

PUBLISHED TEXTS

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“recognize characteristics and structures of argumentative text by identifying the claim”

“compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using genre characteristics and craft”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

A letter can share facts and an opinion with one reader.

A writer can answer a request by giving a reason.

A polite question can help a reader think about the writer’s side.

THIS WEEK’S FOCUS

Answering a Request Politely

from “Letter to Grace Bedell” by Abraham Lincoln (1860)

Grace asked Lincoln to grow whiskers. Lincoln answers her kindly, gives his reason for saying no, and asks her a question to help her see his side. This week we study how a letter writer answers a request with reasons.

This deck teaches **argumentative author craft and composition** across the five RPLD thinking levels:

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



Read the published text.

Eleven-year-old Grace Bedell wrote to Abraham Lincoln and told him to grow whiskers. This is his answer. Read it twice.

Letter to Grace Bedell (excerpt)

MY DEAR LITTLE MISS:--Your very agreeable letter of the 15th is received.

I regret the necessity of saying I have no daughter. I have three sons--one seventeen, one nine, and one seven. They with their mother constitute my whole family. As to the whiskers, as I have never worn any, do you not think that people would call it a piece of silly affectation were I to begin wearing them now?

I am your true friend and sincere well-wisher,

A. LINCOLN.

SOURCE · PUBLIC DOMAIN

Abraham Lincoln, Letter of October 19, 1860, from The Papers and Writings of Abraham Lincoln (public domain, Project Gutenberg #3253)

ICAN | I can read a published argumentative text and notice the author's craft move.





TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

“I can notice the parts of a letter.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“recognize characteristics and structures of argumentative text by identifying the claim”

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Notice the parts of the letter.

Find the greeting, the facts Lincoln shares, the opinion question, and the closing.

Greeting: MY DEAR LITTLE MISS

Closing: I am your true friend and sincere well-wisher

I CAN | I can notice the greeting, the body, and the closing of a letter.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose the reason the writer gives.”

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Choose Lincoln's reason.

Why does Lincoln think he should not grow whiskers?

A His sons do not like whiskers.

B Grace's letter was not agreeable.

C People might think it was silly to start now.

I CAN | I can choose the reason that supports the writer's answer.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can show how a question helps a reader think.”

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Show how the question works.

Lincoln asks, “do you not think...?” How does a question help Grace see his side?

He does not say “No.”

He asks **do you not think, so Grace thinks about it with him.**

I CAN | I can show how a polite question invites the reader to agree.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can answer a request with a reason and a question.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

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Own it. Try the craft move.

Someone asks you to do something you do not want to do. Answer politely with a reason and a question.

Dear _____,
Thank you for _____. I do not think _____ because _____.
Do you not think _____?

I CAN | I can write a polite answer with a reason and a question.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend why a kind tone matters."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

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Defend the author's choice.

Lincoln was very busy. Why did he take time to answer a child kindly?

"Your very agreeable letter"
"your true friend and sincere well-wisher"

I CAN

I can defend why the writer's kind words make the letter stronger.



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Write your own reply letter.

Pretend a friend wrote you with an idea. Write back with your opinion, a reason, and a kind closing.

Begin with a greeting and thank your friend.
Give your opinion and one reason.
End with a kind closing and your name.

I CAN | I can write a letter that gives my opinion, a reason, and a kind closing.



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Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE Greeting: My Dear Little Miss. Facts: he has no daughter and three sons. Opinion question: the whiskers question. Closing: your true friend and sincere well-wisher.

CHOOSE C. Lincoln says people would call it **a piece of silly affectation** if he began wearing them now.

SHOW A question invites Grace to think it through and agree on her own. It sounds kind, not bossy.

OWN Answers vary. One example: **Dear Sam, thank you for asking me to skip recess to play inside. I do not think I should, because I need to run. Do you not think we would both feel better outside?**

DEFEND Kind words show Lincoln respected Grace. A reader who feels respected listens to the reason, even when the answer is no.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Check for a greeting, a clear opinion, one reason, and a closing.



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READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT • FROM “RAIN, FROM THE STORY-BOOK OF SCIENCE” (JEAN-HENRI FABRE, 1917)

“A continual evaporation takes place on the surface of the damp earth as well as on the surface of the different sheets of water, lakes, ponds, marshes, streams, and above all the sea. The vapors formed rise into the air and remain invisible as long as the heat is sufficient. But since heat diminishes as the height increases, there comes a time when the vapors can no longer be kept in complete solution, and they condense into a mass of visible vapor, into a fog or cloud.”

What happens to the vapor when the air high up gets colder?

- A** It turns into the sea.
- B** It condenses into a fog or cloud.
- C** It becomes invisible forever.
- D** It rises faster and faster.

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The answer is B.

A **It turns into the sea.**

The sea is where some vapor starts, not where it goes when air cools.

B **It condenses into a fog or cloud.**

B **Correct.**

The text says the vapors condense into a mass of visible vapor, into a fog or cloud.

C **It becomes invisible forever.**

The vapor is invisible only while it is warm enough. Cold makes it visible.

D **It rises faster and faster.**

The text says heat diminishes as height increases. It does not say the vapor speeds up.

