

THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC.

Student Interactive Workbook

Grade 5

Cluster 1 - Modules 1 to 4

Module 1: Understanding and Upgrading Thinking Levels in WHY and HOW Responses

Module 2: Writing a Strong Thesis (central idea) Using TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER

Module 3: Using Evidence to Support Thinking

Module 4: Writing the Explanation Sentence



Name: _____



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THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC.

Student Interactive Workbook

Grade 5

Cluster 1 - Module 1

Understanding and Upgrading Thinking
Levels in WHY and HOW Responses



Name: _____



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Grade 5 • Cluster 1 • 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



Understanding and Upgrading Thinking Levels in WHY and HOW Responses

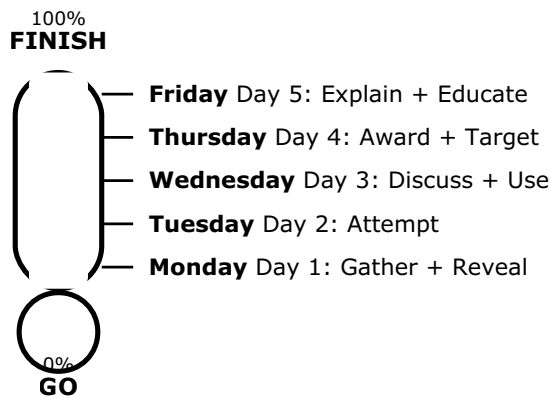
Why This Matters to Me

The words I choose show how deeply I understand the evidence. When I upgrade my citation stem and explanation, I show clearer, more precise thinking.

Essential Question

How can writers upgrade WHY and HOW SCR responses so their word choice shows deeper thinking?

My Week Tracker



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

My First Thinking

I Can

- I can upgrade an SCR response by choosing precise language that shows deeper, clearer thinking.
- I can identify the thinking level of a response by the words it uses.
- I can write a WHY response as a complex sentence using a subordinating word such as because.
- I can write a relational HOW response as a simple sentence using a preposition such as through or by.

I Will

- I will move a response up one thinking level at a time instead of just making it longer.
- I will use stronger citation stems and explanation words to show precise thinking.
- I will connect my responses to historical, cultural, and environmental setting.

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 identify a response's thinking level and upgrade it one level at a time using precise citation stems and explanation language.	One informational passage, "From Tension to Revolution," and one fiction passage, "The Ocean Lesson." Both are at low stamina.	Upgraded WHY and HOW responses, a Level Up Showdown recording, and a partner teach-back explanation.

Where We Are Going

I will move from comparing two SCR responses to identifying their thinking levels and upgrading them on my own. I will learn that precise language, not length, shows depth. By the end of the week, I will teach someone else how to use the Thinking Levels Chart to identify a level, upgrade one feature, and justify why the new version shows deeper thinking.

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

- ☐ I name the thinking level of a response and point to the exact words that reveal it.
- ☐ I upgrade a response one level higher with a stronger stem and a clearer explanation.
- ☐ I match my sentence structure to a WHY prompt or a HOW prompt.
- ☐ I support my answer with accurate evidence from the passage.
- ☐ I explain what the evidence means and why it supports my answer.
- ☐ I connect my response to historical, cultural, or environmental setting.
- ☐ I can tell the difference between restating a detail and explaining what it means.
- ☐ I can teach a partner how to identify a level, upgrade one feature, and justify why the new version is stronger.

Check Myself

- ☐ I can name the thinking level of a response.
- ☐ I can point to the exact words that show the level.
- ☐ I can upgrade a citation stem and explanation one level higher.
- ☐ I can match a complex sentence to a WHY response using because.
- ☐ I can match a preposition to a relational HOW response using through or by.
- ☐ I can explain what the evidence means and why it supports my answer.
- ☐ I can connect my response to historical, cultural, or environmental setting.
- ☐ I can teach a partner the level-up process.

How I Will Show What I Know

Say It Together!

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

5.11(A)(i):

I can plan a first draft by selecting a genre for a particular topic, purpose, and audience.

5.12(B)(i):

I can compose an informational text with a clear thesis (central idea).

Call and Response

Read this together as a class before we start.

Teacher asks: "What do precise words show?"

Class answers: "Our thinking level!"

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 short constructed response has a thesis (central idea), evidence, and explanation. I can find details in a passage and write a complete sentence.

A connection I can make

Remember It!

- ☐ A short constructed response has a thesis (central idea), evidence, and explanation.
- ☐ I can find a detail in a passage and use it as evidence.
- ☐ I can write a complete sentence with a subject and a verb.
- ☐ WHY prompts ask for a reason. HOW prompts ask for a way.
- ☐ The words I choose show how deeply I understand the evidence.

One idea I remember

Ready Check

- ☐ I can name what a passage is about.
- ☐ I can copy a detail from the passage as evidence.
- ☐ I can write a sentence that answers a question.
- ☐ I can tell whether a prompt asks WHY or HOW.
- ☐ I can explain what a detail means, not just restate it.

Watch Out! Common Mix-Up

Watch out! A longer answer is not automatically a stronger answer. Precise language, not length, shows the depth of thinking. Upgrade the exact words, not the word count. Also watch out for copying a stronger stem without changing the explanation. If you write establishes but the explanation still restates the text, the response has not truly leveled up.

Where This Fits in My Writing

Choosing exact language is what makes a written response show its thinking. Students identify the current level, point to the words that reveal it, and upgrade one level at a time. The thesis (central idea), evidence, and explanation remain connected while the writer improves sentence structure and word choice. Historical, cultural, and environmental setting shapes the ideas students explain.

What I want to remember before I start

Where I Am Starting



This is not for a grade

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

Part 1: Name the Prompt Type

Read the prompt: Why did colonists protest British laws?

Is this a WHY prompt or a HOW prompt? How do you know?

Part 2: Name the Thinking Level

Read this response: The colonists protested because they were taxed. The text says, "It required colonists to pay taxes on printed materials..." This shows they were upset.

What is the thinking level of this response? Which words tell you?

Part 3: Upgrade the Response

Rewrite the response one level higher. Use a stronger citation stem and a clearer explanation.

My upgraded response

Part 4: Order the Response

Number these four sentences 1, 2, 3, 4 to show the order they belong in a strong SCR response.

Sentence	Order
The colonists protested British laws because they were taxed without representation.	
According to the text, colonists argued it was unfair to be taxed without a voice.	
This suggests the colonists wanted fairness and a say in decisions.	
Unfair taxation pushed the colonies toward organized resistance.	

Part 5: HOW Response

Read this prompt: How does setting influence behavior in both passages?

My HOW response (use through or by)

Part 6: Explain the Upgrade

Why is your upgraded response from Part 3 stronger than the original? Name the exact word or relationship that changed.

Why my upgraded version shows deeper thinking



Words I Need

Tier 1, everyday words



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

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
answer	AN-ser	What you write or say to respond to a question or prompt.	When I _____ a prompt, I start by _____.
explain	ek-SPLAYN	To tell why something happened or how it works, not just what happened.	To _____, I tell _____.
reason	REE-zun	The why behind an idea, the cause or support for it.	The _____ is _____.
choose	CHOOZ	To pick the best evidence or detail to support your thinking.	I _____ this detail because _____.
clear	KLEER	Easy to understand, so the reader does not have to guess.	A _____ response helps the reader _____.
deeper	DEE-per	Going past the surface to think about what something means or why it matters.	To go _____, I ask _____.
upgrade	UP-grayd	To make a response better by adding stronger thinking or wording.	I can _____ my answer by _____.
level	LEV-ul	A step that shows how deep the thinking is.	This response is at _____.
stronger	STRON-gur	More convincing because it uses precise words and real evidence.	A _____ response uses _____.
word	WURD	A single unit of meaning; the right word makes thinking sharper.	I will swap this _____ for _____.

Use one Tier 1 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 2, academic words

These academic thinking words help you understand questions and explain answers. Say each word, then use it in the frame.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
evidence	EV-uh-duns	Specific text proof used to support an answer.	My _____ is ____.
explanation	ek-spluh-NAY-shun	The writer's thinking about what the evidence means and why it matters.	My _____ shows ____.
thesis (central idea)	THEE-sis (SEN-trul eye-DEE-uh)	The sentence that directly answers the SCR prompt.	My _____ is ____.
infer	in-FUR	To combine text clues with reasoning to reach a supported idea.	I can _____ that ____.
suggests	sug-JESTS	Signals an idea that the evidence reasonably points toward.	The evidence _____ ____.
demonstrates	DEM-un-strayts	Shows an idea clearly through evidence and reasoning.	This _____ that ____.
supports	suh-PORTS	Provides proof that strengthens a thesis (central idea) or explanation.	This detail _____ ____.
indicates	IN-duh-kayts	Points toward a conclusion supported by the text.	The text _____ that ____.
establishes	ih-STAB-ish-iz	Builds firm support for an idea through clear evidence.	The text _____ that ____.
synthesizes	SIN-thuh-sy-ziz	Combines multiple details or ideas into a larger understanding.	My response _____ ____.

Use one Tier 2 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 3, passage words

These words come from the passages. Say each word, then use it in the frame.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
Parliament	PAR-luh-ment	The British law-making body that passed taxes and laws affecting the American colonies.	_____ placed new taxes on the colonies.
taxation	tak-SAY-shun	The act of collecting money through taxes.	_____ without representation angered the colonists.
representation	rep-ri-zen-TAY-shun	Having someone speak for you in government.	The colonists had no _____ in Parliament.
revolution	rev-uh-LOO-shun	A long fight to break away from a ruler or government.	The American _____ was a fight for independence.
instinct	IN-stinkt	A behavior an animal is born with and does not learn.	Sea turtles use _____ to reach the ocean.
orcas	OR-kuhz	Large ocean animals, also called killer whales, that hunt in groups.	_____ rely on learned behavior.
Intolerable Acts	in-TOL-er-uh-bul AKTS	The harsh laws Britain passed after the Boston Tea Party to punish the colonies.	The _____ limited the colonies' rights.
Sons of Liberty	SUNZ uv LIB-er-tee	The group that, with Samuel Adams, helped organize resistance and spread ideas.	The _____ helped organize resistance.
Boston Massacre	BAW-stun MAS-uh-ker	The 1770 killing of colonists by British soldiers that increased anger toward Britain.	The _____ increased distrust toward British authority.
coordinated	koh-OR-di-nay-tid	Working together in an organized way.	The orcas swam in _____ patterns.

Use one Tier 3 word in a sentence



My Strategy Tools

SCR Thinking: Thesis (Central Idea), Evidence, Explanation



A short constructed response has three parts: thesis (central idea), evidence, and explanation. The words I choose show my thinking level.

T Thesis (central idea)	E Evidence	E Explanation
Words = Thinking Level says, suggests, indicates, demonstrates, establishes		

Precise language, not length, shows depth.

SCR Prompt Parts

Mark	What it means
Red circle	TOPIC: what the writing is about.
Yellow box	CHARGE: what job the writing must do.
Green triangle	CLUE WORD: WHY or HOW.

A WHY response uses a complex sentence with because. A relational HOW response uses a simple sentence with through or by.

How I identify a thinking level

WHY responses use... and HOW responses use...

WHY responses use...	HOW responses use...
a complex sentence with because. The writer explains the reason something happened or why an idea is supported.	a simple sentence with through or by. The writer explains a method or way that something happened.

Precise language, not length, shows the depth of thinking.

How I Say the Standard!

5.11(A)(i):

I can plan a first draft by selecting a genre for a particular topic, purpose, and audience.

5.12(B)(i):

I can compose an informational text with a clear thesis (central idea).

Check My Writing

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

A WHY or HOW response I can explain

Five Thinking Levels

Read from the bottom up. Each level names the kind of thinking a response needs.

Level	Symbol	Color Label	Thinking Stage	Description
Reflective (Level 5, Blue, Diamond)		What larger understanding emerges?	I can synthesize and reframe the meaning.	Setting and larger idea
Independent (Level 4, Green, Triangle)		What pattern does the evidence establish?	I can strengthen an inference.	Pattern and precise inference
Visible (Level 3, Yellow, Inverted triangle)		What does the evidence indicate?	I can connect the evidence to an idea.	Clear evidence and explanation
Emergent (Level 2, Orange, Square)		What does the detail suggest?	I can add a little explanation.	Suggestion and first inference
Foundational (Level 1, Red, Circle)		What does the text say?	I can restate the detail.	Basic citation and restatement

Use the Level-Up Language Ladder: says and shows, then suggests, indicates, demonstrates, establishes, and synthesis language.

A thinking level I understand

Progression of Thinking

Each progression row names the hidden question and the student thinking.

Level	Hidden Question	Student Thinking	Thinking Focus	
Synthesis			Connect evidence from both passages to a larger understanding.	Synthesize and reframe
Evaluative			Judge which of two responses shows deeper thinking.	Compare and justify
Inferential			Choose the response genre from the purpose and audience.	Infer and explain
Literal			Identify the thinking level of a response.	Name the level and point to the words

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.	Why did colonists protest British laws?
HOW	Analyze how parts work together or how something happens.	How does setting influence behavior in both passages?

A WHY response uses a complex sentence with because. A relational HOW response uses a simple sentence with through or by. Precise language, not length, shows depth.

A thinking level I want to reach



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

The colonial passage shows how unfair laws led to organized resistance. The ocean passage shows how animals survive through instinct and learned behavior. Both show how setting shapes responses.

Background I Need

"From Tension to Revolution" is an informational passage about taxes, resistance, and the American Revolution. "The Ocean Lesson" is a fiction passage about instinct, learned behavior, and survival.

Words I dotted while reading

From Tension to Revolution

Two passages. Low Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

- 1

Before the American Revolution, the thirteen colonies were part of Great Britain, a superpower at the time. Many colonists considered themselves loyal to the king. However, this began to change after the French and Indian War. Although Great Britain gained land, it also gained significant debt. To recover money, Parliament placed new taxes on the colonies.
- 2

One of these laws was the Stamp Act. It required colonists to pay taxes on printed materials such as newspapers and legal documents. Colonists strongly opposed this law because they had no representatives in Parliament. They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice, which led to the phrase "taxation without representation."
- 3

Tensions continued to rise. In 1770, the Boston Massacre occurred when British soldiers fired into a crowd of colonists, killing several people. This event increased anger and distrust toward British authority. A few years later, the Tea Act was passed, leading to the Boston Tea Party. After the Tea Act was passed, trouble was brewing in the colonies. During this protest, colonists dumped tea into Boston Harbor. Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty helped organize resistance and spread ideas.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

From Tension to Revolution (continued)

Two passages. Low Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

4 In response, Great Britain passed the Intolerable Acts, which punished the colonies and limited their rights. Instead of ending the conflict, these actions brought the colonies closer together. The colonists learned that there is strength in numbers.

5 Over time, many colonists wanted to remove British control. The American Revolution became a fight for independence, leading to the Declaration of Independence and the creation of a new nation.

My
marks

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Ocean Lesson

Two passages. Low Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

1

Nyla stood quietly on the beach as dozens of sea turtles began to hatch from the sand. One by one, they broke through their shells and started moving toward the ocean.

2

"How do they know where to go?" Nyla asked. "They don't need to be taught," her guide explained. "It's an instinct. They are born with that behavior."

3

Nyla watched closely. The turtles moved slowly but with determination. Even though birds circled above and the sand was uneven, most continued toward the water. Their instinct guided them through the transition from sand to ocean, increasing their chances of survival during a dangerous moment.

4

The guide smiled and said, "Slow and steady wins the race."

5

Later that day, Nyla visited a marine biology exhibit at an aquarium. She stopped in front of a large tank where a group of orcas swam together in coordinated patterns. A trainer explained how they hunt in the wild.

6

"Orcas rely on learned behavior," he said. "Young orcas observe older members of their group. Over time, they learn strategies and practice working together."

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Ocean Lesson (continued)

Two passages. Low Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use Dot, Discover, Drop.

7 The trainer smiled and said, "These orcas are a whale of a team."

8 Nyla noticed how the orcas stayed close and moved as a team. Their actions seemed planned and purposeful.

9 "So they have to learn how to survive?" Nyla asked. "Yes," the trainer replied. "Their success depends on learning and cooperation."

10 Nyla thought about what she had seen. The turtles relied on instinct to act quickly without guidance. The orcas relied on learning and teamwork over time. Both types of behavior helped animals survive in their environments, even though they developed in different ways.

My
marks

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Annotate: From Tension to Revolution

Taxes, protests, and the words and events that show increasing resistance.

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: From Tension to Revolution (continued)

Punishment, unity, and the shift toward independence.

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 word in the passage could change a response's thinking level?

My thinking

My Prompt Marking Notes

An SCR prompt has a topic, a charge, and a clue word. Use these shapes to see each part.

Shape	Word	Question I ask myself
Red circle	Topic	What is my writing about?
Yellow box	Charge	What job must my writing do?
Green triangle	Clue word	WHY or HOW?

Circle the topic. Box the charge. Triangle the clue word.

Why did colonists protest British laws?

My three marks in words

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 1: Gather + Reveal



I learn that words show a thinking level

Our Question for Today

Which response shows stronger thinking, and what exact words prove it?

1. Gather: Compare Two Responses

Prompt: Why did colonists protest British laws?

Response A: The colonists protested because they were taxed. The text says, "It required colonists to pay taxes on printed materials..." This shows they were upset.

Response B: The colonists protested British laws because they were taxed without representation and believed the treatment was unfair. According to the text, "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..." This suggests the colonists wanted fairness and a say in decisions that affected them.

Which response shows stronger thinking? Point to the exact words that prove it.

Day 1: Reveal, continued

2. Reveal: The Level-Up Language Ladder

Your words show your thinking level. A lower-level response often uses says, shows, or tells. A stronger response uses suggests, indicates, demonstrates, or establishes. The strongest responses synthesize ideas and explain them clearly.

Level	Citation stems	Explanation language
Level 1: Foundational	says, shows, tells	Restates the detail
Level 2: Emergent	According to the text, suggests	Adds a little explanation
Level 3: Visible	indicates, demonstrates	Connects evidence to an idea
Level 4: Independent	establishes	Names a pattern and strengthens an inference
Level 5: Reflective	frames, converges, reframes	Synthesizes and connects to a bigger idea

3. WHY and HOW Sentence Structures

Response type	Structure	Key word
WHY response	Complex sentence	because
Relational HOW response	Simple sentence	through or by

STOP & THINK

What word in Response A reveals its level? What word in Response B reveals its level?

Response A uses _____. Response B uses _____.

Day 1 Embedded Check

Complete this sentence:

One change that can raise a response's thinking level without making it longer is

SCR Thinking Chart

SCR Part	What it means
Thesis (central idea)	The sentence that directly answers the prompt.
Evidence	Specific text proof used to support an answer.
Explanation	The explanation sentence tells what the evidence means and why it supports the thesis (central idea).

One new word I want to start using in my responses

The Two Types of Prompts

Thinking type	Clue words	What the writer explains
WHY responses	WHY, because, since	Reasons that explain why something happened or why an idea is supported.
HOW responses	HOW, through, by	A method or way that explains how something happened or how behavior developed.

Practice: Name the Type

Read each prompt. Write WHY or HOW.

Prompt	WHY or HOW?
Why did colonists protest British laws?	
How does setting influence behavior in both passages?	
Why do orcas rely on learned behavior?	
How does the Stamp Act show the conflict between Britain and the colonies?	

One difference between WHY and HOW responses

STUDENT WORKBOOK



LEVEL UP SHOWDOWN

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards

Cut on the dashed lines. Keep the 3 SCR cards in the middle of the table and the 5 response cards in a stack. Store all cards in your Pocket Practice.

THESIS (CENTRAL IDEA)	EVIDENCE
EXPLANATION	The text says, "It required colonists to pay taxes on printed materials..." This shows they were upset.
According to the text, "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..." This suggests the colonists wanted fairness.	The text indicates that "Their instinct guided them through the transition from sand to ocean..." This demonstrates that instinct helps turtles survive.
The text establishes that "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..." This pattern strengthens the inference that unfair taxation pushed the colonies toward organized resistance.	Critically, the passage frames the conflict around fairness and voice. Ultimately, this reframes the Revolution as a response to denied rights.

Self-Check (back of cards)

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 Specific text proof used to support the answer.	THESIS (CENTRAL IDEA) The sentence that directly answers the SCR prompt.
Level 1: Foundational	EXPLANATION The writer's thinking about what the evidence means and why it matters.
Level 3: Visible	Level 2: Emergent
Level 5: Reflective	Level 4: Independent

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 2: Attempt

I play Level Up Showdown



Our Question for Today: How do I identify a response's level and upgrade it?

1. Level Up Showdown

- Spin to land on a level from 1 to 5.
- Draw a task card and read the response aloud.
- Identify the level using the Thinking Levels Chart.
- Upgrade the response one level higher.
- Explain what changed in the reasoning.
- Move your marker. Record the upgrade in your notebook.
- Put every card back in Pocket Practice.

Round	1	2	3	4	5
My partner					
My point					

2. Record My Upgrades

Original response	Original level	Upgraded response	New level

What changed in the reasoning (not just the length)

Day 2: Attempt, continued

3. Embedded Check

Before awarding the marker move, name the level, point to the exact word, and explain why the upgraded version is stronger.

Check	My response
Name the level	
Point to the exact word	
Explain why the upgrade is stronger	

4. Sample Game Card

Response: The text says the turtles follow instinct. Level: Foundational (Level 1). The words says and follow tell us this restates the text.

My upgrade of this response (one level higher)

Why the upgrade is stronger (name the exact word change)

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 3: Discuss + Use



I upgrade on my own

Our Question for Today

How did precise word choice change the reasoning in my responses?

1. Discuss

Explain your reasoning, not just your answer.

Question	My thinking
Which words showed the original level?	
What became more specific in the upgrade?	
How did the explanation change?	
Did the upgraded response connect better to setting?	
Why is precise language more important than length?	

My discussion notes

2. Use: Upgrade a WHY Response

WHY Practice: The colonists protested because they had taxes. The text says, "It required colonists to pay taxes on printed materials..." This means they did not like the law.

Current level: _____

My upgraded WHY response (one level higher)

3. Use: Upgrade a HOW Response

HOW Practice: Setting influences behavior by making people and animals act differently. The text says, "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..." and "Young orcas observe older members of their group." This shows behavior changes.

Current level: _____

My upgraded HOW response (one level higher)



Embedded Check

Did I upgrade the reasoning, not just the length?

- ☐ I named the current level.
- ☐ I underlined the citation stem.
- ☐ I circled the explanation words.
- ☐ I can explain why the rewritten response is stronger.

Why my upgraded response shows deeper thinking

My Personal Connection

Think of a time you needed to explain something more precisely. How did choosing a better word change what someone understood?

My connection

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 4: Award + Target



I notice my growth

Our Question for Today

Which upgrade made my response stronger, and what is my next level goal?

1. Award the Best Parts

Name one change that made your response clearer. Write: Today I leveled up by changing _____ to _____.

My award: Today I leveled up by changing _____ to _____

2. Target My Next Step

Choose the next thinking level or language habit you want to reach.

- ☐ Move from Level 1 to Level 2.
- ☐ Move from Level 2 to Level 3.
- ☐ Use stronger explanation words.
- ☐ Use a better citation stem.
- ☐ Connect the response more clearly to setting.
- ☐ Use the Thinking Levels Chart every time I write.

My target: My current level is _____. My next level goal is _____.

One word I want to start using and one question I still have

[illegible]

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 5: Explain/Educate



I teach someone else

Our Question for Today

How would I teach someone else to identify a level and upgrade a response?

1. Explain to Others

Teach a partner how to use the Thinking Levels Chart. Read one response, identify its level, explain which words show that level, upgrade it one level higher, and explain why the new version is stronger.

- This response is at Level ____ because it uses the words ____.
- I can upgrade it by changing ____ to ____.
- The new version is stronger because ____.
- This response connects to setting by ____.

My partner taught me...

2. Independent Transfer

Choose one response from either passage and complete the upgrade in writing. Edit for a complete sentence, subject-verb agreement, and correct spelling.

My upgraded response

3. Transfer: Day 5 Exit Ticket

Read each response. Name its thinking level, point to the exact words that reveal it, and rewrite it one level higher.

Response 1: The text says, "It required colonists to pay taxes on printed materials..." This shows the colonies had taxes.

Level: _____. The word that reveals the level is _____.

My one-level upgrade of Response 1

Response 2: The author says, "They are born with that behavior." This means turtles use instinct.

Level: _____. The word that reveals the level is _____.

My one-level upgrade of Response 2

Why my new wording shows deeper thinking

 **STOP & THINK**

Day 5 Assessment Prompt Bank

Choose one prompt. Identify the response type, write a thesis (central idea), and upgrade it with evidence and explanation.

Prompt	Type
Why did colonists protest British laws?	WHY
How does setting influence behavior in both passages?	HOW
Why do orcas rely on learned behavior?	WHY

My thesis (central idea)

My evidence (a quote from the passage)

My explanation (what the evidence means and why it matters)

The thinking level of my response and the word that shows it



Write More

Plan, draft, revise, edit, and share



My Writing Assignment

Write a short response to this prompt:

Circle the topic. Box the charge. Triangle the clue word.

Why did colonists protest British laws?

My Plan

- Read the prompt. Circle the topic. Box the charge. Triangle the clue word.
- Decide: is this a WHY or HOW response?
- Write your thesis (central idea): the sentence that directly answers the prompt.
- Choose evidence from the passage. Write the citation stem and the quote.
- Write the explanation: what does the evidence mean and why does it matter?

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 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

- ☐ I improved one sentence for structure.
- ☐ My word choice matches the thinking I can support.

Edit

- ☐ I checked subject-verb agreement.
- ☐ I checked correct spelling of high-frequency words.
- ☐ I used complete sentences.

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
Thinking level	I named the level and pointed to the exact words.	
Word choice	I upgraded the citation stem and explanation to a precise next level.	
Evidence	I used accurate, relevant text detail from the passage.	
Explanation	I explained what the evidence means and why it supports my answer.	
WHY or HOW	I matched my sentence structure to the prompt type.	
Conventions	I used complete sentences, capital letters, and correct spelling.	
Connection to setting	I connected my response to historical, cultural, or environmental setting.	
Upgrade explanation	I explained why the new version is stronger, not just longer.	

Study the Samples

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

Why did colonists protest British laws?

Low

The colonists protested because they were taxed. The text says, "It required colonists to pay taxes on printed materials..." This shows they were upset.

What is missing: the citation stem and explanation remain at a foundational level and name a feeling only.

Medium

According to the text, "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..." This suggests the colonists were upset about the taxes.

What is missing: the explanation still names a feeling instead of the larger effect the evidence points toward.

High

The colonists protested British laws because they were taxed without representation and believed the treatment was unfair. The text establishes that "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..." This pattern strengthens the inference that unfair taxation pushed the colonies toward organized resistance.

Why it works: a complex WHY sentence, a precise citation stem, and an explanation that names a pattern and connects the evidence to the historical setting show deeper, clearer thinking.

What improves from Low to High?



Look Back & Look Forward

I own my learning



My Progress Tracker

I can...	Not yet	Growing	Got it
Name the thinking level of a response.	☐	☐	☐
Point to the exact words that show the level.	☐	☐	☐
Upgrade a citation stem one level higher.	☐	☐	☐
Make the explanation more precise, not just longer.	☐	☐	☐
Match a complex sentence to a WHY response using because.	☐	☐	☐
Match a preposition to a relational HOW response using through or by.	☐	☐	☐
Support my answer with accurate evidence from the passage.	☐	☐	☐
Explain why the new version is stronger.	☐	☐	☐
Connect my response to the historical, cultural, or environmental setting.	☐	☐	☐

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 can writers upgrade WHY and HOW SCR responses so their word choice shows deeper thinking?

The answer

Writers upgrade WHY and HOW SCR responses by identifying the current thinking level, choosing precise citation and explanation language, matching a complex sentence with because to a WHY response, matching a relational HOW sentence with through or by, and explaining how accurate evidence supports the answer. The stronger wording makes the relationship among the answer, evidence, setting, and reasoning clearer.

My Final Thinking (in my own words)

What Changed in My Thinking?

At first I thought...

Now I think...

Try It Another Way

Choose a new response from either passage. Name the current level and upgrade it one level higher. Explain why the new wording shows deeper thinking.

My new prompt

Take It Further! Multi-Level Response Challenge

Write the same idea at more than one level: Choose one response from either passage and upgrade it two levels higher. Explain what changed in the reasoning at each level.

- Choose a prompt from either passage.
- Write a Level 2 response using According to the text and This suggests.
- Rewrite at Level 3 using The text indicates that and This demonstrates that.
- Rewrite at Level 4 or 5 using The text establishes that or synthesis language.
- Explain why each level is stronger than the one before it.
- Share your progression with a partner.

My Level 2, Level 3, and Level 4 responses

My Multi-Level Response Challenge

Write your response progression in the box below. Label each level.

At-Home Connection

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

Upgrade It

Read this sentence: "The text says the turtles follow instinct." Replace The text says with indicates or demonstrates, finish the sentence, and explain whether the new version reaches one level higher.

Ask them: which word makes the thinking deeper, and why?

Family member signature: _____

Thinker or Reteller

Read this sentence: "The passage shows that the Stamp Act made colonists angry." Swap in suggests or establishes and explain why the word choice makes the thinking deeper.

Ask them: when have you needed to explain something more precisely?

Family member signature: _____

Compare Two Responses

Ask which is stronger: "The text says orcas learn" or "The text establishes that orcas learn from older members." Explain the exact word that makes the stronger response clearer.

Ask them: which response would help a reader understand the evidence better?

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 can identify a thinking level and upgrade my response one level at a time.

A note to my future writer self

My Proud Moment This Week

THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC.

Student Interactive Workbook

Grade 5

Cluster 1 - Module 2

Writing a Strong Thesis (central idea)
Using TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER



Name: _____



The Writing Academy®, LLC

Grade 5 • Cluster 1 • 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 a Strong Thesis (central idea) Using TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER

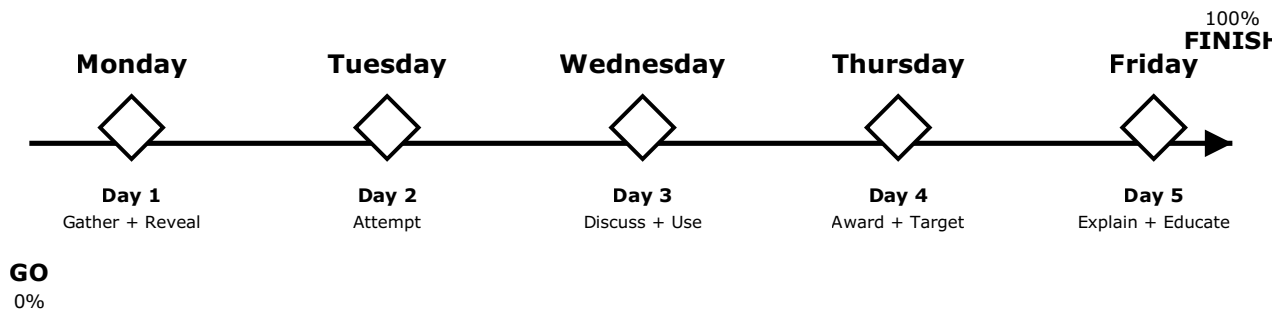
Why This Matters to Me

A strong thesis (central idea) starts my writing with strength and clarity. When I name the TOPIC, the CHARGE, and my own ANSWER, my reader knows exactly what I will prove. This week I learn to build that sentence, label every piece, and match my structure to the prompt.

Essential Question

What are the three pieces of a strong thesis (central idea), and how do I match my sentence to the prompt?

My Five Day Timeline



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

My First Thinking

I Can

- I can name the three pieces of a thesis (central idea) and point to each one in a sentence.
- I can build a complete thesis (central idea) that answers the prompt with TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER.
- I can match a WHAT prompt to a simple sentence, a WHY prompt to a complex sentence with because, and a relational HOW prompt to a simple sentence with a preposition.
- I can find and add a missing thesis (central idea) part.

I Will

- I will label the TOPIC, the CHARGE, and the ANSWER in the thesis (central idea) I build.
- I will use stronger words from my Thinking Levels Chart to upgrade my thesis (central idea).
- I will make sure my sentence structure matches the prompt type.
- I will explain my thinking to a partner and ask for clarification when I need it.

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 build a strong thesis (central idea) with TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER.	Two passages at medium stamina: "From Tension to Revolution" and "The Ocean Lesson."	Labeled WHAT, WHY, and HOW thesis (central idea) statements and a partner teach-back.

Where We Are Going

By Friday, I will build a complete thesis (central idea) on my own. I will use the TOPIC, the CHARGE, and my own ANSWER, match my sentence to the prompt, and teach someone else how to do it.

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

- ☐ I can name the three pieces and point to each one in a sentence.
- ☐ I can build a complete thesis (central idea) that answers the prompt and includes all three pieces.
- ☐ I can match my sentence structure to a WHAT, WHY, or HOW prompt.
- ☐ I can upgrade my thesis (central idea) with stronger, more precise word choice.

Check Myself

- ☐ I can name the three pieces and point to each one.
- ☐ I can build a complete thesis (central idea).
- ☐ I can match my structure to the prompt type.
- ☐ I can upgrade my word choice.

How I Will Show What I Know

I write independent WHAT, WHY, and HOW thesis (central idea) statements and explain my thinking to a partner.

My GRADUATE Learning Path

Stage	Day	What I do
Notice	Days 1	Compare two responses.
Name	Days 1	Name TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER.
Match	Day 2	Match the prompt to its structure.
Build	Day 2	Build and label a thesis (central idea).
Discuss	Day 3	Explain how the prompt sets the structure.
Use	Day 3	Write one WHAT, WHY, and HOW thesis (central idea).

Say It Together!

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

5.11(B)(i):

5.11(B)(i) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction.

5.12(B)(i):

5.12(B)(i) 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: "What are the three pieces of a strong thesis (central idea)?"

Class answers: "TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER!"

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 sentence needs a subject and a verb. I can find details in a passage and use them to answer a question.

A connection I can make

Remember It!

- ☐ A statement that answers a prompt needs a TOPIC and a CHARGE.
- ☐ I can find a detail in a passage and use it as evidence.
- ☐ I can write a complete sentence with a subject and a verb.
- ☐ WHAT prompts ask for a simple answer. WHY prompts ask for a reason. HOW prompts ask for a way.
- ☐ The words I choose show how deeply I understand the passage.

One idea I remember

Ready Check

- ☐ I can name what a passage is about.
- ☐ I can find a detail in the passage and use it as part of my answer.
- ☐ I can write a sentence that answers a question.
- ☐ I can tell whether a prompt asks WHAT, WHY, or HOW.
- ☐ I can explain what a detail means, not just restate it.

Watch Out! Common Mix-Up

Watch out! Restating the prompt is not a complete thesis (central idea). A simple sentence does not work for every prompt, and a general phrase such as taxes does not explain a relationship. Check that all three pieces are present, that the sentence answers the whole prompt, and that the structure matches the prompt type.

Where This Fits in My Writing

Choosing exact words and the right structure is what makes my writing show my thinking. I find the TOPIC and the CHARGE in the prompt, add my own ANSWER, and match my sentence to the prompt type. The TOPIC and CHARGE stay connected to my ANSWER while I improve my word choice and sentence structure. The historical setting of the passages shapes the ideas I explain.

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 as often as you want.

Part 1: Prompt Analysis

Read the prompt. Circle the TOPIC in red. Box the CHARGE in yellow. Triangle the prompt type in green.

Why did colonists protest British laws?

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 colonists protested British laws because they were taxed without representation.
_____	According to the text, colonists argued it was unfair to be taxed without a voice.
_____	This suggests the colonists wanted fairness and a say in decisions.
_____	Unfair taxation pushed the colonies toward organized resistance.

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: The colonists protested because they believed the taxes were unfair. 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: Explanation

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



These are everyday words I need so I can read about our topic and talk about it clearly.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
topic	TOPIC	the main subject the prompt is about	The topic of this prompt is ____.
answer	ANSWER	the response you give to a question	My answer is ____.
build	BUILD	to put pieces together to make something	I can build a thesis (central idea) by ____.
piece	PIECE	one part of a bigger whole	The missing piece is ____.
sentence	SENTENCE	a group of words that shares a complete idea	My sentence has ____.
ask	ASK	to put a question to someone	The prompt asks me to ____.
match	MATCH	to pair things that go together	I can match the structure by ____.
begin	BEGIN	to start something	I begin my response with ____.
strong	STRONG	powerful and clear	My thesis (central idea) is strong because ____.
missing	MISSING	not there when it should be	The part that is missing is ____.

Use one Tier 1 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 2, academic words

These are the academic thinking words I will use in every subject. When I know them, I can understand a prompt and explain my answer.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
thesis (central idea)	THESIS	a complete sentence that directly answers the prompt	My thesis (central idea) is ____.
structure	STRUCTURE	the way ideas and sentence parts are organized	The structure of a WHY thesis (central idea) is ____.
response	RESPONSE	the written answer a student creates from a prompt and text	My response includes ____.
evidence	EVIDENCE	specific proof from the passage	My evidence is ____.
explanation	EXPLANATION	the thinking that tells what evidence means	My explanation shows ____.
relationship	RELATIONSHIP	the connection between ideas, events, details, or conditions	The relationship here is ____.
influence	INFLUENCE	the power to affect an action, idea, behavior, or result	Setting can influence ____.
connect	CONNECT	to show how ideas or details belong together	I connect these ideas by ____.
analyze	ANALYZE	to study parts closely in order to understand how they work	When I analyze the prompt, I see ____.
compare	COMPARE	to compare ideas or details for meaningful similarities or differences	I can compare ____ and ____.

Use one Tier 2 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 3, passage words

These are the special words that belong to our two texts. Knowing them helps me talk about "From Tension to Revolution" and "The Ocean Lesson" like an expert.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
Parliament	PAR-luh-ment	the group in Great Britain that made laws and taxes for the colonies	Parliament decided to ____.
representation	rep-ri-zen-TAY-shun	having someone speak for you in government	The colonists wanted representation because ____.
colonists	KOL-uh-nists	people who lived in the American colonies	The colonists reacted by ____.
resistance	ri-ZIS-tuns	the act of fighting against or opposing something	The resistance grew when ____.
revolution	rev-uh-LOO-shun	a fight to change who holds power	The revolution began because ____.
instinct	IN-stinkt	a behavior an animal is born with and does not learn	The turtles used instinct to ____.
survival	sur-VY-vul	staying alive through danger	Survival depended on ____.
orcas	OR-kuhz	large ocean animals, also called killer whales	The orcas showed that ____.
coordinated	koh-OR-di-nay-tid	working together in an organized way	The orcas swam in coordinated ____.
behavior	bi-HAY-vyur	the way a person or animal acts	Learned behavior means ____.

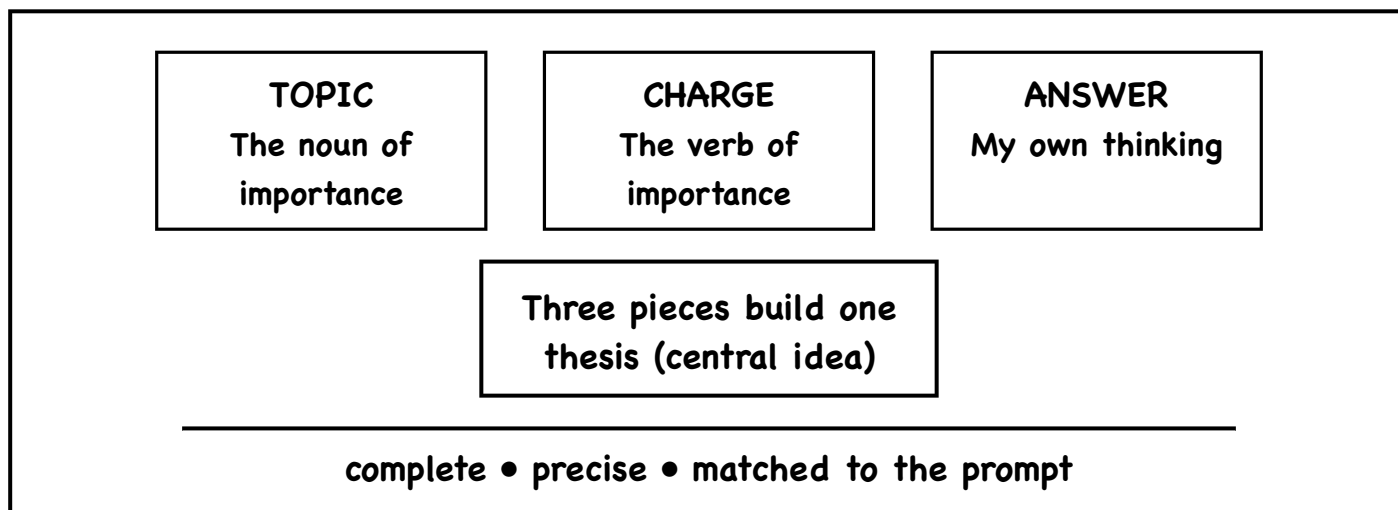
Use one Tier 3 word in a sentence

My Strategy Tools

Building a Thesis (Central Idea): TOPIC, CHARGE, ANSWER



A strong thesis (central idea) has three pieces: the TOPIC, the CHARGE, and the ANSWER. The words I choose show how deeply I understand the passage, and the prompt type tells me which sentence structure to use.



Complete, precise, and matched to the prompt is what makes a thesis (central idea) strong.

The Three Pieces of a Thesis (Central Idea)

Mark	What it means
Red circle	TOPIC: the noun of importance, the main subject named in the prompt.
Yellow box	CHARGE: the verb of importance, the job the prompt asks the writer to do.
Green triangle	PROMPT TYPE: tells me WHAT, WHY, or HOW.

A WHAT prompt takes a simple sentence. A WHY prompt takes a complex sentence with because. A relational HOW prompt takes a simple sentence with a preposition such as through or by.

How I will find the TOPIC and the CHARGE in a prompt

WHY prompts use... and HOW prompts use...

WHY prompts use...	HOW prompts use...
a complex sentence with because. The writer explains the reason something happened or why an idea is supported.	a simple sentence with a preposition such as through or by. The writer explains a way or a relationship.

A WHAT prompt uses a simple sentence. A WHY prompt uses a complex sentence with because. A relational HOW prompt uses a simple sentence with a preposition such as through or by.

How I Say the Standard!

5.11(B)(i):

5.11(B)(i) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction.

5.12(B)(i):

5.12(B)(i) 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 Parliament and Great Britain.
- ☐ I use a period or another ending mark.

A WHAT, WHY, or HOW thesis (central idea) I can explain

The Five Thinking Levels

Read from the bottom up. Each level names the kind of thinking a response needs.

Level	Symbol	Color Label	Thinking Stage	Language That Shows It
Level 1		Red	Foundational	The text says. This shows.
Level 2		Orange	Emergent	According to the text. This suggests.
Level 3		Yellow	Visible	The text indicates. This demonstrates.
Level 4		Green	Independent	The text establishes. This pattern strengthens the inference.
Level 5		Blue	Reflective	The evidence converges on the idea. Ultimately, this reframes.

Use language that matches the thinking I can support: says and shows, then suggests, then indicates, then demonstrates, then establishes and reframes.

A thinking level I understand

Upgrade the ANSWER

Each row names one step that makes an answer stronger, with a module example.

Level	Symbol	Upgrade the ANSWER	Module Example
Level 1	○	Use a basic accurate verb.	Taxes caused tension.
Level 2	□	Add a relationship.	Taxes contributed to tension.
Level 3	▽	Connect evidence to an idea.	Taxes increased tension because colonists lacked representation.
Level 4	△	Show a pattern.	New taxes and punishments strengthened colonial resistance.
Level 5	◇	Reframe the larger meaning.	The growing resistance transformed anger about taxes into a struggle for self-government.

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.	Why did colonists protest British laws?
HOW	Analyze how parts work together or how something happens.	How does setting influence survival in both passages?

A WHY prompt uses a complex sentence with because. A relational HOW prompt uses a simple sentence with a preposition such as through or by.

A thinking level I want to reach



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

TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER are the three pieces of a thesis (central idea) in every subject. Knowing how to find them and match a sentence structure helps me answer prompts clearly in science, social studies, and language arts.

Background I Need

"From Tension to Revolution" is an informational passage about taxes, resistance, and the American Revolution. "The Ocean Lesson" is a fiction passage about instinct, learned behavior, and survival.

Words I dotted while reading

From Tension to Revolution

Two passages. Medium Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use DOT, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

1 Before the American Revolution, the thirteen colonies were part of Great Britain, a superpower at the time. Many colonists considered themselves loyal to the king and were proud to be British subjects. They followed British laws, traded with British merchants, and depended on Great Britain for protection. However, this began to change after the French and Indian War. Although Great Britain gained land, it also gained significant debt. To recover money, Parliament placed new taxes on the colonies.

2 One of these laws was the Stamp Act. It required colonists to pay taxes on printed materials such as newspapers, legal documents, licenses, and playing cards. Colonists strongly opposed this law because they had no representatives in Parliament. They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice, which led to the phrase "taxation without representation." Many colonists began to meet together, write letters, and speak out against the tax. Some refused to buy stamped paper, while others protested in the streets. These actions showed that the colonists were beginning to challenge British authority.

3 Tensions continued to rise. In 1770, the Boston Massacre occurred when British soldiers fired into a crowd of colonists, killing several people. Before the shooting, colonists had gathered near the soldiers and shouted angrily. Some threw snowballs and other objects. The event shocked many people and increased anger and distrust toward British authority. Leaders such as Samuel Adams used the event to remind colonists that British soldiers were a threat to their rights.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

From Tension to Revolution (continued)

Two passages. Medium Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use DOT, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

4 A few years later, the Tea Act was passed, leading to the Boston Tea Party. The Tea Act allowed one British company to sell tea at a lower price, but many colonists still saw it as another way for Parliament to control them. After the Tea Act was passed, trouble was brewing in the colonies. During this protest, colonists dumped tea into Boston Harbor. Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty helped organize resistance and spread ideas. Some colonists dressed as Native Americans to hide their identities as they threw the tea into the water. This protest showed that many colonists were willing to take bold action.

5 In response, Great Britain passed the Intolerable Acts, which punished the colonies and limited their rights. One part of these acts closed Boston Harbor until the ruined tea was paid for. Another part allowed British officials to have more control over the colony of Massachusetts. Instead of ending the conflict, these actions brought the colonies closer together. Colonists in different places sent food, supplies, and support to Boston. They began to understand that one colony's problem could become every colony's problem. The colonists learned that there is strength in numbers.

6 Over time, many colonists wanted to remove British control. They believed they should have a government that protected their rights and listened to their voices. The American Revolution became a fight for independence, leading to the Declaration of Independence and the creation of a new nation. What began as anger over taxes grew into a larger struggle for freedom, self-government, and independence.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Ocean Lesson

Two passages. Medium Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use DOT, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

1 Nyla stood quietly on the beach as dozens of sea turtles began to hatch from the sand. The morning air was cool, and small waves rolled onto the shore. At first, the sand looked still. Then tiny movements appeared near the nest. One by one, they broke through their shells and started moving toward the ocean.

2 "How do they know where to go?" Nyla asked.

3 "They don't need to be taught," her guide explained. "It's an instinct. They are born with that behavior."

4 Nyla watched closely. The turtles moved slowly but with determination. Their small flippers pushed against the sand again and again. Some turtles slipped into shallow footprints, and others had to crawl around pieces of seaweed. Even though birds circled above and the sand was uneven, most continued toward the water. Their instinct guided them through the transition from sand to ocean, increasing their chances of survival during a dangerous moment.

5 The guide smiled and said, "Slow and steady wins the race."

6 Nyla understood what the guide meant. The turtles were not the fastest animals on the beach, but they kept moving. They did not stop to look for help. They did not wait for an older turtle to show them the way. Their bodies and brains already knew what to do. Reaching the ocean quickly helped protect them from danger on the beach.

7 Later that day, Nyla visited a marine biology exhibit at an aquarium. She stopped in front of a large tank where a group of orcas swam together in coordinated patterns. A trainer explained how they hunt in the wild.

8 "Orcas rely on learned behavior," he said. "Young orcas observe older members of their group. Over time, they learn strategies and practice working together."

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Ocean Lesson (continued)

Two passages. Medium Stamina. Read every paragraph. Use DOT, Discover, Drop.

My
marks

9 The trainer smiled and said, "These orcas are a whale of a team."

10 Nyla noticed how the orcas stayed close and moved as a team. Their actions seemed planned and purposeful. One orca turned, and the others followed. Another slowed down, and the group changed direction together. The trainer explained that young orcas spend a long time watching and practicing. They learn which signals to follow and how to stay with the group.

11 "So they have to learn how to survive?" Nyla asked.

12 "Yes," the trainer replied. "Their success depends on learning and cooperation."

13 Nyla thought about what she had seen. The turtles relied on instinct to act quickly without guidance. The orcas relied on learning and teamwork over time. Both types of behavior helped animals survive in their environments, even though they developed in different ways.

14 As Nyla left the aquarium, she realized that survival could look different for different animals. Some behaviors were present from birth, like the turtles moving toward the sea. Other behaviors developed through practice, like the orcas hunting in a group. Instinct helped one animal act right away, while learning helped another animal improve over time. Nyla smiled because both examples showed how animals are equipped to meet the challenges of their environments.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Annotate: From Tension to Revolution

Look for how the colonies moved from loyalty to resistance: the new taxes, the protests, and the growing idea of representation.

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: From Tension to Revolution (continued)

Look for the actions that built colonial resistance and the words that show the colonies growing closer together.

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 in the passage could become part of a strong ANSWER?

My thinking

My Prompt Marking Notes

A thesis (central idea) prompt has a TOPIC, a CHARGE, and a prompt type. Use these shapes to see each part.

Shape	Word	Question I ask myself
Red circle	TOPIC	What is this prompt about?
Yellow box	CHARGE	What is the prompt asking me to do?
Green triangle	Prompt type	Does the prompt ask WHAT, WHY, or HOW?

Circle the TOPIC in red. Box the CHARGE in yellow. Triangle the prompt type in green.

Why did colonists protest British laws?

My three marks in words

STUDENT WORKBOOK

Day 1: Gather + Reveal



I gather what is missing, then I reveal the three pieces.

Our Question for Today

What is missing from this response: The colonists protested.

1. Gather: What Is Missing?

Read the response. Turn and tell a partner which piece is missing: TOPIC, CHARGE, or ANSWER.

The piece that is missing is...

2. Reveal: The Three Pieces

Piece	Job	Example
TOPIC	the noun of importance, the main subject named in the prompt	colonists and British laws
CHARGE	the verb of importance, what the prompt asks the writer to do	protested
ANSWER	the writer's own thinking that completes the sentence	because they were taxed without representation and believed the treatment was unfair

One piece I will look for first, and why

The Three Structures

Prompt Type	Required Structure	Module Example
WHAT	a simple sentence	Tension between Great Britain and the colonies was caused by taxes and lack of representation.
WHY	a complex sentence with because	The colonists protested British laws because they were taxed without representation and felt it was unfair.
HOW	a simple sentence with a preposition such as through or by	Setting influences behavior in both passages through the colonists' protests and the animals' survival methods.

Notebook Fill-In

- A thesis (central idea) has THREE pieces: TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER.
- TOPIC is the noun of importance from the question.
- CHARGE is the verb of importance, the job the question asks.
- ANSWER is my own thinking.
- WHAT equals SIMPLE.
- WHY equals COMPLEX with BECAUSE.
- HOW equals SIMPLE with a PREPOSITION.

? STOP & THINK

Which piece completes this response: The colonists protested.

My answer

3. Model the Three Marks

Prompt: Why did colonists protest British laws?

Mark	The Model Shows
Red circle, TOPIC	colonists and British laws
Yellow box, CHARGE	protested
Green triangle, prompt type	WHY
Structure	a complex sentence with because

4. Listen and Label

Listen to one piece at a time. Label what I hear as TOPIC, CHARGE, or ANSWER.

What I Hear	My Label
the colonists	
explain why they protested British laws	
because they were taxed without representation	

How does each piece help build a complete thesis (central idea)?

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Thesis (central idea) Builder Showdown

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards

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

TOPIC	CHARGE
ANSWER	What caused tension between Great Britain and the colonies?
Why did colonists protest British laws?	How does setting influence behavior in both passages?

Self-Check (back of cards)

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.

CHARGE The verb of importance, the job the prompt asks the writer to do.	TOPIC The noun of importance, the main subject named in the prompt.
Tension between Great Britain and the colonies was caused by taxes and lack of representation.	ANSWER My own thinking that completes the sentence. It comes from the passage, not from the prompt.
Setting influences behavior in both passages through the colonists' protests and the animals' survival methods.	The colonists protested British laws because they were taxed without representation and felt it was unfair.

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 2: Attempt



I build and label complete thesis (central idea) statements.

Our Question for Today: How do I build a complete thesis (central idea) from three pieces?

1. Thesis (central idea) Builder Showdown

- Spin to determine the prompt type.
- Draw a prompt from the passage set.
- Assemble TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER.
- Match the sentence structure.
- Write and label the thesis (central idea).
- Move the marker and explain the choice.

Round	1	2	3	4	5
My partner					
My point					

My strongest build today

2. Model the Partner Prompt

Prompt: How does setting influence behavior in both passages?

Read the prompt. Name the prompt type and the structure before I write.

This is a WHY or HOW prompt because...

3. My Turn: Build It

- Name the TOPIC from the prompt.
- Name the CHARGE, the job the prompt asks.
- Add the ANSWER, my own thinking.
- Match the structure to the prompt type.
- Upgrade my word choice with the Thinking Levels Chart.

My thesis (central idea)

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 3: Discuss + Use

I explain my thinking, then I write on my own.



Our Question for Today
How did the prompt tell me which sentence structure to use?

1. Discuss

Question	My Thinking
How did the prompt tell you which structure to use?	
Which piece was easiest to miss?	
What made your thesis (central idea) strong?	
How can stronger words improve your thinking?	

My discussion notes

2. Use: WHAT and WHY

Write one thesis (central idea) for each prompt type. Label all three pieces.

WHAT Practice

Prompt: What event increased tension between colonists and British soldiers?

My WHAT thesis (central idea)

WHY Practice

Prompt: Why do sea turtles rely on instinct?

My WHY thesis (central idea)

HOW Practice, relational

Prompt: How does setting influence survival in both passages?

My HOW thesis (central idea)

Check My Three Statements

- Each statement answers the prompt.
- Each statement includes the TOPIC, the CHARGE, and the ANSWER.
- Each statement uses the required structure.
- One statement uses a stronger verb than my first try.

One fix I made, and why

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 4: Award + Target



I compare responses, then I choose a target for revision.

Our Question for Today

What makes one thesis (central idea) stronger than another?

1. Award: Compare Two Responses

Response	What I Notice
The colonists protested because of taxes.	
The colonists protested British laws because they were taxed without representation and felt it was unfair.	

The stronger thesis (central idea) is...

2. Target: My Revision Goal

Name one feature I will upgrade: the verb, the relationship, or the precision of my thinking.

My target, and the feature I will upgrade

3. Revise Toward My Target

Prompt: Why did colonists protest British laws?

My first version

My revised version, with a stronger verb

4. Explain the Upgrade

Explain why the new version is stronger, not only longer.

My wording is stronger because...

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 5: Explain/Educate



I teach the three pieces to someone else.

Our Question for Today

How do I teach a partner to find the three pieces and match the structure?

1. My Teach-Back Plan

- Name the TOPIC, the CHARGE, and the ANSWER.
- Tell how the prompt type sets the structure.
- Show a complete example.
- Explain why one version is stronger than another.

The steps I will teach, in order

[illegible]

2. Teach a Partner

Prompt: How does setting influence survival in both passages?

Teach a partner the three pieces. Have the partner build and label a thesis (central idea) for this prompt.

My partner's labeled thesis (central idea)

3. My Learning Statement

One thing I can now do on my own



Write More

Plan, draft, revise, edit, and share



My Writing Assignment

Write one strong thesis (central idea) for this prompt. Label the TOPIC, the CHARGE, and the ANSWER.

Circle the TOPIC in red. Box the CHARGE in yellow. Triangle the prompt type in green.

Why did colonists protest British laws?

My Plan

- Read the prompt. Circle the TOPIC. Box the CHARGE. Triangle the prompt type.
- Decide: is this a WHAT, WHY, or HOW prompt?
- Name the structure: a simple sentence, a complex sentence with because, or a simple sentence with a preposition.
- Add my own ANSWER from the passage, in my own words.
- Build the thesis (central idea) and label all three pieces.

Two possible answers from the passage

The stronger ANSWER is...

Color Words I Can Use

My Draft



Use my plan. Write one strong thesis (central idea) and label all three pieces.

Draft, page 1

A sentence I want to keep

Revise, Edit, and Share

Revise

- ☐ My thesis (central idea) answers the prompt and includes all three pieces.
- ☐ I matched a complex sentence with because to a WHY prompt.
- ☐ I replaced one plain word with a stronger word from the Thinking Levels Chart.

Edit

- ☐ Every sentence is complete with subject-verb agreement.
- ☐ I use a capital letter for Parliament and Great Britain.
- ☐ Parliament, Great Britain, Boston, and Samuel Adams begin with capital letters.
- ☐ High-frequency words are spelled correctly.
- ☐ Past tense verbs are correct.

My improved sentence

Share

Read the sentence to a partner. The partner identifies the TOPIC, the CHARGE, the ANSWER, the prompt type, and the sentence structure.

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
TOPIC	Names the important subject precisely.	
CHARGE	Carries the exact task the prompt asks.	
ANSWER	Supplies precise, passage-grounded thinking.	
Structure	The WHAT, WHY, or HOW structure is accurate.	
Word choice	Uses the strongest word I can support.	
Conventions	Uses complete sentences, capital letters, and correct spelling.	

Study the Samples

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

Why did colonists protest British laws?

Low

The colonists protested. It says they had no voice.

What is missing: the CHARGE and a precise ANSWER are missing. The response does not explain why the colonists protested.

Medium

The colonists protested because of taxes. According to the text, they had no representatives in Parliament.

What is missing: the ANSWER names taxes but does not connect the evidence to representation or fairness, so the thinking stays general.

What improves from Low to High?

Study the High Sample

This is the target. Notice how every piece has a job.

High

The colonists protested British laws because they were taxed without representation and believed the treatment was unfair. According to the text, "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..." This establishes that the colonists wanted a say in the decisions that affected them.

Why it works: this is a complex WHY sentence with because, it includes all three pieces, and the ANSWER connects precise evidence to a clear idea.

High Sample Key

Piece	Evidence from the High sample	Why it works
TOPIC	colonists and British laws	names the important subject from the prompt
CHARGE	protested	carries the exact task the prompt asks
ANSWER	because they were taxed without representation and believed the treatment was unfair	supplies precise, passage-grounded thinking

One sentence in my own writing I want to make stronger



Look Back & Look Forward

I own my learning



My Progress Tracker

I can...	Not yet	Growing	Got it
Name the three pieces of a thesis (central idea) and point to each one.	☐	☐	☐
Build a complete thesis (central idea) that answers the prompt and includes all three pieces.	☐	☐	☐
Match a WHAT prompt to a simple sentence.	☐	☐	☐
Match a WHY prompt to a complex sentence with because.	☐	☐	☐
Match a relational HOW prompt to a simple sentence with a preposition.	☐	☐	☐
Upgrade a thesis (central idea) with stronger, more precise word choice.	☐	☐	☐

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

What are the three pieces of a strong thesis (central idea), and how do I match my sentence to the prompt?

The answer

A strong thesis (central idea) has three pieces: TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER. I match the structure to the prompt: WHAT takes a simple sentence, WHY takes a complex sentence with because, and a relational HOW takes a simple sentence with a preposition such as through or by.

My Final Thinking (in my own words)

What Changed in My Thinking?

At first I thought...

Now I think...

Try It Another Way

Choose one prompt from either passage. Say the TOPIC, the CHARGE, and the ANSWER. Name the prompt type and the sentence structure. Then explain why the sentence is complete.

The prompt I chose, and my complete thesis (central idea)

Take It Further! Build a Stronger Thesis (central idea)

Choose one prompt. Build a first version, then upgrade it. Choose one prompt. Build a first version, then upgrade it. Use stronger, more precise words and explain why the new version shows deeper thinking.

- Choose one prompt. Write a thesis (central idea) and label all three pieces.
- Rewrite it with a stronger, more precise verb.
- Explain why the new verb matches deeper thinking.
- Create a second version using a different accurate structure.
- Explain why the second version still answers the same prompt.
- Read both versions to a partner and tell which one is stronger.

My first thesis (central idea), my upgraded verb, and my second version

My Two Versions

Write your first thesis (central idea) and your upgraded version in the box below. Label the TOPIC, the CHARGE, and the ANSWER in both.

At-Home Connection

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

Name the Three Pieces

Say a prompt aloud, such as "Why did colonists protest British laws?" Take turns naming the TOPIC, the CHARGE, and the ANSWER, then put them together into one complete sentence.

How did you decide what your ANSWER should say?

Family member signature: _____

Match the Structure

Ask a WHAT question and answer with a simple sentence. Ask a WHY question and answer with a complex sentence using because. Ask a relational HOW question and answer with a preposition such as through or by. Notice how the sentence changes with each prompt type.

Which structure was easiest to match, and why?

Family member signature: _____

Ask About the Passages

Talk about taxes and representation in "From Tension to Revolution," or about instinct and learned behavior in "The Ocean Lesson." Name the prompt type, say the structure, and give one complete thesis (central idea).

How did you decide what your ANSWER should say?

Family member signature: _____

My Family Conversation Notes

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

Notes

My Progress This Week

Color in how I am doing on each part of a thesis (central idea).

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

What helps me most?

The part of a thesis (central idea) I check first

- ☐ I can name the TOPIC.
- ☐ I can name the CHARGE.
- ☐ I can add my own ANSWER.
- ☐ I can match the structure to the prompt type.

One tool that helped me this week

My Module 2 Snapshot

This is my snapshot of Module 2.

A word I own now

The part of a thesis (central idea) I can find fastest

My Strong Roots

I can build a complete thesis (central idea) with TOPIC, CHARGE, and ANSWER and match my sentence to the prompt type.

One idea I will carry into Module 3

I am proud that I can...

THE WRITING ACADEMY®, LLC.

Student Interactive Workbook

Grade 5

Cluster 1 - Module 3

Using Evidence to Support Thinking



Name: _____



The Writing Academy®, LLC

Grade 5 • Cluster 1 • 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

Using Evidence to Support Thinking



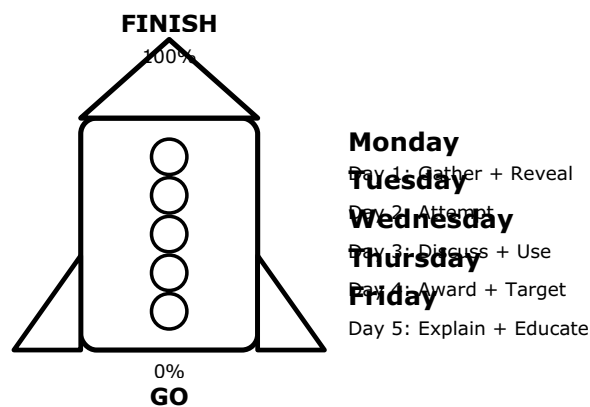
Why This Matters to Me

Not every sentence copied from a text is strong evidence. I will learn what evidence is and is not, how to judge whether evidence is strong or weak, and how to test it with CSI: Connect, Support, Infer. I will also learn to introduce a quote with a signal marker and punctuate it correctly.

Essential Question

How does CSI help a writer choose and introduce evidence that truly supports an SCR thesis (central idea)?

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!

My First Thinking

I Can

- I can choose, test, and introduce evidence that connects to the prompt and supports my thesis (central idea).
- I can tell the difference between evidence and explanation, and between evidence and opinion.
- I can test evidence with CSI: Connect, Support, Infer.
- I can introduce a quote with a signal marker and punctuate it correctly.

I Will

- I will read closely, listen actively, discuss my reasoning, write independently, reflect on my growth, and explain my thinking to others.
- I will choose short, precise quotes instead of the longest quote.
- I will check every quote with CSI before I use it.
- I will introduce each quote with a signal marker and correct punctuation.

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, test, and introduce evidence that connects to a prompt and supports a thesis (central idea).	Two informational passages: "From Tension to Revolution" and "The Ocean Lesson."	Tested quotes, a CSI Evidence Quest page, a Thesis (central idea) + Evidence page, and a next step.

Where We Are Going

I will move from telling proof apart from opinion to testing a quote with CSI on my own. I will finish by coaching a partner through choosing and presenting evidence.

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

- ☐ I can decide whether a quote is strong or weak for a given prompt.
- ☐ I can name which CSI checks a quote passes.
- ☐ I can add a signal marker and a comma before a quotation.
- ☐ I can explain what a quote helps me infer.

Check Myself

- ☐ I read the whole prompt.
- ☐ I can point to proof for my thinking.
- ☐ I can explain my choice to a partner.

How I Will Show What I Know

I will show what I know with a CSI Evidence Quest, a Thesis (central idea) + Evidence page, an Evidence Coach turn and teach, and the Day 5 exit ticket.

My GRADUATE Learning Path

Stage	Day	What I do
Gather	Day 1	I tell real proof apart from a general statement.
Reveal	Day 1	I learn CSI and the signal marker that introduces a quote.
Attempt	Day 2	I solve evidence challenges in the CSI Evidence Quest.
Discuss	Day 3	I explain why an accurate quote can still be weak for a prompt.
Use Again	Day 3	I pair a thesis (central idea) with a strong quote on my own.
Award	Day 4	I recognize an evidence habit I used well.
Target	Day 4	I choose my next evidence goal.
Explain/Educate	Day 5	I teach a partner how to match, signal, and test proof.

Say It Together!

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

5.12(B)(i):

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

5.12(B)(iii):

Compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using craft.

Call and Response

Read this together as a class before we start.

Teacher asks: "What do we do with a prompt?"

Class answers: "Circle it, box it, triangle 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 evidence is proof taken from a text and that a thesis (central idea) gives a writer's direct answer.

A connection I can make

Remember It!

- ☐ Evidence is text proof. Explanation is the writer's thinking about the proof.
- ☐ CSI stands for Connect, Support, Infer.
- ☐ A signal marker announces that evidence is coming.

One idea I remember

Ready Check

- ☐ I can read both passages and locate details in numbered paragraphs.
- ☐ I can use the DOT habit to mark an unfamiliar word and return to it after reading.
- ☐ I can write a complete sentence with a capital letter and end punctuation.

Watch Out! Common Mix-Up

Watch out! An accurate sentence is not automatically strong evidence. The quote must connect to the prompt and support the thesis (central idea).

Where This Fits in My Writing

A strong SCR paragraph states a thesis (central idea), proves it with evidence, and explains what the evidence means.

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 my own. I may reread the passages in Read and Interact as often as I want.

Part 1: Prompt Analysis

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

Why did colonists protest British laws?

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
_____	They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice.
_____	Colonists protested British laws because they were taxed without representation and felt it was unfair.
_____	This shows that colonists wanted a voice in the decisions that affected them.
_____	One reason is that Parliament placed new taxes on the colonies without asking the colonists.

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: Colonists protested British laws because they were taxed without representation. 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 evidence.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
proof	PROOF	Something that shows an idea is true.	My proof is ____.
choose	CHOOZ	To pick one option over another.	I choose the quote that ____.
check	CHEK	To look closely to make sure something is right.	I check my evidence by ____.
strong	STRAWNG	Powerful and clear.	This evidence is strong because ____.
weak	WEEK	Not powerful or not clear.	This evidence is weak because ____.
match	MACH	To pair things that go together.	This quote matches the prompt because ____.
exact	ig-ZAKT	Correct in every detail.	My exact quote is ____.
quote	KWOHT	The exact words copied from a text.	My quote is ____.
find	FYND	To locate something you are looking for.	I can find evidence by ____.
show	SHOH	To make something clear to see.	This quote shows ____.

Use one Tier 1 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 2, academic words

Say each word. These are the academic thinking words you will use in every subject.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
evidence	EV-uh-duns	Specific proof taken from the passage.	My evidence is ____.
support	suh-PORT	To strengthen an idea with relevant proof.	This proof supports ____.
infer	in-FUR	To form a supported idea from evidence and reasoning.	I can infer that ____.
connect	kuh-NEKT	To show how evidence relates to the prompt or thesis (central idea).	This quote connects to ____.
signal marker	SIG-nul MAR-kur	A word or phrase that alerts the reader that evidence is coming.	My signal marker is ____.
thesis (central idea)	THEE-sis	The sentence that gives the writer's direct answer.	My thesis (central idea) is ____.
punctuation	punk-choo- AY-shun	Marks that organize written language and clarify how quoted words are presented.	The punctuation I need is ____.
explanation	ek-spluh- NAY-shun	The writer's interpretation of what the evidence proves.	My explanation shows ____.
relevant	REL-uh-vunt	Directly connected to the prompt, thesis (central idea), or idea being proved.	This evidence is relevant because ____.

Use one Tier 2 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 3, passage words

These words come from our passages about From Tension to Revolution and The Ocean Lesson.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
Parliament	PAR-luh-ment	The group in Great Britain that made laws and taxes for the colonies.	Parliament decided ____.
representation	rep-ri-zen-TAY-shun	Having someone speak for you in government.	The colonists wanted representation because ____.
boycott	BOY-kot	Refusing to buy or use products as a form of protest.	The colonists used a boycott to ____.
repealed	ri-PEELD	Officially canceled a law.	Parliament repealed the law because ____.
resistance	ri-ZIS-tuns	The act of fighting against or opposing something.	The resistance grew when ____.
instinct	IN-stinkt	A behavior an animal is born with and does not learn.	The turtles used instinct to ____.
survival	sur-VY-vul	Staying alive through danger.	Survival depended on ____.
orcas	OR-kuhz	Large ocean animals, also called killer whales.	The orcas showed that ____.
pod	pod	A group of orcas that lives and travels together.	A young orca learns from its pod by ____.
coordinated	koh-OR-di-nay-tid	Working together in an organized way.	The orcas swam in coordinated ____.

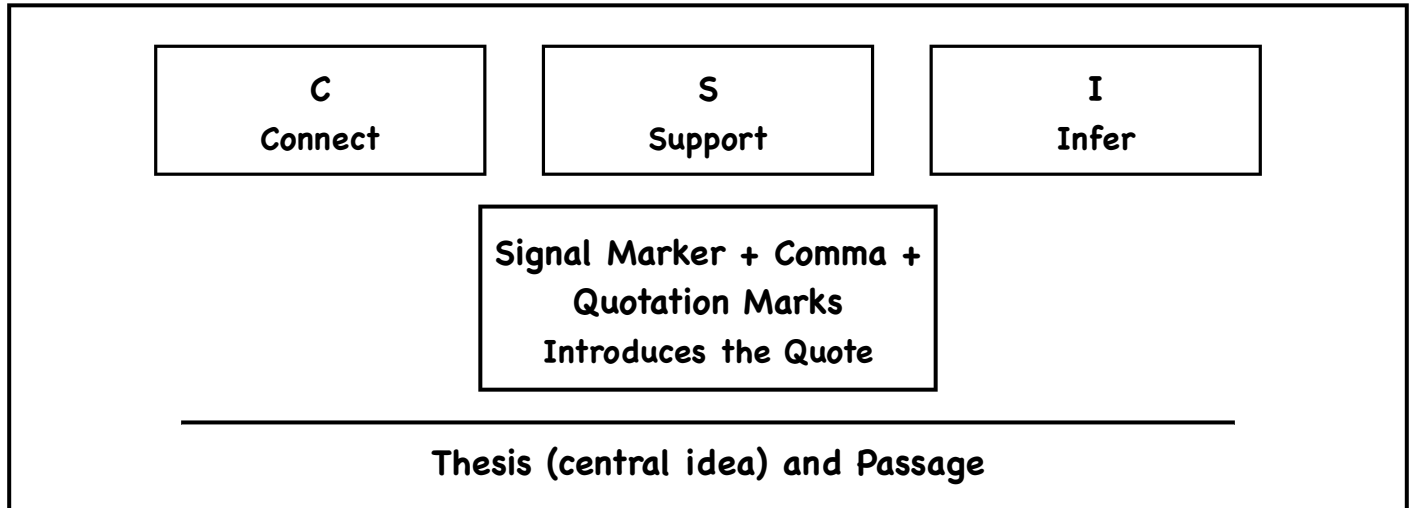
Use one Tier 3 word in a sentence

My Strategy Tools

SCR Thinking Chart



The SCR Thinking Chart reminds me to test each quote with CSI before I use it as evidence.



Evidence is what the text says. Explanation is what I say about what the text means.

Shaping an SCR Prompt

Mark	What it means
Red circle	TOPIC: what the prompt is about.
Yellow box	CHARGE: what the prompt asks me to do.
Green underline	WHY OR HOW WORD: tells me if the response is WHY or HOW.

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

How CSI works for me

WHY and HOW

WHY	HOW
asks for a reason; a strong response explains why something happened.	asks for a way; a strong response explains how something happened.

WHY asks for reasons; HOW asks for a way something happened.

How I Say the Standard!

5.12(B)(i):

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

5.12(B)(iii):

Compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using craft.

Check My Writing

- ☐ I use a comma after my signal marker.
- ☐ I use quotation marks around the exact words from the passage.
- ☐ I use a capital letter for Parliament, Boston, Nyla, and orcas.

A WHY or HOW sentence I can try

Five Thinking Levels

Read from the bottom up. Each level names the kind of language a response uses.

Level	Symbol	Color	Stage	What the Language Shows
Level 5		Blue	Reflective	Synthesizes ideas, reframes meaning, and connects to a bigger idea or setting.
Level 4		Green	Independent	Uses establishes and shows a pattern that strengthens an inference.
Level 3		Yellow	Visible	Uses indicates or demonstrates and connects evidence to an idea.
Level 2		Orange	Emergent	Begins to use suggests or means and adds a little explanation.
Level 1		Red	Foundational	Uses says, shows, or tells; restates the text.

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

A thinking level I understand

Five Thinking Levels

Read from the bottom up. Each level names the kind of language a response uses.

Level	Symbol	Color	Stage	What the Language Shows
Level 5		Blue	Reflective	Synthesizes ideas, reframes meaning, and connects to a bigger idea or setting.
Level 4		Green	Independent	Uses establishes and shows a pattern that strengthens an inference.
Level 3		Yellow	Visible	Uses indicates or demonstrates and connects evidence to an idea.
Level 2		Orange	Emergent	Begins to use suggests or means and adds a little explanation.
Level 1		Red	Foundational	Uses says, shows, or tells; restates the text.

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.	Why did colonists protest British laws?
HOW	Analyze how parts work together or how something happens.	How did British actions push the colonies toward revolution?

WHY asks for reasons; HOW asks for a way something happened.

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

Colonists tested whether new laws were fair, and animals such as sea turtles and orcas use instinct or learned behavior to survive; careful thinkers in every setting test their proof before they act.

Background I Need

"From Tension to Revolution" explains how new taxes and unfair treatment pushed the American colonies toward revolution. "The Ocean Lesson" explains how sea turtles rely on instinct while orcas rely on learned behavior and teamwork.

Words I dotted while reading

From Tension to Revolution

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

My
marks

1 Before the American Revolution, the thirteen colonies were part of Great Britain, a superpower at the time. Great Britain had a strong army, a powerful navy, and a large empire that reached across many parts of the world. Many colonists considered themselves loyal to the king. They followed British laws, traded with British merchants, and depended on Great Britain for protection. Some colonists were proud to be British subjects because they believed Great Britain was strong and successful. At first, many people in the colonies did not want to separate from Great Britain. They simply wanted to be treated fairly.

2 However, this began to change after the French and Indian War. This war was fought between Great Britain and France, with Native American groups joining on different sides. Great Britain won the war and gained a large amount of land in North America. Many colonists were happy that France had lost power in the region because it seemed to make the colonies safer. Although Great Britain gained land, it also gained significant debt. War was expensive. Soldiers had to be paid, supplies had to be bought, and forts had to be protected. To recover money, Parliament placed new taxes on the colonies.

3 One of these laws was the Stamp Act. It required colonists to pay taxes on printed materials such as newspapers, legal documents, licenses, pamphlets, and even playing cards. Colonists strongly opposed this law because they had no representatives in Parliament. They believed that only their own colonial governments should have the power to tax them. They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice, which led to the phrase "taxation without representation." This phrase became one of the most important ideas during the time before the American Revolution.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Ocean Lesson

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

My
marks

1 Nyla stood quietly on the beach as dozens of sea turtles began to hatch from the sand. The morning air was cool, and the sky was just starting to brighten. Small waves rolled gently onto the shore and then slid back into the ocean. At first, the sand looked still. Then Nyla noticed tiny movements near the nest. Little cracks appeared in the shells, and bits of sand shifted as the hatchlings pushed upward. One by one, they broke through their shells and started moving toward the ocean.

2 Nyla leaned closer, careful not to step too near the nest. The turtles were very small, but they seemed to know exactly what they needed to do. Their tiny flippers pressed into the sand as they moved forward. Some crawled in a straight line, while others had to move around small shells, seaweed, and footprints left by people walking along the beach.

3 "How do they know where to go?" Nyla asked.

4 "They don't need to be taught," her guide explained. "It's an instinct. They are born with that behavior."

5 Nyla watched closely. The turtles moved slowly but with determination. Each movement seemed small, but together those movements helped the turtles get closer to the water. The beach was not an easy place for them. The sand was soft in some places and packed down in others. A few turtles slipped into shallow dips in the sand and had to push themselves out. Others paused for a moment, then continued forward.

6 Even though birds circled above and the sand was uneven, most continued toward the water. Their instinct guided them through the transition from sand to ocean, increasing their chances of survival during a dangerous moment. Nyla could see why the first journey was so important. The longer the turtles stayed on the beach, the more danger they faced. Birds, crabs, and other animals could catch them before they reached the sea.

7 The guide smiled and said, "Slow and steady wins the race."

8 Nyla understood what the guide meant. The turtles were not moving quickly, and they were not strong compared with many animals around them. Still, they did not give up. They kept crawling toward the waves. They did not need an older turtle to show them the way. They did not wait for someone to teach them how to move toward the ocean. Their bodies and brains already knew what to do.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

From Tension to Revolution (continued)

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

My
marks

4 Many colonists began to protest the Stamp Act. Some refused to buy stamped paper. Others wrote letters, gave speeches, and printed articles explaining why the law was unfair. Groups such as the Sons of Liberty helped organize protests in cities like Boston and New York. Sometimes colonists gathered in large crowds to show their anger. They wanted Parliament to understand that the colonies would not accept unfair taxes without a fight. These protests helped unite colonists who had once thought of themselves mostly as people from separate colonies. Now they began to see that they shared the same problem.

5 Great Britain eventually repealed, or canceled, the Stamp Act. Many colonists celebrated because they believed their protests had worked. However, Parliament still believed it had the right to tax the colonies. Soon, more laws and taxes followed. Colonists were taxed on goods such as glass, paper, paint, lead, and tea. These taxes continued to anger many people. Some colonists began to boycott British goods. A boycott means refusing to buy or use certain products as a form of protest. By refusing to buy British goods, colonists hoped to hurt British businesses and pressure Parliament to change its laws.

6 Tensions continued to rise. British soldiers were sent to the colonies to keep order and enforce the laws. Many colonists did not like seeing soldiers in their towns. They felt as if they were being watched and controlled. In 1770, the Boston Massacre occurred when British soldiers fired into a crowd of colonists, killing several people. Before the shooting, colonists had gathered near the soldiers and shouted angrily. Some threw snowballs, sticks, and other objects. The situation quickly became dangerous and confusing. When the soldiers fired, several colonists were killed or wounded.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Ocean Lesson (continued)

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

My
marks

9 As the first turtles reached the edge of the water, a small wave washed over them. For a moment, they disappeared in the foam. Then Nyla saw them floating and paddling in the shallow water. Their flippers moved in a new way now that they were no longer on land. The guide explained that reaching the ocean was only the first step. The turtles would still face many challenges, but their instinct had helped them begin the journey.

10 Nyla thought about how amazing that was. The turtles had just hatched, but they already had a behavior that helped them survive. They did not have to practice it first. They did not have to watch another turtle do it. They were born ready to respond to their environment in a way that gave them a better chance of living.

11 Later that day, Nyla visited a marine biology exhibit at an aquarium. The building was cool and quiet compared with the bright beach. Large signs showed pictures of ocean animals and explained how different species survive. Nyla walked past tanks filled with colorful fish, sea stars, and jellyfish. Then she stopped in front of a large tank where a group of orcas swam together in coordinated patterns.

12 The orcas moved through the water with power and control. They glided past the glass, turned smoothly, and stayed close to one another. Nyla noticed that they did not swim randomly. Their movements seemed connected, almost like they were following a plan.

13 A trainer stood nearby and explained how orcas hunt in the wild. Nyla listened carefully because the orcas seemed very different from the tiny turtles she had seen that morning.

14 "Orcas rely on learned behavior," he said. "Young orcas observe older members of their group. Over time, they learn strategies and practice working together."

15 The trainer smiled and said, "These orcas are a whale of a team."

16 Nyla smiled at the joke, but she also understood the meaning behind it. The orcas survived by working together. Their teamwork was not something they were born knowing how to do perfectly. Instead, young orcas had to watch, listen, and practice.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

From Tension to Revolution (continued)

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

My
marks

7 The Boston Massacre shocked many people. News of the event spread through the colonies. Some colonists saw it as proof that British soldiers were a threat to their rights and safety. Leaders such as Samuel Adams used the event to increase anger toward British authority. Paul Revere created an engraving that showed the soldiers firing at colonists. The picture was used to influence public opinion. Although the event was more complicated than the picture showed, it helped many colonists believe that Great Britain was becoming too forceful.

8 A few years later, another conflict grew over tea. Tea was a popular drink in the colonies, and many colonists bought it regularly. Parliament passed the Tea Act, which allowed one British company to sell tea directly to the colonies. This made the tea cheaper, but many colonists still saw the law as a problem. They believed Parliament was trying to make them accept its power to tax. To them, buying the tea would mean accepting British control. After the Tea Act was passed, trouble was brewing in the colonies.

9 This conflict led to the Boston Tea Party. During this protest, colonists dumped tea into Boston Harbor. Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty helped organize resistance and spread ideas. Some colonists dressed as Native Americans to hide their identities. They boarded British ships and threw hundreds of chests of tea into the water. The protest was bold and costly. The destroyed tea was worth a large amount of money. To many colonists, the Boston Tea Party was a strong message against unfair taxation. To Great Britain, it was an act of rebellion.

10 In response, Great Britain passed the Intolerable Acts, which punished the colonies and limited their rights. One part of these acts closed Boston Harbor until the ruined tea was paid for. This hurt many people in Boston because the harbor was important for trade and jobs. Another part of the laws gave British officials more control over Massachusetts. The laws also allowed British soldiers to be housed in empty buildings when needed. Many colonists believed these acts were harsh and unfair.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Ocean Lesson (continued)

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

My
marks

17 Nyla noticed how the orcas stayed close and moved as a team. Their actions seemed planned and purposeful. One orca turned, and the others followed. Another slowed down, and the group changed direction together. They seemed to communicate through their movements. The trainer explained that, in the wild, orcas use sounds and signals to stay connected. These signals can help them hunt, travel, and protect one another.

18 "So they have to learn how to survive?" Nyla asked.

19 "Yes," the trainer replied. "Their success depends on learning and cooperation."

20 The trainer explained that young orcas learn from the older members of their group, called a pod. A young orca may watch how adults find food or work together during a hunt. At first, the young orca may not know exactly what to do. Over time, it learns by observing and practicing. The more it practices, the better it becomes at using the skills that help the pod survive.

21 Nyla looked back at the tank. She imagined a young orca swimming beside its mother and watching every move. The young orca would learn when to turn, when to stay close, and how to follow the group. Unlike the turtles, the orcas did not depend only on instinct. They depended on learning from others.

22 Nyla thought about what she had seen. The turtles relied on instinct to act quickly without guidance. The orcas relied on learning and teamwork over time. Both types of behavior helped animals survive in their environments, even though they developed in different ways.

23 As Nyla left the aquarium, she compared the two examples in her mind. The turtles had been born with a behavior that helped them move toward the ocean right away. That instinct helped them during a dangerous time when there was no chance to stop and learn. The orcas, however, survived by gaining knowledge from their pod. Their learned behaviors helped them hunt in groups and respond to different situations in the ocean.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

From Tension to Revolution (continued)

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

My
marks

11 Instead of ending the conflict, these actions brought the colonies closer together. Colonists in different places sent food, supplies, and support to Boston. They began to understand that one colony’s problem could become every colony’s problem. Leaders from different colonies met to discuss what they should do next. They shared ideas, debated solutions, and talked about their rights. The colonists learned that there is strength in numbers. Working together made them more powerful than acting alone.

12 As the conflict grew, many colonists still hoped for peace. They wanted Great Britain to listen to their concerns and respect their rights. However, others began to believe that the colonies needed to break away completely. They argued that a government across the ocean could not understand or protect the needs of the colonists. More people began to question the king’s power and Parliament’s control. The idea of independence slowly became stronger.

13 Over time, many colonists wanted to remove British control. They believed they should have a government that protected their rights and listened to their voices. The American Revolution became a fight for independence, leading to the Declaration of Independence and the creation of a new nation. What began as anger over taxes grew into a larger struggle for freedom, self-government, and independence. The colonists’ protests, boycotts, meetings, and acts of resistance helped prepare them for the difficult fight ahead. Their choices changed history and helped create the United States of America.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Ocean Lesson (continued)

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

My
marks

24 Nyla realized that survival could look different for different animals. Some behaviors are present from birth, like turtle hatchlings moving toward the sea. Other behaviors develop through practice, like orcas hunting in a group. Instinct helps an animal act right away, while learning helps an animal improve over time. Both are important because both increase an animal’s chances of survival.

25 By the end of the day, Nyla had learned that animal behavior is not always the same. A tiny turtle and a giant orca may live in the ocean, but they use different behaviors to survive. The turtle’s instinct gives it a quick start in life. The orca’s learned behavior helps it become a strong member of its pod. Nyla smiled because both examples showed how animals are equipped to meet the challenges of their environments.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Annotate: From Tension to Revolution

Time, reactions, actions, characters, and key knowledge that show why colonists moved from loyalty toward resistance.

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 Ocean Lesson

Time, reactions, actions, characters, and key knowledge that show how instinct and learned behavior help animals survive.

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 topic, a charge, and a WHY or HOW word. I can use the shapes to slow down and see the job.

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

Circle the topic in red. Box the charge in yellow. Underline the WHY or HOW word in green.

Why did colonists protest British laws?

My three marks in words

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 1: Gather + Reveal



I gather what real evidence is

Our Question for Today

Only one of these three lines is real evidence that could support a response. Which one, and why?

1. Gather: Spot the Strongest Proof

- The colonists were upset.
- "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..."
- I think the colonists were mad because taxes are annoying.

The strongest proof is number ____ because ____

2. Reveal: CSI for Evidence

Evidence is the PROOF from the passage that helps support my thinking. It must CONNECT to the prompt. Strong evidence must SUPPORT my thesis (central idea). Strong evidence can also help me INFER additional ideas.

CSI stands for CONNECT, SUPPORT, and INFER. When I use quoted evidence, I need a SIGNAL marker first. I also need correct PUNCTUATION: a comma before the quotation marks after the signal marker.

Fill in the key words I heard: Evidence is the _____ from the passage. Strong evidence must _____ to the prompt, _____ my thesis (central idea), and help me _____ more ideas.

Board Text

Evidence = text proof. Explanation = my thinking about the proof.

If I say, "The colonists were angry," that may be my idea. But if I write, "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice," now I have proof from the text.

Day 1 Closing: CSI stands for ____, ____, and ____, and a signal marker tells the reader that ____.

3. Watch Out!

An accurate sentence is not automatically strong evidence. The quote must connect to the prompt and support the thesis (central idea).

Read two choices: "Great Britain gained land..." and "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..." Which is stronger for the prompt "Why did colonists protest British laws?"

The stronger choice is ____ because ____

One question I still have about evidence

STUDENT WORKBOOK



CSI EVIDENCE QUEST

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards

Cut on the dashed lines. Keep the 3 CSI cards in the middle of the table and the 5 evidence cards in a stack. Store all cards in your Pocket Practice.

CONNECT	SUPPORT
INFER	"They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice" answers why colonists protested British laws.
"They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice" strengthens a thesis about unfair treatment.	"They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice" helps the reader infer that colonists wanted representation.
"Young orcas observe older members of their group" connects to learned behavior.	"They are born with that behavior" supports a thesis about how turtles survive without guidance.

Self-Check (back of cards)

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.

SUPPORT the quote strengthens the thesis (central idea).	CONNECT the quote answers the exact question the prompt asks.
Connect	INFER the quote helps the reader figure out more.
Infer	Support
Support	Connect

STUDENT WORKBOOK

 **Day 2: Attempt**

I attempt the CSI Evidence Quest



Our Question for Today
How can I judge whether a quote is strong or weak for a prompt?

1. Attempt: CSI Evidence Quest
Move around the gameboard with my group. Every time I land on a space, I draw a game card and my group solves it together, using the passages, Thinking Charts, and Interactive Notebook.

Gameboard space	What I do there
Prompt Check	Decide whether a quote answers the exact question.
Thesis (central idea) Match	Match a quote to the thesis (central idea) it supports.
Strong or Weak	Judge whether a quote is strong or weak for the prompt.
Signal Marker	Choose a signal marker to introduce a quote.
Quote It	Write the quote with a signal marker and correct punctuation.
CSI Check	Explain which CSI checks a quote passes.

The gameboard space I think will be hardest, and why

Sample Game Cards

- Prompt Check: Prompt: Why did colonists protest British laws? Quote: "It required colonists to pay taxes on printed materials..." Answer: Yes, it connects because the taxes were one reason colonists protested.
- Thesis (central idea) Match: "The colonists protested British laws because they were taxed without representation and felt it was unfair." Choice A: "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..." Choice B: "Nyla visited an aquarium." Answer: A.
- Strong or Weak: "Great Britain gained land..." is weak for why colonists protested. "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..." is strong.
- Signal Marker: The text states, "Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty helped organize resistance..."
- CSI Check: "The turtles moved slowly but with determination" connects to the prompt, supports a thesis (central idea) about survival behavior, and helps infer that instinct helps the turtles continue even in danger.

Strong Evidence / Weak Evidence

One example of strong evidence from today's game, and why it belongs there

One example of weak evidence from today's game, and why it belongs there

Day 2 Closing: record one strong quote and one weak quote from the game. Remember, strong evidence connects, supports, and helps me infer.

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 3: Discuss + Use



I discuss evidence, then use it on my own

Our Question for Today

How does CSI help a writer choose and introduce evidence that truly supports an SCR thesis (central idea)?

1. Discuss: Why Isn't Every Quote Strong?

Discussion question	What we noticed
What is the difference between evidence and explanation?	Evidence is from the passage, and explanation is what we think about it.
Why is not every quote strong evidence?	A quote may be true, but if it does not connect to the prompt or support the thesis (central idea), it is weak for that response.
How does CSI help us choose better evidence?	It helps us check if the evidence connects, supports, and helps us infer.
Why do we need a signal marker before a quote?	So the reader knows evidence is coming.
What makes quoted evidence look correct?	Quotation marks and a comma after the signal marker.

A discussion question I want to remember, and why

2. Use: Thesis (central idea) + Evidence

Title my page Thesis (central idea) + Evidence. Copy the thesis (central idea) statement. Find one strong quote from the passage. Add a signal marker before the quote and underline it. Write the quote with correct punctuation and quotation marks.

Practice set	Thesis (central idea)	Teacher answer example
1	The colonists protested British laws because they were taxed without representation and felt it was unfair.	The text states, "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..."
2	Setting influences survival in both passages through instinct in sea turtles and learned behavior in orcas.	The author says, "Young orcas observe older members of their group."
3	The Boston Massacre increased anger and distrust toward British authority.	The passage explains, "The Boston Massacre shocked many people."
4	Sea turtles survive dangerous moments because instinct guides them quickly toward the ocean.	The text states, "Their instinct guided them through the transition from sand to ocean..."

My Thesis (central idea) + Evidence page (choose one practice set)

Day 3 Closing: "Hey! Hey! Hey! Evidence is on the way!" Every time I add a quote correctly, I am proving my thinking.



Day 4: Award + Target



I recognize my growth and set a target

Our Question for Today

What evidence habit did I use well today, and what will I improve next?

1. Award: Recognize My Growth

- ☐ I can tell what evidence is.
- ☐ I can tell what evidence is not.
- ☐ I can use CSI.
- ☐ I can use a signal marker.
- ☐ I can punctuate a quote correctly.

Evidence Expert Strip: one strong habit I used today was ____

Partner Praise: one thing my partner did well was ____

2. Target: Choose My Next Goal

One thing I can already do well with evidence is ____

One thing I still want to improve is ____

My next evidence goal is ____

Target Choices

- choose stronger evidence
- connect evidence more clearly to the thesis (central idea)
- use better signal markers
- punctuate quotes correctly every time
- infer more
- use stronger vocabulary

Curiosity Questions

- How would the meaning of a response change if evidence did not match the thesis (central idea)?
- Why might a short quote be stronger than a long quote?
- Which passage gives easier evidence to find, and why?
- How does setting help us decide what evidence matters most?

Day 4 Closing: My next goal is to strengthen my evidence by ____.



Day 5: Explain/Educate

I coach a partner



Our Question for Today

How would I teach someone else to choose and present evidence correctly?

1. Educate: Evidence Coach

Partner A reads a thesis (central idea), explains how to find matching evidence, chooses a signal marker, and says the evidence sentence aloud with correct punctuation language. Partner B listens, checks for CSI, tells whether the quote is strong or weak, and suggests one improvement. Then switch roles.

Sample Thesis (central idea) Statements

- The colonists protested British laws because they were treated unfairly.
- Sea turtles rely on instinct because they must survive danger immediately.
- Setting influences behavior in both passages through conflict, instinct, and learning.

Sentence Stems

- This evidence is strong because ____.
- This quote connects to the prompt by ____.
- A good signal marker would be ____.
- This evidence helps us infer ____.

The sentence stem I will use first, and why

2. Transfer: Day 5 Exit Ticket

Prompt: Why did colonists protest British laws? Choose one strong quote, introduce it with a signal marker, and check it with CSI.

Circle the topic in red. Box the charge in yellow. Underline the WHY or HOW word in green.

Why did colonists protest British laws?

My thesis (central idea)

My evidence sentence

My CSI check: the quote Connects because ____; Supports because ____; helps me Infer ____.

Check My Exit Ticket

- ☐ The quote Connects to the prompt.
- ☐ The quote Supports my thesis (central idea).
- ☐ A signal marker introduces the quote.
- ☐ A comma follows the signal marker, and quotation marks surround the exact words.

? STOP & THINK

How does CSI help a writer choose and introduce evidence that truly supports an SCR thesis (central idea)? CSI helps a writer test whether evidence connects to the prompt, supports the thesis (central idea), and helps the writer infer more. A clear signal marker and correct presentation of the quotation help the reader recognize exactly where the proof begins.

My final Day 5 thought

3. Coach Like an Expert

As I coach my partner, I listen for the difference between evidence and explanation, correct signal markers, correct quotation punctuation, CSI vocabulary, and stronger vocabulary from the Thinking Charts.

One coaching tip I gave my partner

One coaching tip my partner gave me



Write More

Plan, draft, revise, edit, and share



My Writing Assignment

Write a short response to this prompt:

Circle the topic in red. Box the charge in yellow. Underline the WHY or HOW word in green.

Why did colonists protest British laws?

My Plan

- Shape the prompt. Mark the topic, charge, and WHY or HOW word.
- Write a thesis (central idea) that answers the exact prompt.
- Choose a short, exact quote that passes CSI.
- Add a signal marker, a comma, and quotation marks. Explain what the evidence proves.

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 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 charge 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.
- ☐ Parliament, Boston, Nyla, and orcas begin with capital letters.
- ☐ Colonists and turtles 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 topic, charge, and WHY or HOW word.	
Evidence	I chose a short, exact quote that passes CSI.	
Presentation	I used a signal marker, a comma, and quotation marks.	
Explanation	I explained what the evidence proves and helps me infer.	

Study the Samples

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

How do orcas learn to survive in their group?

Low

I think the colonists were mad because taxes are annoying.

What is missing: this is a personal opinion, not quoted proof from the text. It does not pass CSI.

Medium

The passage says, "Great Britain gained land..." This shows the war changed things.

What is missing: the quote is accurate but weak for this prompt. It does not connect to why colonists protested, so it fails the Connect check.

High

The text states, "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..." This quote connects to the prompt about protest, supports a thesis (central idea) about unfair treatment, and helps the reader infer that the colonists wanted representation.

Why it works: a signal marker and correct punctuation introduce a precise quote that passes Connect, Support, and Infer.

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 topic.	☐	☐	☐
Find the charge.	☐	☐	☐
Find the WHY or HOW word.	☐	☐	☐
Name WHY or HOW.	☐	☐	☐
Tell evidence and explanation apart.	☐	☐	☐
Test a quote with CSI: Connect, Support, Infer.	☐	☐	☐
Introduce a quote with a signal marker.	☐	☐	☐
Punctuate a quote correctly.	☐	☐	☐
Name my next evidence goal.	☐	☐	☐

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 CSI help a writer choose and introduce evidence that truly supports an SCR thesis (central idea)?

The answer

CSI helps a writer test whether evidence connects to the prompt, supports the thesis (central idea), and helps the writer infer more. A clear signal marker and correct presentation of the quotation then help the reader recognize exactly where the proof begins.

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 topic, charge, and WHY or HOW word. Tell whether it asks WHY or HOW. Then find one piece of proof and test it with CSI.

My new prompt and its CSI-tested proof

Take It Further! Evidence Detective Challenge

Choose one prompt from the Prompt Bank and build a complete evidence case: How does setting influence behavior in both passages?

- Write the prompt and name the topic, charge, and WHY or HOW word.
- Write a thesis (central idea) that answers the exact prompt.
- Find one short, exact quote from the passage that passes CSI.
- Introduce the quote with a signal marker, a comma, and quotation marks.
- Write an explanation sentence that tells what the evidence proves and helps a reader infer.
- Present your evidence case to the class in one minute or less.
- Find one classmate whose quote is different from yours, and tell why theirs also passes CSI.

My plan: thesis (central idea), evidence, signal marker, explanation

My Evidence Detective Challenge

Write your complete evidence case in the box below. Label the thesis (central idea), the quote, the signal marker, and the explanation.

At-Home Connection

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

Prove It with CSI

Make a claim about a show, a game, or a book. Take turns finding one piece of proof and checking it three ways: Does it Connect? Does it Support? Does it help you Infer more?

Ask them: what proof would you use to support that claim?

Family member signature: _____

Signal the Quote

Practice introducing proof with a signal marker. Say, "The text states," or "The author says," before the exact words. Notice how the signal tells the listener that proof is coming.

Ask them: does that proof connect, support, and help you infer more?

Family member signature: _____

Ask for the Proof

When your student shares an idea about something read or watched, ask for the proof and then ask, "Does that proof connect, support, and help you infer more?" Talk about why a short, exact quote can be stronger than a long one.

Ask them: why might a short quote be stronger than a long quote?

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 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 5

Cluster 1 - Module 4

Writing the Explanation Sentence



Name: _____



The Writing Academy®, LLC

Grade 5 • Cluster 1 • 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

Writing the Explanation Sentence



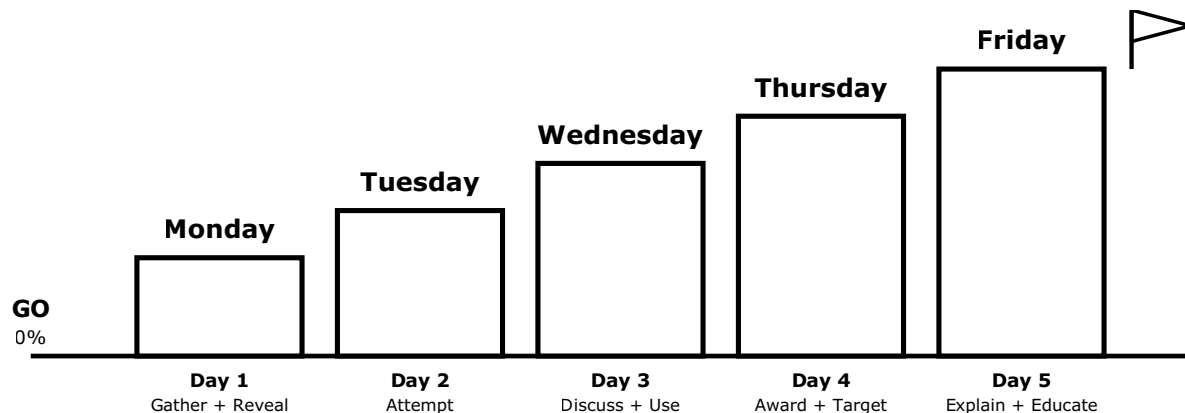
Why This Matters to Me

Not every sentence copied from a text explains anything. I will learn to tell evidence from explanation, to use a Definition or Story bookend, to point back with the word *this*, and to connect each explanation to a thesis (central idea) so my proof has clear meaning.

Essential Question

How does a strong explanation turn evidence into clear meaning for the reader?

My Week Tracker



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

My First Thinking

I Can

- I can explain what a piece of evidence means.
- I can say why the evidence matters.
- I can use "this means" or "this shows" as a Definition bookend.
- I can use "this reminds me of" or "this makes me think of" as a Story bookend.
- I can use the word this to point back to nearby evidence.

I Will

- I will read closely and listen for what evidence means.
- I will tell the difference between evidence and explanation.
- I will use a Definition or Story bookend.
- I will connect each explanation to the thesis (central idea).
- I will revise sentence structure and word choice so my meaning is clear.

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 explain evidence so the reader understands what the proof means, why it matters, and how it supports the thesis (central idea).	Two passages: "From Tension to Revolution" and "The Ocean Lesson."	Listen for What Is Missing responses, Explanation Relay Race matches, Thesis (central idea) + Evidence + Explanation pages, and a next step.

Where We Are Going

I will move from telling evidence and explanation apart to writing explanation sentences that connect to a thesis (central idea), then coach a partner.

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

- ☐ I identify the evidence and keep it separate from my explanation.
- ☐ I explain what the evidence means instead of repeating it.
- ☐ I use a Definition or Story bookend.
- ☐ I connect the explanation to the thesis (central idea) and say why it matters.

Check Myself

- ☐ I read the whole prompt.
- ☐ I can point to proof for my explanation.

How I Will Show What I Know

I will show what I know with Explanation Relay Race matches, a Thesis (central idea) + Evidence + Explanation page for both passages, an Explanation Coach turn and teach, and the Day 5 exit ticket.

My GRADUATE Learning Path

Stage	Day	What I do
Gather	Day 1	I hear the difference between naming proof and explaining meaning.
Reveal	Day 1	I learn the explanation job, the bookends, and the word this.
Attempt	Day 2	I match a thesis (central idea), evidence, and explanation in the relay.
Discuss	Day 3	I clarify how an explanation adds meaning.
Use Again	Day 3	I independently explain selected evidence from both passages.
Award	Day 4	I recognize an explanation habit I used well.
Target	Day 4	I choose a precise next explanation goal.
Explain/Educate	Day 5	I teach a partner how evidence becomes clear meaning.

Say It Together!

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

5.12(B)(i):

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

5.12(B)(iii):

Compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using craft.

Call and Response

Read this together as a class before we start.

Teacher asks: "What does an explanation do?"

Class answers: "It tells what the evidence means, why it matters, and how it connects to the thesis (central idea)!"

One TEKS I want to practice today



Get Ready

Before I begin



Before We Begin: What Do I Already Know?

I already know that evidence is proof taken from a text and that an explanation is my own thinking about the proof, not another quote.

A connection I can make

Remember It!

- ☐ Evidence is proof from the text. Explanation is what the proof means and why it matters.
- ☐ A Definition bookend begins with this means or this shows.
- ☐ A Story bookend begins with this reminds me of or this makes me think of.
- ☐ The word this points back to nearby evidence.

One idea I remember

Ready Check

- ☐ I can read both passages and locate a detail that supports a thesis (central idea).
- ☐ I can recognize evidence as proof taken from a text.
- ☐ I can write a complete sentence with a capital letter and end punctuation.
- ☐ I know that an explanation is the writer's thinking about evidence, not another quote.

Watch Out! Common Mix-Up

Watch out! Repeating the quote or writing "This is important" is not an explanation. I must tell what the evidence means and why it matters.

Where This Fits in My Writing

Evidence is proof, and explanation is what the proof means. A strong Short Constructed Response follows evidence with a Definition or Story explanation.

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 my own. I may reread the passages in Read and Interact as often as I want.

Part 1: Prompt Analysis

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

Why did colonists protest British laws?

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
_____	They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice...
_____	Colonists protested British laws because they were taxed without representation and felt it was unfair.
_____	This shows that the colonists wanted a voice in the decisions that affected them.
_____	One reason is that Parliament placed new taxes on the colonies without asking the colonists.

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: Colonists protested British laws because they were taxed without representation. 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 explaining evidence.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
explain	explain	to tell what something means and why	I explain the quote by ____.
mean	mean	to stand for a certain idea	This quote means ____.
matter	matter	to be important	This matters because ____.
show	show	to make something clear	This shows that ____.
think	think	to form an idea in your mind	I think this proves ____.
story	story	a short example that helps make an idea clear	This reminds me of the story of ____.
repeat	repeat	to say the same thing again	An explanation does not just repeat ____.
add	add	to put in something more	My explanation adds ____.
clear	clear	easy to understand	My explanation is clear because ____.
point	point	to show where something is	The word this points back to ____.

Use one Tier 1 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 2, academic words

Say each word. These are the academic thinking words you will use in every subject.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
explanation	explanation	the sentence or sentences that tell what evidence means	My explanation tells ____.
clarify	clarify	to make an idea easier for the reader to understand	This explanation clarifies ____.
demonstrate	demonstrate	to show an idea clearly with proof or reasoning	This demonstrates that ____.
meaning	meaning	the idea or understanding communicated by evidence and explanation	The meaning of this quote is ____.
support	support	to strengthen an answer with proof and reasoning	My explanation supports ____.
analyze	analyze	to examine evidence closely and explain its significance	When I analyze this quote, I see ____.
anecdote	anecdote	a brief story or example used to make an idea more understandable	My anecdote is ____.
illustrate	illustrate	to make an idea clear by giving an example or showing a connection	This illustrates ____.
connection	connection	a meaningful relationship between evidence, explanation, and the thesis (central idea)	The connection here is ____.
metacognition	metacognition	thinking about how your own thinking and writing choices work	I use metacognition when I ____.

Use one Tier 2 word in a sentence

Words I Need: Tier 3, passage words

These words come from our passages about From Tension to Revolution and The Ocean Lesson.

Word	Say it	What it means	Sentence frame
Parliament	PAR-luh-ment	the group in Great Britain that made laws and taxes for the colonies	Parliament decided ____.
representation	rep-ri-zen-TAY-shun	having someone speak for you in government	Representation means ____.
boycott	BOY-kot	refusing to buy or use products as a form of protest	The colonists chose to boycott ____.
resistance	ri-ZIS-tuns	the act of fighting against or opposing something	Their resistance showed ____.
revolution	rev-uh-LOO-shun	a fight to change who holds power	The revolution began when ____.
instinct	IN-stinkt	a behavior an animal is born with and does not learn	Instinct helps the animal ____.
predators	PRED-uh-terz	animals that hunt and eat other animals	Sea turtles must escape predators by ____.
orcas	OR-kuhz	large ocean animals, also called killer whales	Orcas learn from ____.
pod	pod	a group of orcas that lives and travels together	The pod works together to ____.
cooperation	koh-op-uh-RAY-shun	working together toward the same goal	Cooperation helps the group ____.

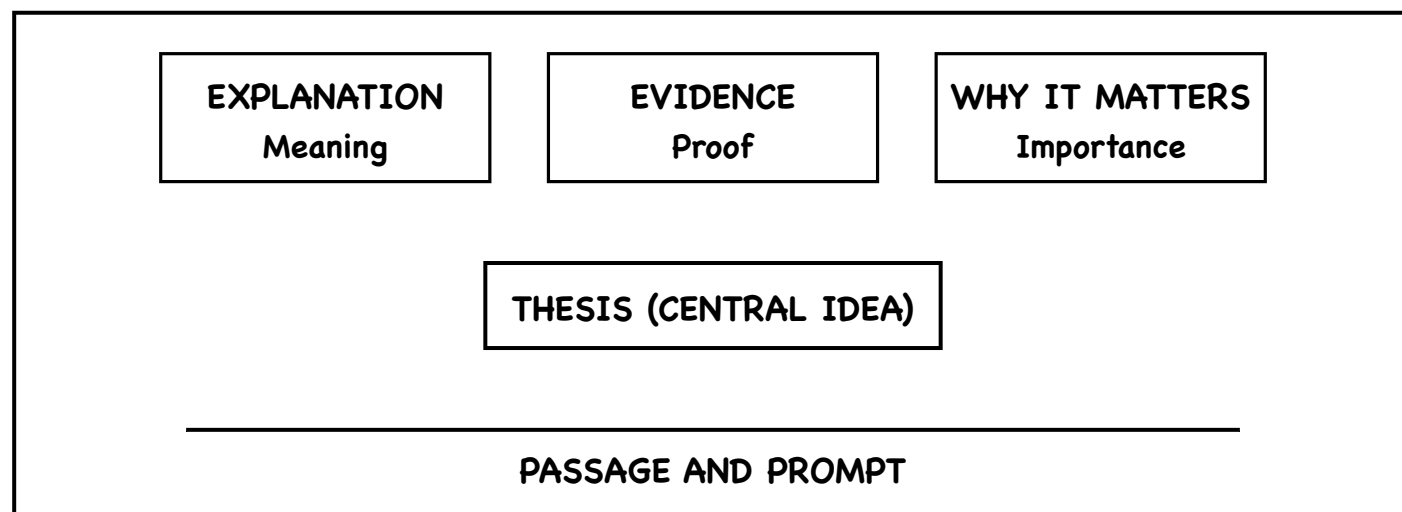
Use one Tier 3 word in a sentence

My Strategy Tools

Explanation Bookend Key



The Explanation Bookend turns a correct quote into clear meaning for the reader.



Evidence is what the text says. **Explanation** is what I say about what the text means.

Shaping an SCR Prompt

Mark	What it means
Red circle	TOPIC: what the prompt is about.
Yellow box	CHARGE: what the prompt asks me to do.
Green triangle	WHY OR HOW WORD: tells me if the response is WHY or HOW.

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

How the Explanation Bookend works for me

WHY and HOW

WHY	HOW
asks for a reason; a strong response explains why something happened.	asks for a way; a strong response explains how something happened.

WHY asks for reasons; HOW asks for a way something happened.

How I Say the Standard!

5.12(B)(i):

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

5.12(B)(iii):

Compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using craft.

Check My Writing

- ☐ I use a Definition bookend: this means or this shows.
- ☐ I use a Story bookend: this reminds me of or this makes me think of.
- ☐ I use a capital letter for Parliament, Samuel Adams, and orcas.

A WHY or HOW sentence I can try

The Progression of Thinking

Read from the top down. Each level names a kind of thinking a strong explanation uses.

Level	Symbol	Hidden Question	Student Thinking	Thinking Focus
Foundational (Red)	○	What does the quote say?	I can identify the evidence.	Evidence
Emergent (Orange)	◻	What does it mean?	I can begin an explanation with a Definition bookend.	Meaning
Visible (Yellow)	▽	How does it support the thesis (central idea)?	I can connect the evidence to the main idea.	Connection
Independent (Green)	△	Why does the evidence matter?	I can explain the proof's importance precisely.	Importance
Reflective (Blue)	◊	What larger idea does the evidence suggest?	I can reframe the meaning while staying grounded in the passage.	Reflection

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

A thinking level I want to try

The Progression of Thinking

HOW prompts ask about the way something works or the way parts fit together. These same five levels name the thinking my explanation needs.

Level	Symbol	Hidden Question	Student Thinking	Thinking Focus
Foundational (Red)	○	What does the quote say?	I can identify the evidence.	Evidence
Emergent (Orange)	◻	What does it mean?	I can begin an explanation with a Definition bookend.	Meaning
Visible (Yellow)	▽	How does it support the thesis (central idea)?	I can connect the evidence to the main idea.	Connection
Independent (Green)	△	Why does the evidence matter?	I can explain the proof's importance precisely.	Importance
Reflective (Blue)	◊	What larger idea does the evidence suggest?	I can reframe the meaning while staying grounded in the passage.	Reflection

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.	Why did colonists protest British laws?
HOW	Analyze how parts work together or how something happens.	How did British actions push the colonies toward revolution?

WHY asks for reasons; HOW asks for a way something happened.

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

Colonists tested whether new laws were fair, and sea turtles and orcas survive through instinct or learned behavior; careful thinkers in every setting explain what their proof means and why it matters.

Background I Need

"From Tension to Revolution" explains how taxes, protests, the Boston Massacre, the Boston Tea Party, and growing unity pushed the colonies toward revolution. "The Ocean Lesson" explains how sea turtles rely on instinct while orcas rely on learned behavior and cooperation.

Words I dotted while reading

From Tension to Revolution

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

My
marks

1 Before the American Revolution, the thirteen colonies were part of Great Britain, a superpower at the time. Great Britain had a strong army, a powerful navy, and a large empire that reached across many parts of the world. The king ruled from far across the Atlantic Ocean, but British laws still affected daily life in the colonies. Many colonists considered themselves loyal to the king. They followed British laws, traded with British merchants, and depended on Great Britain for protection. Some colonists were proud to be British subjects because they believed Great Britain was strong and successful.

2 At first, many people in the colonies did not want to separate from Great Britain. They thought of themselves as both colonists and British citizens. They enjoyed some freedoms in the colonies and had their own local governments. These local governments helped make decisions about roads, trade, taxes, and other needs. However, the colonists still had to follow many laws made by Parliament, the lawmaking group in Great Britain. Over time, colonists began to feel that Parliament was making decisions without understanding life in the colonies.

3 This began to change even more after the French and Indian War. This war was fought between Great Britain and France, with Native American groups joining on different sides. Both Great Britain and France wanted control of land in North America. The war lasted for several years and affected many people living in the colonies. Colonists helped British soldiers fight because they believed a British victory would protect them from French power. Great Britain won the war and gained a large amount of land in North America. Many colonists were happy that France had lost power in the region because it seemed to make the colonies safer.

4 Although Great Britain gained land, it also gained significant debt. War was expensive. Soldiers had to be paid, supplies had to be bought, and forts had to be protected. Great Britain believed the colonies should help pay for the cost of the war because the war had helped protect them. To recover money, Parliament placed new taxes on the colonies. British leaders also wanted to keep soldiers in North America to protect the new land. This meant Great Britain needed even more money. Many colonists did not agree with this plan. They believed they had already helped during the war and should not be forced to pay taxes decided by leaders far away.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Ocean Lesson

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

My
marks

1 Nyla stood quietly on the beach as dozens of sea turtles began to hatch from the sand. The morning air was cool, and the sky was just starting to brighten. Small waves rolled gently onto the shore and then slid back into the ocean. The beach seemed peaceful, but Nyla knew something important was happening beneath the sand. At first, the nest looked like a small, still mound. Then tiny movements appeared. Grains of sand shifted, and little cracks formed in the shells hidden below the surface.

2 One by one, the sea turtles broke through their shells and started moving toward the ocean. Nyla leaned forward, careful not to step too close. The hatchlings were small, but they were active. Their tiny flippers pushed against the sand again and again. Some turtles moved in a straight line, while others had to crawl around shells, seaweed, and shallow footprints. The ocean was not far away, but for such small animals, the trip looked long and difficult.

3 "How do they know where to go?" Nyla asked.

4 "They don't need to be taught," her guide explained. "It's an instinct. They are born with that behavior."

5 Nyla thought about the word instinct. It meant the turtles did not have to watch another turtle first. They did not have to practice or wait for instructions. They already had the behavior inside them from the moment they hatched. Even though they were new to the world, their bodies seemed to understand that the ocean was where they needed to go.

6 Nyla watched closely. The turtles moved slowly but with determination. Each movement seemed small, but together those movements helped them get closer to the water. The sand was not easy for them to cross. In some places it was soft, and the turtles sank down a little as they crawled. In other places, the sand was packed tight. A few turtles slipped into shallow dips and had to push themselves out. Others paused for a moment, then began moving again.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

From Tension to Revolution (continued)

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

My
marks

5 One of these laws was the Stamp Act. It required colonists to pay taxes on printed materials such as newspapers, legal documents, licenses, pamphlets, and even playing cards. These items were used by many people, so the tax affected lawyers, business owners, newspaper printers, and ordinary colonists. Colonists strongly opposed this law because they had no representatives in Parliament. They believed that only their own colonial governments should have the power to tax them. They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice, which led to the phrase "taxation without representation." This phrase became one of the most important ideas during the time before the American Revolution.

6 Many colonists began to protest the Stamp Act. Some refused to buy stamped paper. Others wrote letters, gave speeches, and printed articles explaining why the law was unfair. Groups such as the Sons of Liberty helped organize protests in cities like Boston and New York. Sometimes colonists gathered in large crowds to show their anger. They wanted Parliament to understand that the colonies would not accept unfair taxes without a fight. These protests helped unite colonists who had once thought of themselves mostly as people from separate colonies. Now they began to see that they shared the same problem.

7 The protests against the Stamp Act showed that the colonists could work together. Merchants agreed not to buy certain British goods. Printers shared information about the protests. Colonial leaders met to discuss how to respond. These actions made it difficult for Great Britain to enforce the law. Great Britain eventually repealed, or canceled, the Stamp Act. Many colonists celebrated because they believed their protests had worked. They had spoken out, worked together, and caused Parliament to change its decision.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Ocean Lesson (continued)

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

My
marks

7 Even though birds circled above and the sand was uneven, most continued toward the water. Their instinct guided them through the transition from sand to ocean, increasing their chances of survival during a dangerous moment. Nyla could see why this first journey mattered so much. The longer the turtles stayed on the beach, the more danger they faced. Birds, crabs, and other animals might catch them before they reached the sea.

8 The guide smiled and said, "Slow and steady wins the race."

9 Nyla smiled too, but she kept watching the turtles. The saying made sense. The turtles were not fast, and they were not strong compared with many animals around them. Still, they did not quit. They kept moving forward, little by little. They did not stop to look for help. They did not wait for an older turtle to lead them. Their instinct gave them a chance to survive when there was no time for a lesson.

10 As the first turtles reached the edge of the water, a small wave washed over them. For a moment, they disappeared in the white foam. Nyla held her breath. Then she saw them floating and paddling in the shallow water. Their flippers moved differently now that they were no longer on land. On the sand, their flippers had dragged them forward. In the water, those same flippers helped them swim.

11 The guide explained that reaching the ocean was only the beginning. The young turtles would still face many challenges in the sea. They would need to avoid predators and find food. However, their instinct had helped them survive the first dangerous part of life. Without that instinct, the hatchlings might not know to move toward the ocean right away.

12 Nyla looked back at the nest. More turtles were still coming out. Some were just beginning the trip, while others were almost to the waves. Nyla noticed that the hatchlings did not all move at the same speed. Some seemed stronger. Some seemed slower. But most of them were moving in the same direction. Their instinct guided them, even though they had never taken this journey before.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

From Tension to Revolution (continued)

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

My
marks

8 However, the conflict was not over. Parliament still believed it had the right to tax the colonies. British leaders wanted to remind the colonists that Parliament was in control. Soon, more laws and taxes followed. Colonists were taxed on goods such as glass, paper, paint, lead, and tea. These taxes continued to anger many people. Some colonists began to boycott British goods. A boycott means refusing to buy or use certain products as a form of protest. By refusing to buy British goods, colonists hoped to hurt British businesses and pressure Parliament to change its laws.

9 Boycotts became an important way for colonists to resist British control. Some families chose to make their own goods instead of buying British products. Women often helped by spinning thread, making cloth, and encouraging others to use homemade items. This showed that resistance was not only led by famous leaders. Ordinary people also played an important role. Every time colonists refused to buy British goods, they were sending a message that they wanted their rights to be respected.

10 Tensions continued to rise. British soldiers were sent to the colonies to keep order and enforce the laws. Many colonists did not like seeing soldiers in their towns. They felt as if they were being watched and controlled. Soldiers and colonists often argued with one another. Colonists were upset that soldiers sometimes took jobs or stayed in their communities. British leaders believed the soldiers were needed to keep peace, but many colonists believed the soldiers made the situation worse.

11 In 1770, the Boston Massacre occurred when British soldiers fired into a crowd of colonists, killing several people. Before the shooting, colonists had gathered near the soldiers and shouted angrily. Some threw snowballs, sticks, and other objects. The situation quickly became dangerous and confusing. The soldiers felt threatened, and the crowd grew louder. When the soldiers fired, several colonists were killed or wounded. The event shocked people in Boston and across the colonies.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Ocean Lesson (continued)

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

My
marks

13 The guide told Nyla that instincts are important for many animals. Some birds know when to migrate. Some spiders know how to spin webs. Sea turtle hatchlings know to move toward the ocean. These behaviors help animals survive because they happen naturally. The animals do not have to learn every step from a parent or teacher.

14 Nyla thought that was amazing. A baby turtle had just hatched, yet it already knew something that could save its life. It did not need a map. It did not need a warning. It did not need another turtle to explain the danger. Its instinct helped it act quickly in the environment where it lived.

15 After watching for a while, Nyla and her guide moved away from the nest so the turtles could continue safely. Nyla kept thinking about the hatchlings. Their journey had been short compared with the size of the ocean, but it was full of danger. Instinct helped them respond at the right time.

16 Later that day, Nyla visited a marine biology exhibit at an aquarium. The building was cool and quiet compared with the bright beach. Large signs showed pictures of ocean animals and explained how different species survive. Nyla walked slowly from one display to another. She saw tanks filled with colorful fish, sea stars, jellyfish, and rays. Some animals hid in rocks, while others swam in groups.

17 Then Nyla stopped in front of a large tank where a group of orcas swam together in coordinated patterns. The orcas looked powerful and graceful. They moved through the water with control. Their black and white bodies glided past the glass, turned smoothly, and stayed close to one another. Nyla noticed right away that they did not seem to be swimming randomly. Their movements looked connected, almost as if they were following a plan.

18 A trainer stood nearby and explained how orcas hunt in the wild. Nyla listened carefully because the orcas seemed very different from the tiny turtles she had seen that morning. The turtles had acted alone as they moved toward the ocean. The orcas, however, moved as a group.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

From Tension to Revolution (continued)

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

My
marks

12 The Boston Massacre increased anger and distrust toward British authority. News of the event spread quickly. Some colonists saw it as proof that British soldiers were a threat to their rights and safety. Leaders such as Samuel Adams used the event to increase anger toward British authority. Paul Revere created an engraving that showed the soldiers firing at colonists. The picture was used to influence public opinion. Although the event was more complicated than the picture showed, it helped many colonists believe that Great Britain was becoming too forceful. The Boston Massacre became a symbol of the growing conflict between the colonies and Great Britain.

13 A few years later, another conflict grew over tea. Tea was a popular drink in the colonies, and many colonists bought it regularly. Parliament passed the Tea Act, which allowed one British company to sell tea directly to the colonies. This made the tea cheaper, but many colonists still saw the law as a problem. They believed Parliament was trying to make them accept its power to tax. To them, buying the tea would mean accepting British control. After the Tea Act was passed, trouble was brewing in the colonies.

14 This conflict led to the Boston Tea Party. During this protest, colonists dumped tea into Boston Harbor. Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty helped organize resistance and spread ideas. Some colonists dressed as Native Americans to hide their identities. They boarded British ships and threw hundreds of chests of tea into the water. The protest was bold and costly. The destroyed tea was worth a large amount of money. To many colonists, the Boston Tea Party was a strong message against unfair taxation. To Great Britain, it was an act of rebellion.

15 The Boston Tea Party showed that some colonists were no longer willing to protest only with words or boycotts. They were ready to take stronger action. Some colonists supported the protest because they believed British laws were unfair. Others worried that destroying property would make the conflict worse. Even though colonists did not always agree on every action, more and more of them were beginning to question British rule. The colonies were changing. People were talking more openly about rights, government, and freedom.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Ocean Lesson (continued)

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

My
marks

19 "Orcas rely on learned behavior," he said. "Young orcas observe older members of their group. Over time, they learn strategies and practice working together."

20 The trainer smiled and said, "These orcas are a whale of a team."

21 Nyla laughed softly at the joke, but she also understood the point. The orcas survived by working together. Their teamwork was not something they were born knowing how to do perfectly. Instead, young orcas learned by watching the older orcas in their pod. They practiced skills again and again until they could help the group.

22 Nyla noticed how the orcas stayed close and moved as a team. Their actions seemed planned and purposeful. One orca turned, and the others followed. Another slowed down, and the group changed direction together. At times, they swam side by side. At other times, one orca moved ahead while the others stayed nearby. Their movements showed cooperation.

23 The trainer explained that, in the wild, orcas often live in groups called pods. A pod may include mothers, young orcas, and other family members. The older orcas help the younger ones by showing them how to survive. Young orcas watch how adults find food, travel, and communicate. They learn what sounds and movements mean. They also learn when to stay close and when to follow the group.

24 "So they have to learn how to survive?" Nyla asked.

25 "Yes," the trainer replied. "Their success depends on learning and cooperation."

26 The trainer explained that learned behavior develops through experience. A young orca is not born knowing every hunting strategy. It must observe the pod and practice. For example, older orcas may show younger ones how to work together to find food. A young orca may make mistakes at first, but over time it improves. The more it watches and practices, the better it becomes at using the skills that help the pod survive.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

From Tension to Revolution (continued)

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

My
marks

16 In response, Great Britain passed the Intolerable Acts, which punished the colonies and limited their rights. One part of these acts closed Boston Harbor until the ruined tea was paid for. This hurt many people in Boston because the harbor was important for trade and jobs. Ships could not come and go as they once had. Merchants, sailors, workers, and families all felt the effects. Another part of the laws gave British officials more control over Massachusetts. The laws also allowed British soldiers to be housed in empty buildings when needed. Many colonists believed these acts were harsh and unfair.

17 Great Britain hoped the Intolerable Acts would make the colonists obey. Instead, the laws had the opposite effect. Instead of ending the conflict, these actions brought the colonies closer together. Colonists in different places sent food, supplies, and support to Boston. They began to understand that one colony's problem could become every colony's problem. If Great Britain could punish Massachusetts, it could punish any colony. This idea made people in other colonies pay closer attention.

18 Leaders from different colonies met to discuss what they should do next. They shared ideas, debated solutions, and talked about their rights. Some leaders wanted to continue asking the king for help. Others believed stronger action was needed. These meetings helped the colonies become more united. The colonists learned that there is strength in numbers. Working together made them more powerful than acting alone. Even though the colonies had different economies, religions, and ways of life, they were beginning to see themselves as part of one larger cause.

19 As the conflict grew, many colonists still hoped for peace. They wanted Great Britain to listen to their concerns and respect their rights. They did not all want independence at first. Some believed the king would protect them if he understood what was happening. Others were afraid that separating from Great Britain would lead to war, danger, and uncertainty. Great Britain was powerful, and the colonies did not have the same kind of army or navy. Choosing independence would not be easy.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Ocean Lesson (continued)

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

My
marks

27 Nyla looked back at the tank. She imagined a young orca swimming beside its mother in the open ocean. The young orca might listen for sounds, watch the movements of the pod, and follow the older orcas during a hunt. Each day, it would learn a little more. Over time, those lessons would help it become a stronger hunter and a better member of the group.

28 The trainer also explained that cooperation is important because orcas often hunt animals that are difficult to catch alone. Working as a team helps them be more successful. One orca might help guide prey in a certain direction, while others move into place. Because they practice these behaviors, the pod can act together. This teamwork increases their chances of getting food.

29 Nyla compared the orcas to the sea turtles. The turtle hatchlings did not wait for help. Their instinct told them to move toward the ocean as soon as they hatched. That behavior helped them escape danger on the beach. The orcas, however, depended on learning from others. Their survival depended on time, practice, and cooperation.

30 Nyla thought about how both behaviors were useful, even though they were different. Instinct was helpful when an animal needed to act right away. A hatchling could not spend days learning how to reach the ocean because danger was all around. Learned behavior was helpful when an animal needed to develop more complex skills. Orcas had to learn how to communicate, hunt, and work as a team.

31 As Nyla continued watching, the orcas changed direction again. Their large bodies moved smoothly through the water. They seemed calm, but their actions were organized. Nyla realized that what looked simple from the outside actually took learning. The orcas had practiced these movements many times. Their behavior helped them survive in a challenging ocean environment.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

From Tension to Revolution (continued)

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

My
marks

20 However, others began to believe that the colonies needed to break away completely. They argued that a government across the ocean could not understand or protect the needs of the colonists. They believed people should have a voice in the laws they were expected to follow. More people began to question the king's power and Parliament's control. The idea of independence slowly became stronger. Colonists talked about natural rights, liberty, and self-government. These ideas helped people think differently about their relationship with Great Britain.

21 Over time, many colonists wanted to remove British control. They believed they should have a government that protected their rights and listened to their voices. The American Revolution became a fight for independence, leading to the Declaration of Independence and the creation of a new nation. What began as anger over taxes grew into a larger struggle for freedom, self-government, and independence. The colonists' protests, boycotts, meetings, and acts of resistance helped prepare them for the difficult fight ahead. Their choices changed history and helped create the United States of America.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

The Ocean Lesson (continued)

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

My
marks

32 Nyla thought about what she had seen. The turtles relied on instinct to act quickly without guidance. The orcas relied on learning and teamwork over time. Both types of behavior helped animals survive in their environments, even though they developed in different ways.

33 As Nyla left the aquarium, she compared the two examples in her mind. The turtles had been born with a behavior that helped them move toward the ocean right away. That instinct helped them during a dangerous time when there was no chance to stop and learn. The orcas survived by gaining knowledge from their pod. Their learned behaviors helped them hunt in groups and respond to different situations in the ocean.

34 Nyla realized that survival could look different for different animals. Some behaviors are present from birth, like turtle hatchlings moving toward the sea. Other behaviors develop through practice, like orcas hunting in a group. Instinct helps an animal act right away, while learning helps an animal improve over time. Both are important because both increase an animal's chances of survival.

35 On the ride home, Nyla looked out the window and pictured the beach again. She imagined the tiny turtles pushing across the sand, guided by instinct. Then she pictured the orcas swimming together, guided by learning and teamwork. Both animals lived in or near the ocean, but they used different behaviors to meet their needs.

36 By the end of the day, Nyla had learned that animal behavior is not always the same. A tiny turtle and a giant orca may both be connected to the ocean, but they survive in different ways. The turtle's instinct gives it a quick start in life. The orca's learned behavior helps it become a strong member of its pod. Nyla smiled because both examples showed how animals are equipped to meet the challenges of their environments.

A phrase I want to remember

My Words: One new word I learned today: _____

Annotate: From Tension to Revolution

Time, reactions, actions, characters, and key knowledge that show how taxes, protests, and resistance pushed the colonies toward revolution.

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 Ocean Lesson

Time, reactions, actions, characters, and key knowledge that show how instinct and learned behavior help animals survive.

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 what the evidence means and why it matters?

My thinking

My Prompt Marking Notes

The prompt gives me a topic, a charge, and a WHY or HOW word. I can use the shapes to slow down and see the job.

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?

Circle the topic in red. Box the charge in yellow. Triangle the WHY or HOW word in green.

Why did colonists protest British laws?

My three marks in words

STUDENT WORKBOOK

 Day 1: Gather + Reveal



I gather the difference between naming something and explaining it

Our Question for Today

Which line explains what the evidence means and why it matters?

1. Gather: Meaning Maker Warm-Up

Hold up an ordinary classroom object such as a pencil or a sticky note. Do not name it yet. Tell your partner what it does. Then tell why it matters.

- It helps you write.
- It keeps papers together.
- It matters because it helps organize things.

This object does ____ and it matters because ____

2. Gather: Compare Two Responses

Compare a response that repeats the evidence with one that explains what the evidence means.

Response	What it does
"They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..."	Repeats the evidence. It adds no meaning.
This shows that the colonists believed British rule was unfair and wanted change.	Explains what the evidence means.

The stronger response is number ____ because ____

Day 1: Reveal, continued

3. Reveal: The Job of Explanation

An explanation tells what the evidence **MEANS**. It helps the reader understand why the evidence **MATTERS**. An explanation is not another **QUOTE** from the passage. An explanation is your **THINKING** about the quote.

Part	Job
Meaning	what the proof means.
Connection	how the proof connects to the thesis (central idea).
Why It Matters	why the proof is important to the reader.

4. Reveal: The Two Bookends

Bookend	Starter
Definition	this means / this shows
Story	this reminds me of / this makes me think of
Pointing Word	this points back to nearby evidence

The word this points back to nearby evidence. This is a demonstrative pronoun.

One bookend I want to try is ____ because ____

5. Fill In What You Hear

Sentence	My word
An explanation tells what the evidence _____.	
An explanation helps the reader understand why the evidence _____.	
An explanation is not another _____ from the passage.	
An explanation is your _____ about the quote.	
The word _____ points back to nearby evidence.	
Good explanations connect to the _____ (central idea).	

Check My Thinking

- ☐ Evidence = proof from the text.
- ☐ Explanation = what the proof means.
- ☐ I can name the two bookends: Definition and Story.
- ☐ I can say why the evidence matters.

? Which word points back to nearby evidence?

Evidence = proof from the text. Explanation = ____

6. Check My Thinking

- ☐ I can tell what an explanation means.
- ☐ I can tell why an explanation matters.
- ☐ I can name the two bookends: Definition and Story.
- ☐ I can say why the evidence matters.

One idea I want to remember about explanation

STUDENT WORKBOOK



EXPLANATION RELAY RACE

Day 2: Attempt

✂ Cut out these cards

Cut on the dashed lines. Keep the 3 explanation-part cards in the middle of the table and the 5 match cards in a stack. Store all cards in your Pocket Practice.

MEANING	CONNECTION
WHY IT MATTERS	"They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..."
This shows that the colonists believed British rule was unfair and wanted change.	This means the turtles do not have time to be taught because survival must happen immediately.
This makes me think of a younger student learning from an older classmate during partner work.	The ocean is a place with water.

Self-Check (back of cards)

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.

CONNECTION how the evidence connects to the thesis (central idea).	MEANING what the evidence means.
Evidence, a quote from the passage	WHY IT MATTERS why the proof is important to the reader.
Explanation, Definition bookend	Explanation, Definition bookend
Weak, it does not explain the quote's meaning	Explanation, Story bookend

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 2: Attempt



I race to match a thesis (central idea), evidence, and the strongest explanation

Our Question for Today

How can a reader tell the difference between evidence and explanation?

1. Play It: Explanation Relay Race

- A student draws a Thesis (central idea) Card.
- Another student draws the matching Evidence Card.
- The team chooses the best Explanation Card.
- If the match is correct, the team moves one space.
- If the team explains why, it moves an extra space.
- Repeat the chant before the next round: "I'm explaining now!"

2. Show My Score

Round	1	2	3	4	5
My partner					
My point					

The card that was hardest to match was ____ because ____

Day 2: Attempt, continued

3. Talk About It

Say why one card matched one sentence. Did the explanation add meaning, or did it repeat the quote?

This card matched because ____

4. Look at Card 5 and Card 7

Card 5 is evidence, not explanation. Card 7, "The ocean is a place with water," is weak because it does not explain the quote's meaning. A strong explanation names what the evidence proves and how it connects to the thesis (central idea).

Card 7 is weak because ____

5. Whole-Class Check

- ☐ I can sort evidence from explanation.
- ☐ I can choose the explanation that adds meaning.
- ☐ I can defend my match with a reason.
- ☐ I noticed a weak explanation and said why.

One explanation habit my team used well

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 3: Discuss + Use

I explain my thinking



Our Question for Today

What makes an explanation more than a restatement?

1. Discuss

Explain your reasoning, not just your answer.

Question	My thinking
What does an explanation tell the reader?	
How is explanation different from evidence?	
How does the word this point back to nearby evidence?	
What makes a weak explanation weak?	
Why does the explanation help the reader understand the thesis (central idea)?	

My discussion notes



2. Use: Try It On Your Own!

Title the page "Thesis (central idea) + Evidence + Explanation." Copy the thesis (central idea) and the evidence sentence. Add one explanation using Definition or Story. Check the first word of each sentence and the last punctuation mark. Use stronger vocabulary from the Thinking Levels Chart if possible.

Practice Set	Thesis (central idea) and Evidence
Set 1	Thesis (central idea): The colonists protested British laws because they were treated unfairly. Evidence: "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..."
Set 2	Thesis (central idea): Sea turtles survive dangerous moments because instinct guides them. Evidence: "Their instinct guided them through the transition from sand to ocean..."
Set 3 (Story)	Thesis (central idea): Orcas succeed because they learn from older members of their group. Evidence: "Young orcas observe older members of their group."
Set 4	Thesis (central idea): Setting influences behavior in both passages through conflict, instinct, and learning. Evidence: "Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty helped organize resistance..."

My explanation for Set 1

My explanation for Set 2

My explanation for Set 3 or Set 4, and the bookend I used

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 4: Award + Target



I notice evidence of my growth

Our Question for Today

What did my brain learn to do this week that it could not do before?

1. Award

Identify one explanation sentence that made your thinking visible to the reader. Point to that sentence in your notebook.

Award	What I write
Explanation Glow Line	One explanation habit I used well today was _____.
Bookend Badge	I used this explanation type well because _____.
Partner Praise	You explained clearly when you _____.

My award, and the sentence in my notebook that shows it

2. Target My Next Step

Choose one explanation habit to strengthen: clarity, connection, deeper meaning, or avoiding repetition.

- ☐ explain more clearly what the quote means
- ☐ use "this shows" correctly
- ☐ use "this reminds me of" correctly
- ☐ connect the explanation to the thesis (central idea)
- ☐ capitalize the first word and punctuate the last word
- ☐ use stronger words from the Thinking Levels Chart

My target: Next time I will ____

3. Curiosity Questions

- Why is a quote not enough by itself?
- How does the word this make explanation stronger?
- When would a Story explanation help a reader most?
- How does setting affect the explanation in these passages?
- Why does building on earlier lessons help the brain remember more?

My next target, and why I chose it

STUDENT WORKBOOK



Day 5: Explain/Educate



I teach someone else

Our Question for Today

How would I teach someone else to explain evidence?

1. Explain: Turn and Teach

- Partner A reads the thesis (central idea) and evidence, explains what the quote means using one starter, and says whether the explanation used Definition or Story.
- Partner B listens, checks whether the explanation connects back to the evidence, says one strength, and suggests one way to make it clearer.
- Switch roles and repeat with a new set.

Set	Thesis (central idea), Evidence, and Possible Explanation
Set 1	The colonists protested British laws because they were treated unfairly. Evidence: "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..." Possible explanation: This shows that the colonists believed they deserved a say in decisions that affected them.
Set 2	Sea turtles survive dangerous moments because instinct guides them. Evidence: "Their instinct guided them through the transition from sand to ocean..." Possible explanation: This means the turtles do not need to stop and learn because survival must happen right away.
Set 3	Orcas succeed because they learn from older members of their group. Evidence: "Young orcas observe older members of their group." Possible explanation: This makes me think of a new player learning from an experienced teammate.

I taught my partner ____

2. Sentence Stems for Teaching

- This explanation is strong because _____.
- The word "this" points back to _____.
- A clearer explanation would say _____.
- This explanation type is _____.

3. Educate: Answer the Overarching Question

Explanation tells what evidence means, connects it to the thesis (central idea), and shows why the proof matters rather than repeating it.

In my own words, a strong explanation ____

Check My Teaching

- ☐ I heard an explanation instead of a repeated quote.
- ☐ The explanation connected back to the evidence.
- ☐ My partner used Definition or Story correctly.
- ☐ My partner used stronger vocabulary from the Thinking Levels Chart.

One thing my partner taught me

4. Transfer: Day 5 Exit Ticket

Read the evidence from one of the two passages. Write an explanation sentence using Definition or Story. Make sure the explanation adds meaning, connects to the thesis (central idea), and is a complete sentence.

Circle the topic in red. Box the charge in yellow. Triangle the WHY or HOW word in green.

Why did colonists protest British laws?

Evidence: The text states, "They argued that it was unfair to be taxed without a voice..."

This sentence is: EVIDENCE or EXPLANATION

My bookend: Definition or Story

Write one explanation sentence that tells what the evidence means and why it matters

Use evidence from "The Ocean Lesson" and write a second explanation that connects to a thesis (central idea)

☐ I circled the topic in red.



Write More

Plan, draft, revise, edit, and share



My Writing Assignment

Write an explanation sentence that tells what the evidence means and why it matters. Choose evidence from "From Tension to Revolution" and "The Ocean Lesson." Write a thesis (central idea), copy the evidence, and add an explanation using Definition or Story. Connect the explanation back to the thesis (central idea).

Circle the topic in red. Box the charge in yellow. Triangle the WHY or HOW word in green.

Why did colonists protest British laws?

My Plan

- DOT unfamiliar words and TAP the TRACKS to find evidence.
- Write a thesis (central idea) that gives the reader the main idea.
- Copy one evidence sentence from each assigned passage.
- Choose Definition or Story for each explanation.
- Write what each piece of evidence means in your own thinking.
- Show why each piece of evidence matters and how it supports the thesis (central idea).
- Revise sentence structure and word choice, then edit capitalization, punctuation, and subject-verb agreement.

One explanation for each passage

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

[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 explanation adds meaning instead of repeating the quote.
- ☐ I used a Definition or Story bookend.
- ☐ My explanation connects back to the thesis (central idea).
- ☐ I revised one sentence for clearer word choice.

Edit

- ☐ Every sentence is complete with a subject and a verb.
- ☐ I capitalized the first word of every sentence.
- ☐ I punctuated the last word of every sentence.
- ☐ I used a capital letter for Parliament, Samuel Adams, Nyla, and orcas.
- ☐ 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 explanation 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 topic, charge, and WHY or HOW word.	
Thesis (central idea)	I wrote a thesis (central idea) that my evidence can support.	
Evidence	I copied exact evidence from both passages.	
Explanation	I explained what the evidence means and why it matters without repeating it.	
Bookend and word choice	I used Definition or Story correctly and chose precise words.	

Study the Samples

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

Why did colonists protest British laws?

Low

This shows they were taxed without a voice.

What is missing: the sentence repeats the evidence in slightly different words and does not add meaning. Add what the quote means.

Medium

This shows the colonists were unhappy.

What is missing: the meaning is general. It names a feeling instead of the larger idea the evidence points toward.

High

This shows that the colonists believed they should have a voice in decisions that affected them, which is why unfair taxation pushed them to protest.

Why it works: the Definition explanation tells what the quote means, connects the meaning back to the thesis (central idea) about protest, and shows why the evidence matters.

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 the difference between evidence and explanation.	☐	☐	☐
Write an explanation that tells what the evidence means.	☐	☐	☐
Use the Definition bookend, this means or this shows.	☐	☐	☐
Use the Story bookend, this reminds me of or this makes me think of.	☐	☐	☐
Connect my explanation back to the thesis (central idea).	☐	☐	☐
Keep the evidence separate from my own thinking.	☐	☐	☐
Say why the evidence matters.	☐	☐	☐
Name my next explanation goal.	☐	☐	☐

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 a strong explanation turn evidence into clear meaning for the reader?

The answer

Explanation tells what evidence means, connects it to the thesis (central idea), and shows why the proof matters rather than repeating it.

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 prompt from your day. Say the topic, charge, and WHY or HOW word. Then take one quote from a passage and write an explanation that tells what it means and why it matters.

My new quote and its explanation

Take It Further! Explanation Upgrade Challenge

Choose one prompt from the Prompt Bank and build a complete response: How does setting influence behavior in both passages?

- Write the prompt and name the topic, charge, and WHY or HOW word.
- Write a thesis (central idea) that answers the exact prompt.
- Copy one exact evidence sentence from a passage.
- Write an explanation using Definition or Story.
- Connect the explanation to the thesis (central idea) and show why the evidence matters.
- Write a second explanation for the same evidence and decide which is stronger.
- Present your response to the class in one minute or less.
- Find one classmate whose explanation is different from yours, and tell why theirs also works.

My two explanations, and the stronger one

My Explanation Upgrade Challenge

Write your two explanations side by side in the box below. Circle the one that connects more clearly to the thesis (central idea).

At-Home Connection

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

This Means

Share a fact. Ask, "What does that mean, and why does it matter?" Answer with "this means" or "this shows," then connect the meaning to a larger idea.

Ask them: what does that mean, and why does it matter?

Family member signature: _____

This Reminds Me Of

Share a fact from one passage. Say, "This reminds me of _____," or "This makes me think of _____," and explain how the story makes the evidence clearer.

Ask them: how does the story make the evidence clearer?

Family member signature: _____

Teach the Connection

Read a thesis (central idea) and evidence sentence to a family member. Add an explanation, name Definition or Story, and say why the evidence matters.

Ask them: was that a Definition or a Story explanation?

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 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
