

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 writers can begin with a surprising fact.

A surprising fact makes the reader want to keep reading.

After the hook, the writer explains the facts clearly.

THIS WEEK’S FOCUS

A Surprising Fact Hooks the Reader

from “Paper” by Jean-Henri Fabre (1917)

Fabre opens with a surprise: beautiful paper comes from miserable rags. The surprise makes readers want to learn how. Then he explains each step. This week we study how informational writers hook the reader with a surprising fact.

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

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



Read the published text.

Long ago, paper was made from old cloth rags. Read how Fabre explains it. Read it twice.

Paper (excerpt)

Paper, real paper, that on which we write, of which we make books. The beautiful white sheets of your copybooks, the leaves of a book, even the costliest, gilt-edged and enriched with magnificent pictures, come to us from miserable rags.

They are thoroughly washed, for they need it. Now machines take them in hand. Scissors cut them, steel claws tear them, wheels make pulp of them and reduce them to shreds.

Other machines spread it in thin layers on sieves. Water drips through, and the rag soup forms into felt. Cylinders press this felt, others dry it, others give it a polish. The paper is finished.

SOURCE · PUBLIC DOMAIN

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

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



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TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a surprising fact."

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Notice the surprising fact.

Find the sentence that surprises the reader.

**The beautiful white sheets ...
come to us from miserable rags.**

I CAN | I can notice the surprising fact that hooks the reader.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose strong action verbs.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

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Choose the action verbs.

Which group of words shows what the machines do?

A cut, tear, make pulp, spread, press, dry

B beautiful, white, magnificent

C real, finished, thin

I CAN | I can choose the action verbs that explain each step.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can show the steps in order.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

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Show the steps from rags to paper.

Put the steps in order, from rags to finished paper.

washed → cut and torn → pulp
→ spread on sieves → pressed, dried, polished → paper

I CAN | I can show the order of steps in an informational text.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can hook my reader with a surprising fact.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

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Own it. Try the craft move.

Write a surprising first sentence about something you know, like how a tree becomes a pencil or how a seed becomes a pumpkin.

Did you know that _____ comes from _____?
Here is how it happens. _____.

I CAN | I can write a surprising fact to begin an informational paragraph.



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TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

“I can defend why a hook belongs first.”

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Defend the author's choice.

Why does Fabre start with the rags instead of the machines?

Start: miserable rags

End: The paper is finished. From the worst to the best.

I CAN | I can defend why a surprising beginning makes readers want the facts.



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Write your own informational paragraph.

Choose an everyday object. Hook your reader with a surprising fact, then explain how it is made.

Begin with a surprising fact.
Explain the steps with action verbs.
End with the finished product.

I CAN | I can write an informational paragraph that begins with a surprising fact.



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Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE Beautiful paper **comes to us from miserable rags**. Readers do not expect old rags to become books.

CHOOSE A. Action verbs show each step: cut, tear, make pulp, spread, press, dry, polish.

SHOW Rags are washed, cut and torn, made into pulp, spread on sieves, pressed, dried, and polished. Then the paper is finished.

OWN Answers vary. One example: **A giant pumpkin starts as a seed smaller than your fingernail.**

DEFEND Starting with rags makes readers curious how something so ugly becomes something so beautiful, so they read every step to find out.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Check for a surprising first sentence, steps in order, and strong action verbs.



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READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT · FROM “THE BOOK OF THE NATIONAL PARKS” (ROBERT STERLING YARD, 1919)

“This view entirely misses the point. The national parks are recreational, of course. So are state, county and city parks.”

How does the author answer the idea that parks are just playgrounds?

A He agrees that parks are only playgrounds.

B He says city parks should be closed.

C He says no one visits Yosemite.

D He says the view misses the point, while agreeing parks are recreational.

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The answer is D.

A He agrees that parks are only playgrounds.
He disagrees. He says the view misses the point.

B He says city parks should be closed.
He never says city parks should close.

C He says no one visits Yosemite.
That is not in the paragraph.

D **Correct.**
He writes This view entirely misses the point, then admits parks are recreational, of course.

