

PUBLISHED TEXTS

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“recognize characteristics and structures of informational text, including the central idea with supporting evidence”

“compose informational texts, including brief compositions that convey information about a topic, using a clear central idea and genre characteristics and craft”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

Informational text teaches the reader true facts about a topic.

Some informational writers explain how something happens, step by step.

Order words help my reader follow each step.

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

Explaining Steps in Order

from “The Spider’s Web” by Jean-Henri Fabre (1917)

Fabre explains how a spider builds its web, one step at a time. Words like first, begins, then, and second help the reader follow the order. This week we study how informational writers explain a process.

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

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



Read the published text.

Jean-Henri Fabre was a scientist who watched insects and spiders. Read how a garden spider, the epeira, starts its web. Read it twice.

The Spider's Web (excerpt)

Since it must serve as a support to the silken network, the first thread stretched from one bank to the other must be of exceptional firmness. The epeira begins, therefore, by fixing both ends well; then, going and coming on the thread from one extremity to the other, always spinning, it doubles and trebles the strands and sticks them together in a common cable. A second similar cable is necessary, placed beneath the first in an almost parallel direction. It is between the two that the web must be spun.

SOURCE · PUBLIC DOMAIN

Jean-Henri Fabre, *The Story-Book of Science*, tr. Florence Constable Bicknell, The Century Co., 1917 (public domain, Project Gutenberg #56795)

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





TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice order words in a process."

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Notice the order words.

Find the words that tell the order of the spider's steps.

the first thread • The epeira begins
then, going and coming • A second similar cable

I CAN | I can notice the words that show the order of the steps.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose the first step in a process.”

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Choose the first step.

What does the spider do first?

A It spins the web between two cables.

B It fixes both ends of the first thread well.

C It places a second cable underneath.

I CAN | I can choose the first step the writer explains.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can show how one fact explains another.”

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Show why the first thread matters.

Why must the first thread be so strong?

The first thread is the **support for the whole web.
So it **must be of exceptional firmness.****

I CAN | I can show how the writer explains why a step matters.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can explain a process with order words.”

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Own it. Try the craft move.

Explain how to do something you know well in three steps. Use order words.

First, _____.

Then, _____.

Last, _____.

I CAN | I can write steps in order with order words.



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TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

“I can defend why steps teach more than one sentence.”

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Defend the author's choice.

Fabre could have written “Spiders make webs.” Why do the steps teach more?

“Spiders make webs.”

vs. thread, then cable, then a second cable, then the web. Which one teaches you how?

I CAN | I can defend why explaining each step helps the reader learn.



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Write your own how-it-works paragraph.

Pick something in nature or at school that happens in steps. Explain it in order.

Name the process in your first sentence.
Explain three or more steps with order words.
Tell why one step matters.

I CAN | I can write my own informational paragraph that explains steps in order.



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Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE first, begins, then, second. These words show the order of the steps.

CHOOSE B. The epeira **begins** by fixing both ends of the first thread well.

SHOW The first thread holds up the whole web, so it must be very strong. Fabre tells the reason before he tells the step.

OWN Answers vary. One example: **First, I fill the bowl with water. Then, I add the fish food. Last, I check that the fish eats it.**

DEFEND One sentence only names the topic. The steps teach how the spider actually builds, so the reader could picture it or even explain it to someone else.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Check for a topic sentence, order words, and at least one reason.



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READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT · FROM “THE CICADA AND THE ANT” (JEAN-HENRI FABRE, 1921)

“Now the insect in this fable could not possibly be a Cicada. La Fontaine, it is plain, was thinking of the Grasshopper and as a matter of fact the English translations usually substitute a Grasshopper for the Cicada.”

What is the author’s claim in this paragraph?

A The insect in the fable could not be a Cicada.

B English translations are always wrong.

C Ants are better neighbors than Cicadas.

D Cicadas sing all through the summer.



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The answer is A.

The insect in the fable could not be a Cicada.

A Correct.

Fabre states it directly: the insect in this fable could not possibly be a Cicada.

B English translations are always wrong.

He says translations usually substitute a Grasshopper. He does not say they are always wrong.

C Ants are better neighbors than Cicadas.

The paragraph is about which insect it is, not about good neighbors.

D Cicadas sing all through the summer.

That is a detail from the fable, not the author's claim.

