

PUBLISHED TEXTS

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“explain the author’s purpose and message within a text”

“compose literary texts, including personal narratives and poetry, using genre characteristics and craft”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

Published texts are real stories written by real authors and published for the world to read.

An author writes with a purpose, and the author’s message is the idea the story teaches.

When I study what an author did, I can try that same craft in my own writing.

THIS WEEK’S FOCUS

A Message the Reader Must Figure Out

from “The Mice in Council” (Aesop, 1867)

Some fables do not state the moral in words. The ending shows what happened, and the reader figures out the message. This week we read a published fable, notice the ending that teaches without telling, and try writing a story that lets the reader discover the lesson.

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

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



PUBLISHED TEXTS

Read the published fable.

This is the whole fable. Read it, then read it again. Notice that the author does not state the moral. The ending shows the message instead.

The Mice in Council

THE MICE summoned a council to decide how they might best devise means of warning themselves of the approach of their great enemy the Cat. Among the many plans suggested, the one that found most favour was the proposal to tie a bell to the neck of the Cat, so that the Mice, being warned by the sound of the tinkling, might run away and hide themselves in their holes at his approach.

But when the Mice further debated who among them should thus “bell the Cat,” there was no one found to do it.

SOURCE · PUBLIC DOMAIN

From Aesop’s Fables, translated by George Fyler Townsend, published 1867 (public domain)

I CAN | I can read a published fable and figure out the message the author does not state.

PUBLISHED TEXTS

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice the ending that shows the message without stating it."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"explain the author's purpose and message within a text"

"compose literary texts, including personal narratives and poetry, using genre characteristics and craft"

Notice the ending.

Read the last sentence. No mouse will do the job. What does that ending show the reader?

"But when the Mice further debated who among them should thus 'bell the Cat,'"

"there was no one found to do it."

I CAN | I can notice the ending that shows the message without stating it.



PUBLISHED TEXTS

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose the real message the ending shows.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“explain the author’s purpose and message within a text”

“compose literary texts, including personal narratives and poetry, using genre characteristics and craft”

Choose the real message.

The author never writes the moral. Which sentence best states the message the ending shows?

- A** “The Mice summoned a council to decide how they might best devise means of warning themselves.”
- B** “The one that found most favour was the proposal to tie a bell to the neck of the Cat.”
- C** It is easy to suggest a plan but hard to carry it out.

I CAN | I can choose the real message the ending shows.



PUBLISHED TEXTS

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can show how the ending proves the message.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“explain the author’s purpose and message within a text”

“compose literary texts, including personal narratives and poetry, using genre characteristics and craft”

Show how the ending proves the message.

The plan sounded good. Why did no mouse do it? How does that prove the message?

“The one that found most favour was the proposal to tie a bell to the neck of the Cat.”

“There was no one found to do it.”

I CAN | I can explain how the ending proves the author’s message.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write an ending that shows the message without stating it.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“explain the author’s purpose and message within a text”

“compose literary texts, including personal narratives and poetry, using genre characteristics and craft”

Own it. Try the craft move.

Write the ending of this story. Do not state the moral. Let the ending show the message, the way the fable did.

The students decided that someone should ask the principal for extra recess. Everyone cheered the idea. But when the teacher asked who would go to the office and ask, ...

I CAN | I can write an ending that shows the message without stating it.



PUBLISHED TEXTS

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

“I can defend why the author lets the reader figure out the message.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“explain the author’s purpose and message within a text”

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Defend the author’s choice.

The author could have written the moral at the end. Why is the message stronger when the reader must figure it out?

“There was no one found to do it.”

The fable ends right there. No moral sentence follows. Why does that make the message stick?



I can defend why the author lets the reader discover the message instead of stating it.



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Write your own fable.

Choose a group with a problem. Let them suggest a plan, then show that no one will do the hard part. Do not state the moral.

Choose a group with a problem.
Let them suggest a plan that sounds great.
End by showing that no one will do the hard part.

I CAN | I can write my own story that lets the ending show the message.



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Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE “**There was no one found to do it.**” The fable ends without a moral sentence. The ending itself is the message.

CHOOSE **C.** It is easy to suggest a plan but hard to carry it out. The other choices tell what happened, not the lesson.

SHOW The plan sounded great, but belling the Cat is dangerous. No mouse would risk it. The gap between the idea and the action proves the message.

OWN Answers vary. One example: “**... no one raised a hand.**” The ending shows the message without telling it.

DEFEND When the reader figures out the message, it feels like a discovery. The reader does the thinking, and the lesson sticks longer than if the author had just said it.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. One example: The birds agreed someone should chase the hawk away. They all looked at each other. **Not one bird flew forward.**



PUBLISHED TEXTS

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT · FROM “THE DOG AND THE SHADOW” (AESOP, TRANS. TOWNSEND, 1867)

“A Dog, crossing a bridge over a stream with a piece of flesh in his mouth, saw his own shadow in the water and took it for that of another Dog, with a piece of meat double his own in size. He immediately let go of his own, and fiercely attacked the other Dog to get his larger piece from him. He thus lost both: that which he grasped at in the water, because it was a shadow; and his own, because the stream swept it away.”

What message does the author want the reader to learn?

- A** Dogs should not cross bridges alone.
- B** Shadows in the water look bigger than real things.
- C** Be happy with what you have instead of wanting more.
- D** It is brave to fight for what you want.



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The answer is C.

A **Dogs should not cross bridges alone.**

The bridge is just the setting. The problem is the Dog's choice, not where he walks.

B **Shadows in the water look bigger than real things.**

That is a fact about shadows, not the message of the story. The message is about wanting more and losing what you have.

C **Be happy with what you have instead of wanting more.**

Correct.

The Dog already had a piece of meat. He grabbed for a bigger one that was only a shadow and lost everything. The author teaches that wanting more can cost you what you already have.

D **It is brave to fight for what you want.**

The story shows the opposite. The Dog fights for something that is not real and ends up with nothing.

