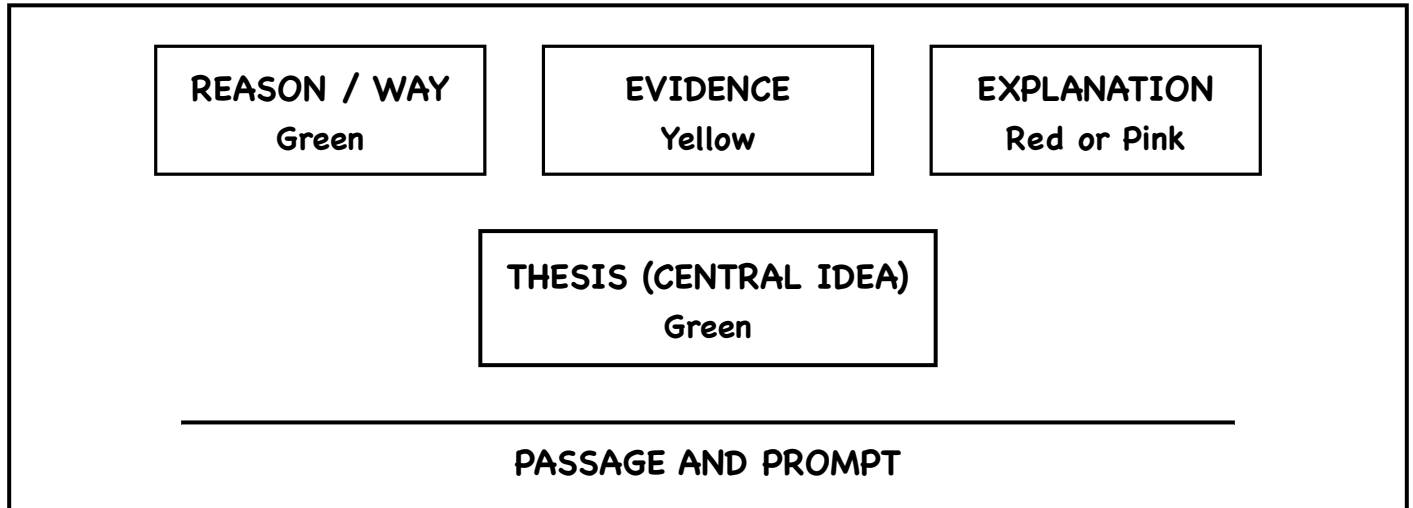
Use one Tier 3 word in a sentence



The Growing Tree



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



Nothing grows until the ground is ready.

Shaping an ECR Prompt

Mark	What it means
Red Circle	NOI (Noun of Importance): what the prompt is about.
Blue Box	VOI (Verb of Importance): what you must do.
Green Triangle	Clue word: the WHY or HOW that tells you the ECR type.

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

How this strategy works for me

WHY and HOW

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

The clue word decides the shape of my answer.

How I Say the Standard!

4.12B(i):

I can compose an informative text that conveys information about a topic using a clear central idea.

4.11B(i):

I can develop my draft into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing with purposeful structure.

Check My Writing

- ☐ My sentence has a subject and a verb.
- ☐ I use a capital letter for Columbus and Spain.
- ☐ I use a period or another ending mark.

A WHY or HOW sentence I can try

Five Thinking Levels: WHY

Read from the bottom up. A clue word can help me choose the kind of WHY thinking I need.

Level	Symbol	Hidden Question	Student Thinking	Thinking Focus
Level 1			Student follows directions or repeats information exactly as taught with little independent thinking.	Foundational
Level 2			Student begins trying ideas independently but may be uncertain or inconsistent.	Emergent
Level 3			Student connects ideas directly to textual evidence.	Visible
Level 4			Student combines evidence with personal reasoning, applying understanding to a claim.	Independent
Level 5			Student connects evidence to the world, morals, lessons, or broader understanding.	Reflective

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

A WHY clue word I know

Five Thinking Levels

HOW prompts ask about the way something works or the way parts fit together.

Level	Symbol	Hidden Question	Student Thinking	Thinking Focus
Level 1	○		Student follows directions or repeats information exactly as taught with little independent thinking.	Foundational
Level 2	◻		Student begins trying ideas independently but may be uncertain or inconsistent.	Emergent
Level 3	▽		Student connects ideas directly to textual evidence.	Visible
Level 4	△		Student combines evidence with personal reasoning, applying understanding to a claim.	Independent
Level 5	◊		Student connects evidence to the world, morals, lessons, or broader understanding.	Reflective

The Difference Between WHY and HOW

Prompt type	What it asks me to do	Example
WHY	Explain a reason, a purpose, or why something matters.	Explain why Columbus's arrival affected people in the Americas in important ways.
HOW	Analyze how parts work together or how something happens.	Explain how renewable and nonrenewable resources affect decisions about energy use.

ECR only has two types: WHY and HOW. A prompt is a statement to respond to, not a question to answer briefly.

A thinking level I want to try



Read & Interact

Read with a purpose



Dot, Discover, Drop

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

TRACKS Legend

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

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

Connect It to Our World

Understanding renewable and nonrenewable resources, and understanding how an event like Columbus's arrival had lasting effects on land, culture, and people, helps students build responsibility when they think and write about the world around them.

Background I Need

"The Energy We Use Everyday" explains renewable resources (wind, water, sunlight, plants, and animals) and nonrenewable resources (coal, oil, and natural gas). "Columbus's Arrival" explains Christopher Columbus's 1492 voyage, his claim of land for Spain, and the lasting effects on Native American groups such as the Taino and the Carib.

Words I dotted while reading

The Energy We Use Everyday

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

My
marks

1 Have you ever wondered where the energy you use each day comes from? When you turn on lights, charge a device, or travel in a car, you are using energy produced from natural resources found on Earth.

2 Some of these resources are called renewable. Renewable resources can be replaced over time and used again. Examples include wind, water, sunlight, plants, and animals. The sun provides energy each day, and wind can be used to generate electricity. In addition, plants and animals can be grown and replaced through careful management.

3 Renewable resources have several advantages. They do not run out easily, and they often cause less damage to the environment. However, they also have limitations. Renewable energy sources are not always available. For example, solar energy depends on sunlight, and wind energy depends on weather conditions. This can cause mismanagement of energy resources if people do not plan carefully.

4 Other resources are known as nonrenewable. These include coal, oil, and natural gas, which form deep underground over millions of years. Because they take so long to develop, they cannot be replaced quickly once they are used.

5 Nonrenewable resources provide a large and steady supply of energy, which makes them useful.

6 However, their use can lead to pollution and environmental damage. In addition, these resources are limited and may eventually be used up.

7 Understanding the advantages and disadvantages helps build responsibility when making decisions about energy use.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Columbus's Arrival

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

My
marks

- 1 In 1492, Christopher Columbus sailed across the Atlantic Ocean searching for a new route to Asia. Instead, he reached islands in the Caribbean. When he arrived, he claimed the land for Spain, even though Native American groups such as the Taino and the Carib already lived there.
- 2 By claiming the land, Columbus helped Spain begin to explore and settle in the Americas. This was important because it led to more Spanish expeditions and the growth of Spain's influence in the region.
- 3 Columbus and his crew also brought their beliefs with them. They wanted to spread Christianity to the people they met. Over time, missionaries traveled to the Americas to teach Native Americans about this religion. This changed many traditions and ways of life.
- 4 At first, some Native American groups, like the Taino, showed friendliness toward Columbus and his crew by trading and cooperating with them. However, these relationships did not always stay peaceful. Conflicts developed over land, resources, and control. The Carib were known for resisting the Spanish, which led to fighting between the groups.
- 5 Today, Columbus's journey is remembered and retold in different ways. Columbus Day recognizes his voyage, but many people also think about how his arrival affected Native Americans.
- 6 Columbus's actions had lasting effects on land, culture, and the people who lived in the Americas.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Annotate: The Energy We Use Everyday

the renewable and nonrenewable resources, and their advantages and limitations

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

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

My best TRACKS phrase and why I chose it

Annotate: Columbus's Arrival

the effects of Columbus's arrival on land, culture, and the people of the Americas

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

STOP & THINK

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

My thinking

My Prompt Marking Notes

The prompt gives me a NOI (Noun of Importance), a VOI (Verb of Importance), and a clue word. I can use the shapes to slow down and see the job.

Shape	Word	Question I ask myself
Red circle	NOI (Noun of Importance)	What is this prompt about?
Blue box	VOI (Verb of Importance)	What must I do?
Green triangle	Clue word	Does the prompt ask WHY or HOW?

Circle the NOI (Noun of Importance) in red. Box the VOI (Verb of Importance) in blue. Triangle the WHY/ HOW clue word in green.

Explain why Columbus's arrival affected people in the Americas in important ways.

My three marks in words

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 1: Gather + Reveal



The ECR tree grows from roots to trunk to branches

1. Gather: Listen and Sketch the ECR Tree

Pencils down first. Listen to the whole explanation. Then sketch: ROOTS = passage + prompt, TRUNK = thesis (central idea), BRANCH 1 = reason/way, BRANCH 2 = evidence, BRANCH 3 = explanation. Add one arrow showing that every branch must connect back to the trunk.

Fresh Recall: cover your sketch and name the roots, trunk, and three branches from memory.

2. Reveal: Build the Thinking Tree Together

- ☐ Roots = Passage + Prompt. Everything starts here.
- ☐ Trunk = Thesis (Central Idea). This is your main answer.
- ☐ Branches = Reason/Way, Evidence, Explanation.

STOP & THINK

ECR prompts are NOT questions: they are STATEMENTS. Read these two statements: "Explain why Columbus's arrival affected people in the Americas in important ways." and "Explain how renewable and nonrenewable resources shape energy decisions."

ECR only has TWO TYPES: WHY and HOW.

The ECR Tree

An Extended Constructed Response grows like a tree.

Tree Part	ECR Part
Roots	Passage + Prompt (everything starts here)
Trunk	Thesis (Central Idea) (your main answer / central idea)
Branch 1	Reason or Way
Branch 2	Evidence
Branch 3	Explanation

Say it together: "Roots... Trunk... Branches!" Every branch must connect back to the trunk.

SCR vs. ECR

SCR	ECR
Comes from a question	Comes from a statement
Short response	Extended response
One main idea, briefly supported	A thesis (central idea) grown with reasons or ways, evidence, and explanation

? STOP & THINK

Look at the two prompt statements from today: "Explain why Columbus's arrival affected people in the Americas in important ways." and "Explain how renewable and nonrenewable resources shape energy decisions." How can you tell each one is a statement and not a question?

My answer

Day 1: Reveal, continued

Reading the Prompt: Shapes and Colors.

Mark	What it means
Red Circle	NOI (Noun of Importance): what the prompt is about.
Blue Box	VOI (Verb of Importance): what you must do.
Green Triangle	Clue Words: the WHY or HOW that tells you the ECR type.

Day 1 Closing

Complete: "The roots of an ECR are ____, the trunk is ____, and the branches are ____."

My completed sentence

[illegible]

STUDENT WORKBOOK



BOOM BOOM GRAB: Tree Style

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards (sheet 1 of 2)

Cut on the dashed lines. Keep the 3 tree cards in the middle of the table and the 6 sentence cards in a stack. Store all cards in your Pocket Practice.

 THESIS (CENTRAL IDEA)	 EVIDENCE
 EXPLANATION	Columbus's arrival changed the lives of Native Americans.
The text says Columbus claimed land for Spain.	This shows that Spain wanted control over new land.

Self-Check (back of cards) (sheet 1 of 2)

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

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

STUDENT WORKBOOK



BOOM BOOM GRAB: Tree Style

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards (sheet 2 of 2)

Cut on the dashed lines. Keep the 3 tree cards in the middle of the table and the 6 sentence cards in a stack. Store all cards in your Pocket Practice.

Energy choices are shaped by the advantages and limitations of different resources.

The passage states, "Renewable energy sources are not always available."

This shows communities must plan carefully when some renewable sources are not always available.

Self-Check (back of cards) (sheet 2 of 2)

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

Evidence	Thesis (Central Idea)
	Explanation

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 2: Attempt

BOOM BOOM GRAB: Tree Style



BOOM BOOM GRAB: Directions

Work with a partner. Between you, place three tree cards: Thesis (Central Idea), Evidence, Explanation. Listen to the sentence. The first person to grab the correct tree card wins a point. Be ready to justify your choice.

- ☐ Thesis (Central Idea): the trunk, the main answer to the prompt.
- ☐ Evidence: a branch, proof that comes straight from the passage.
- ☐ Explanation: a branch, what the evidence proves.

Set A: Columbus's Arrival

Sentence	Answer
Columbus's arrival changed the lives of Native Americans.	Thesis (Central Idea)
The text says Columbus claimed land for Spain.	Evidence
This shows that Spain wanted control over new land.	Explanation

Set B: The Energy We Use Everyday

Sentence	Answer
Energy choices are shaped by the advantages and limitations of different resources.	Thesis (Central Idea)
The passage states, "Renewable energy sources are not always available."	Evidence
This shows communities must plan carefully when some renewable sources are not always available.	Explanation

Reminder to Students: Add these examples to your Interactive Notebook. These will help you review anytime!

? STOP & THINK

Why is Set A's first sentence a thesis (central idea) and not evidence?

My answer

Day 2 Closing

Record the sorted sets in your notebook. Say aloud why each card is a thesis (central idea), evidence, or explanation.

One card I sorted and why

STUDENT WORKBOOK

Day 3: Discuss + Use Again



What makes the tree strong?

Discuss: What Makes the Tree Strong?

- Why is evidence not enough by itself? Evidence shows, but explanation GROWS the idea.
- What would happen if we skipped the thesis (central idea)? No main idea, no trunk, no tree.
- Why do we only use WHY or HOW in ECR? So we explain more, thinking deeply, not just answering quickly.

? STOP & THINK

How do the passage, the prompt, and the parts of an ECR work together to build a strong informative response?

My answer

Use Again: Independent Tree Builder

Circle the NOI (Noun of Importance) in red. Box the VOI (Verb of Importance) in blue. Triangle the WHY/ HOW clue word in green.

Explain how renewable and nonrenewable resources affect decisions about energy use.

Draw a tree with roots, trunk, and three branches. Circle the NOI (renewable and nonrenewable resources). Box the VOI (affect). Triangle the clue word (how). Add a thesis (central idea), one evidence detail, and one explanation.

Standards Application Check (90-Second Response Quality Check)

Choose one sentence from your ECR work. Revise it for clearer sentence structure and stronger word choice. Then check subject-verb agreement, singular/plural/common/ proper nouns, spelling patterns, and high-frequency words.

Teacher Model: "Columbus claimed land for Spain." Revision example: "Columbus's arrival changed control of the land when he claimed it for Spain."

Day 3 Closing

Underline the thesis (central idea) on your trunk and star the branch that connects most clearly back to it.

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 4: Award + Target



Give yourself credit and choose a next goal

Award

- ☐ I built a thesis (central idea) on the trunk.
- ☐ I marked the NOI, VOI, and clue in the prompt.
- ☐ I connected evidence to my thesis (central idea).
- ☐ I explained what my evidence proves.

Complete: "One part of my ECR Tree that is growing strong is ____ because ____."

My completed sentence

Target

Choose a precise next goal. Which part needs more practice: prompt analysis, thesis (central idea), evidence, or explanation? Write one specific goal.

My next ECR-tree goal

Day 4 Closing

Complete: "My next ECR-tree goal is ____ because ____."

STUDENT WORKBOOK

Day 5: Explain to Others



Turn and Teach

Turn and Teach

Teach one ECR Tree part to your partner. You must say: what it is; why it matters; and one example from today.

Sentence Frame: "The ____ of an ECR is _____. It matters because _____. For example, _____."

What I taught my partner

Module Overarching Question: Answer

How does understanding the passage, the prompt, and the parts of an ECR help us build a strong informative response?

Understanding the passage and prompt gives the response strong roots, while knowing the ECR parts gives the writer a structure for turning a clear thesis (central idea) into reasons or ways, evidence, and explanation.

Finish: "One part of the ECR tree I can teach someone else is ____ because ____."

My completed sentence



Write More

Plan, draft, revise, edit, and share



My Writing Assignment

Write a short response to this prompt:

Circle the NOI (Noun of Importance) in red. Box the VOI (Verb of Importance) in blue. Triangle the WHY/HOW clue word in green.

Explain how renewable and nonrenewable resources affect decisions about energy use.

My Plan

- Mark the prompt: circle the NOI, box the VOI, triangle the WHY/HOW clue.
- Write a clear thesis (central idea) (your central idea and answer to the prompt).
- Choose the author's exact words as evidence.
- Explain what the evidence proves and connect it back to the thesis (central idea).

Two possible reasons from the passage

The stronger reason is...

Color Words I Can Use

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

My thesis (central idea) starter

[illegible]

My Draft



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

Draft, page 1

A sentence I want to keep

Revise, Edit, and Share

Revise

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

Edit

- ☐ Every sentence is complete.
- ☐ Columbus and Spain begin with capital letters.
- ☐ Resource and energy are common nouns unless they begin a sentence.
- ☐ Singular nouns are spelled correctly.
- ☐ High-frequency words are spelled correctly.

My improved sentence

Share

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

My sharing plan

Before I Turn It In

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

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

Study the Samples

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

Explain how renewable and nonrenewable resources affect decisions about energy use.

Low

Energy comes from resources. The text says there are renewable and nonrenewable ones. This is important.

There is no clear thesis (central idea), the evidence is not exact, and the explanation ("this is important") does not prove anything. Add a thesis (central idea) on the trunk, quote exact words as evidence, and explain how the evidence connects to energy decisions.

Medium

Renewable and nonrenewable resources affect energy decisions. The text states, "Renewable energy sources are not always available." This shows renewable energy has a limitation.

The response stops at one branch and does not connect the explanation fully back to the thesis (central idea) about decisions. Connect the explanation back to the central idea: people must weigh advantages and limitations when they decide.

High

Renewable and nonrenewable resources both affect energy decisions because each has advantages and limitations. The text states, "Renewable energy sources are not always available," and it explains that nonrenewable resources "cannot be replaced quickly once they are used." This shows people must plan carefully and weigh advantages against limitations when they choose an energy resource.

Every branch connects back to the trunk: exactly what a strong ECR tree looks like.

What improves from Low to High?



Look Back & Look Forward

I own my learning



My Progress Tracker

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

Something I Did Well...

What I did well, and where I did it

My Next Step...

Why this is my next step

Essential Question Answered

How does understanding the passage, the prompt, and the parts of an ECR help us build a strong informative response?

The answer

Understanding the passage and prompt gives the response strong roots, while knowing the ECR parts gives the writer a structure for turning a clear thesis (central idea) into reasons or ways, evidence, and explanation.

My Final Thinking (in my own words)

What Changed in My Thinking?

At first I thought...

Now I think...

Try It Another Way

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

My new prompt

Take It Further! Tree Builder Challenge

Grow the whole tree from one prompt: Explain how renewable and nonrenewable resources affect decisions about energy use.

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

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

My Tree Builder Challenge

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

At-Home Connection

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

Grow an Idea

Start with a main idea out loud ("Our family works best as a team"). Then grow it: give one reason, one example, and one sentence that explains why the example proves the idea.

This is the same thesis (central idea)-evidence-explanation habit we practice this week.

Family member signature: _____

Why or How

Take turns making a statement, then ask each other "Why?" or "How do you know?" Practice answering with a full explanation, not just a few words.

Growing a reason into an explanation is the heart of this week's work.

Family member signature: _____

One Question to Ask at Home

"What is your main idea, and what proof from the reading grows out of it?"

When they make a point, ask them to add "because" or "this shows that..." to explain it.

Family member signature: _____

My Family Conversation Notes

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

Notes

Track My Progress

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

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

Why This Helps Me

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

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

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

My Module 1 Snapshot

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

The most useful word I learned

The prompt part I can find fastest

My Strong Roots

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

A note to my future writer self

My Proud Moment This Week

THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC.

Student Interactive Workbook

Grade 4

Cluster 2 - Module 2

Writing Thesis (Central Idea) Statements



Name: _____



The Writing Academy®, LLC

Grade 4 • Cluster 2 • Module 2

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How to Use My Workbook

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

My Name and My Goal for This Module

Pocket Practice

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



Meet My Week

Writing Thesis (Central Idea) Statements



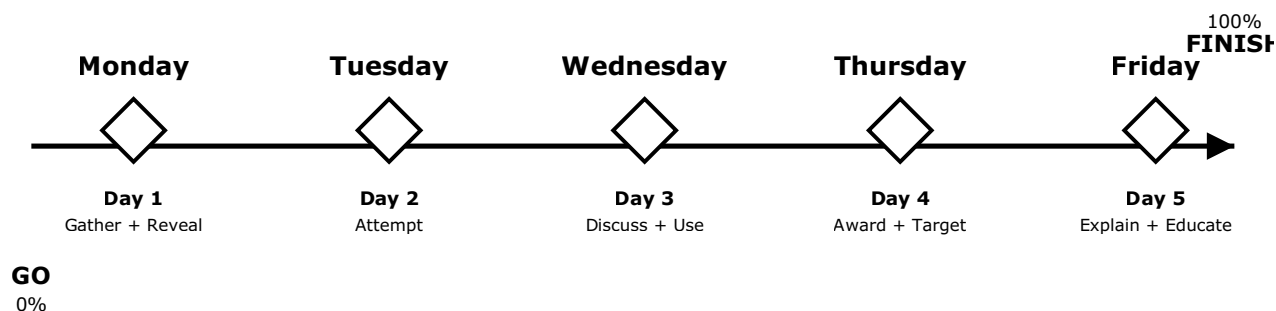
Why This Matters to Me

You learned in Module 1 that the thesis (central idea) is the trunk of the ECR Tree. This module zooms in on the trunk: a strong ECR thesis (central idea) has three pieces, the Noun of Importance (from the prompt), the Verb of Importance (from the prompt), and the Answer (from you). Using the two Cluster 2 passages at Medium Stamina, you learn that WHY prompts need a complex sentence with a subordinator and HOW prompts need a simple sentence with a preposition, and you notice cause/effect, comparison, and advantages/limitations.

Essential Question

How can the words in an ECR prompt guide us to build a strong thesis (central idea) statement?

My Week Tracker



**Color in one stop on the timeline at the END of each day, after I finish that day's work.
Watch my week travel from GO to FINISH!**

My First Thinking

I Can

- I can use the prompt to build a complete thesis (central idea) with the noun, the verb, and my answer.
- I can find the Noun of Importance and the Verb of Importance in a prompt.
- I can decide whether a prompt is WHY or HOW and use the matching sentence type.
- I can add my own answer to complete a strong thesis (central idea).

I Will

- I will use the passage, speak about my thinking, and record my work.
- I will explain how my choices strengthen the response.
- I will keep the noun and verb from the prompt and add my own answer.
- I will notice informational relationships such as cause and effect.

The I Can I want to reach first, and why

My Week at a Glance

What I learn	What I read	What I make
The big skill: building a strong thesis (central idea) from three pieces, the Noun of Importance, the Verb of Importance, and my own Answer. The clue words: WHY (a because sentence) and HOW (a through or by sentence). I also notice cause and effect.	The Energy We Use Everyday (renewable and nonrenewable resources) and Columbus's Arrival (Columbus's 1492 voyage), both at Medium Stamina.	The Thesis (Central Idea) Builder Trail and the Prompt-to-Thesis (Central Idea) Foldable.

Where We Are Going

By the end of this module, I will build a thesis (central idea) that keeps the noun and verb from the prompt, adds my own answer, and matches the sentence type to WHY or HOW. I will also notice cause and effect, comparison, and advantage and limitation in my two passages.

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

- ☐ I can point to the noun, verb, and answer in my thesis (central idea).
- ☐ I can tell WHY and HOW prompts apart and match the sentence type.
- ☐ I can build a thesis (central idea) that does more than copy the prompt.
- ☐ I can run the conventions sweep on my thesis (central idea).
- ☐ I can notice cause, effect, comparison, and advantage/limitation in a passage.

Check Myself

- ☐ I found the Noun of Importance in a prompt.
- ☐ I found the Verb of Importance in a prompt.
- ☐ I decided WHY or HOW and matched the sentence type.
- ☐ I added my own answer to build a thesis (central idea).
- ☐ I checked my thesis (central idea) for conventions.
- ☐ I noticed a cause, effect, comparison, or advantage/limitation in a passage.

How I Will Show What I Know

Explain how renewable and nonrenewable resources shape energy decisions.

My GRADUATE Learning Path

Stage	Day	What I do
Day 1	Gather + Reveal	I label thesis (central idea) statements as WHY or HOW, then learn the three thesis (central idea) pieces, the Noun of Importance, the Verb of Importance, and the Answer, and the sentence type that matches each prompt, WHY as a complex sentence with a subordinator and HOW as a simple sentence with a preposition.
Day 1	Gather	After each thesis (central idea) I hear, I label the relationship: WHY means a reason relationship; HOW means a method or means relationship, and I finish the frame the thesis (central idea) works because ____ connects ____ to ____, then tell a partner one clue that usually signals WHY and one clue that usually signals HOW, closing my notes for Fresh Recall.
Day 1	Reveal	The noun of importance tells what the prompt is mostly about; the verb of importance tells what the writer must explain; the answer comes from me, and I glue the What a Thesis (Central Idea) Needs chart and the WHY/HOW charts into my interactive notebook for later review, studying the WHY model and the HOW model the teacher shows me.
Day 2	Attempt	I attempt the module skill through Thesis (Central Idea) Builder Trail: I spin Noun, Verb, Answer, or Type and complete the matching part of a thesis (central idea) from a prompt card about energy resources or Columbus, moving one space for a correct answer and two for extra-strong academic language, then place my thesis (central idea) helper chart in my Interactive Notebook.
Day 3	Discuss	I discuss why a thesis (central idea) cannot copy the prompt, why a WHY thesis (central idea) needs a complex sentence with a subordinator, why a HOW thesis (central idea) uses a simple sentence with a preposition, and what cause, effect, and comparison add to a thesis (central idea), connecting back to our Overarching Question.
Day 3	Use Again	I use the Prompt-to-Thesis (Central Idea) Foldable, folding a page into four flaps, Prompt, Noun + Verb, Type, and Thesis (Central Idea), and completing the work under each flap for four different prompts about Columbus and energy resources, then run a Quality Check on my own thesis (central idea): underline the NOI, box the VOI, bracket my answer, and label WHY or HOW.
Day 4	Award + Target	I underline the part of my thesis (central idea) that came from me and complete the sentence my thesis (central idea) is strong because ____, then choose one target: find the NOI, find the VOI, identify WHY/HOW, build the sentence, or strengthen word choice, and set my next thesis (central idea) goal for tomorrow's writing.
Day 5	Explain to Others	I teach my partner what the three pieces are, how to know whether a prompt is WHY or HOW, and one example thesis (central idea) I built this week, using sentence frames to guide my explanation of each part, and together we answer our Module Overarching Question: how the words in an ECR prompt guide us to build a strong thesis (central idea) statement.

Say It Together!

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

4.11B(i):

I can organize my writing with an introduction and purposeful structure.

4.12B(i):

I can compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea.

Call and Response

Read this together as a class before we start.

Teacher asks: "My noun of importance is _____. My verb of importance is _____. My answer is _____. This is a _____ (WHY/HOW) thesis (central idea), so I used a _____ sentence."

Class answers: "Noun, verb, answer, that is our thesis (central idea) plan! A strong thesis (central idea) holds our whole response together."

One TEKS I want to practice today



Get Ready

Before I begin



Before We Begin: What Do I Already Know?

I already know from Module 1 that the thesis (central idea) is the trunk of the ECR Tree. This week I will use passage copies (Medium Stamina), interactive notebooks, glue, scissors, crayons or colored pencils, sentence strips, a spinner labeled Noun / Verb / Answer / Type, a gameboard and game pieces, Pencil Guy markers, Thesis (Central Idea) cards, and prompt cards to build the trunk from three pieces.

A connection I can make

Remember It!

- ☐ WHY subordinators: because, since, although, while, after, before, when, if.
- ☐ HOW prepositions: by, through, with, during, across, in.
- ☐ Two pieces come from the prompt, but the answer must come from you.
- ☐ A thesis (central idea) must answer the prompt, but it does not copy the prompt only.

One idea I remember

Ready Check

- ☐ Did I keep the noun of importance from the prompt?
- ☐ Did I keep the verb of importance from the prompt?
- ☐ Did I add my own answer?
- ☐ Does my sentence type match WHY or HOW?

Watch Out! Common Mix-Up

Students often think a thesis (central idea) is just a copied prompt with one extra word added, so listen for responses that sound almost identical to the original prompt. Another common misconception is that students may know the answer but forget to keep the noun and verb from the prompt. Some students will mix up why and how, which shows up when they use the wrong sentence type. Others may write a sentence fragment after a subordinator, especially in why responses. Some students also struggle to create an answer that is broad enough to support a full essay.

Where This Fits in My Writing

This week's thesis (central idea) work builds directly into the informational ECR response I will write in Additional Writing Opportunity. The teacher may read a passage aloud, reread it, and let me use the What a Thesis (Central Idea) Needs chart, the WHY/HOW charts, and sentence frames, but I still find the noun and verb, choose the sentence type, and add my own answer.

What I want to remember before I start

Where I Am Starting

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

Part 1: Prompt Analysis

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

Explain how renewable and nonrenewable resources shape energy decisions.

Part 2: Thesis (Central Idea)

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

My thesis (central idea)

Part 3: Informative Organization

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

Number	Sentence
_____	The passage says solar panels collect energy from sunlight and turn it into electricity.
_____	Renewable and nonrenewable resources shape energy decisions.
_____	This shows that communities plan their energy use around what each resource can and cannot do.
_____	One way is through differences in availability and environmental effects.

Part 4: Introduction

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

My first sentence

Part 5: Relevant Details and Evidence

Reason: Renewable resources do not run out easily, but they are not always available.
Copy one sentence from the passage that proves this. Then explain in one sentence why it proves the point.

The sentence I copied from the passage

Why it proves the reason

Part 6: Passage-Based Paragraph

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

My paragraph



Words I Need

Tier 1, everyday words



Before we begin, let's preview the words we will use to talk about prompts, thesis (central idea) pieces, and informational relationships, everyday words, academic words, and words from our two passages.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
noun		a person, place, thing, or idea	The noun of importance is ____.
verb		an action or state word	The verb of importance is ____.
answer		your response to the prompt	My answer is ____.
ask		to put a question	The prompt asks me to ____.
build		to make part by part	I build my thesis (central idea) by ____.
word		a unit of language	A stronger word here is ____.
reason		why something is true	One reason is ____.
way		how something happens	One way is ____.
cause		what makes something happen	The cause was ____.
effect		what happens because of a cause	The effect was ____.

Use one Tier 1 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 2, academic words

Before we begin, let's preview the words we will use to talk about prompts, thesis (central idea) pieces, and informational relationships, everyday words, academic words, and words from our two passages.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
thesis (central idea)		the clear central idea a response will prove	My thesis (central idea) is ____.
prompt		the statement that tells you what to write about	The prompt asks me to ____.
analyze		to look closely at parts to understand the whole	I analyze the prompt by ____.
response		the writing you build to answer the prompt	My response begins with ____.
complex sentence		a sentence with a subordinator	A complex sentence uses ____.
simple sentence		a sentence with one complete thought	A simple sentence states ____.
subordinator		a word like because or since that adds a reason	I use ____ to show a reason.
preposition		a word like through or by that names a method	I use ____ to name the method.
noun of importance		the main topic word in the prompt	The noun of importance is ____.
verb of importance		the word that tells what to explain	The verb of importance is ____.

Use one Tier 2 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 3, passage words

Before we begin, let's preview the words we will use to talk about prompts, thesis (central idea) pieces, and informational relationships, everyday words, academic words, and words from our two passages.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
renewable	rih-NOO-uh-buhl	able to be replaced over time and used again	A renewable resource is ____.
nonrenewable	non-rih-NOO-uh-buhl	not able to be replaced quickly once it is used	A nonrenewable resource is ____.
resource	REE-sorss	a material or supply that people use	One resource we use is ____.
pollution	puh-LOO-shun	harmful materials that damage the environment	Pollution can ____.
environment	en-VY-run-ment	the natural world around us	The environment is affected when ____.
Columbus	kuh-LUM-bus	the explorer who sailed to the Americas in 1492	Columbus ____.
exploration	eks-plur-AY-shun	traveling to learn about new places	Exploration led to ____.
missionaries	MISH-uh-nair-eez	people who travel to teach a religion	Missionaries traveled to ____.
influence	IN-floo-uhns	the power to change or affect something	The influence of the voyage was ____.
conflict	KON-flikt	a serious disagreement or struggle	A conflict developed when ____.

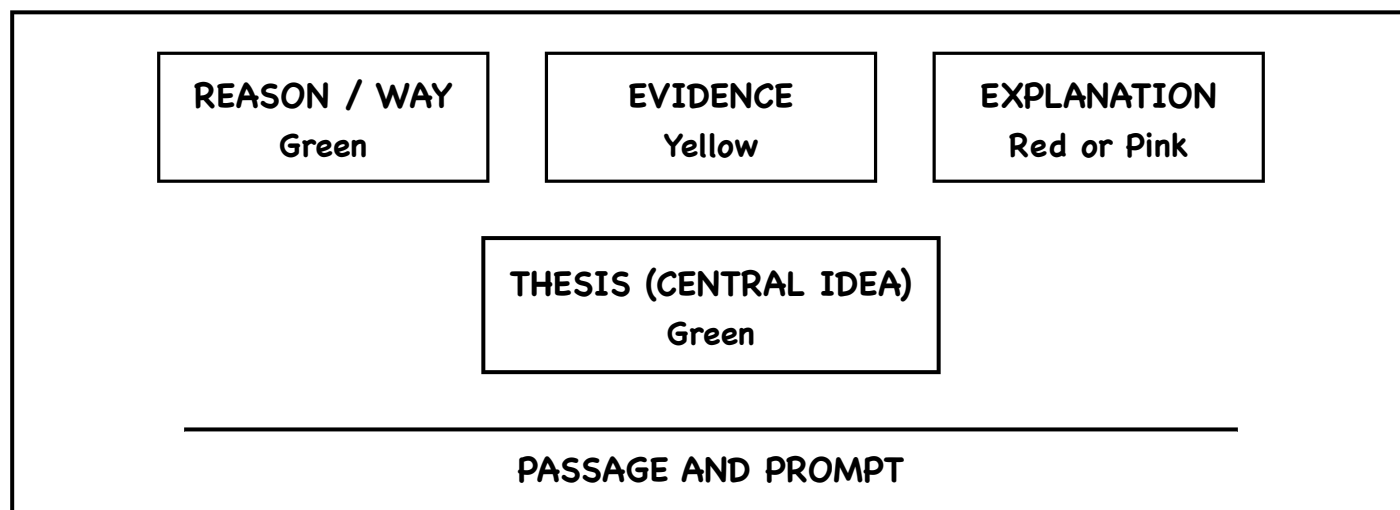
Use one Tier 3 word in a sentence

My Strategy Tools

The Growing Tree



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



Nothing grows until the ground is ready.

Shaping an ECR Prompt

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

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

How this strategy works for me

WHY and HOW

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

The clue word decides the shape of my answer.

How I Say the Standard!

4.11B(i):

I can organize my writing with an introduction and purposeful structure.

4.12B(i):

I can compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea.

Check My Writing

- ☐ My sentence has a subject and a verb.
- ☐ I use a capital letter for Columbus and Spain.
- ☐ I use a period or another ending mark.

A WHY or HOW sentence I can try

Five Thinking Levels: WHY

Read from the bottom up. A clue word can help me choose the kind of WHY thinking I need.

Level	Symbol	Hidden Question	Student Thinking	Thinking Focus
Level 1			Student follows directions or repeats information exactly as taught with little independent thinking.	Foundational
Level 2			Student begins trying ideas independently but may be uncertain or inconsistent.	Emergent
Level 3			Student connects ideas directly to textual evidence.	Visible
Level 4			Student combines evidence with personal reasoning, applying understanding to a claim.	Independent
Level 5			Student connects evidence to the world, morals, lessons, or broader understanding.	Reflective

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

A WHY clue word I know

Five Thinking Levels: HOW

HOW prompts ask about the way something works or the way parts fit together.

Level	Symbol	Hidden Question	Student Thinking	Thinking Focus
Level 1	○		Student follows directions or repeats information exactly as taught with little independent thinking.	Foundational
Level 2	◻		Student begins trying ideas independently but may be uncertain or inconsistent.	Emergent
Level 3	▽		Student connects ideas directly to textual evidence.	Visible
Level 4	△		Student combines evidence with personal reasoning, applying understanding to a claim.	Independent
Level 5	◊		Student connects evidence to the world, morals, lessons, or broader understanding.	Reflective

The Difference Between WHY and HOW

Prompt type	What it asks me to do	Example
WHY	Explain a reason, a purpose, or why something matters.	Explain why Columbus's arrival affected people in the Americas in important ways.
HOW	Analyze how parts work together or how something happens.	Explain how renewable and nonrenewable resources shape energy decisions.

WHY prompts must be answered with a complex sentence with a subordinator: because, since, although, while, after, before, when, if. HOW prompts must be answered with a simple sentence with a preposition: by, through, with, during, across, in.

A thinking level I want to try



Read & Interact

Read with a purpose



Dot, Discover, Drop

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

TRACKS Legend

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

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

Connect It to Our World

Renewable and nonrenewable resources shape decisions in our own community, and Columbus's arrival still shapes how we understand history today.

Background I Need

The Energy We Use Everyday is a nonfiction text about renewable resources (wind, water, sunlight, plants, animals) and nonrenewable resources (coal, oil, natural gas), with their advantages and limitations. Columbus's Arrival is a nonfiction text about Christopher Columbus's 1492 voyage, his claim of land for Spain, the spread of Christianity, and the lasting effects on Native American groups.

Words I dotted while reading

The Energy We Use Everyday

Preview the two passages before reading. Each passage appears once here for you to read and annotate.

My
marks

1 Have you ever wondered where the energy you use each day comes from? When you turn on lights, charge a device, watch television, or travel in a car, you are using energy produced from natural resources found on Earth. Energy is an important part of daily life. People use it at home, at school, and at work. Without energy, many of the things we depend on each day would not be possible.

2 Some of these resources are called renewable. Renewable resources can be replaced over time and used again. Examples include wind, water, sunlight, plants, and animals. The sun provides energy each day, and wind can be used to generate electricity. In addition, plants and animals can be grown and replaced through careful management.

3 People use renewable resources in many ways. Solar panels collect energy from sunlight and turn it into electricity. Wind turbines use moving air to generate power. Water flowing through dams can also be used to produce electricity. Farmers grow plants that can be used for food, fuel, and other products. Because these resources can be replaced naturally, many people believe they are important for the future.

4 Renewable resources have several advantages. They do not run out easily, and they often cause less damage to the environment. However, they also have limitations. Renewable energy sources are not always available. For example, solar energy depends on sunlight, and wind energy depends on weather conditions. This can cause mismanagement of energy resources if people do not plan carefully.

5 Imagine a town that relies mostly on solar energy. On bright, sunny days, plenty of electricity may be produced. However, during cloudy weather, less energy may be available. The same challenge can occur with wind energy. If the wind is not blowing, wind turbines cannot produce as much electricity. Because of this, communities often use several different energy sources to meet their needs.

6 Other resources are known as nonrenewable. These include coal, oil, and natural gas, which form deep underground over millions of years. Because they take so long to develop, they cannot be replaced quickly once they are used.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Columbus's Arrival

Preview the two passages before reading. Each passage appears once here for you to read and annotate.

My
marks

1 In 1492, Christopher Columbus sailed across the Atlantic Ocean searching for a new route to Asia. Instead, he reached islands in the Caribbean. When he arrived, he claimed the land for Spain, even though Native American groups such as the Taino and the Carib already lived there.

2 At the time, many European countries were looking for faster trade routes. Traveling to Asia by land could be difficult and costly. Columbus believed that sailing west across the Atlantic Ocean would be a quicker way to reach Asia. Although he did not arrive in Asia, his voyage connected Europe and the Americas in new ways.

3 By claiming the land, Columbus helped Spain begin to explore and settle in the Americas. This was important because it led to more Spanish expeditions and the growth of Spain's influence in the region. Other European countries soon became interested in exploring the Americas as well.

4 As more explorers arrived, Spain established settlements in different areas. Ships traveled back and forth across the Atlantic Ocean carrying people, goods, and ideas. These voyages helped increase trade and allowed European countries to expand their influence in the Americas.

5 Columbus and his crew also brought their beliefs with them. They wanted to spread Christianity to the people they met. Over time, missionaries traveled to the Americas to teach Native Americans about this religion. This changed many traditions and ways of life.

6 The arrival of Europeans introduced new customs, languages, and technologies. Some Native American groups adopted certain European practices, while others worked to keep their own traditions. As different cultures came into contact, many changes took place throughout the Americas.

7 At first, some Native American groups, like the Taino, showed friendliness toward Columbus and his crew by trading and cooperating with them. They exchanged goods and shared information about the area. These early interactions helped both groups learn about one another.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Energy We Use Everyday (continued)

Preview the two passages before reading. Each passage appears once here for you to read and annotate.

7 Nonrenewable resources provide a large and steady supply of energy, which makes them useful. Many homes, businesses, and vehicles rely on these resources every day. Coal has been used for many years to generate electricity. Oil is used to make fuels such as gasoline, and natural gas is commonly used for heating and cooking.

8 However, the use of nonrenewable resources can also create challenges. Their use can lead to pollution and environmental damage. In addition, these resources are limited and may eventually be used up. Once a nonrenewable resource is gone, it cannot be replaced within a human lifetime.

9 Scientists, engineers, and community leaders continue to study ways to use energy wisely. Many people look for methods that reduce pollution while still providing enough energy for homes and businesses. Some communities use a combination of renewable and nonrenewable resources to meet their energy needs.

10 Understanding the advantages and disadvantages helps build responsibility when making decisions about energy use. Learning about renewable and nonrenewable resources can help people make informed choices that protect Earth's resources for future generations.

My
marks

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Columbus's Arrival (continued)

Preview the two passages before reading. Each passage appears once here for you to read and annotate.

My
marks

8 However, these relationships did not always stay peaceful. Conflicts developed over land, resources, and control. The Carib were known for resisting the Spanish, which led to fighting between the groups. As more Europeans arrived, disagreements often became more common.

9 The arrival of Europeans affected Native American communities in many ways. Some groups lost control of their land, while others experienced changes to their cultures and daily lives. These effects were different from place to place, but they often had lasting results.

10 Today, Columbus's journey is remembered and retold in different ways. Columbus Day recognizes his voyage, but many people also think about how his arrival affected Native Americans. Historians study different perspectives to better understand the events that followed his journey.

11 People continue to discuss the impact of Columbus's voyage because it marked an important turning point in history. His journey opened the door to further exploration, settlement, and cultural exchange between Europe and the Americas.

12 Columbus's actions had lasting effects on land, culture, and the people who lived in the Americas. His voyage remains one of the most significant events in world history because of the changes it set into motion.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Annotate: The Energy We Use Everyday

TAP the TRACKS: Time (over millions of years), Reactions (lead to pollution and environmental damage), Actions (Solar panels collect energy from sunlight), Character/Concept/Creature (Renewable resources), Key Knowledge (coal, oil, and natural gas), Scenery/Setting (natural resources found on Earth).

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

TAP the TRACKS: hunt for the six kinds of evidence and mark each one, Time, Reactions, Actions, Character/Concept/Creature, Key Knowledge, and Scenery/Setting.

One piece of evidence I found in The Energy We Use Everyday is ____.

Annotate: Columbus's Arrival

TAP the TRACKS: Time (In 1492), Reactions (changed many traditions and ways of life), Actions (he claimed the land for Spain), Character/Concept/Creature (Christopher Columbus), Key Knowledge (spread Christianity to the people they met), Scenery/Setting (islands in the Caribbean).

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

? STOP & THINK

Stop and think: What is the Noun of Importance (the topic), and what is the Verb of Importance (what to explain)?

My thinking

My Prompt Marking Notes

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

Shape	Word	Question I ask myself	
Explain why Columbus's arrival affected people in the Americas in important ways.	Columbus's arrival	affected	why
Explain how renewable and nonrenewable resources shape energy decisions.	renewable and nonrenewable resources	shape	how

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

Explain why Columbus's arrival affected people in the Americas in important ways.

Is there a reason (because) or a method (through)?

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 1: Gather + Reveal



We Are Thesis (Central Idea) Builders, Not Thesis (Central Idea) Guessers

Gather: Auditory Engagement, Listen for the Relationship

After each thesis (central idea), label the relationship: WHY means a reason relationship; HOW means a method or means relationship. Finish: The thesis (central idea) works because ____ connects ____ to ____.

Thesis (Central Idea)	Answer
Renewable resources are important for the future because they can be replaced over time.	WHY, because connects the importance of renewable resources to the reason.
Columbus influenced the Americas through exploration, land claims, and cultural change.	HOW, through connects the influence to the ways it happened.
Renewable and nonrenewable resources shape energy decisions through differences in availability and environmental effects.	HOW, through shows the method or relationship.

Fresh Recall: tell a partner one clue that usually signals WHY and one clue that usually signals HOW.

A Thesis (Central Idea) Has Three Pieces

Write on the board: A Thesis (Central Idea) Has 3 Pieces, Noun of Importance (what the prompt is about), Verb of Importance (what the prompt asks you to explain), and Answer (your thinking). WHY equals a complex sentence with a subordinator. HOW equals a simple sentence with a preposition.

Reveal: Build a Strong Trunk

The noun of importance tells what the prompt is mostly about; the verb of importance tells what the writer must explain; the answer comes from the student. WHY subordinators: because, since, although, while, after, before, when, if. HOW prepositions: by, through, with, during, across, in.

Prompt	Noun / Verb / Answer / Type	Thesis (Central Idea)
Explain why Columbus's arrival affected people in the Americas in important ways.	Columbus's arrival / affected / WHY	Because Columbus's arrival changed land, culture, and relationships in the Americas, it affected people in important ways.
Explain how renewable and nonrenewable resources shape energy decisions.	renewable and nonrenewable resources / shape / HOW	Renewable and nonrenewable resources shape energy decisions through differences in availability, replacement, and environmental effects.

Day 1 Closing: A thesis (central idea) has three pieces, ____, ____, and ____, and a WHY thesis (central idea) uses ____.

Informational Relationships

When I write a thesis (central idea) about Columbus's arrival or energy resources, I also think about cause/effect, comparison, advantage/limitation, and problem/solution. These relationships help me explain what the details mean, I am not just restating facts, I am showing how the facts connect and why those connections matter.

One informational relationship I notice in a passage

[illegible]

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Thesis (Central Idea) Builder Trail

Day 2: Attempt

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

Spin Noun, Verb, Answer, or Type. Pull a prompt card. Complete the part you spun.



Noun of Importance



Verb of Importance



Answer



WHY



HOW

Explain why Columbus's arrival affected people in the Americas in important ways.

Self-Check: Thesis (Central Idea) Pieces (sheet 1 of 2)

Correct answer moves one space; extra-strong academic language moves two.

Verb of Importance what the writer must explain, from the prompt	Noun of Importance what the prompt is mostly about, from the prompt
WHY complex sentence with a subordinator: because, since, although, while, after, before, when, if	Answer the student's own thinking
Because Columbus's arrival changed land, culture, and relationships in the Americas, it affected people in important ways.	HOW simple sentence with a preposition: by, through, with, during, across, in

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Thesis (Central Idea) Builder Trail

Day 2: Attempt

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

Spin Noun, Verb, Answer, or Type. Pull a prompt card. Complete the part you spun.

Explain how renewable and nonrenewable resources shape energy decisions.

Explain how Columbus influenced the lives of Native Americans.

Explain why renewable resources are important for the future.

Self-Check: Thesis (Central Idea) Pieces (sheet 2 of 2)

Correct answer moves one space; extra-strong academic language moves two.

Columbus influenced Native American groups through exploration, land claims, and conflict.

Renewable and nonrenewable resources shape energy decisions through differences in availability, replacement, and environmental effects.

Renewable resources are important for the future because they can be replaced over time and often cause less environmental damage.

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 2: Attempt

Thesis (Central Idea) Builder Trail



Spin Noun, Verb, Answer, or Type. Pull a prompt card. Complete the part you spun. If you spin Noun, identify the noun of importance; Verb, the verb of importance; Answer, create your own answer; Type, decide WHY or HOW and name the sentence type. Correct answer moves one space; extra-strong academic language moves two.

Prompt	Noun / Verb / Type	Sample Answer Part
Explain why Columbus's arrival affected people in the Americas in important ways.	Columbus's arrival / affected / WHY (complex)	because it led to changes in culture, religion, and control
Explain how renewable and nonrenewable resources shape energy decisions.	renewable and nonrenewable resources / shape / HOW (simple)	through differences in availability, replacement, and environmental effects
Explain how Columbus influenced the lives of Native Americans.	Columbus / influenced / HOW	through claiming land, spreading beliefs, and causing conflict
Explain why renewable resources are important for the future.	renewable resources / are important / WHY	because they can be replaced over time and often cause less environmental damage
Explain how Columbus's voyage changed the Americas.	Columbus's voyage / changed / HOW	through exploration, settlement, and cultural change
Explain why nonrenewable resources require careful use.	nonrenewable resources / require careful use / WHY	because they cannot be replaced quickly and their use can lead to pollution and environmental damage

Day 2 Closing: Place your thesis (central idea) helper chart in your Interactive Notebook.

Interactive Notebook Reminder

Place your thesis (central idea) helper chart in your Interactive Notebook. Use the games and activities to review the ECR concepts whenever you have free time.

Try It on Your Own

Pick one prompt card from the trail above. Write the noun of importance, the verb of importance, WHY or HOW, and your own answer.

Noun of Importance / Verb of Importance

WHY or HOW, and my answer

STUDENT WORKBOOK

Day 3: Discuss and Use Again



Prompt-to-Thesis (Central Idea) Foldable

Discuss the Thesis (Central Idea)

Why can't a thesis (central idea) just copy the prompt? Why does a WHY thesis (central idea) need a complex sentence with a subordinator? Why does a HOW thesis (central idea) use a simple sentence with a preposition? What does cause and effect add to a thesis (central idea)?

Because the answer part has to come from the student. A why thesis (central idea) needs a reason connection. A preposition points to the path or means.

Use Again: Prompt-to-Thesis (Central Idea) Foldable

Fold a page into four flaps: Prompt, Noun + Verb, Type, Thesis (Central Idea). Under each flap, complete the work.

Prompt	Noun + Verb / Type	Thesis (Central Idea)
Explain why Columbus's arrival affected people in the Americas in important ways.	Columbus's arrival / affected / WHY	Because Columbus's arrival changed land, beliefs, and relationships in the Americas, it affected people in important ways.
Explain how renewable and nonrenewable resources shape energy decisions.	renewable and nonrenewable resources / shape / HOW	Renewable and nonrenewable resources shape energy decisions through differences in availability, environmental effects, and long-term supply.
Explain how Columbus influenced Native American groups.	Columbus / influenced / HOW	Columbus influenced Native American groups through exploration, land claims, and conflict.
Explain why renewable resources are valuable for long-term energy planning.	renewable resources / are valuable / WHY	Renewable resources are valuable for long-term energy planning because they can be replaced over time and often cause less environmental damage.

Standards Application Check: Module 2 Thesis (Central Idea)

Quality Check: Underline the NOI, box the VOI, bracket your answer, label WHY or HOW, revise one word or phrase for precision, and check conventions and spelling.

Model: Renewable resources are important for the future because they can be replaced over time. Check for: complete sentence, correct sentence type, clear noun/verb/answer, accurate plural/common nouns, and correct spelling.

Day 3 Closing: Underline the part of your thesis (central idea) that came from YOU.

STUDENT WORKBOOK

Day 4: Award and Target



My thesis (central idea) is strong because ____

Award

Underline the part of your thesis (central idea) that came from YOU. Complete: My thesis (central idea) is strong because _____. Draw a tree trunk and write one strong thesis (central idea) across it.

My thesis (central idea) is strong because ____

Target

Choose one target: find the noun of importance, find the verb of importance, identify WHY/HOW, build the sentence, or strengthen word choice.

Curiosity Questions: How can one prompt lead to more than one good thesis (central idea)? Why might two students answer the same prompt differently but still be correct? What happens to the rest of the essay if the thesis (central idea) is weak?

Day 4 Closing: My next thesis (central idea) goal is ____ because ____.

STUDENT WORKBOOK

Day 5: Explain to Others



Teach the Three Pieces

Teach your partner: what the three pieces are; how to know whether the prompt is WHY or HOW; and one example thesis (central idea) from today.

- The noun of importance is ____.
- The verb of importance is ____.
- The answer comes from ____.
- A WHY thesis (central idea) uses ____.
- A HOW thesis (central idea) uses ____.
- An example from Columbus is ____.
- An example from the energy passage is ____.

Module Overarching Question, Answer

How can the words in an ECR prompt guide us to build a strong thesis (central idea) statement? The prompt gives us the noun of importance, the verb of importance, and the WHY/HOW clue. Those parts tell us what to answer and which sentence structure will make the thesis (central idea) clear.

One piece of a thesis (central idea) I can teach is ____.



Write More

Build a Thesis (Central Idea)



Writing Prompt

Choose one prompt below and build a thesis (central idea) with all three pieces.

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

Explain why Columbus's arrival affected people in the Americas in important ways. Build a WHY thesis (central idea) with all three pieces.

My Plan

- Find the Noun of Importance (the topic word).
- Find the Verb of Importance (what to explain).
- Decide WHY or HOW.
- Add your own answer and build the thesis (central idea) in the matching sentence structure.

Explain why renewable resources are important for the future.

Explain how Columbus's voyage changed the Americas.

Connection to This Module

This week you learned that a strong thesis (central idea) keeps the noun and verb from the prompt and adds your own answer. Now build the thesis (central idea) in the matching sentence type.

Step 1: Mark the noun of importance and the verb of importance.

[illegible]

Drafting Space



Step 2: Decide WHY (complex) or HOW (simple with a preposition). Step 3: Add your answer in the matching sentence structure.

Draft, page 1

My thesis (central idea) keeps the noun and verb from the prompt.

Revise, Edit, and Share

Revise

- ☐ Read your thesis (central idea) aloud.
- ☐ Improve one word or phrase for precision so the relationship is clear.

Edit

- ☐ Complete sentence.
- ☐ Subject-verb agreement.
- ☐ Singular/plural/common/proper nouns.
- ☐ Grade-appropriate spelling patterns.

My sentence type matches WHY or HOW.

Share

My thesis (central idea) adds my own answer.

Read your thesis (central idea) aloud to a partner.

Success Criteria

My thesis (central idea) keeps the noun and verb from the prompt, adds my own answer, and matches the sentence type to WHY or HOW.

Part	I can show...	Check
Noun of Importance	Must name the topic word from the prompt.	
Verb of Importance	Must name what the prompt asks to explain.	
Answer	Must add the student's own thinking.	
Sentence Type	Must match WHY (complex) or HOW (simple with a preposition).	

Answer Key: Two Types

WHY equals a complex sentence with a subordinator (because, since, although...). HOW equals a simple sentence with a preposition (through, by, with...).

Explain why Columbus's arrival affected people in the Americas in important ways.

Low

Columbus's arrival affected people in the Americas in important ways.

The thesis (central idea) copies the prompt and adds no answer of the student's own; it is not a complex WHY sentence. Add the student's own answer and a because reason to match the WHY prompt.

Medium

Columbus's arrival affected people because he came to the Americas.

The answer (he came to the Americas) repeats the topic rather than explaining the effect. Sharpen the answer to name what changed (land, culture, relationships).

High

Because Columbus's arrival changed land, culture, and relationships in the Americas, it affected people in important ways.

A complete WHY thesis (central idea): the noun (Columbus's arrival), the verb (affected), and the student's own answer, written as a complex sentence with because. All three pieces are present and the sentence structure matches the WHY prompt exactly.

[illegible]



Look Back & Look Forward

My Module 2 Snapshot



My Progress Tracker

I can...	Not yet	Growing	Got it
Find the Noun of Importance in a prompt.	☐	☐	☐
Find the Verb of Importance in a prompt.	☐	☐	☐
Decide WHY or HOW and match the sentence type.	☐	☐	☐
Add my own answer to build a thesis (central idea).	☐	☐	☐
Check my thesis (central idea) for conventions.	☐	☐	☐

One thing I am proud of

One thing I want to get better at

Essential Question Answered

How can the words in an ECR prompt guide us to build a strong thesis (central idea) statement?

The answer

The prompt gives us the noun of importance, the verb of importance, and the WHY/HOW clue. Those parts tell us what to answer and which sentence structure will make the thesis (central idea) clear.

At the beginning of this module, we asked how the words in an ECR prompt guide us to build a strong thesis (central idea). Now we can answer it: the prompt gives us the noun of importance, the verb of importance, and the WHY/HOW clue, and our own thinking gives the answer.

How my thinking changed

A thesis (central idea) is just the topic restated.

A thesis (central idea) needs the noun of importance, the verb of importance, and my own answer, matched to WHY or HOW.

Module Overarching Question, Answered

How can the words in an ECR prompt guide us to build a strong thesis (central idea) statement?

The prompt gives us the noun of importance, the verb of importance, and the WHY/HOW clue. Those parts tell us what to answer and which sentence

Relationship Thesis (Central Idea) Challenge

Build thesis (central idea) statements that not only answer the prompt but also show deep cause and effect. Create one thesis (central idea) about Columbus and one thesis (central idea) about energy resources, then revise each to make it more precise and thoughtful. Rebuild a WHY thesis (central idea) as a HOW thesis (central idea) (or the reverse). Notice how the sentence structure changes.

- Identify the prompt type.
- Build the thesis (central idea) correctly.
- Add cause-and-effect language.
- Explain how the thesis (central idea) became stronger after revision.

Because Columbus's actions brought control, cultural change, and conflict to the Americas, they influenced the region in lasting ways. Energy resource differences shape community decisions through availability, environmental effects, and long-term supply.

Reflection

How does your word choice reveal your understanding of the relationship among ideas?

At-Home Connection

Send these home with the letter, or post them in the class stream. None of them can be answered with only yes or no.

Keep the Topic, Add Your Idea

Ask a why question (Why is recycling helpful?). Have your student keep the topic word and add a because reason in one sentence.

This is the thesis (central idea) building habit we practice this week: keep the topic word and add your own idea in one clear sentence.

Family member signature: _____

Why or How

Take turns asking WHY and HOW questions. Notice that a WHY answer uses because and a HOW answer uses by or through.

WHY questions get a because sentence; HOW questions get a through or by sentence.

Family member signature: _____

One Question to Ask at Home

What is the topic, and what is your own answer about it, in one clear sentence?

When your student answers a question, ask them to say a full sentence that keeps the topic word and adds their own idea.

Family member signature: _____

Family Conversation Starters

What are the three pieces of a strong thesis (central idea)? Why can't a thesis (central idea) just copy the question? What is the difference between a WHY sentence and a HOW sentence? What is a cause-and-effect relationship in one of our two passages?

Notes

Track My Progress

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

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

Why This Helps Me

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

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

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

My Module 2 Snapshot

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

The most useful word I learned

The prompt part I can find fastest

My Strong Roots

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

A note to my future writer self

My Proud Moment This Week

THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC.

Student Interactive Workbook

Grade 4

Cluster 2 - Module 3

Organizing Reasons and Ways



Name: _____



The Writing Academy®, LLC

Grade 4 • Cluster 2 • Module 3

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How to Use My Workbook

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

My Name and My Goal for This Module

Pocket Practice

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



Meet My Week

Organizing Reasons and Ways



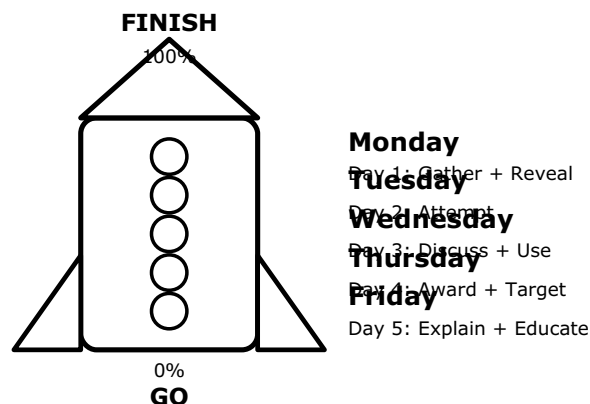
Why This Matters to Me

After you build a strong thesis (central idea), you grow the first big branch of the ECR Tree: the Reason/Way branch. A reason tells why the thesis (central idea) is true. A way tells how. This week you learn the Magnifying Process: brainstorm many ideas, sort them into buckets or baskets, choose one strong idea from each, and narrow to two or three separate baskets. When your reasons or ways come from different baskets, your body paragraphs come from different angles and stay connected to the thesis (central idea).

Essential Question

How can organizing reasons or ways into different groups help us build focused, nonrepetitive body paragraphs?

My Week Tracker



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

My First Thinking

I Can

- I can brainstorm, sort, and narrow reasons or ways that directly support my thesis (central idea).
- I can tell a reason (WHY) from a way (HOW).
- I can sort ideas into buckets or baskets, including an off-topic basket.
- I can choose reasons or ways from different baskets so my paragraphs are not repetitive.

I Will

- I will use the passage, speak about my thinking, and record my work.
- I will explain how my choices strengthen the response.
- I will brainstorm freely before I narrow.
- I will keep only ideas that prove the thesis (central idea).

The I Can I want to reach first, and why

My Week at a Glance

What I learn	What I read	What I make
How to Magnify a thesis (central idea) into two or three reasons or ways from different baskets.	Two nonfiction passages at High Stamina: The Energy We Use Everyday and Columbus's Arrival.	Bucket Sort cards, a Magnify My Thesis (Central Idea) page, a Branch Builder Badge, and a Turn-and-Teach explanation.

Where We Are Going

This week you grow the first big branch of the ECR Tree: brainstorm wide, sort ideas into baskets, and narrow to two or three that become different body paragraphs.

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

- ☐ I can name the four Magnifying steps in order.
- ☐ I can sort ideas into like groups and spot off-topic ideas.
- ☐ I can choose two or three reasons or ways from different baskets.
- ☐ I can add and delete ideas for coherence.

Check Myself

- ☐ I brainstormed many ideas before I chose.
- ☐ I sorted like ideas into buckets or baskets, including an off-topic basket.
- ☐ I chose reasons or ways from different baskets so my paragraphs do not repeat.

How I Will Show What I Know

The Bucket Sort game (sorted baskets with keepers), the Magnify My Thesis (Central Idea) page, and the Turn-and-Teach explanation.

My GRADUATE Learning Path

Stage	Day	What I do
Gather	Day 1	I number the four Magnifying steps.
Reveal	Day 1	I learn the Reason/Way branch and baskets.
Attempt	Day 2	I play Bucket Sort and keep one from each basket.
Discuss	Day 3	I explain my thinking and magnify my own thesis (central idea).
Award	Day 4	I star my strongest basket and pick one next step.
Educate	Day 5	I teach the four steps to a partner.

Say It Together!

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

4.11B(iv):

I can develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by developing an engaging idea with relevant details.

4.12B(i):

I can compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea.

Call and Response

Read this together as a class before we start.

Teacher asks: "How do I grow one strong branch of reasons or ways?"

Class answers: "Brainstorm, sort, choose, and narrow!"

One TEKS I want to practice today



Get Ready

Before I begin



Before We Begin: What Do I Already Know?

I can write a thesis (central idea) with all three parts, and I know the trunk holds the branches. Now I add the first big branch: the reasons or ways that prove my thesis (central idea).

A connection I can make

Remember It!

- ☐ A reason tells WHY the thesis (central idea) is true.
- ☐ A way tells HOW the thesis (central idea) is true.
- ☐ Magnify: Brainstorm, Sort, Choose, Narrow.
- ☐ Every reason or way must prove the thesis (central idea).

One idea I remember

Ready Check

- ☐ I can write a complete sentence.
- ☐ I can use Dot, Discover, Drop and TRACKS.
- ☐ I can find the thesis (central idea) trunk.

Watch Out! Common Mix-Up

Watch out! A fact can be true in the passage and still not prove this thesis (central idea). That is why an off-topic basket helps. Sort ideas by what kind of meaning group they belong to, not by how they sound.

Where This Fits in My Writing

Later, each reason or way gets its own evidence, so the reasons you choose now decide the evidence you will need next. Different baskets lead to more diverse evidence.

What I want to remember before I start

Where I Am Starting

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

Part 1: Shape the Prompt

Read the prompt. Circle the topic in red. Draw a yellow box around the charge. Draw a green triangle around the word that tells WHY or HOW.

Read the prompt. Circle the topic in red. Draw a yellow box around the charge. Draw a green triangle around the word that tells WHY or HOW.

Explain why Columbus's arrival affected people in the Americas.

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

Part 2: Magnify

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

My details

Part 3: Order the Magnifying Process

Number these four sentences 1, 2, 3, 4 to show the order of the Magnifying Process.

Number	Step
_____	Choose one strong idea from each basket.
_____	Brainstorm many connected ideas.
_____	Narrow to two or three separate baskets.
_____	Sort like ideas into baskets.

Part 4: Introduction

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

My first sentence

Part 5: Relevant Details and Evidence

Sort this detail into the right basket, then tell why it fits.

The detail I copied from the passage

The basket it belongs to, and why it fits

Part 6: Passage-Based Paragraph

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

My paragraph



Words I Need

Tier 1, everyday words



Tier 1 words are the everyday words you already use. This week they carry big ideas, because you will sort your thinking into baskets. Say each word, then use it with a partner.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
reason	REE-zun	why something is true	One reason is ____.
way	WAY	how something happens	One way is ____.
sort	SORT	to put into groups	I sort my ideas by ____.
group	GROOP	a set of things that are alike	This group holds ____.
choose	CHOOZ	to pick on purpose	I choose ____ because ____.
keep	KEEP	to hold onto	I keep this idea because ____.
idea	eye-DEE-uh	a thought about something	One idea is ____.
wide	WYD	broad; covering a lot	I brainstorm wide by ____.
strong	STRONG	powerful and clear	A strong reason is ____.
connect	kuh-NEKT	to link two things together	This reason connects to the thesis (central idea) because ____.

Use one Tier 1 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 2, academic words

These academic words help you talk about organizing ideas. Say each word, then use it with a partner.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
thesis (central idea)	THEE-sis	the clear central idea a response will prove	My thesis (central idea) is ____.
organize	OR-guh-nyz	to arrange in order	I organize my ideas by ____.
categorize	KAT-uh-guh-ryz	to put into categories	I categorize these as ____.
classify	KLAS-uh-fy	to sort by type	I classify this idea as ____.
brainstorm	BRAIN-storm	to think of many ideas quickly	When I brainstorm, I ____.
narrow	NAIR-oh	to reduce to the best few	I narrow my ideas to ____.
topic sentence	TOP-ik SEN-tuhns	the sentence that starts a body paragraph	My topic sentence is ____.
relevant	REL-uh-vuhnt	closely connected to the point	A relevant idea is ____.
magnify	MAG-nuh-fy	to organize ideas into groups before choosing	I magnify my reasons by ____.
coherence	koh-HEER-uhns	how well ideas fit and flow together	I improve coherence by ____.

Use one Tier 2 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 3, passage words

These words come from our two passages, *The Energy We Use Everyday* and *Columbus's Arrival*. Say each word, then use it with a partner.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
renewable	rih-NOO-uh-buhl	able to be replaced over time and used again	A renewable resource is ____.
nonrenewable	non-rih-NOO-uh-buhl	not able to be replaced quickly once it is used	A nonrenewable resource is ____.
resource	REE-sorss	a material or supply that people use	One resource we use is ____.
pollution	puh-LOO-shun	harmful materials that damage the environment	Pollution can ____.
environment	en-VY-run-ment	the natural world around us	The environment is affected when ____.
Columbus	kuh-LUM-bus	the explorer who sailed to the Americas in 1492	Columbus ____.
Taino	TY-noh	a Native American people of the Caribbean	The Taino ____.
Carib	KAIR-ib	a Native American people known for resisting the Spanish	The Carib ____.
missionaries	MISH-uh-nair-eez	people who travel to teach a religion	Missionaries traveled to ____.
hydroelectric	hy-droh-ih-LEK-trik	making electricity from moving water	A hydroelectric dam ____.

Use one Tier 3 word in a sentence

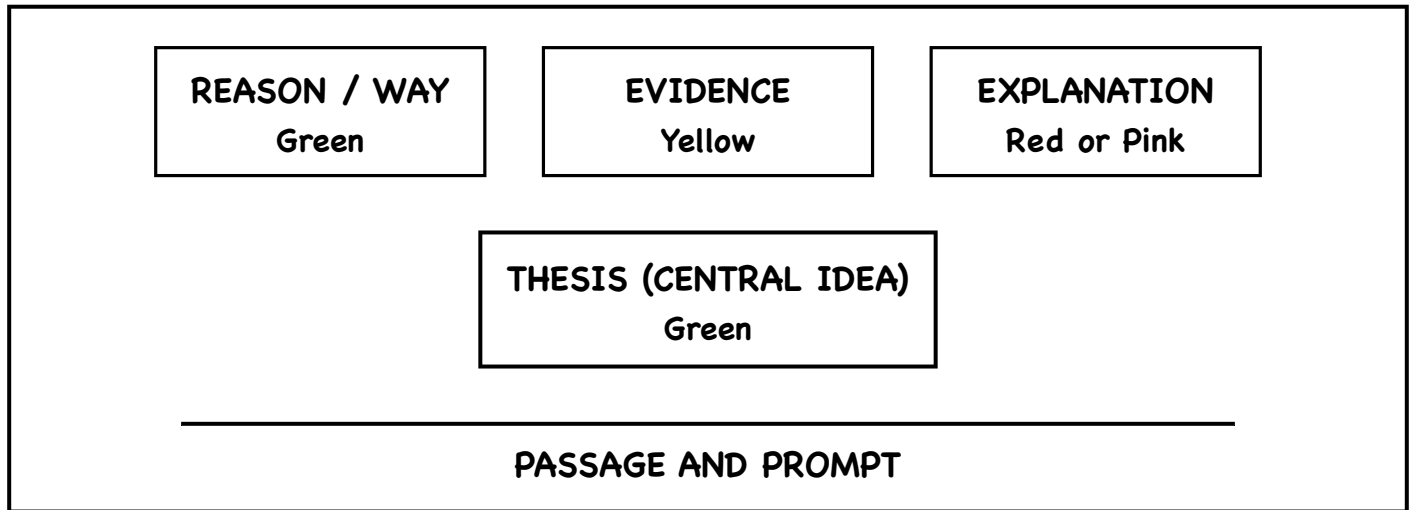


My Strategy Tools

The ECR Tree and the Reason/Way Branch



Your ideas grow from the passage and the prompt. The thesis (central idea) is the trunk. The Reason/Way branch is the first big branch you grow this week.



Nothing grows until the ground is ready.

The Reason/Way Branch and the Magnifying Process

Mark	What it means
Reason	It tells WHY the thesis (central idea) is true.
Way	It tells HOW the thesis (central idea) is true.
Magnify	Brainstorm, Sort, Choose, Narrow: sort like ideas into baskets, then choose from different baskets.

Every reason or way must prove the thesis (central idea). Choosing from different baskets keeps body paragraphs from repeating.

How this branch works for me

WHY (Reason) and HOW (Way)

WHY (Reason)	HOW (Way)
A reason tells WHY the thesis (central idea) is true.	A way tells HOW the thesis (central idea) is true.
Sort ideas into baskets, make an off-topic basket, then choose one keeper from each basket.	Narrow to two or three baskets so each body paragraph develops a different part of the thesis (central idea).

Choosing from entirely different baskets gives a more in-depth and diverse list of ideas.

How I Say the Standard!

4.11B(iv):

I can develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by developing an engaging idea with relevant details.

4.12B(i):

I can compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea.

Check My Writing

- ☐ My sentence has a subject and a verb.
- ☐ I use a capital letter for Columbus, Spain, the Caribbean, the Taino, and the Carib.
- ☐ I use a period or another ending mark.

A reason or way from a basket I could use

Five Thinking Levels: WHY

Read from the bottom up. Use this chart to name the kind of WHY thinking a task and a response require.

Level	Symbol	Hidden Question	Student Thinking	Thinking Focus
Level 1	○		Student follows directions or repeats information exactly as taught with little independent thinking.	Foundational
Level 2	◻		Student begins trying ideas independently but may be uncertain or inconsistent.	Emergent
Level 3	▽		Student connects ideas directly to textual evidence.	Visible
Level 4	△		Student combines evidence with personal reasoning, applying understanding to a claim.	Independent
Level 5	◊		Student connects evidence to the world, morals, lessons, or broader understanding.	Reflective

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

A kind of WHY thinking I used today

Five Thinking Levels: HOW

Read from the bottom up. The same five levels name the kind of HOW thinking a task and a response require.

Level	Symbol	Hidden Question	Student Thinking	Thinking Focus
Level 1	○		Student follows directions or repeats information exactly as taught with little independent thinking.	Foundational
Level 2	◻		Student begins trying ideas independently but may be uncertain or inconsistent.	Emergent
Level 3	▽		Student connects ideas directly to textual evidence.	Visible
Level 4	△		Student combines evidence with personal reasoning, applying understanding to a claim.	Independent
Level 5	◊		Student connects evidence to the world, morals, lessons, or broader understanding.	Reflective

The Difference Between WHY and HOW

Prompt type	What it asks me to do	Example
WHY	Explain a reason, a purpose, or why something matters.	Explain why Columbus's arrival affected people in the Americas.
HOW	Analyze how parts work together or how something happens.	Explain how renewable and nonrenewable resources shape energy decisions.

Reasons answer WHY prompts. Ways answer HOW prompts. Both grow on the same branch, and choosing from entirely different baskets keeps my body paragraphs from repeating.

A thinking level I want to try



Read & Interact

Read with a purpose



Dot, Discover, Drop

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

TRACKS Legend

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

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

Connect It to Our World

Think about the energy you use at home and the history you learn at school. Which details help you understand how choices affect people and the world?

Background I Need

The Energy We Use Everyday is a longer nonfiction text about renewable and nonrenewable resources, their advantages and limitations, availability and reliability, environmental effects, and the need for careful planning. Columbus's Arrival is a longer nonfiction text about Columbus's 1492 voyage, Spanish settlement, the spread of Christianity, early cooperation and later conflict with the Taino and the Carib, and the lasting effects of his arrival. A basket is a category, and the name of the category becomes a reason or way.

Words I dotted while reading

The Energy We Use Everyday

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

My
marks

1 Have you ever wondered where the energy you use each day comes from? When you turn on lights, charge a device, watch television, use a computer, or travel in a car, you are using energy produced from natural resources found on Earth. Energy is an important part of daily life. People use it at home, at school, and at work. Without energy, many of the things we depend on every day would not be possible.

2 Natural resources are materials found in nature that people use to meet their needs. Some natural resources provide food, while others provide energy. The energy people use comes from both renewable and nonrenewable resources. Understanding the difference between these resources helps people make informed decisions about how energy is produced and used.

3 Some of these resources are called renewable. Renewable resources can be replaced over time and used again. Examples include wind, water, sunlight, plants, and animals. The sun provides energy each day, and wind can be used to generate electricity. In addition, plants and animals can be grown and replaced through careful management.

4 People use renewable resources in many different ways. Solar panels collect energy from sunlight and turn it into electricity. Wind turbines use moving air to generate power. Water flowing through dams can also be used to produce electricity. Farmers grow plants that can be used for food, fuel, and other products. Because these resources can be replaced naturally, many people believe they are important for the future.

5 Renewable resources have several advantages. They do not run out easily, and they often cause less damage to the environment. Since sunlight, wind, and water are continually renewed by natural processes, people can use them again and again. This makes renewable resources valuable sources of energy for communities around the world.

6 Another advantage of renewable resources is that they often produce less pollution. Solar panels and wind turbines generate electricity without burning fuel. This helps reduce the amount of harmful gases released into the air. Many people support the use of renewable resources because they can help protect the environment while still providing energy.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Energy We Use Everyday (continued)

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

My
marks

7 However, renewable resources also have limitations. Renewable energy sources are not always available. For example, solar energy depends on sunlight, and wind energy depends on weather conditions. This can cause mismanagement of energy resources if people do not plan carefully.

8 Imagine a town that relies mostly on solar energy. On bright, sunny days, plenty of electricity may be produced. However, during cloudy weather, less energy may be available. The same challenge can occur with wind energy. If the wind is not blowing, wind turbines cannot produce as much electricity. Because of this, communities often use several different energy sources to meet their needs.

9 Water power also has limitations. Hydroelectric dams depend on a steady supply of water. During droughts, rivers and reservoirs may contain less water than usual. When this happens, less electricity can be generated. Even though water is a renewable resource, changes in weather can affect how much energy it provides.

10 Other resources are known as nonrenewable. These include coal, oil, and natural gas, which form deep underground over millions of years. These resources were created from the remains of ancient plants and animals that were buried beneath Earth's surface. Heat and pressure slowly transformed these materials into the fuels people use today.

11 Because nonrenewable resources take so long to develop, they cannot be replaced quickly once they are used. Although new deposits may still be forming underground, the process takes millions of years. As a result, people must carefully manage these resources because the supply is limited.

12 Nonrenewable resources provide a large and steady supply of energy, which makes them useful. Many homes, businesses, and vehicles rely on these resources every day. Coal has been used for many years to generate electricity. Oil is used to make fuels such as gasoline, diesel fuel, and jet fuel. Natural gas is commonly used for heating homes, cooking food, and producing electricity.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Energy We Use Everyday (continued)

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

My
marks

13 One reason nonrenewable resources remain popular is that they can provide energy whenever it is needed. Unlike solar panels or wind turbines, which depend on weather conditions, coal, oil, and natural gas can be used at any time. This reliability makes them important energy sources in many areas.

14 However, the use of nonrenewable resources can also create challenges. Their use can lead to pollution and environmental damage. When fossil fuels are burned, gases and particles are released into the atmosphere. These pollutants can affect air quality and contribute to environmental problems.

15 Mining and drilling for nonrenewable resources can also affect ecosystems. Land may be disturbed when coal is mined, and oil spills can harm plants and animals. Because of these risks, many people believe it is important to find ways to reduce environmental damage while still meeting energy needs.

16 In addition, nonrenewable resources are limited and may eventually be used up. As populations grow and more energy is needed, supplies of coal, oil, and natural gas may decrease. This is one reason why scientists continue to search for new technologies and energy sources.

17 Scientists, engineers, and community leaders study ways to use energy more efficiently. Energy efficiency means using less energy to perform the same task. For example, energy-efficient light bulbs use less electricity than older bulbs while producing the same amount of light. Efficient appliances and vehicles can also reduce energy use.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Energy We Use Everyday (continued)

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

My
marks

18 Many communities use a combination of renewable and nonrenewable resources. This approach helps provide a steady supply of energy while also reducing dependence on limited resources. A city might use electricity from solar panels during the day while relying on natural gas when renewable energy is unavailable.

19 People can also help conserve resources through everyday actions. Turning off lights when leaving a room, using less water, recycling materials, and choosing energy-efficient products can reduce the demand for energy. Small actions by many people can make a big difference over time.

20 Understanding the advantages and disadvantages of renewable and nonrenewable resources helps people make informed decisions about energy use. Both types of resources play important roles in meeting society's needs. Renewable resources can be replenished naturally, while nonrenewable resources provide dependable energy supplies. Learning about these resources helps people understand how energy choices affect the environment, communities, and future generations.

21 As technology continues to improve, people will likely discover new ways to produce and use energy. By carefully managing Earth's resources and making thoughtful decisions, communities can help ensure that energy remains available for many years to come.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Columbus's Arrival

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

My
marks

1 In 1492, Christopher Columbus sailed across the Atlantic Ocean searching for a new route to Asia. Instead, he reached islands in the Caribbean. When he arrived, he claimed the land for Spain, even though Native American groups such as the Taino and the Carib already lived there.

2 Columbus was born in Genoa, in what is now Italy, but he sailed for Spain. During this time, many European countries were interested in finding faster ways to trade with Asia. Goods such as spices, silk, and other valuable products came from Asia, but reaching those places often required long and difficult journeys. Columbus believed he could reach Asia more quickly by sailing west across the Atlantic Ocean.

3 Many people doubted his plan because they believed the journey would be too long. However, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain agreed to support the voyage. They provided ships, supplies, and crew members. Columbus set sail with three ships called the Niña, the Pinta, and the Santa María.

4 The journey across the Atlantic Ocean was not easy. The crew spent weeks at sea without seeing land. Some sailors became worried and wanted to turn back. They were unsure if they would ever reach their destination. Columbus encouraged them to continue sailing. Finally, after many days at sea, land was spotted in October of 1492.

5 Although Columbus believed he had reached islands near Asia, he had actually arrived in the Caribbean. He did not realize that two large continents stood between Europe and Asia. Even though he had not reached his intended destination, his voyage became one of the most important events in history.

6 By claiming the land, Columbus helped Spain begin to explore and settle in the Americas. This was important because it led to more Spanish expeditions and the growth of Spain's influence in the region. News of Columbus's voyage spread quickly throughout Europe. Other countries became interested in exploring lands across the Atlantic Ocean.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Columbus's Arrival (continued)

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

My
marks

7 Soon, explorers from Spain and other European nations traveled to the Americas. They searched for land, resources, and opportunities to expand their countries. Over time, settlements were established in many areas. These settlements became places where Europeans lived, worked, and traded.

8 Ships regularly crossed the Atlantic Ocean carrying people and goods between Europe and the Americas. Crops, animals, tools, and other products moved between the two regions. This exchange changed the lives of people on both sides of the ocean. New foods became available in different parts of the world, and trade increased between continents.

9 Columbus and his crew also brought their beliefs with them. They wanted to spread Christianity to the people they met. Over time, missionaries traveled to the Americas to teach Native Americans about this religion. Churches and missions were built in many places. Some Native Americans accepted Christianity, while others continued following their traditional beliefs.

10 The arrival of Europeans introduced new customs, languages, and technologies. People encountered different ways of farming, building, and living. Some Native American groups adopted certain European practices, while others worked to keep their own traditions. As different cultures came into contact, many changes took place throughout the Americas.

11 At first, some Native American groups, like the Taino, showed friendliness toward Columbus and his crew by trading and cooperating with them. They exchanged goods and shared information about the area. These early interactions helped both groups learn about one another. The Taino introduced Europeans to local foods and resources, while Europeans shared items they had brought from across the ocean.

12 The Taino lived throughout parts of the Caribbean. They built villages, farmed crops, and fished in nearby waters. Their communities had existed long before Columbus arrived. Like many Native American groups, they had their own traditions, languages, and ways of life.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Columbus's Arrival (continued)

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

My
marks

13 However, relationships between Europeans and Native Americans did not always stay peaceful. Conflicts developed over land, resources, and control. As more Europeans arrived, they wanted access to valuable resources and additional land for settlements. Native American groups often wanted to protect their homes and communities.

14 The Carib were known for resisting the Spanish. They fought to defend their land and way of life. This resistance led to conflicts between the groups. Over time, fighting became more common in some areas. These conflicts affected both Europeans and Native Americans.

15 The arrival of Europeans affected Native American communities in many ways. Some groups lost control of their land. Others experienced changes to their cultures and daily lives. Traditional customs sometimes changed as new ideas and practices spread throughout the region.

16 In addition to cultural changes, new plants and animals were introduced to the Americas. Horses, cattle, and other animals became important in many areas. New crops and foods were also exchanged between Europe and the Americas. These changes affected farming, transportation, and trade.

17 The effects of Columbus's voyage continued for many years. Exploration increased, new settlements were established, and trade expanded. The movement of people, goods, and ideas connected different parts of the world in ways that had never happened before.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Columbus's Arrival (continued)

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

My
marks

18 Today, Columbus's journey is remembered and retold in different ways. Columbus Day recognizes his voyage, but many people also think about how his arrival affected Native Americans. Historians study different perspectives to better understand the events that followed his journey.

19 Some people focus on Columbus's role in opening the door to exploration and increased trade. Others focus on the challenges and hardships that Native American groups experienced after Europeans arrived. Looking at different viewpoints helps people gain a fuller understanding of history.

20 People continue to discuss the impact of Columbus's voyage because it marked an important turning point in history. His journey connected Europe and the Americas and led to changes that affected millions of people. The events that followed shaped the development of countries, cultures, and communities throughout the Western Hemisphere.

21 Columbus's actions had lasting effects on land, culture, and the people who lived in the Americas. His voyage remains one of the most significant events in world history because of the changes it set into motion. More than five hundred years later, people still study his journey to understand how it influenced the world we live in today.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Annotate: The Energy We Use Everyday

Notice how the passage compares renewable and nonrenewable resources and names their advantages and limitations.

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

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

My best TRACKS phrase and why I chose it

Annotate: The Energy We Use Everyday (continued)

Look for the limitations of each kind of resource and how communities respond to them.

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

STOP & THINK

Which detail helps a reader understand why the reasons or ways must come from different baskets?

My thinking

My Prompt Marking Notes

The prompt gives you a topic, a charge, and a word that tells WHY or HOW. Slow down and see the job before you plan.

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

Read the prompt. Circle the topic in red. Draw a yellow box around the charge. Draw a green triangle around the word that tells WHY or HOW.

Explain why Columbus's arrival affected people in the Americas.

My three marks in words

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 1: Gather + Reveal



I prepare the ground and grow the first branch

1. Gather: Listen and Number the Magnifying Process

Today you gather by ordering the four Magnifying steps. Listen for what must happen first, next, and last.

Number these steps 1 to 4. ____ Choose one strong idea from each basket. ____
Brainstorm many connected ideas. ____ Narrow to two or three separate baskets. ____
Sort like ideas into baskets.

My numbered order (1, 2, 3, 4)

2. Reveal: The Reason/Way Branch

The thesis (central idea) is the trunk. The reason or way is the first major branch. A reason tells why the thesis (central idea) is true. A way tells how the thesis (central idea) is true.

Read the prompt. Circle the topic in red. Draw a yellow box around the charge. Draw a green triangle around the word that tells WHY or HOW.

Explain why Columbus's arrival affected people in the Americas.

This prompt asks WHY or HOW because...

3. Reveal: Magnify the Ideas

Magnifying helps you take a big idea and organize it into smaller, clearer parts.

Step	What Writers Do
1 Brainstorm	List many connected ideas without judging.
2 Sort	Group like ideas into buckets or baskets, and make an off-topic basket.
3 Choose	Keep one strong idea from each basket.
4 Narrow	Use ideas from only two or three different baskets. Those become your topic sentences.

4. Model It: The Columbus Thesis (Central Idea)

Because Columbus's arrival changed land, culture, and relationships in the Americas, it affected people in important ways.

Basket	Ideas inside
Land and Power	claimed land for Spain; Spain gained influence; settlements grew; control
Religion and Culture	missionaries came; brought Christianity; changed traditions
Relationships and Conflict	traded with the Taino; conflict developed; Carib resisted
Off-Topic	islands; sailing; boats

My final keepers from different baskets

Ⓢ An idea can be true in the passage and still not belong in this thesis (central idea).

Why does an off-topic basket help?

STUDENT WORKBOOK



BUCKET SORT

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards (sheet 1 of 4)

Cut on the dashed lines. Spread the idea cards face up. Sort the cards into baskets of like ideas. Make one off-topic basket. Choose one keeper from each basket. Store all cards in your Pocket Practice.

claimed land for Spain	Spain gained influence
settlements grew	control
missionaries came	brought Christianity
changed traditions	traded with the Taino

Self-Check (sheet 1 of 4)

Flip each card to check your answer. Keep every card in Pocket Practice.

Land and Power	Land and Power
Land and Power	Land and Power
Religion and Culture	Religion and Culture
Relationships and Conflict	Religion and Culture

STUDENT WORKBOOK



BUCKET SORT

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards (sheet 2 of 4)

Cut on the dashed lines. Spread the idea cards face up. Sort the cards into baskets of like ideas. Make one off-topic basket. Choose one keeper from each basket. Store all cards in your Pocket Practice.

conflict developed	Carib resisted
islands	sailing
boats	renewable resources can be replaced over time
nonrenewable resources cannot be replaced quickly	renewable sources are not always available

Self-Check (sheet 2 of 4)

Flip each card to check your answer. Keep every card in Pocket Practice.

Relationships and Conflict	Relationships and Conflict
Off-Topic	Off-Topic
Replacement and Long-Term Supply	Off-Topic
Availability and Reliability	Replacement and Long-Term Supply

STUDENT WORKBOOK



BUCKET SORT

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards (sheet 3 of 4)

Cut on the dashed lines. Spread the idea cards face up. Sort the cards into baskets of like ideas. Make one off-topic basket. Choose one keeper from each basket. Store all cards in your Pocket Practice.

steady supply from nonrenewable resources	weather conditions
pollution	environmental damage
advantages and disadvantages	future generations
careful planning	television

Self-Check (sheet 3 of 4)

Flip each card to check your answer. Keep every card in Pocket Practice.

Availability and Reliability	Availability and Reliability
Environmental Effects	Environmental Effects
Planning and Responsibility	Planning and Responsibility
Off-Topic	Planning and Responsibility

STUDENT WORKBOOK



BUCKET SORT

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards (sheet 4 of 4)

Cut on the dashed lines. Spread the idea cards face up. Sort the cards into baskets of like ideas. Make one off-topic basket. Choose one keeper from each basket. Store all cards in your Pocket Practice.

charge a device

Self-Check (sheet 4 of 4)

Flip each card to check your answer. Keep every card in Pocket Practice.

	Off-Topic
--	-----------

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 2: Attempt

I sort idea cards into baskets



Our Question for Today: Which ideas belong in the same basket, and which idea is off-topic?

1. Play Bucket Sort

- Read the thesis (central idea).
- Spread the idea cards face up so everyone can see them.
- Add your own ideas to the cards.
- Sort like ideas into baskets. No basket is empty.
- Create an off-topic basket for ideas that do not prove the thesis (central idea).
- Choose one keeper from each basket.
- Narrow to two or three baskets.
- Turn the final ideas into topic-sentence beginnings.

Round	1	2	3	4	5
My partner					
My point					

2. My Baskets and Keepers

Basket name	Ideas inside	My keeper

3. Talk About It

Say why one keeper belongs in its basket, and why one card is off-topic.

My reason

STUDENT WORKBOOK

Day 3: Discuss and Use Again



I explain my thinking and magnify my own thesis (central idea)

1. Discuss Organized Thinking

- Why brainstorm wide first?
- Why sort?
- Why keep an off-topic basket?
- Why choose from different baskets?

Writers need organized thinking before organized writing. A fact can be true in the passage and still not prove this thesis (central idea). Different baskets lead to deeper, more diverse writing.

Read the prompt. Circle the topic in red. Draw a yellow box around the charge. Draw a green triangle around the word that tells WHY or HOW.

Explain how renewable and nonrenewable resources shape energy decisions.

This is a WHY or HOW prompt because...

2. Use Again: Magnify My Thesis (Central Idea)

Write one thesis (central idea). Draw four baskets. Brainstorm connected ideas, sort them into baskets, choose one strong idea from each, and narrow to two or three from different baskets.

My thesis (central idea)

Basket name	Ideas inside	My keeper

My two or three keepers from different baskets

3. Add and Delete for Coherence

Look at one basket. Add one idea that makes the category clearer. Delete one weak or off-topic idea.

One idea I added, and why it makes the basket clearer

One idea I deleted, and why

4. Modifier Check

Edit one content sentence to use a comparative or superlative adjective and one adverb of frequency or degree accurately.

What I used	My sentence
comparative adjective	
superlative adjective	
adverb of frequency or degree	

My strongest basket, and why it will make a strong body paragraph

STUDENT WORKBOOK

Day 4: Award and Target



I name my growth and choose my next step

1. Award: Star My Strongest Basket

Draw two or three baskets and place a star in the one you think was your strongest.

One idea I organized well today was...

Earn a Branch Builder Badge. Class cheer: Brainstorm wide! Sort with care! Strong ideas are growing there!

2. Target: Choose My Next Step

Choose one target.

- brainstorm more
- sort by meaning
- remove off-topic ideas
- choose different angles
- write clearer topic sentences

3. Curiosity Questions

- Why does organized thinking usually lead to stronger writing?
- What might happen if all of our paragraphs come from the same basket?
- Why is it important to narrow ideas before we start writing body paragraphs?

My next organizing goal is... because...

My answer to one curiosity question

STUDENT WORKBOOK

Day 5: Explain to Others



I teach the four Magnifying steps

1. Teach the Four Magnifying Steps

Teach your partner the four steps in order: what each step is, why each step matters, and one example from Columbus's Arrival or The Energy We Use Everyday.

2. Sentence Frames

- Step one is ____.
- In step two, we ____.
- One basket I made was ____.
- An off-topic idea might be ____.
- The reason we choose from different baskets is ____.
- One strong reason about Columbus is ____.
- One strong way from the energy passage is ____.

My partner's best idea

3. Answer Our Overarching Question

How can organizing reasons or ways into different groups help us build focused, nonrepetitive body paragraphs?

The answer

Grouping ideas helps us see which ideas are alike, remove weak or off-topic ideas, and choose reasons or ways from different categories so each body paragraph develops a different part of the thesis (central idea).

- ☐ I taught the four Magnifying steps in order.
- ☐ My final reasons or ways come from different baskets.
- ☐ I removed off-topic ideas.

One Magnifying step I can teach

My final thinking, in my own words

4. Pause and Think Before I Explain

Use these pause points when you explain your thinking to a partner. Stop, think, then answer in a whole sentence. Each pause point names exactly what to think about.

Pause Point: Reason or Way? Stop and think: Does this idea tell WHY the thesis (central idea) is true, or HOW it is true?

Pause Point: Which Basket? Stop and think: What meaning group does this idea belong to? Is it off-topic for this thesis (central idea)?

Pause Point: One From Each Stop and think: Have I kept only one strong idea from each basket?

Pause Point: Different Angles Stop and think: Do my final reasons come from different baskets, or from the same one?

My answer to pause point 4, in a whole sentence

- ☐ I used all four pause points before I explained.
- ☐ I can name the basket each keeper came from.
- ☐ My final reasons come from different baskets.



Write More



Magnify a thesis (central idea) into reasons or ways

My Writing Assignment

Magnify this thesis (central idea) into two or three strong reasons or ways from different baskets.

Read the prompt. Circle the topic in red. Draw a yellow box around the charge. Draw a green triangle around the word that tells WHY or HOW.

Magnify the thesis (central idea) "Because Columbus's arrival changed land, culture, and relationships in the Americas, it affected people in important ways." into strong reasons.

My Plan

- Write one thesis (central idea).
- Brainstorm many connected ideas without judging.
- Sort like ideas into buckets or baskets, and make an off-topic basket.
- Choose one strong idea from each basket.
- Narrow to two or three reasons or ways from different baskets, then turn each into a topic sentence.
- Check that my keepers come from different baskets, not the same one.
- Keep one strong keeper from each basket and let the weaker ones go.
- Put my keepers in order so each body paragraph grows from a different basket.

Two or three reasons or ways from different baskets

A reason tells WHY the thesis (central idea) is true. A way tells HOW. Every keeper must come from its own basket.

[illegible]

My Draft



Turn each keeper into a complete sentence that proves the thesis (central idea).

Draft, page 1

A sentence I want to keep

Revise, Edit, and Share

Revise

- ☐ Every reason or way proves the thesis (central idea).
- ☐ My keepers come from different baskets.
- ☐ I deleted one weak or off-topic idea.

Edit

- ☐ Every sentence is complete.
- ☐ Names such as Columbus, Spain, the Caribbean, the Taino, and the Carib begin with capital letters.
- ☐ I used a comparative or superlative adjective correctly.
- ☐ I used an adverb of frequency or degree correctly.

My improved sentence

Share

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

My sharing plan

Before I Turn It In

Read each line. Check it when you can show it in your work.

Part	I can show...	Check
Thesis (central idea)	My response proves one clear thesis (central idea).	
Reason or way	Every reason or way proves the thesis (central idea).	
Different baskets	My keepers come from different baskets.	
Coherence	I added and deleted ideas so the baskets fit together.	

Study the Samples

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

Magnify the thesis (central idea) "Because Columbus's arrival changed land, culture, and relationships in the Americas, it affected people in important ways." into strong reasons.

Low

Reasons: claimed land for Spain, Spain gained influence, settlements grew.

All three reasons come from the same basket (Land and Power), so the body paragraphs would repeat. What Needs

Improvement: Choose reasons from different baskets so each paragraph develops a different part of the thesis (central idea).

Medium

Reasons: claimed land for Spain (Land and Power); brought Christianity (Religion and Culture); Spain gained influence (Land and Power).

The student labels two different baskets, but two reasons still come from the same basket, so the response is not yet fully diverse. What Needs

Improvement: Replace the repeated Land-and-Power reason with one from a third basket (Relationships and Conflict).

High

Reasons from different baskets: Columbus affected the Americas by claiming land for Spain (Land and Power); by bringing religious and cultural change (Religion and Culture); by creating conflict with Native American groups (Relationships and Conflict).

Three reasons, each from a different basket, each proving the thesis (central idea) from a distinct angle.

What improves from Low to High?



Look Back & Look Forward

I own my learning



My Progress Tracker

I can...	Not yet	Growing	Got it
Tell a reason from a way.	☐	☐	☐
Brainstorm ideas that connect to the thesis (central idea).	☐	☐	☐
Sort ideas into baskets, including an off-topic basket.	☐	☐	☐
Choose reasons or ways from different baskets.	☐	☐	☐
Add and delete ideas for coherence.	☐	☐	☐

Something I Did Well...

What I organized well, and where I did it

My Next Step...

Why this is my next step

Essential Question Answered

How can organizing reasons or ways into different groups help us build focused, nonrepetitive body paragraphs?

The answer

Grouping ideas helps us see which ideas are alike, remove weak or off-topic ideas, and choose reasons or ways from different categories so each body paragraph develops a different part of the thesis (central idea).

My Final Thinking (in my own words)

What Changed in My Thinking?

At first I thought...

Now I think...

Try It Another Way

Use a thesis (central idea) from your own life. Say which ideas you would brainstorm, how you would sort them into baskets, and which idea you would remove as off-topic.

My baskets and my off-topic idea

Take It Further! Three Different Angles

Prove the same thesis (central idea) from three different angles: "Renewable and nonrenewable resources shape energy decisions through differences in availability, environmental effects, and long-term supply."

- Choose one thesis (central idea).
- Brainstorm at least 10 ideas.
- Sort them into at least 4 baskets.
- Choose 3 different baskets.
- Write one topic sentence from each.
- Under each, explain the cause/effect, comparison, or informational relationship it represents.
- Present your three angles to a partner and tell why each comes from a different basket.

My thesis (central idea):

My Three Different Angles

Draw your baskets and label each keeper. Then write one topic sentence for each of your three angles.



At-Home Connection

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

Teach the Four Steps

Teach someone at home the four Magnifying steps: Brainstorm, Sort, Choose, Narrow. Use the Columbus thesis (central idea) from class. Ask that person to name one basket and one off-topic idea, and tell why the off-topic idea does not belong. Then brainstorm two more ideas together and sort each one into a basket. Write one sentence: The strongest basket was ____ because _____. Finish by telling that person why ideas from different baskets keep a response from repeating itself. Ask them: what makes an idea belong in a different basket?

Family member signature: _____

Basket Detective

Pick one room in your home. Find three groups of things that belong together, and name each group. Then find one thing that does not belong in any group and say why it is off-topic. Sort one more item into a group and explain what makes it fit. Circle the group that was easiest to name. Write two sentences about your baskets: which group was easiest to name, and which item was hardest to place. Ask them: how did you decide which group each thing belonged in?

Family member signature: _____

Energy Choices at Home

List three ways your family uses energy at home. Sort them into two groups, such as ways we can replace easily and ways we cannot. Circle the idea you would keep as your strongest reason, and tell why that one is stronger than the others. Then add one idea that does not belong in either group and tell why it is off-topic. Write two sentences: the group that matters most to your family, and the reason it matters.

Ask them: which energy choice matters most to our family, and why?

Family member signature: _____

My Family Conversation Notes

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

Notes

Track My Progress

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

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

Why This Helps Me

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

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

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

My Module 3 Snapshot

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

The most useful word I learned

The Magnifying step I can use fastest

My Strong Roots

I am ready to find the evidence that supports each reason or way.

A note to my future writer self

My Proud Moment This Week

THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC.

Student Interactive Workbook

Grade 4

Cluster 2 - Module 4

Choosing Evidence



Name: _____



The Writing Academy®, LLC

Grade 4 • Cluster 2 • Module 4

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All rights reserved. This student interactive workbook is provided for classroom instructional use. No part may be reproduced for resale or distribution outside the purchasing campus without written permission.

How to Use My Workbook

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

My Name and My Goal for This Module

Pocket Practice

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



Meet My Week

Choosing Evidence



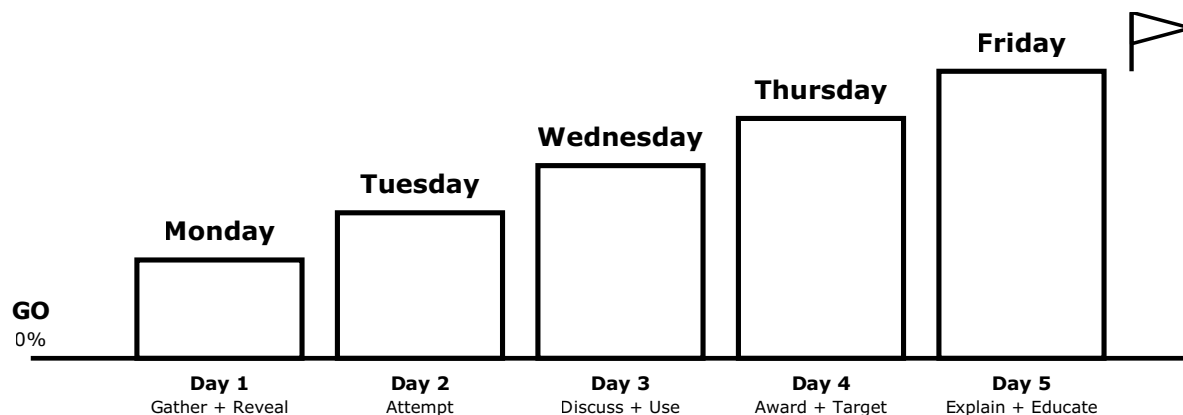
Why This Matters to Me

You grow the next major branch of the ECR Tree: the Evidence Branch. Evidence is the proof that supports each reason or way, not just any interesting fact. Using the two Cluster 2 passages at Very High Stamina, you learn to use CSI naturally: Connect the evidence to the reason or way, Support the idea with a specific detail from the passage, and Infer what the evidence shows. This completes the reason-evidence part of the ECR. Module 4 completes Cluster 2: you will distinguish strong from weak evidence, match evidence to reasons, complete CSI, and run a cumulative ECR quality check. Student reminder: Connect it, support it, infer it. You will look at what counts as strong evidence, specific, relevant, and from the text, and how evidence reveals cause and effect, comparison, advantages, and limitations. You will read the module Passage Set at Very High Stamina, the longest and most demanding passages in this cluster, and practice with a model about Columbus and religious and cultural change: connecting the reason to religion and culture, supporting it with the passage detail that missionaries wanted to spread Christianity, and inferring that this shows new beliefs changed traditions.

Essential Question

How can we choose evidence that truly proves each reason or way in an informative ECR?

My Week Tracker



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

[illegible]

I Can

- I can choose precise text evidence and use CSI to show what it proves.
- I can tell strong evidence from weak evidence.
- I can Connect evidence to a reason or way, Support it with a text detail, and Infer what it shows.
- I can name the relationship (cause/effect, comparison, advantage, limitation) the evidence reveals.

I Will

- I will use the passage, speak about my thinking, and record my work.
- I will explain how my choices strengthen the response.
- I will choose evidence that matches the reason, not just any interesting fact.
- I will quote the important part of a detail accurately.

The I Can I want to reach first, and why

My Week at a Glance

What I learn	What I read	What I make
How to choose strong evidence and use CSI (Connect, Support, Infer) to show what it proves.	Two nonfiction passages: "The Energy We Use Everyday" and "Columbus's Arrival" at Very High Stamina.	CSI Evidence Match-Up recordings, an Evidence Branch Builder, a cumulative ECR quality check, and a partner explanation.

Where We Are Going

I will move from finding any detail in a passage to choosing the strongest evidence for a reason. I will finish by teaching a partner how to use CSI with evidence.

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

- ☐ I can point to evidence and explain why it fits the reason.
- ☐ I can complete Connect, Support, and Infer for a piece of evidence.
- ☐ I can tell why a true detail might still be weak evidence.
- ☐ I can run the cumulative ECR quality check.

Check Myself

- ☐ My evidence matches the reason and comes from the text.
- ☐ I completed Connect, Support, and Infer.
- ☐ I named the relationship the evidence reveals.

How I Will Show What I Know

I will show what I know with a CSI Evidence Match-Up recording, an Evidence Branch Builder, a cumulative ECR quality check, and a partner explanation of CSI.

My GRADUATE Learning Path

Stage	Day	What I do
Gather	Day 1	I catch the missing CSI part.
Reveal	Day 1	I learn that evidence is proof from the passage and how CSI works.
Attempt	Day 2	I practice CSI Evidence Match-Up.
Discuss	Day 3	I discuss what makes evidence strong.
Use Again	Day 3	I build an Evidence Branch with CSI independently.
Award	Day 4	I name evidence of my growth.
Target	Day 4	I choose my next step.
Explain/Educate	Day 5	I teach CSI to a partner.

Say It Together!

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

4.12B(iii):

I can compose informational texts using craft.

4.11B(iv):

I can develop drafts by developing an engaging idea with relevant details.

Call and Response

Read this together as a class before we start.

Teacher asks: "What do we do with evidence?"

Class answers: "Connect it, support it, infer it!"

One TEKS I want to practice today



Get Ready

Before I begin



Before We Begin: What Do I Already Know?

I already know that a thesis (central idea) answers the prompt, that reasons or ways support it, and that evidence comes from the passage. I can find details in a passage.

A connection I can make

Remember It!

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

One idea I remember

Ready Check

- ☐ I can find a detail in the passage that connects to a reason.
- ☐ I can tell the difference between a reason and a detail.
- ☐ I can read a passage and find specific information.

Watch Out! Common Mix-Up

Watch out! A true detail is not always strong evidence for a particular reason. The detail must match the reason, not just be interesting or true.

Where This Fits in My Writing

Choosing evidence is the step after naming a reason or way. Without strong evidence, the reader has no proof.

What I want to remember before I start

Where I Am Starting



This shows my teacher what I already know

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

Part 1: Read the Reason

Read the reason below. Find a text detail from the passage that supports it.

A text detail that supports this reason:

Part 2: Complete CSI

Connect: This reason is about...

Support: The passage says...

Infer: This shows...

Part 3: Order These Steps

Number these steps 1 to 4 in the order a writer would use them.

Order	Step
___	Conflicts developed over land, resources, and control.
___	Columbus affected the Americas by creating conflict with Native American groups.
___	This shows Columbus's arrival led to tension and fighting over control of land and resources.
___	The passage says conflicts developed between Europeans and Native Americans.

Part 4: My Own CSI Response

Columbus affected the Americas by creating conflict with Native American groups. Copy one sentence from the passage that proves this reason. Then explain in one sentence why it proves the reason.

My evidence from the passage:

Why this proves the reason:



Words I Need

Tier 1, everyday words



Say each word. Then use one word in a sentence about evidence.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
proof	PROOF	Something that shows an idea is true.	My proof is ____.
detail	dee-TAYL	A small, specific piece of information.	One detail is ____.
match	MATCH	To go together correctly.	This evidence matches the reason because ____.
choose	CHOOZ	To pick on purpose.	I choose this detail because ____.
show	SHOH	To make something known.	This detail shows ____.
quote	KWOHT	The exact words from a text.	My quote is ____.
reason	REE-zun	Why something is true.	My reason is ____.
fit	FIT	To belong or match.	This detail fits because ____.
prove	PROOV	To show something is true.	This evidence proves ____.
strong	STRONG	Powerful and clear.	Strong evidence ____.

Use one Tier 1 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 2, academic words

Say each word. Then use one word in a sentence about how we use evidence in our writing.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
evidence	EH-vih-dents	Proof from the text.	My evidence is ____.
support	suh-PORT	To back up an idea with proof.	This detail supports ____.
connect	kuh-NEKT	To link the evidence to the reason.	This connects to my reason because ____.
infer	in-FUR	To figure out what a detail shows.	I infer that ____.
relevant	REL-uh-vunt	Closely connected to the point.	A relevant detail is ____.
precise	prih-SYSE	Exact and specific.	A precise detail here is ____.
justify	JUS-tih-fy	To give a good reason for a choice.	I justify my evidence by ____.
cite	SYTE	To show where the words came from.	I cite the text by ____.
analyze	AN-uh-lyze	To look closely at parts to understand the whole.	I analyze the evidence by ____.
thesis (central idea)	THEE-sis	The clear central idea a response will prove.	My thesis (central idea) is ____.

Use one Tier 2 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 3, passage words

These words come from our two passages. Say each word and use it in a sentence about the passage.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
renewable	Able to be replaced over time and used again.	rih-NOO-uh-buhl	A renewable resource is ____.
nonrenewable	Not able to be replaced quickly once it is used.	non-rih-NOO-uh-buhl	A nonrenewable resource is ____.
resource	A material or supply that people use.	REE-sorss	One resource we use is ____.
pollution	Harmful materials that damage the environment.	puh-LOO-shun	Pollution can ____.
environment	The natural world around us.	en-VY-run-ment	The environment is affected when ____.
Columbus	The explorer who sailed to the Americas in 1492.	kuh-LUM-bus	Columbus ____.
Taino	A Native American people of the Caribbean.	TY-noh	The Taino ____.
Carib	A Native American people known for resisting the Spanish.	KAIR-ib	The Carib ____.
missionaries	People who travel to teach a religion.	MISH-uh-nair-eez	Missionaries traveled to ____.
hydroelectric	Making electricity from moving water.	hy-droh-ih-LEK-trik	A hydroelectric dam ____.

Use one Tier 3 word in a sentence

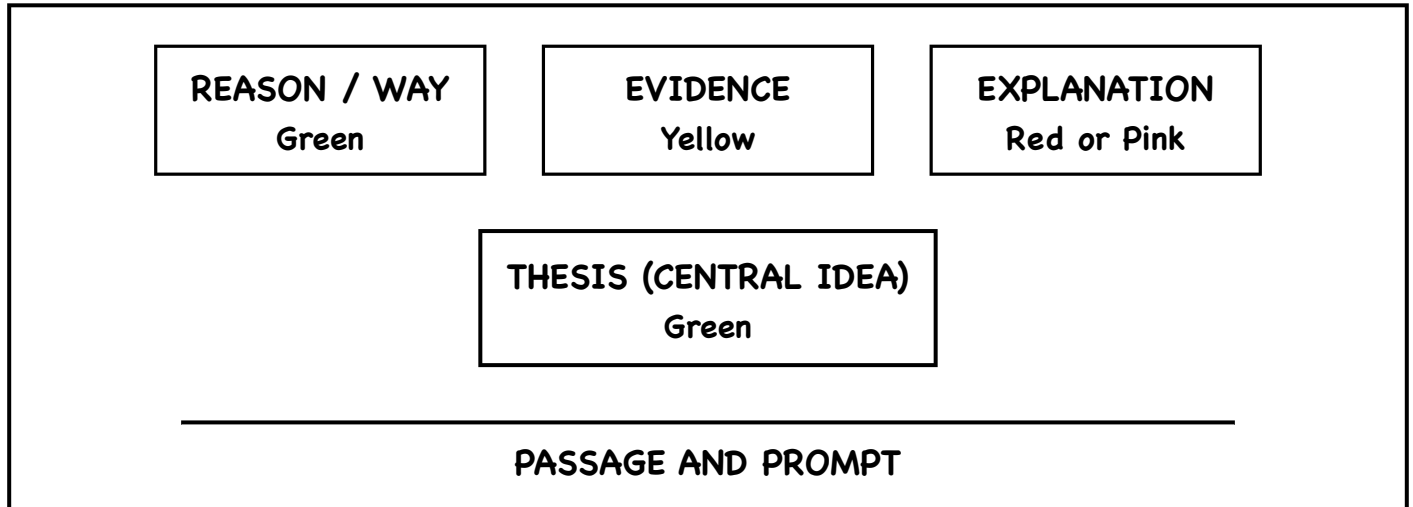


My Strategy Tools

The ECR Tree and the Evidence Branch



Your ideas grow from the passage and the prompt. The thesis (central idea) is the trunk. The Reason/Way branch names WHY or HOW. Now you grow the Evidence Branch: proof from the passage that supports each reason or way.



Strong evidence comes from the text, matches the reason or way, is specific, is not off topic, and helps prove the thesis (central idea).

CSI for Evidence

Mark	What it means
C: Connect	Link the evidence to the reason or way.
S: Support	Quote the exact detail from the passage.
I: Infer	Tell what the evidence shows.

A true detail is not always the best supporting evidence for a particular reason. Ask, "What exactly does this prove?"

How CSI works for me

Reason (WHY) and Way (HOW)

Reason (WHY)	Way (HOW)
A reason tells WHY the thesis (central idea) is true.	A way tells HOW the thesis (central idea) is true.
Find evidence that directly supports the reason.	Find evidence that directly supports the way.
Complete CSI: Connect it, Support it, Infer what it shows.	Complete CSI: Connect it, Support it, Infer what it shows.

A true detail is not always the best supporting evidence for a particular reason. Ask, "What exactly does this prove?"

How I Say the Standard!

4.12B(iii):

I can compose informational texts using craft.

4.11B(iv):

I can develop drafts by developing an engaging idea with relevant details.

Check My Writing

- ☐ My sentence has a subject and a verb.
- ☐ I use a capital letter for Columbus, Spain, and Taino.
- ☐ I use a period or another ending mark.

An evidence choice I made and what it proved

Five Thinking Levels

Read from the bottom up. Use this chart to name the level of thinking a task and a response require.

Level	Symbol	Hidden Question	Student Thinking	Thinking Focus
Level 1			Student follows directions or repeats information exactly as taught with little independent thinking.	Foundational
Level 2			Student begins trying ideas independently but may be uncertain or inconsistent.	Emergent
Level 3			Student connects ideas directly to textual evidence.	Visible
Level 4			Student combines evidence with personal reasoning, applying understanding to a claim.	Independent
Level 5			Student connects evidence to the world, morals, lessons, or broader understanding.	Reflective

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

A kind of thinking I used today

Five Thinking Levels

The same five levels name the kind of thinking a task and a response require.

Level	Symbol	Hidden Question	Student Thinking	Thinking Focus
Level 1	○		Student follows directions or repeats information exactly as taught with little independent thinking.	Foundational
Level 2	◻		Student begins trying ideas independently but may be uncertain or inconsistent.	Emergent
Level 3	▽		Student connects ideas directly to textual evidence.	Visible
Level 4	△		Student combines evidence with personal reasoning, applying understanding to a claim.	Independent
Level 5	◊		Student connects evidence to the world, morals, lessons, or broader understanding.	Reflective

The Difference Between WHY and HOW

Prompt type	What it asks me to do	Example
WHY	Explain a reason, a purpose, or why something matters.	Columbus affected the Americas by claiming land for Spain.
HOW	Analyze how parts work together or how something happens.	Energy choices are shaped by environmental effects.

A true detail is not always the best supporting evidence for a particular reason. Ask, "What exactly does this prove?"

A thinking level I want to try



Read & Interact

Read with a purpose



Dot, Discover, Drop

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

TRACKS Legend

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

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

Connect It to Our World

Every day, people support their ideas with evidence. When you tell someone why a movie is good or why a food tastes great, you are choosing evidence to prove your point.

Background I Need

"The Energy We Use Everyday" explains renewable and nonrenewable resources.

"Columbus's Arrival" tells about Columbus's 1492 voyage and its effects on Native American communities.

Words I dotted while reading

The Energy We Use Everyday (Part 1)

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

My
marks

[1] Have you ever wondered where the energy you use each day comes from? When you turn on lights, charge a device, watch television, use a computer, or travel in a car, you are using energy produced from natural resources found on Earth. Energy is an important part of daily life. People use it at home, at school, and at work. Without energy, many of the things we depend on every day would not be possible.

[2] Natural resources are materials found in nature that people use to meet their needs. Some natural resources provide food, while others provide energy. The energy people use comes from both renewable and nonrenewable resources. Understanding the difference between these resources helps people make informed decisions about how energy is produced and used.

[3] Some of these resources are called renewable. Renewable resources can be replaced over time and used again. Examples include wind, water, sunlight, plants, and animals. The sun provides energy each day, and wind can be used to generate electricity. In addition, plants and animals can be grown and replaced through careful management.

[4] People use renewable resources in many different ways. Solar panels collect energy from sunlight and turn it into electricity. Wind turbines use moving air to generate power. Water flowing through dams can also be used to produce electricity. Farmers grow plants that can be used for food, fuel, and other products. Because these resources can be replaced naturally, many people believe they are important for the future.

[5] Renewable resources have several advantages. They do not run out easily, and they often cause less damage to the environment. Since sunlight, wind, and water are continually renewed by natural processes, people can use them again and again. This makes renewable resources valuable sources of energy for communities around the world.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Energy We Use Everyday (Part 2)

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

My
marks

[6] Another advantage of renewable resources is that they often produce less pollution. Solar panels and wind turbines generate electricity without burning fuel. This helps reduce the amount of harmful gases released into the air. Many people support the use of renewable resources because they can help protect the environment while still providing energy.

[7] Communities around the world are increasing their use of renewable resources. Some schools have installed solar panels on rooftops to help lower electricity costs. Certain cities have built wind farms that contain dozens or even hundreds of wind turbines. These projects demonstrate how renewable resources can be used on both small and large scales.

[8] However, renewable resources also have limitations. Renewable energy sources are not always available. For example, solar energy depends on sunlight, and wind energy depends on weather conditions. This can cause mismanagement of energy resources if people do not plan carefully.

[9] Imagine a town that relies mostly on solar energy. On bright, sunny days, plenty of electricity may be produced. However, during cloudy weather, less energy may be available. The same challenge can occur with wind energy. If the wind is not blowing, wind turbines cannot produce as much electricity. Because of this, communities often use several different energy sources to meet their needs.

[10] Water power also has limitations. Hydroelectric dams depend on a steady supply of water. During droughts, rivers and reservoirs may contain less water than usual. When this happens, less electricity can be generated. Even though water is a renewable resource, changes in weather can affect how much energy it provides.

[11] Storage can also be a challenge for some renewable resources. Some energy produced by solar panels and wind turbines is stored in batteries for later use. Scientists continue to develop better storage systems so renewable energy can be used even when the sun is not shining or the wind is not blowing.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Energy We Use Everyday (Part 3)

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

My
marks

[12] Other resources are known as nonrenewable. These include coal, oil, and natural gas, which form deep underground over millions of years. These resources were created from the remains of ancient plants and animals that were buried beneath Earth's surface. Heat and pressure slowly transformed these materials into the fuels people use today.

[13] Because nonrenewable resources take so long to develop, they cannot be replaced quickly once they are used. Although new deposits may still be forming underground, the process takes millions of years. As a result, people must carefully manage these resources because the supply is limited.

[14] Nonrenewable resources provide a large and steady supply of energy, which makes them useful. Many homes, businesses, and vehicles rely on these resources every day. Coal has been used for many years to generate electricity. Oil is used to make fuels such as gasoline, diesel fuel, and jet fuel. Natural gas is commonly used for heating homes, cooking food, and producing electricity.

[15] One reason nonrenewable resources remain popular is that they can provide energy whenever it is needed. Unlike solar panels or wind turbines, which depend on weather conditions, coal, oil, and natural gas can be used at any time. This reliability makes them important energy sources in many areas.

[16] Many products people use every day are connected to nonrenewable resources. Plastic containers, certain clothing materials, and many household products are made using substances that come from petroleum. This means nonrenewable resources are used for more than just producing energy.

[17] However, the use of nonrenewable resources can also create challenges. Their use can lead to pollution and environmental damage. When fossil fuels are burned, gases and particles are released into the atmosphere. These pollutants can affect air quality and contribute to environmental problems.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Energy We Use Everyday (Part 4)

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

My
marks

[18] Mining and drilling for nonrenewable resources can also affect ecosystems. Land may be disturbed when coal is mined, and oil spills can harm plants and animals. Because of these risks, many people believe it is important to find ways to reduce environmental damage while still meeting energy needs.

[19] In addition, nonrenewable resources are limited and may eventually be used up. As populations grow and more energy is needed, supplies of coal, oil, and natural gas may decrease. This is one reason why scientists continue to search for new technologies and energy sources.

[20] Scientists, engineers, and community leaders study ways to use energy more efficiently. Energy efficiency means using less energy to perform the same task. For example, energy-efficient light bulbs use less electricity than older bulbs while producing the same amount of light. Efficient appliances and vehicles can also reduce energy use.

[21] Many communities use a combination of renewable and nonrenewable resources. This approach helps provide a steady supply of energy while also reducing dependence on limited resources. A city might use electricity from solar panels during the day while relying on natural gas when renewable energy is unavailable.

[22] People can also help conserve resources through everyday actions. Turning off lights when leaving a room, using less water, recycling materials, and choosing energy-efficient products can reduce the demand for energy. Small actions by many people can make a big difference over time.

[23] Students can help conserve resources as well. Walking or riding a bicycle when possible, recycling paper and plastic, and remembering to unplug unused devices are simple ways to reduce energy use. Learning about resources today can help students become responsible decision-makers in the future.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Energy We Use Everyday (continued)

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

[24] Scientists continue to develop new technologies that may improve how energy is produced and stored. Advances in solar panels, batteries, and other systems may help communities rely more on renewable resources in the future. Researchers are constantly searching for ways to provide energy while protecting the environment.

[25] Understanding the advantages and disadvantages of renewable and nonrenewable resources helps people make informed decisions about energy use. Both types of resources play important roles in meeting society's needs. Renewable resources can be replenished naturally, while nonrenewable resources provide dependable energy supplies. Learning about these resources helps people understand how energy choices affect the environment, communities, and future generations.

[26] As technology continues to improve, people will likely discover new ways to produce and use energy. By carefully managing Earth's resources and making thoughtful decisions, communities can help ensure that energy remains available for many years to come. The choices people make today will influence how resources are used tomorrow, making energy conservation and responsible planning important goals for everyone.

My
marks

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Columbus's Arrival (Part 1)

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

My
marks

[1] In 1492, Christopher Columbus sailed across the Atlantic Ocean searching for a new route to Asia. Instead, he reached islands in the Caribbean. When he arrived, he claimed the land for Spain, even though Native American groups such as the Taino and the Carib already lived there.

[2] Columbus was born in Genoa, in what is now Italy, but he spent many years working as a sailor. From a young age, he was interested in ships, travel, and geography. He learned about trade routes and heard stories about valuable goods coming from Asia. At that time, products such as spices, silk, and precious metals were highly desired in Europe. Many merchants and leaders wanted easier ways to reach Asian markets.

[3] During the late 1400s, traveling to Asia was difficult. Ships often had to follow long routes around Africa or use trade networks that crossed large areas of land. These journeys could take months or even years. They were expensive and sometimes dangerous. Columbus believed there was another way. He thought that by sailing west across the Atlantic Ocean, he could reach Asia more quickly.

[4] Many people doubted Columbus's idea. Some believed the ocean was too large to cross. Others thought the trip would take too long or be too risky. Columbus spent years asking leaders to support his plan. Finally, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain agreed to help. They provided money, ships, supplies, and sailors for the voyage.

[5] Columbus set sail with three ships called the Niña, the Pinta, and the Santa María. The crew packed food, water, tools, and other supplies needed for a long journey. As the ships traveled farther from Europe, many sailors became nervous. Week after week passed without seeing land. Some crew members worried they would never return home.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Columbus's Arrival (Part 2)

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

My
marks

[6] Life aboard the ships was not comfortable. Sailors worked long hours and had very little space. Food often became stale, and fresh water had to be carefully rationed. Storms and rough seas could make traveling even more difficult. Despite these challenges, the ships continued westward across the Atlantic Ocean.

[7] After more than two months at sea, land was finally spotted on October 12, 1492. The crew celebrated because they knew their long journey had come to an end. Columbus believed he had reached islands near Asia. However, he had actually arrived in the Caribbean, a region that was already home to many Native American groups.

[8] The islands Columbus reached were not empty. Native American communities had lived there for generations. These groups had their own governments, traditions, languages, and cultures. They farmed crops, fished in coastal waters, traded with neighboring groups, and built thriving communities.

[9] One of the first groups Columbus encountered was the Taino. The Taino lived on several islands throughout the Caribbean. They grew crops such as corn, cassava, and sweet potatoes. They built villages and developed systems for sharing resources within their communities. Their daily lives were closely connected to the land and sea around them.

[10] When Columbus arrived, he claimed the land for Spain. This was a common practice among European explorers. European countries often believed that claiming land would allow them to expand their power and influence. However, Native Americans already lived on these lands and considered them their homes.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Columbus's Arrival (Part 3)

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

My
marks

[11] By claiming the land, Columbus helped Spain begin to explore and settle in the Americas. His voyage encouraged other explorers to travel across the Atlantic Ocean. News of his discoveries spread quickly throughout Europe. Many people became excited about the opportunities that might exist in these newly encountered lands.

[12] Spain soon sent additional expeditions to the Americas. Explorers searched for resources, trade opportunities, and places to establish settlements. Over time, Spain built colonies throughout parts of North America, Central America, South America, and the Caribbean.

[13] Other European countries also became interested in exploration. Nations such as England, France, and Portugal sponsored voyages across the Atlantic Ocean. As explorers returned with stories about new lands, competition between European countries increased. Each nation hoped to gain wealth, resources, and influence.

[14] As exploration expanded, more people traveled between Europe and the Americas. Ships crossed the Atlantic Ocean carrying settlers, sailors, merchants, missionaries, and government officials. These journeys helped connect regions that had previously been separated by vast distances.

[15] Trade also grew between Europe and the Americas. Goods moved in both directions across the ocean. European products were brought to the Americas, while resources from the Americas were transported to Europe. This exchange affected economies and daily life in many different places.

[16] Columbus and his crew also brought their beliefs with them. They wanted to spread Christianity to the people they met. Over time, missionaries traveled throughout the Americas to teach Native Americans about this religion. Churches and missions were established in many communities.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Columbus's Arrival (Part 4)

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

My
marks

[17] Some Native Americans accepted Christianity and combined certain Christian practices with their own traditions. Others chose to continue following the beliefs that had guided their communities for generations. The spread of Christianity became one of the many cultural changes that occurred after European arrival.

[18] The arrival of Europeans introduced new languages as well. Spanish became widely spoken in many areas. As Europeans settled in different regions, communication between groups often required learning new languages. These interactions influenced the development of cultures throughout the Americas.

[19] European settlers also introduced new tools, technologies, and farming methods. Native American groups sometimes adopted useful innovations, while Europeans learned valuable skills from Native Americans. The exchange of knowledge worked in both directions.

[20] At first, some Native American groups, like the Taino, showed friendliness toward Columbus and his crew by trading and cooperating with them. They exchanged goods and shared information about local resources. These early interactions helped both groups learn about one another.

[21] The Taino taught Europeans about foods and crops that grew in the Caribbean. They shared knowledge about fishing, farming, and local geography. Europeans introduced metal tools, clothing, and other items they had brought from Europe. These exchanges allowed both groups to experience new products and ideas.

[22] However, relationships between Europeans and Native Americans did not always stay peaceful. As more explorers and settlers arrived, disagreements began to develop. Land, resources, and power became sources of conflict.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Columbus's Arrival (Part 5)

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

My
marks

[23] European settlements often required large areas of land. Native American groups sometimes found their traditional hunting grounds, villages, or farmland being claimed by newcomers. As a result, tensions increased in many regions.

[24] The Carib were known for resisting Spanish efforts to control their lands. They fought to protect their communities and maintain their independence. This resistance led to conflicts between the groups. Similar conflicts occurred in other parts of the Americas as European settlement expanded.

[25] Competition over resources also contributed to disagreements. Both Europeans and Native Americans depended on land, water, and natural resources to support their communities. When multiple groups wanted access to the same resources, conflicts sometimes followed.

[26] The arrival of Europeans affected Native American communities in many ways. Some groups lost control of land that had belonged to their ancestors for generations. Others experienced major changes to their cultures, traditions, and daily routines.

[27] At the same time, the movement of people and goods between Europe and the Americas introduced new plants and animals. Horses, cattle, pigs, and sheep were brought from Europe. These animals changed transportation, farming, and food production in many areas.

[28] New crops also moved between continents. Foods that originated in the Americas, such as corn, potatoes, tomatoes, and cacao, became important in Europe and other parts of the world. Likewise, crops from Europe were introduced to the Americas. These exchanges changed diets and agriculture around the globe.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Columbus's Arrival (continued)

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

My
marks

[29] The effects of Columbus's voyage continued for many years. Exploration increased. Colonies expanded. Trade networks grew larger. The movement of people, products, and ideas connected different parts of the world in ways that had never happened before.

[30] Historians often describe Columbus's voyage as a turning point in history because it led to lasting global changes. The connections established between Europe and the Americas influenced economics, culture, government, and society.

[31] Today, Columbus's journey is remembered and retold in different ways. Columbus Day recognizes his voyage and its role in history. At the same time, many people also reflect on how European arrival affected Native American communities.

[32] Historians study documents, artifacts, and other evidence to better understand what happened after Columbus arrived. They examine multiple perspectives because different groups experienced these events in different ways. Looking at several viewpoints helps create a more complete picture of history.

[33] Some people focus on Columbus's role in opening the door to exploration, trade, and cultural exchange. Others focus on the challenges Native Americans faced as European settlement expanded. Both perspectives help explain why Columbus remains an important historical figure.

[34] People continue to discuss the impact of Columbus's voyage because its effects can still be seen today. Languages, traditions, governments, and cultures throughout the Americas were influenced by the events that followed his arrival.

[35] More than five hundred years later, students and historians continue to study Columbus and the world he helped change. His voyage connected Europe and the Americas and led to events that shaped the future of entire continents.

[36] Columbus's actions had lasting effects on land, culture, and the people who lived in the Americas. His journey remains one of the most significant events in world history because of the changes it set into motion. Understanding his voyage helps people better understand how the modern world developed and why different perspectives are important when studying history.

[illegible]

Annotate: The Energy We Use Everyday (Part 1)

Time: over millions of years. Reactions: lead to pollution and environmental damage.

Actions: Solar panels collect energy from sunlight. Character/Concept: Renewable resources. Key Knowledge: coal, oil, and natural gas. Scenery/Setting: natural resources found on Earth.

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

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

My best TRACKS phrase and why I chose it

Annotate: The Energy We Use Everyday (Part 2)

Look for limitations of renewable resources: weather dependence, storage challenges.

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

STOP & THINK

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

My thinking

My Prompt Marking Notes

The prompt gives you a reason or way. Find the strongest text detail that proves it, then complete CSI.

Shape	Word	Question I ask myself
Step 1	Connect	Which reason or way does this evidence go with?
Step 2	Support	What sentence or detail from the passage supports it?
Step 3	Infer	What does this evidence show?

Read the reason or way. Find the strongest text detail. Complete Connect, Support, and Infer.
Columbus affected the Americas by claiming land for Spain.

My three marks in words

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 1: Gather + Reveal



I catch the missing CSI part and learn how evidence works

1. Gather: What Is Missing from CSI?

Hear each response. Decide which CSI step is missing: Connect (C), Support (S), or Infer (I). Then supply the missing thinking.

Round	Response	Missing Step	Repair
1	"My reason is about cultural change. The passage says, 'They wanted to spread Christianity to the people they met.'"	INFER	"This shows Columbus and his crew brought beliefs that changed traditions and ways of life."
2	"Energy choices are shaped by environmental effects. This shows communities must think about the environmental costs of their choices."	SUPPORT	Add "The passage says, 'Their use can lead to pollution and environmental damage.'"
3	"The passage says, 'Renewable energy sources are not always available.' This shows communities may need more than one source."	CONNECT	"This way is about availability and reliability."

Without looking, write what Connect, Support, and Infer each do.

2. Reveal: The Evidence Branch and CSI

The roots are the passage and prompt. The trunk is the thesis (central idea). The first branch is the reason or way. Now we add the Evidence Branch. Evidence is proof from the passage.

CSI: Connect the evidence to the reason or way. Support the idea with a specific detail. Infer what it shows.

Letter	What Writers Do
C: Connect	Connect the evidence to the reason or way.
S: Support	Support the idea with a specific detail from the passage.
I: Infer	Infer what that evidence shows.

Strong evidence: comes from the text, matches the reason or way, is specific, is not off topic, and helps prove the thesis (central idea).

Partner completion: "Evidence is ____, and CSI means Connect, ____, and ____."

STUDENT WORKBOOK



CSI Evidence Match-Up

Day 2: Attempt

✂ **Cut out these cards (sheet 1 of 3)**

Read the reason or way. Compare the evidence choices. Choose the strongest match. Complete Connect, Support, and Infer.

EVIDENCE	CSI: CONNECT
CSI: SUPPORT	CSI: INFER
STRONG EVIDENCE	WEAK EVIDENCE
THESIS (CENTRAL IDEA)	REASON or WAY

Self-Check (sheet 1 of 3)

Flip each card to check your answer. Keep every card in Pocket Practice.

CSI: CONNECT

Link the evidence to the reason or way.

EVIDENCE

Proof from the passage that supports a reason or way.

CSI: INFER

Tell what the evidence shows.

CSI: SUPPORT

Quote the exact detail from the passage.

WEAK EVIDENCE

A true detail that does not connect to this reason.

STRONG EVIDENCE

Comes from the text, matches the reason, is specific.

REASON or WAY

The first branch. It supports the thesis (central idea).

THESIS (CENTRAL IDEA)

The trunk. It answers the prompt.

STUDENT WORKBOOK



CSI Evidence Match-Up

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards (sheet 2 of 3)

Read the reason or way. Compare the evidence choices. Choose the strongest match. Complete Connect, Support, and Infer.

Columbus affected the Americas by claiming land for Spain.	"When he arrived, he claimed the land for Spain."
Columbus affected the Americas by bringing religious and cultural change.	"They wanted to spread Christianity to the people they met."
Columbus affected the Americas by creating conflict with Native American groups.	"Conflicts developed over land, resources, and control."
Energy choices are shaped by environmental effects.	"Their use can lead to pollution and environmental damage."

Self-Check (sheet 2 of 3)

Flip each card to check your answer. Keep every card in Pocket Practice.

Evidence: matches the land reason	Reason: Land and Power
Evidence: matches the culture reason	Reason: Religion and Culture
Evidence: matches the conflict reason	Reason: Conflict
Evidence: matches the environment reason	Reason: Environmental Effects

STUDENT WORKBOOK



CSI Evidence Match-Up

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards (sheet 3 of 3)

Read the reason or way. Compare the evidence choices. Choose the strongest match. Complete Connect, Support, and Infer.

Energy decisions are shaped by how quickly resources can be replaced.

"Renewable resources can be replaced over time and used again."

Energy choices are shaped by availability and reliability.

"Renewable energy sources are not always available."

Self-Check (sheet 3 of 3)

Flip each card to check your answer. Keep every card in Pocket Practice.

Evidence: matches the replacement reason	Reason: Replacement and Long-Term Supply
Evidence: matches the availability reason	Reason: Availability and Reliability

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 2: Attempt

I practice CSI Evidence Match-Up



CSI Evidence Match-Up: Columbus

Read the reason or way. Compare the evidence choices. Choose the strongest match. Complete Connect, Support, and Infer.

Reason or Way	Evidence Choices	Best Match
Columbus affected the Americas by claiming land for Spain.	A. "He reached islands in the Caribbean." B. "When he arrived, he claimed the land for Spain." C. "Columbus Day recognizes his voyage."	
Columbus affected the Americas by bringing religious and cultural change.	A. "They wanted to spread Christianity to the people they met." B. "The Carib were known for resisting the Spanish." C. "Columbus sailed across the Atlantic Ocean."	
Columbus affected the Americas by creating conflict with Native American groups.	A. "At first, some Native American groups traded and cooperated..." B. "Conflicts developed over land, resources, and control." C. "Many people also think about how his arrival affected Native Americans."	

Choose one reason above. Complete CSI for your strongest evidence.

CSI Evidence Match-Up: The Energy We Use Everyday

Reason or Way	Evidence Choices	Best Match
Energy decisions are shaped by how quickly resources can be replaced.	A. "Renewable resources can be replaced over time and used again." B. "Energy is an important part of daily life." C. "People use it at home, at school, and at work."	
Energy choices are shaped by environmental effects.	A. "Their use can lead to pollution and environmental damage." B. "The sun provides energy each day." C. "Energy is an important part of daily life."	
Energy choices are shaped by availability and reliability.	A. "Renewable energy sources are not always available." B. "Examples include wind, water, sunlight, plants, and animals." C. "Energy is an important part of daily life."	

Choose one way above. Complete CSI for your strongest evidence.

Glue your CSI evidence sheet into your Interactive Notebook. Use the games and activities to review the ECR concepts whenever you have free time.

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 3: Discuss + Use



I discuss strong evidence and build an Evidence Branch independently

1. Discuss: What Makes Evidence Strong?

- Can a true detail still be weak evidence?
- How does CSI stop us from just copying?
- What makes evidence precise and relevant?

Write your answer to one question above.

2. Use Again: Evidence Branch Builder

Choose one reason or way. Find two details from the passage that connect to it. Circle the strongest. Complete the CSI frame, then add one sentence naming the relationship the evidence reveals.

My CSI Frame

Connect: This reason or way is about...

Support: The passage says...

Infer: This shows...

Relationship sentence: This evidence reveals a ____ relationship because...

Cumulative ECR Quality Check

- ☐ My response has a thesis (central idea).
- ☐ My reason or way is relevant.
- ☐ My evidence is precise and from the text.
- ☐ My CSI inference is clear.
- ☐ I revised sentence structure and word choice.
- ☐ I edited nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and spelling.

My strongest evidence is strong because...

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 4: Award + Target



I recognize the proof I chose and set a precise next goal

1. Award: My Evidence Leaf

Draw a tree branch and place one "evidence leaf" on it with your strongest text detail.

One piece of evidence I chose well today was...

This is strong evidence because...

2. Target: My Next Evidence Goal

Choose one target: connect more directly, quote accurately, choose more specific evidence, or infer more deeply.

- Why is the strongest evidence not always the longest sentence?
- How does good evidence prepare us for writing better explanations?
- Why would weak or off-topic evidence make an essay feel less convincing?

My next evidence goal is ____ because...

[illegible]

STUDENT WORKBOOK

Day 5: Explain + Educate



I teach a partner how to use CSI with evidence

Teach CSI to a Partner

Teach your partner how to use CSI with evidence. You must include: what strong evidence is, what Connect means, what Support means, what Infer means, and one example from Columbus or the energy passage.

Strong evidence is...

Connect means...

Support means...

Infer means...

My example from the passage:

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



Write More

Build an Evidence Branch with CSI



My Writing Assignment

Choose one reason or way below, then choose strong evidence and complete CSI.

Read the reason or way. Find the strongest text detail. Complete Connect, Support, and Infer.

Choose one reason or way below, then choose strong evidence and complete CSI.

• Columbus affected the Americas by claiming land for Spain. • Energy choices are shaped by environmental effects.

My Plan

- Find two details from the passage that connect to your reason or way.
- Circle the strongest.
- Complete Connect, Support, and Infer.
- Add one sentence naming the relationship the evidence reveals.

My reason or way

The strongest text detail that proves it

CSI Steps

Connect the evidence to the reason or way. Support it with a specific detail. Infer what it shows.

My CSI starter

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

My Draft



Write your CSI response: Connect, Support, and Infer. Then add one sentence naming the relationship the evidence reveals.

Draft, page 1

A sentence I want to keep

Revise, Edit, and Share

Revise

- ☐ My evidence matches the reason and comes from the text.
- ☐ I completed Connect, Support, and Infer.
- ☐ I named the relationship the evidence reveals.
- ☐ My inference explains what the evidence shows, not just what it says.

Edit

- ☐ Every sentence is complete.
- ☐ Names such as Columbus, Spain, the Taino, and the Carib begin with capital letters.
- ☐ I used a comparative or superlative adjective correctly.
- ☐ I spelled words with grade-appropriate patterns correctly.

My improved CSI response

Share

Choose one: read your CSI response to a partner, share in author's chair, join a gallery walk, or add your evidence leaf to a class chart.

My sharing plan

Before I Turn It In

Read each line. Check each box. Fix anything that needs fixing.

Part	I can show...	Check
Evidence	My evidence matches the reason and comes from the text.	
Connect	I named which reason or way the evidence goes with.	
Support	I quoted the exact detail from the passage.	
Infer	I explained what the evidence shows.	

Sample CSI Response

Read this example. Then write your own CSI response below.

For the reason "Columbus affected the Americas by creating conflict with Native American groups," choose strong evidence and complete CSI.

Low

"Columbus sailed across the Atlantic Ocean."

The student picks a true detail from the passage. The detail is true but does not connect to conflict. It is off topic for this reason. Choose a detail that matches conflict, then complete Connect, Support, and Infer.

Medium

"Conflicts developed over land, resources, and control. This is about conflict."

The evidence matches the reason and connects to conflict. The Infer step only restates the topic; it does not yet say what the evidence shows. Add an inference that tells what the conflict led to.

High

Connect: this reason is about conflict. Support: "Conflicts developed over land, resources, and control." Infer: this shows Columbus's arrival led to tension and fighting over control of land and resources.

The evidence matches the reason, the exact detail supports it, and the inference explains what the evidence shows. A complete CSI response.

My CSI response



Look Back & Look Forward

I own my learning



My Progress Tracker

I can...	Not yet	Growing	Got it
Tell strong evidence from weak evidence.	☐	☐	☐
Match evidence to a reason or way.	☐	☐	☐
Complete Connect, Support, and Infer.	☐	☐	☐
Name the relationship the evidence reveals.	☐	☐	☐
Run the cumulative ECR quality check.	☐	☐	☐

Something I Did Well...

What I chose well and where I did it

My Next Step...

Why this is my next step

Essential Question Answered

How can we choose evidence that truly proves each reason or way in an informative ECR?

The answer

We choose strong evidence by checking that it connects directly to the reason or way, comes from the passage, is specific, and helps us infer exactly what the evidence proves.

My Final Thinking (in my own words)

What Changed in My Thinking?

At first I thought...

Now I think...

Try It Another Way

When you make a point at home, prove it with an exact detail (not just a summary) and then say what the detail shows. That is the CSI habit.

My point, my detail, and what it shows

Take It Further! Two Pieces, Two Angles

Prove one reason with two different details, then compare what each one reveals.

- Choose one reason or way.
- Find two different supporting details.
- Write a CSI response for each.
- Explain how each detail proves the idea from a slightly different angle.
- Add one sentence about the cause/effect, comparison, advantage, or limitation the evidence reveals.
- Present your two angles to a partner.

My reason or way:

My Two Evidence Angles

Draw or write both pieces of evidence. Label each with its CSI inference. Then write one comparison sentence.

At-Home Connection

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

Prove It, Then Explain It

Make a claim ("Our garden is doing well"). Then give one exact detail that proves it and say what the detail shows. This is the CSI habit we practice this week.

Ask your student to name the Connect, Support, and Infer steps.

Family member signature: _____

Which Detail Fits?

Give a reason, then two possible details. One fits and one is off topic. Have your student pick the one that proves the reason and explain why.

Choosing the right detail is the first step in strong evidence.

Family member signature: _____

Evidence in Everyday Life

When your student makes a point, ask them to prove it with an exact detail (not just a summary) and then say what the detail shows. That is the CSI habit we practice this week.

Strong evidence is specific, matches the reason, and comes from the source.

Family member signature: _____

My Family Conversation Notes

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

Notes

Track My Progress

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

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

Why This Helps Me

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

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

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

My Module 4 Snapshot

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

The most useful word I learned

The CSI step I can do most confidently

My Strong Roots

I am ready to grow the next branch: the Explanation Branch.

A note to my future writer self

My Proud Moment This Week
