

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 Character Who Makes Excuses

from “The Fox and the Grapes” (Aesop, 1867)

Sometimes the author’s message is hidden inside what a character says. The Fox pretends the grapes are sour instead of admitting the truth. This week we read a published fable, notice the excuse the Fox makes, and try writing a character who makes excuses.

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

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

The Writing Academy®, LLC

Grade 3 · Cluster 1 · Published Texts & Mentor Texts

TEKS 3.10(A) · 3.12(A) · Published Texts & Mentor Texts · Week 5 of 36 · Cluster 1 · Module 1 · 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 where the message is hidden inside a character’s excuse. The reader has to figure out what the author really means.”

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

“Our mentor text is The Fox and the Grapes. The Fox pretends the grapes are sour instead of admitting the truth. This week we learn that craft move.”

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

PREP & MATERIALS: the Published Texts and Mentor Texts slide deck for Cluster 1 Module 1 · a class copy of “The Fox and the Grapes” (Aesop, trans. Townsend, 1867, public domain) · the student tracking sheet · pencils

THE MENTOR TEXT

“The Grapes are sour, and not ripe as I thought.” (The Fox and the Grapes)

“The Sun suddenly shone out with all his warmth.” (The North Wind and the Sun, test item)

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student what an excuse is, in their own words.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask how a hidden message is different from a stated message.

Read the published fable.

This is the whole fable. Read it, then read it again. Watch for the sentence where the Fox makes an excuse.

The Fox and the Grapes

A FAMISHED FOX saw some clusters of ripe black grapes hanging from a trellised vine. She resorted to all her tricks to get at them, but wearied herself in vain, for she could not reach them. At last she turned away, hiding her disappointment and saying:

“The Grapes are sour, and not ripe as I thought.”

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 find the sentence that hides the author’s message.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 2 OF 11 ·

Read the Published Text

 ~6 min

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

“This is our published mentor text. It is very short, only a few sentences, but the craft move is powerful.”

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

“As you listen, watch for the sentence where the Fox makes an excuse. Ask yourself if the Fox is telling the truth.”

▶ After reading, point to the Fox’s final words. Ask students to read them once together.

“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 Fox says “The Grapes are sour, and not ripe as I thought.” The author hides the message inside the excuse.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student whether the Fox is telling the truth.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may think the grapes really are sour. The author says the Fox is hiding her disappointment.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How do we know the Fox is lying? The story says she is hiding her disappointment. That word is the clue.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

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

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student what the Fox would say if she were honest.

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice the excuse the character makes at the end."

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 excuse.

Read the ending. Find the sentence where the Fox makes an excuse instead of telling the truth.

"At last she turned away, hiding her disappointment and saying:"
"The Grapes are sour, and not ripe as I thought."

I CAN | I can notice the excuse the character makes at the end of the fable.

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Grade 3 • Cluster 1 • 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 excuse the character makes at the end."

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

"The Fox tried everything and failed. Then she makes an excuse. Find the sentence where she pretends she did not want the grapes."

▶ Read the two sentences aloud twice. Give think time, then have students copy the excuse on the NOTICE row.

ANSWER KEY: "The Grapes are sour, and not ripe as I thought." The Fox makes an excuse instead of admitting she failed.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to read the excuse aloud.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may copy the whole ending. The excuse is one sentence.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What does she mean by not ripe? She is pretending the grapes were not good, even though they were ripe black grapes.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about finding the sentence.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student if they have ever said they did not want something after they could not get it.

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose the real message behind the excuse."

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 Fox says the grapes are sour. What is the author really teaching the reader?

A "She resorted to all her tricks to get at them."

B "A famished Fox saw some clusters of ripe black grapes."

C People sometimes pretend they did not want what they could not get.

I CAN | I can choose the real message the author hides behind a character's excuse.

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Grade 3 • Cluster 1 • Published Texts & Mentor Texts • Tuesday

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES • SLIDE 4 OF 11 •

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 behind the excuse."

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

"The Fox says the grapes are sour. What is the author really teaching? Choose the sentence that states the real message."

▶ Have students choose privately, then share.

ANSWER KEY: C. People sometimes pretend they did not want what they could not get. The other choices tell what happens, not the lesson.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

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

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may pick B because the Fox tried hard. Trying is the action, not the message.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How is the message different from the excuse? The excuse is what the Fox says. The message is what the author teaches.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about selecting the real message.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name a time people make excuses like this.

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can show how the story proves the Fox is making an excuse."

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 story proves it is an excuse.

What word tells us the Fox knows the grapes are not really sour?

"At last she turned away, *hiding her disappointment* and saying:"
"The Grapes are sour, and not ripe as I thought."

I CAN | I can explain how a specific word proves the character is making an excuse.

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Grade 3 • Cluster 1 • 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 story proves the Fox is making an excuse."

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

"The author planted a clue word. The word *hiding* tells us the Fox knows the truth. That word proves the excuse is a lie."

▶ Take two or three answers. Push students to name the clue word.

ANSWER KEY: The word "hiding" proves the Fox knows she is disappointed. She lies to herself. The author plants that clue so the reader sees through the excuse.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to point to the word that proves it is an excuse.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may say the Fox is just wrong about the grapes. The author says *hiding*, which means the Fox knows the truth.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if the grapes really were sour? The story says they were ripe black grapes. The Fox is making it up.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about explaining how a word proves the message.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student what other clue word the author could have used.

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write an excuse a character makes to hide the truth."

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 excuse the character makes. Show that the character is hiding disappointment, the way the Fox did.

A cat jumped again and again but could not reach the bird feeder. She walked away and said:

I CAN | I can write an excuse that hides a character's real feelings.

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Grade 3 • Cluster 1 • 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 excuse a character makes to hide the truth."

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

"Read the practice story. A cat tried to reach a bird feeder and failed. Write the excuse the cat makes when she walks away."

▶ 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: The cat said, "I did not want that food anyway. It probably tastes terrible."

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for an excuse that hides the real feeling.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write the truth instead of an excuse. The craft is the excuse, not honesty.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why would a character make an excuse? To protect their pride, just like the Fox.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

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

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to read their excuse and say what the character is really feeling.

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend why the author hides the message inside an excuse."

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 just written the lesson. Why is it stronger when the reader has to figure out the real message?

**"The Grapes are sour, and not ripe as I thought."
The reader has to notice that the Fox is lying. Why does that make the message stick?**

I CAN | I can defend why hiding the message inside an excuse makes the reader think harder.

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Grade 3 • Cluster 1 • Published Texts & Mentor Texts • Friday

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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 hides the message inside an excuse."

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

"The author could have just written the lesson. Why is it stronger when the reader has to figure out the real message?"

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

ANSWER KEY: When the reader figures out the lie, the message stays longer. The reader does the thinking, and that makes the lesson feel earned.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

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

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may say the Fox should just be honest. The point is why hiding the message makes the reader think.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Is it always better to hide the message? Not always. Some fables state it. This one hides it. Both work.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

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

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name another time a character's excuse teaches a lesson.

Write your own fable with a hidden message.

Choose an animal who cannot reach something it wants. End with the animal making an excuse.

**Choose an animal that wants something it cannot reach.
Show the animal trying and failing.
End with an excuse that hides the truth.**

I CAN | I can write my own story where the character's excuse hides the real message.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 8 OF 11 ·
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.

"Choose an animal that wants something it cannot reach. Show the animal trying and failing. End with an excuse that hides the truth."

▶ Circulate and note who can carry the whole move.

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary. One example: A raccoon stretched and stretched but could not open the trash can. He walked away and said, "That food smelled rotten anyway."

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for both a story and an excuse.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may forget the excuse. Require the ending line.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Can my animal be something besides a fox? Yes. Any animal works.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the craft.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to add a clue word like hiding.

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE “The Grapes are sour, and not ripe as I thought.” The Fox makes an excuse instead of admitting she failed.

CHOOSE C. The other choices tell what happens, not the lesson. The real message is that people pretend they did not want what they could not get.

SHOW The word “hiding” proves the Fox knows she is disappointed. She lies to herself. The author plants that clue so the reader sees through the excuse.

OWN Answers vary. One example: The cat said, “I did not want that food anyway. It probably tastes terrible.”

DEFEND When the reader figures out the lie, the message stays longer. The reader does the thinking, and that makes the lesson feel earned.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. One example: A raccoon stretched and stretched but could not open the trash can. He walked away and said, “That food smelled rotten anyway.”

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 9 OF 11 ·

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 named the clue word.

ANSWER KEY: NOTICE: “The Grapes are sour, and not ripe as I thought.”; CHOOSE: C; SHOW: the word hiding proves the lie; OWN: Answers vary; DEFEND: the reader does the thinking; YOUR TURN: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can explain how the word hiding proves the excuse.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Naming the excuse without naming the clue.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Can a message be hidden and stated? Some stories do both. This one hides it.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to invent a new clue word for a different story.

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT · FROM “THE NORTH WIND AND THE SUN” (AESOP, TRANS. TOWNSEND, 1867)

“The North Wind first tried his power and blew with all his might, but the keener his blasts, the closer the Traveler wrapped his cloak around him. The Sun suddenly shone out with all his warmth. The Traveler no sooner felt his genial rays than he took off one garment after another.”

What message does the author want the reader to learn?

- A** The sun is always stronger than the wind.
- B** Travelers should carry extra clothes.
- C** Winning a contest is the most important thing.
- D** Gentle persuasion works better than force.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 10 OF 11 ·

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 North Wind and the Sun.’”

▶ 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 D.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students choose by the message the story teaches.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Picking B because the Sun beat the Wind. The message is about gentleness, not strength.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How do I know A is right? The Wind used force and failed. The Sun used warmth and succeeded.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

A clean test item is DEFEND in action.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask why each wrong choice is wrong.

The answer is D.

The sun is always stronger than the wind.

- A** The story is not about weather power. It is about how you treat people. The Sun won by being gentle, not by being stronger.

Travelers should carry extra clothes.

- B** The cloak is a detail in the story, not the lesson. The message is about gentleness, not about clothing.

Winning a contest is the most important thing.

- C** The story is about how you win, not whether you win. The method matters more than the victory.

Gentle persuasion works better than force.

Correct.

- D** The Wind used force, and the Traveler held on tighter. The Sun used warmth, and the Traveler took off his cloak. The author teaches that kindness works when force fails.

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TEACHER SAYS & DOES · SLIDE 11 OF 11 ·

The Answer, and Why

 ~4 min

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

"The correct answer is D. 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 D is right.

ANSWER KEY: A sun is stronger than wind: the message is about method, not power.; B carry extra clothes: the cloak is a detail.; C winning a contest: the story is about how you win, not whether you win.; Correct: D. Gentle persuasion works better than force. The Wind blew hard and failed; the Sun shone warm and succeeded.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can explain why the correct message fits.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why is B wrong if the Sun won? Winning is the plot. The message is about how the Sun won: by being gentle.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a different story where B would be the right answer.