

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.

The Writing Academy®, LLC

Grade 3 · Prepare Cluster · Published Texts & Mentor Texts

TEKS 3.10(A) · 3.12(A) · Published Texts & Mentor Texts · Week 3 of 36 · Prepare Cluster · Module 3 · slide 1 of 11

TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 1 OF 11 ·

Introduce the Week

 ~5 min

“ ” = say word-for-word · ▶ = teacher direction (do not read aloud)

“This week we study a fable that does not state its moral. The ending shows the message, and the reader figures it out.”

▶ Show the cover. Read the exact TEKS wording aloud, then read the What does this mean to me box.

“Our mentor text is The Mice in Council, from the same 1867 Aesop collection. The mice have a great plan, but nobody will carry it out.”

▶ Point to the five thinking levels. Preview the week.

PREP & MATERIALS: the Published Texts and Mentor Texts slide deck for Prepare Cluster Module 3 · a class copy of “The Mice in Council” (Aesop, trans. Townsend, 1867, public domain) · the student tracking sheet · pencils

THE MENTOR TEXT

“But when the Mice further debated who among them should thus ‘bell the Cat,’ there was no one found to do it.” (The Mice in Council)

“A Dog, crossing a bridge over a stream with a piece of flesh in his mouth” (The Dog and the Shadow, test item)

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to say what it means when a story shows the message instead of telling it.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask how a fable with no moral sentence is different from the fables we read in Weeks 1 and 2.

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.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 11 ·

 ~6 min

Read the Published Text

“ ” = say word-for-word · ▶ = teacher direction (do not read aloud)

“This is our published mentor text. It is a very short fable, and the author ends it without writing a moral sentence. Listen for what the ending shows.”

▶ Read the source line aloud. Then read the fable aloud twice, slowly.

“As you listen, notice what happens at the very end. The mice have a plan, and then something does not happen. That is the message.”

▶ After reading, point to the last sentence. Ask students to read it once together. Do not explain the message yet.

“Now we will take turns reading. I read one sentence, then you read the next sentence. Keep your finger under each word.”

▶ Take Turns Reading (Fluency). Model sentence 1 with expression, then pause. The student reads sentence 2 while tracking with a finger or pointer. Keep alternating to the end, and praise expression. (ELPS 3(H), 3(A), 2(A))

ANSWER KEY: The fable ends with “there was no one found to do it.” The message is not stated. The ending shows that suggesting a plan is easy, but carrying it out is hard.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to point to the sentence that ends the story.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may look for a moral sentence. There is none. That is the craft move this week.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why is there no moral at the end? Because the author lets the ending show the lesson instead of telling it.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

This slide is the read the published text moment. Keep it joyful.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student what they think the mice are feeling at the end.

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.

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Grade 3 · Prepare Cluster · Published Texts & Mentor Texts · Monday

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 3 OF 11 ·

Monday · NOTICE · Foundational

~4 min

" " = say word-for-word · ▶ = teacher direction (do not read aloud)

"Today's thinking job is NOTICE. I can notice the ending that shows the message without stating it."

▶ Read the I can statement aloud, then the task on the slide.

"The mice agreed to bell the Cat. But when they asked who would do it, not one mouse stepped forward. That ending is the message."

▶ Read the last sentence aloud twice. Give think time, then have students write what the ending shows on the NOTICE row.

ANSWER KEY: "There was no one found to do it." The ending shows the message: it is easy to suggest a plan but hard to carry it out.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to say what the ending shows, in their own words.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may copy the plan (tie a bell on the Cat) instead of the ending. The task is the last sentence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What does "bell the Cat" mean? It means tie a bell around the Cat's neck so the mice can hear it coming.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about finding what the ending shows. Keep the demand at this level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student why the plan sounded so good at first.

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.

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Grade 3 · Prepare Cluster · Published Texts & Mentor Texts · Tuesday

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Tuesday · CHOOSE · Developing

~4 min

" " = say word-for-word · ▶ = teacher direction (do not read aloud)

"Today's thinking job is CHOOSE. I can choose the real message the ending shows."

▶ Read the I can statement aloud, then the task.

"The author never writes the moral. One of these sentences is the message the ending shows. The other two tell what happens in the story."

▶ Have students choose privately, then share with a partner.

ANSWER KEY: C. It is easy to suggest a plan but hard to carry it out. B and C tell what the mice did. The message is A, the lesson the ending shows.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to say why A is not the message.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may pick C because the bell plan is the most interesting detail. A detail is not the message.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How do I find the message if it is not written? Look at the ending and ask what lesson it teaches.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about selecting the real message.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name a time in real life when a group had a plan but no one would do the work.

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.

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Grade 3 · Prepare Cluster · Published Texts & Mentor Texts · Wednesday

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 5 OF 11 ·

Wednesday · SHOW · Independent

 ~4 min

" " = say word-for-word · ▶ = teacher direction (do not read aloud)

"Today's thinking job is SHOW. I can show how the ending proves the message."

▶ Read the I can statement aloud, then the task.

"The plan sounded perfect. Tie a bell on the Cat. But no mouse would risk getting close to the Cat. The gap between the plan and the action is what proves the message."

▶ Take two or three answers. Push students to name the gap between the idea and the doing.

ANSWER KEY: 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.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to name the gap between the plan and the action.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may say the mice were cowards. The story is about the difficulty of action, not about courage.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Could one brave mouse have belled the Cat? Maybe. But the point is that plans are easier than actions.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about explaining how the ending proves the message.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask what the author could have added to give a different 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.

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Grade 3 · Prepare Cluster · Published Texts & Mentor Texts · Thursday

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 6 OF 11 ·

Thursday · OWN · Advanced

 ~4 min

" " = say word-for-word · ▶ = teacher direction (do not read aloud)

"Today's thinking job is OWN. I can write an ending that shows the message without stating it."

▶ Read the I can statement aloud, then the task.

"Read the practice story. Students decided someone should ask the principal for extra recess. Everyone cheered. Write the ending. Do not state the moral. Let the ending show it."

▶ Give two minutes of quiet writing time. Have students write on the OWN row, then share two strong examples.

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary. One example: "... no one raised a hand." The ending shows the message without telling it.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an ending that shows the message, not one that states it.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write a moral sentence at the end. The craft move is no moral. The ending does the work.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if I want to add a moral? This week the craft move is showing, not telling. Save the moral for another fable.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN at Advanced is the first try at the craft move.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to read their ending and say what lesson the reader would figure out.

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"

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

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

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 7 OF 11 ·

Friday · DEFEND · Reflective

 ~4 min

" " = say word-for-word · ▶ = teacher direction (do not read aloud)

"Today's thinking job is DEFEND. I can defend why the author lets the reader figure out the message."

▶ Read the I can statement aloud, then the task.

"The author could have written the moral at the end. Instead, the story just stops. No one found to do it. Why does that make the message stronger?"

▶ Have students write a because statement on the DEFEND row, then share two strong answers.

ANSWER KEY: 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.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to explain how figuring it out makes the lesson stick.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may say the author forgot the moral. The author chose to leave it out on purpose.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Do all fables work this way? No. Some state the moral. This one hides it. Both are craft choices.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about justifying the author's craft choice.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student which they prefer, a stated moral or a hidden one, and why.

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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Independent Practice · YOUR TURN

 ~6 min

“ ” = say word-for-word · ▶ = teacher direction (do not read aloud)

“Now it is your turn to write like the author of the fable.”

▶ Read the Your Turn task. Students work independently on the tracking sheet.

“Choose a group with a problem. Let them suggest a plan that sounds great. Then end by showing that no one will do the hard part. Do not state the moral.”

▶ Circulate and note who can carry the whole move.

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

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for stories that end with a showing ending, not a stated moral.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may state the moral after the ending. Require no moral sentence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How long should my fable be? A few sentences are enough. The ending does the work.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the craft.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher whether their reader could figure out the lesson.

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.**

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Review the Answers

 ~4 min

“ ” = say word-for-word · ▶ = teacher direction (do not read aloud)

“Let’s check our work across the five thinking levels.”

▶ Reveal the answer slide one row at a time.

“If you missed one, that is where your learning is.”

▶ Celebrate students who wrote endings that show instead of tell.

ANSWER KEY: NOTICE: “There was no one found to do it.”; CHOOSE: C; SHOW: the gap between the plan and the action; OWN: Answers vary; DEFEND: the reader’s discovery sticks; YOUR TURN: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can explain how the ending shows the message.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Naming the plan without explaining why no one did it.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why is the message called unstated? Because the author never writes it as a sentence.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student what would change if the author had added a moral sentence.

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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Show What You Know

 ~4 min

“ ” = say word-for-word · ▶ = teacher direction (do not read aloud)

“Here is a test-style question on a different published fable, ‘The Dog and the Shadow.’”

▶ Read the excerpt and the question aloud.

“Read all four choices before you decide.”

▶ Give think time. Students choose privately.

ANSWER KEY: The answer is C.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students choose by the message the story teaches.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Choosing by a word they like. Check the message against the whole story.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Two choices seem close. Ask which message the story truly proves.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask why each wrong choice is wrong.

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.

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 ~4 min

The Answer, and Why

" " = say word-for-word · ▶ = teacher direction (do not read aloud)

"The correct answer is C. The most important part is understanding why."

▶ Reveal each choice's reason.

"Each wrong choice sounds like it could be a message, but it does not match what the story teaches."

▶ Have students write one sentence explaining why C is right.

ANSWER KEY: A dogs and bridges: the bridge is the setting.; B shadows look bigger: a fact, not a message.; Correct: C. Be happy with what you have instead of wanting more. The Dog grabbed for a bigger piece that was only a shadow and lost everything.; D brave to fight: the story shows the opposite.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can explain why the correct message fits.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why is C wrong if it is true? A true fact is not the same as the message of the story.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a new story where C would be the right message.