



THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC



Module 3

The Reason/Way Branch of the ECR

Grade 5 • Cluster 2

Week 3 • High Stamina • ECR Informational

Tackling TEKS • Reading & Writing

5.11(B)(iv) • 5.11(C)(iii) • 5.11(C)(iv) • 5.12(B)(i) • 5.12(B)(ii) • 5.12(B)(iii)





Meet Our Week!

Week 3 · High Stamina · Cluster 2 (ECR)

★ Daily Deck

I Will...

- Brainstorm many ideas connected to a thesis (central idea).
- Group similar ideas into baskets.
- Keep one strong idea from each basket.
- Delete off-topic ideas for coherence.
- Narrow my thinking to two or three baskets.

I Can...

- Brainstorm several ideas connected to a thesis (central idea).
- Group similar ideas into baskets and keep one strong idea from each.
- Narrow to two or three distinct, relevant baskets.
- Explain why my final baskets are different and useful.



★ A Problem & A Discovery

Day 1 · Gather

★ Daily Deck

Passage 1

A Harvest to Remember

Genre: Informational passage

A Harvest to Remember shows how Wampanoag knowledge and cooperation helped Pilgrims adapt to Plymouth.

Passage 2

Spanish Rule in Early Texas

Genre: Informational passage

Spanish Rule in Early Texas explains how missions and presidios supported Spanish control while changing daily life and causing conflict for Native American communities.

Gather connected ideas, sort them by whether they fit a thesis (central idea), and reveal the four steps of magnifying reasons or ways into baskets. Classroom without customs and expectations; food and food safety; both passages; DOT unknown words.

★ Shaping the Prompt

Day 1 · Gather

★ Daily Deck

Sort cards into Fits the thesis (central idea), Could Fit Later, and Off Topic.

A Topic Only

Protection; Guarding; Soldiers.

A Matched Thesis (Central Idea)

Clue word: WHY

Thinking type: REASONS

Strong thesis (central idea): Missions and presidios helped Spain control Texas by protecting settlements and shaping daily life.

Circle nouns; box the verb; triangle WHY or HOW; model WHY: missions and presidios help communities stay safe and fair. A thesis (central idea) must answer the exact WHY or HOW question, not just state a detail.



Dot the Tricky Words

Day 1 · Gather

★ Daily Deck

D

Dot

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

O

Discover

Discover the meaning as we learn together through our lessons.

T

Drop

Erase the dot once you know what the word means.

A little dot above a word means: “I’m not sure about this word yet.”
Words to DOT: mission · presidio · cooperation · Catholicism · significance

Dot the word. Discover the meaning. Drop the dot.



★ The Five Thinking Levels

Day 1 · Reveal

★ Daily Deck

Level 1

Foundational

Why did it happen? /
I can explain the
cause.

Level 2

Emergent

Why was it done? / I
can explain the
purpose.

Level 3

Visible

Why is it important
in the text? / I can
explain why it
matters.

Level 4

Independent

Why is it important
to me? / I can
explain what I can
apply to my life.

Level 5

Reflective

Why is it important
to everyone? / I can
explain the universal
lesson.

Where this module primarily operates: Visible and Independent (Levels 3-4).

★ The ECR (TREES) Chart

Day 1 · Reveal

★ Daily Deck

The prompt tells students what to think about; the ECR (TREES) chart tells students how to make their thinking visible.

T = thesis (central idea), clearly answers the prompt.

R = Reason/Way, tells why or how the thesis (central idea) is true.

E = Evidence, gives text proof.

E = Explanation, connects the proof to the thesis (central idea).

S = Significance, states why the idea matters.

Brainstorm · Group · Keep · Narrow

Today your brain learns four steps: brainstorm many ideas, group similar ideas, keep one strong idea from each basket, and narrow to two or three different baskets.

Circle missions and presidios and communities; box help; WHY means reasons; modeled thesis (central idea).

Watch Me!

Brainstorm (wide): soldiers guarded the land; presidios protected nearby settlements; missions taught farming, cooking, and building; priests converted Native Americans; Catholic religion spread; some Native Americans resisted; place names show Spanish influence.

Final baskets: Protection; Teaching and Daily Life; Religion and Conversion.

Group similar ideas, keep one strong idea per basket, and narrow to three distinct directions.

★ Spin, Sort, and Build the Baskets!

Day 2 · Attempt · Partner Game

★ Daily Deck

Passages: “A Harvest to Remember” &
“Spanish Rule in Early Texas”

How to Play

- 1** Spin WHY, HOW, or BOTH.
Check: Name the result.
- 2** Draw a prompt card for the thinking type.
Check: Read the whole prompt.
- 3** Use the sample: Explain HOW Squanto's discovery solved a problem.
Check: HOW asks for a way.
- 4** Circle important nouns with a hand motion.
Check: Squanto's discovery; problem
- 5** Box the important verb with a hand motion.
Check: solved

With Your Partner...

Sample Card · HOW

“Explain HOW Squanto’s discovery solved a problem.”

shape it

Thesis (Central Idea) · Complete

“Squanto’s discovery solved the problem of food and food safety by showing that learning how to use the land helped the Pilgrims survive.”

★ Spin, Sort, and Build the Baskets! (continued)

★ Daily Deck

Day 2 · Attempt · Partner Game

Passages: “A Harvest to Remember” &
“Spanish Rule in Early Texas”

How to Play

- 6 Triangle the clue word with a hand motion.
Check: HOW
- 7 Say the type aloud.
Check: A way something happened
- 8 Use the nonfiction passage's problem to guide thinking.
Check: the Pilgrims lacked knowledge of the land.
- 9 Write a complete thesis (central idea).
Check: Match the exact prompt.

With Your Partner...

Sample Card · HOW

“Explain HOW Squanto’s discovery solved a problem.”

shape it

Thesis (Central Idea) · Complete

“Squanto’s discovery solved the problem of food and food safety by showing that learning how to use the land helped the Pilgrims survive.”

★ Spin, Sort, and Build the Baskets! (continued)

★ Daily Deck

Day 2 · Attempt · Partner Game

Passages: “A Harvest to Remember” &
“Spanish Rule in Early Texas”

How to Play

- 10 Possible thesis (central idea): Squanto's discovery solved the problem of food and food safety by showing that learning how to use the land helped the Pilgrims survive.
Check: States how the problem was solved.
- 11 Check the thesis (central idea) against the prompt.
Check: Correct thesis (central idea): move 2 spaces!
- 12 Switch roles and play another turn.
Check: Both partners shape and write.

With Your Partner...

Sample Card · HOW

“Explain HOW Squanto’s discovery solved a problem.”

shape it

Thesis (Central Idea) · Complete

“Squanto’s discovery solved the problem of food and food safety by showing that learning how to use the land helped the Pilgrims survive.”

Why do writers brainstorm first?

Why group ideas into baskets?

What happens if all final ideas come from the same basket?

What has this passage reminded you of in your own life?

What have you learned from this passage that will help you in your own life?

Teacher Script: “Brainstorming helps you think of more ideas. Grouping helps you organize. If all the ideas are the same, your writing will sound repetitive. Different baskets help you find different evidence.”

Expected responses: why missions and presidios shaped daily life; conflict: pressure and tension, lost cooperation and respect, growing problems. Compare the conflicts in the nonfiction passage and nonfiction passage: each creates a need for a solution that protects people. Return to the nonfiction passage’s conflict when answering its WHY prompt.



What Makes an Organized ECR?

★ Daily Deck

Day 3 · Discuss (cont.)

The prompt tells students what to think about; the ECR (TREES) chart tells students how to make their thinking visible.

a clear thesis (central idea)

**distinct reason or
way baskets**

**evidence tied to
each basket**

roots = passage and prompt; trunk = thesis (central idea); branches = reason or way, evidence, and explanation.



★ Try It On Your Own!

Day 3 · Use

BRAINSTORM

Brainstorm connected ideas from “Spanish Rule in Early Texas.”

GROUP

Group similar ideas into baskets.

NARROW

Delete off-topic ideas and keep one strong idea from each basket. Narrow to two or three distinct baskets that could become body-paragraph directions.

Keep each basket relevant · make baskets different · use two vocabulary words · support with passage evidence.

A thesis (central idea) must answer the exact WHY or HOW question, not just state a detail. Collect the shaped prompt and thesis (central idea). Check the important nouns, verb, and WHY; then check whether the underlined reason explains the need for missions and presidios. Student product: shaped prompt, complete thesis (central idea), underlined reason, and optional evidence and explanation.



The Moment They Figured It Out

Day 4 · Award

★ Daily Deck

Student Award

- What can I already do? One prompt I shaped or thesis (central idea) I wrote successfully, and the evidence in my work:

The Moment They Figured It Out

Choose a title: Idea Organizer, Basket Builder, Thought Magnifier, or Focus Finder. Name one organizing decision you made well.





What Do I Still Need to Grow?

Day 4 · Target

★ Daily Deck

Student Target

- What do I want to practice next? One next step for shaping a prompt or writing a matching thesis (central idea):





Turn and Teach!

Day 5 · Educate and Explain to Others

★ Daily Deck

1

Brainstorm

many ideas.

2

Group

similar ideas.

3

Keep

one strong idea from
each group.

4

Narrow

to two or three
different baskets.

“Now turn and teach someone else how to magnify reasons or ways. Explain all four steps. You may use your notebook, anchor chart, or basket page to help you.”



Explain and Educate

Day 5 · Partner Teach-Back

★ Daily Deck

Explain It

- Explain how each final basket can become a different body-paragraph direction.
- Explain why repeated or off-topic ideas should be moved out.

Transfer Across Passages

- Compare two theses (central ideas): one from each passage
- Create baskets for each
- Explain why the categories change



★ Exit Ticket

Day 5 · Transfer

★ Daily Deck

Student-Friendly Target: I can magnify a thesis (central idea) into focused baskets.

Prompt: Explain how missions and presidios shaped daily life and Spanish control in early Texas.

Directions: Use the thesis (central idea) "Missions and presidios helped Spain control Texas by protecting settlements and shaping daily life." Brainstorm connected ideas from "Spanish Rule in Early Texas," group similar ideas into baskets, keep one strong idea from each basket, and narrow to two or three distinct baskets.

1. Selected response. Which basket is distinct from Protection? [] Guarding [] Teaching and Daily Life (2 points)
2. Constructed response. Record two or three final baskets and one passage detail for each: (4 points)
3. Underline the strongest idea kept from each basket. (2 points)
4. Transfer / application. Name one idea you deleted or moved because it was off topic or repeated: (2 points)

Total Score: _____ / 10



Build It, Fix It, Say It

Small-Group Support

★ Daily Deck

Build It: “The problem was: _____. This caused: _____. So, missions and presidios were needed because: _____.”

“Missions and presidios shaped early Texas by protecting settlements and shaping daily life”

“missions and presidios were needed because people argued and cooperation and respect was lost”

Fix It: “Missions and presidios shaped early Texas by protecting settlements and shaping daily life.” Revise to “missions and presidios were needed because people argued and cooperation and respect was lost.”

Say It: turn to a partner and rehearse the frame, “The problem was... So... That means...”

★ Think Like an Author, Write Like a Scholar

Enrichment: Connect Across Texts

Part 1: Find the Conflict. Briefly compare the problems in the two texts, then return to the nonfiction passage and shape one prompt. 5.7B

Prompt: Explain WHY AND HOW missions and presidios shaped communities.

Use the deck's dual lens: WHY, missions and presidios shaped communities because they created cooperation and respect and reduced conflict; HOW, missions and presidios shaped communities by setting clear customs and expectations that guided behavior and prevented disagreements. Students circle missions and presidios and communities, box improved, and triangle WHY and HOW in this single prompt.

Part 2: Write a Matching thesis (central idea).

Students combine a reason and a way in a complete thesis (central idea): “missions and presidios improved communities because they created cooperation and respect and reduced conflict by setting clear customs and expectations that guided behavior.” Partners check the thesis (central idea) against both parts of the shaped prompt.

★ Think Like an Author, Write Like a Scholar

★ Daily Deck

Enrichment: Connect Across Texts (continued)

Part 3: Develop and Transfer. Use TREES to plan text evidence, explanation, and significance for the missions and presidios thesis (central idea). Then apply the same habit to one nonfiction passage prompt: “Explain HOW Squanto's discovery solved a problem.” Shape it, identify the conflict, and write a matching thesis (central idea) with the way underlined.

Expert Reflection: have students explain how the shaped words and conflict helped them write a matching thesis (central idea) for each prompt.

★ My Progress Tracker

Directions: This tracker is for YOU. As you practice shaping prompts and writing theses (central ideas), look at each skill below. If you can do it all by yourself without help, check the box that matches how you feel. Be honest with yourself. This helps you see your growth.

I Can...	Not Yet	Getting It	I've Got It!
Circle important nouns, box the important verb, and triangle WHY or HOW.	Not Yet	Getting It	I've Got It!
Tell whether a prompt asks for reasons or a way something happened.	Not Yet	Getting It	I've Got It!
Explain the difference between WHY and HOW.	Not Yet	Getting It	I've Got It!
Identify the problem or conflict in the text.	Not Yet	Getting It	I've Got It!
Write a thesis (central idea) that answers WHY with a reason.	Not Yet	Getting It	I've Got It!
Write a thesis (central idea) that answers HOW with a way something happened.	Not Yet	Getting It	I've Got It!
Add evidence that supports my thesis (central idea).	Not Yet	Getting It	I've Got It!
Explain how my evidence proves my thinking.	Not Yet	Getting It	I've Got It!
Revise my thesis (central idea) to make it clear and complete.	Not Yet	Getting It	I've Got It!

★ Citizenship Connection

- ★ **Understanding cooperation, control, cultural change, resistance, and the consequences of early choices.**

The Wampanoag people's knowledge helped Pilgrims survive in Plymouth. Missions and presidios helped Spain maintain control of Texas.

Reflect & Discuss

How do cooperation, knowledge, and systems shape the outcomes people experience?

Low Exemplar

Prompt: Explain how missions and presidios shaped daily life and Spanish control in early Texas.

LOW Level 1

“Protection; Guarding; Soldiers.”

What the student did successfully: Created baskets and stayed connected to protection.

What needs improvement: All three baskets are the same angle, so later evidence would repeat.

Exact next instructional step: Keep one protection basket, then add a different angle such as Teaching and Daily Life or Religion and Conversion.

Medium Exemplar

Prompt: Explain how missions and presidios shaped daily life and Spanish control in early Texas.

MEDIUM Level 2-3

“Protection; Daily Life; Off Topic (place names).”

What the student did successfully: Found two different angles and began an off-topic basket.

What is missing: Off-topic ideas are still mixed into the final choices.

Why it falls at this level: The baskets are beginning to differ, but the narrowing is incomplete.

Exact next instructional step: Move place names out and, if needed, add a third distinct basket such as Religion and Conversion.

High Exemplar

Prompt: Explain how missions and presidios shaped daily life and Spanish control in early Texas.

HIGH Level 4

Clue word: WHY

Thinking type: REASONS

Strong thesis (central idea): Missions and presidios helped Spain control Texas by protecting settlements and shaping daily life.

Why it works: It gives the organizer a clear trunk from which distinct reason or way branches can grow.

★ **This is our target!**