

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 Speaks the Lesson

from “The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse” (Aesop, 1867)

In this fable the Country Mouse speaks the message at the very end. He tells us that safety is worth more than fancy food. This week we read a published fable, notice the character’s final words, and try writing a character who states 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 · Cluster 1 · Published Texts & Mentor Texts

TEKS 3.10(A) · 3.12(A) · Published Texts & Mentor Texts · Week 6 of 36 · Cluster 1 · Module 2 · 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 character who learned the lesson states it at the end. The Country Mouse lives the danger and then speaks the message.”

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

“Our mentor text is The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse. The Country Mouse visits the town, faces danger, and then speaks the lesson.”

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

PREP & MATERIALS: the Published Texts and Mentor Texts slide deck for Cluster 1 Module 2 · a class copy of the excerpt from “The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse” (Aesop, trans. Townsend, 1867, public domain) · the student tracking sheet · pencils

THE MENTOR TEXT

“I prefer my bare plowlands and roots from the hedgerow, where I can live in safety, and without fear.” (The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse)

“Pray keep at a distance and do not come near me, for if you touch me ever so slightly, I shall be broken in pieces” (The Two Pots, test item)

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student what it means to live in safety and without fear.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask how this fable is different from The Lion and the Mouse.

Read the published fable (excerpt).

This excerpt shows the ending of the fable. Read it, then read it again. Listen for the sentence where the Country Mouse states the author's message.

The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse (excerpt)

Just as they were beginning to eat, someone opened the door, and they both ran off squeaking, as fast as they could, to a hole so narrow that two could only find room in it by squeezing. They had scarcely begun their repast again when someone else entered to take something out of a cupboard, whereupon the two Mice, more frightened than before, ran away and hid themselves. At last the Country Mouse, almost famished, said to his friend:

“Although you have prepared for me so dainty a feast, I must leave you to enjoy it by yourself. It is surrounded by too many dangers to please me. I prefer my bare plowlands and roots from the hedgerow, where I can live in safety, and without fear.”

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 where a character states 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. We are reading an excerpt, the ending of the fable. The Country Mouse has visited the town and found it full of danger.”

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

“As you listen, watch for the sentence where the Country Mouse speaks the author's message.”

▶ After reading, point to the Country Mouse'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 message is “I prefer my bare plowlands and roots from the hedgerow, where I can live in safety, and without fear.” The Country Mouse speaks it at the end.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to point to the sentence where the Country Mouse states the message.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may think “although you have prepared for me so dainty a feast” is the message. That is the goodbye. The message is the reason for leaving.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What are plowlands? Plowlands are farm fields. The Country Mouse lives on a farm.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

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

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student whether they would choose the town or the country, and why.

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice the message the character states 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 message.

Read the Country Mouse's final words. Find the sentence that states the author's message.

"I prefer my bare plowlands and roots from the hedgerow,"
"where I can live in safety, and without fear."

I CAN | I can notice the message a character states 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 message the character states at the end."

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

"The Country Mouse has decided to leave. Listen to the reason he gives. That reason is the message."

▶ Read the sentences aloud twice. Have students copy the message on the NOTICE row.

ANSWER KEY: "I prefer my bare plowlands and roots from the hedgerow, where I can live in safety, and without fear." The Country Mouse states the message at the end.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to read the message aloud.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may copy the farewell line. The message is the reason, not the goodbye.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why does the Country Mouse say bare plowlands? To show that even simple food is better when it comes with safety.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

NOTICE at Foundational is about finding the sentence.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student what the Country Mouse valued more than fancy food.

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose the sentence that best states the author's 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"

Choose the message.

Which sentence best states the author's message? Use the story to decide.

- A** "I prefer my bare plowlands and roots from the hedgerow, where I can live in safety, and without fear."
- B** "They both ran off squeaking, as fast as they could."
- C** "They both ran off squeaking, as fast as they could, to a hole so narrow that two could only find room in it by squeezing."

I CAN | I can choose the sentence that best states the author's message.

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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 sentence that best states the author's message."

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

"All three sentences come from the fable. Only one teaches the lesson."

▶ Have students choose privately, then share.

ANSWER KEY: A. "I prefer my bare plowlands and roots from the hedgerow, where I can live in safety, and without fear." B tells what happens (running). C is the goodbye.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

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

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may pick B because running is dramatic. Drama is the action, not the lesson.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How do I tell the goodbye from the message? The goodbye says I must leave. The message says why.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

CHOOSE at Developing is about selecting the message.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student what the Town Mouse might say in reply.

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can show how the story 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 story proves the message.

How do the dangers in the town prove the Country Mouse's message about safety?

"They had scarcely begun their repast again when **someone else entered...**
the two Mice, more frightened than before, **ran away and hid.**"

"I prefer my bare plowlands... where I can live in safety, and without fear."

I CAN | I can explain how the story's details lead to the author's message.

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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 message."

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

"Every time the mice tried to eat, someone opened a door and they ran. The repeated danger proves that safety matters more than fancy food."

▶ Take two or three answers. Push students to connect the danger to the message.

ANSWER KEY: Every time the mice tried to eat, someone opened the door and they ran. The repeated danger proves that safety matters more than fancy food.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to name one specific danger in the story.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may say the food was bad. The food was wonderful. The danger was the problem.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why does the danger happen more than once? Repetition makes the reader feel how constant the danger is.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

SHOW at Independent is about connecting story details to the message.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student what the story would teach if there were no danger at all.

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

"I can write a message where a character chooses safety over something fancy."

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 what this character says at the end. Let the character state the message, the way the Country Mouse did.

A small fish visited a coral reef full of bright colors and new food. But every time she ate, a bigger fish chased her away. At last she swam home and said:

I CAN | I can write a message where a character chooses something simple and safe.

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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 a message where a character chooses safety over something fancy."

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

"Read the practice story. A small fish visited a coral reef, but bigger fish chased her every time. Write what the fish says when she swims home."

▶ Give two minutes of quiet writing time. Then share two strong examples.

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary. One example: The fish said, "I would rather eat plain food in my own pond, where nothing chases me."

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for a message where the character chooses safety.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may write what happened instead of what the character says.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Does the character have to go home? The character needs to make a choice and speak the lesson.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

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

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student what makes their character's message feel earned.

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend why the author lets the character who learned the lesson state 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 narrator could have stated the lesson. Why is it stronger when the Country Mouse speaks it?

"I prefer my bare plowlands and roots from the hedgerow, where I can live in safety, and without fear."

The character who lived the danger speaks the message. Why does that make it stronger?

I CAN | I can defend why the author lets the character who lived the story state the lesson.

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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 lets the character who learned the lesson state the message."

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

"The narrator could have stated the lesson. Instead, the Country Mouse, who lived the danger, speaks it. Why does that make the message stronger?"

▶ Have students write a because statement on the DEFEND row.

ANSWER KEY: The Country Mouse felt the danger himself. He earned the right to state the lesson. A character who lived the experience makes the message feel real.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask a student to explain how living the danger gives the character authority.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may say characters always state messages. Sometimes narrators do. The point is why this character's voice works.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

What if the Town Mouse stated the lesson? The Town Mouse did not learn anything. The lesson belongs to the one who changed.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND at Reflective is about justifying the craft choice.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to name a book or movie where the character who changed states the lesson.

Write your own fable.

Choose an animal who visits a new place and finds it exciting but dangerous. End by letting the animal state the message.

Choose an animal who visits somewhere exciting but dangerous.
Show the danger.
End by letting the animal state the lesson in its own words.

I CAN | I can write my own story and let the character who learned the lesson state the 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 who visits somewhere exciting but dangerous. Show the danger. End by letting the animal state the lesson.”

▶ Circulate and note who can carry the whole move.

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary. One example: A rabbit visited a garden full of carrots, but a dog chased her every time. She went home and said, “My own patch is small, but I eat in peace.”

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for both a story and a spoken message.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Students may forget to let the character speak.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

How long should my fable be? A few sentences are enough.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice shows who owns the craft.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask an early finisher to add a second danger to make the message stronger.

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE “I prefer my bare plowlands and roots from the hedgerow, where I can live in safety, and without fear.” The Country Mouse states the message at the end.

CHOOSE A. B tells what happens (running away), and C describes the action of squeezing into the hole. A is the sentence that teaches the lesson.

SHOW Every time the mice tried to eat, someone opened a door and they ran. The repeated danger proves that safety matters more than fancy food.

OWN Answers vary. One example: The fish said, “I would rather eat plain food in my own pond, where nothing chases me.”

DEFEND The Country Mouse felt the danger himself. He earned the right to state the lesson. A character who lived the experience makes the message feel real.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. One example: A rabbit visited a garden full of carrots, but a dog chased her every time. She went home and said, “My own patch is small, but I eat in peace.”

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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 connected the dangers to the message.

ANSWER KEY: NOTICE: “I prefer my bare plowlands... where I can live in safety, and without fear.”; CHOOSE: A; SHOW: repeated danger proves safety matters; OWN: Answers vary; DEFEND: the character who lived it speaks it; YOUR TURN: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can explain how the story proves the message.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Naming the message without naming the danger.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why is the message called a lesson? Because the character learned it by living through the story.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reviewing is where OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student what would happen if the Country Mouse had stayed.

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT • FROM “THE TWO POTS” (AESOP, TRANS. TOWNSEND, 1867)

“A River carried down in its stream two Pots, one made of earthenware and the other of brass. The Earthen Pot said to the Brass Pot, ‘Pray keep at a distance and do not come near me, for if you touch me ever so slightly, I shall be broken in pieces, and besides, I by no means wish to come near you.’”

What message does the author want the reader to learn?

- A** Rivers are dangerous for things that float.
- B** Friends who are not equals can end up hurting each other.
- C** Brass is always stronger than clay.
- D** Pots should travel together for safety.

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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 Two Pots.’”

▶ 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 B.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students choose by the message the story teaches.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Picking B because rivers can be dangerous. The story is about unequal companions, not about rivers.

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 B.

- A Rivers are dangerous for things that float.**
The river is just the setting that carries them together. The message is about the two pots, not about rivers.
- B Friends who are not equals can end up hurting each other.**
Correct.
The Earthen Pot is fragile and the Brass Pot is strong. If they touch, only the Earthen Pot gets hurt. The author teaches that unequal companions can be dangerous for the weaker one.
- C Brass is always stronger than clay.**
That is a fact about materials, not the message. The message is about what happens when unequal friends get too close.
- D Pots should travel together for safety.**
The story shows the opposite. The Earthen Pot asks to stay apart because being close is the danger.

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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 B. 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 B is right.

ANSWER KEY: A rivers are dangerous: the river is the setting.; Correct: B. Friends who are not equals can end up hurting each other. The Earthen Pot is fragile and the Brass Pot is strong. If they touch, only the Earthen Pot gets hurt.; C brass is stronger than clay: a fact, not a message.; D pots should travel together: the story shows the opposite.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students can explain why B fits.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Knowing the answer but not why.

POSSIBLE STUDENT QUESTION

Why is C wrong if villages do need guards? The story is about trust that lying destroys.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Explaining the distractors is the highest DEFEND move.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask a student to write a modern version of this fable.