

PUBLISHED TEXTS

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

“recognize characteristics and structures of argumentative text by identifying the claim”

“compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using genre characteristics and craft”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

An argumentative essay states a claim and supports it.

A comparison can make a big idea easier to understand.

An example from real life shows the claim is true.

THIS WEEK’S FOCUS

A Comparison Makes a Claim Clear

from “**Sharp Eyes**” by John Burroughs (1886)

Burroughs claims that learning about nature gives you new and keener eyes. He compares nature’s facts to written words that we put into sentences, then gives a real example: an oriole. This week we study how a comparison makes a claim easy to understand.

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

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



Read the published text.

John Burroughs was a nature writer. In this essay he argues that we should learn to look closely at nature. Read it twice.

Sharp Eyes (excerpt)

Whenever you have learned to discriminate the birds, or the plants, or the geological features of a country, it is as if new and keener eyes were added.

Of course one must not only see sharply, but read aright what he sees. The facts in the life of Nature that are transpiring about us are like written words that the observer is to arrange into sentences.

A female oriole was one day observed very much preoccupied under a shed where the refuse from the horse stable was thrown. She hopped about among the barn fowls, scolding them sharply when they came too near her.

SOURCE · PUBLIC DOMAIN

John Burroughs, *Birds and Bees, Sharp Eyes, and Other Papers*, Houghton, Mifflin, 1887 edition (public domain, Project Gutenberg #3163)

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





TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice a comparison."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"recognize characteristics and structures of argumentative text by identifying the claim"

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Notice the comparison.

Find what Burroughs compares nature's facts to.

**The facts in the life of Nature ...
are like **written words** that the observer is to **arrange into sentences**.**

I CAN | I can notice the comparison the writer uses.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose the writer’s claim.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“recognize characteristics and structures of argumentative text by identifying the claim”

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Choose the claim.

Which sentence is Burroughs’s claim?

A Learning about nature is as if new and keener eyes were added.

B A female oriole was under a shed.

C She hopped about among the barn fowls.

I CAN | I can choose the sentence that states the claim.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can show how an example supports a claim.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“recognize characteristics and structures of argumentative text by identifying the claim”

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Show how the example supports the claim.

How does the oriole show that sharp eyes notice more?

Most people would not notice one bird.

A sharp observer sees her **very much preoccupied, searching for something.**

I CAN | I can show how a real example proves the claim.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can explain a claim with a comparison.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

“recognize characteristics and structures of argumentative text by identifying the claim”

“compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using genre characteristics and craft”

Own it. Try the craft move.

Make a claim about a skill. Explain it with a comparison: it is like _____.

Claim: Learning to _____ is important.

Comparison: It is like _____.

Example: One time _____.

I CAN | I can write a claim, a comparison, and an example.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend why a comparison helps."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

"recognize characteristics and structures of argumentative text by identifying the claim"

"compose argumentative texts, including opinion essays, using genre characteristics and craft"

Defend the author's choice.

Why does Burroughs compare nature to words and sentences?

Readers already know how to read words.
So they understand reading nature right away.

I CAN | I can defend why a familiar comparison makes a claim clearer.



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Write your own opinion essay opening.

Argue that something is worth paying close attention to. Use a comparison and one real example.

State your claim.

Add a comparison that explains it.

Prove it with one real example.

I CAN | I can write an argument that uses a comparison and an example.



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Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE He compares nature's facts to **written words** that an observer arranges into sentences.

CHOOSE **A.** The claim is that learning about nature gives you **new and keener eyes**. The oriole sentences are the example.

SHOW A careless person would miss the oriole. A sharp observer notices she is busy searching and wonders why, which proves that sharp eyes see more.

OWN Answers vary. One example: **Learning to listen is important. It is like turning up the volume on the world. Once I listened closely, I heard three different birds outside our classroom.**

DEFEND Readers already know how words make sentences. Comparing nature to reading turns a hard idea into a familiar one, so the claim is easier to accept.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Check for a claim, a comparison, and a real example.



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READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT • FROM “THE WILD PARKS AND FOREST RESERVATIONS OF THE WEST” (JOHN MUIR, 1901)

“The tendency nowadays to wander in wildernesses is delightful to see. Thousands of tired, nerve-shaken, over-civilized people are beginning to find out that going to the mountains is going home; that wildness is a necessity; and that mountain parks and reservations are useful not only as fountains of timber and irrigating rivers, but as fountains of life.”

What does the author mean by calling parks fountains of life?

- A** Rivers in parks are dangerous.
- B** Parks are full of water fountains.
- C** Wild places refresh and renew people.
- D** Parks are only useful for timber.



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The answer is C.

A Rivers in parks are dangerous.
He never says rivers are dangerous.

B Parks are full of water fountains.
The phrase is a metaphor, not real fountains.

C Wild places refresh and renew people.
Correct.
A fountain keeps flowing. Muir means wild places give people new life and energy.

D Parks are only useful for timber.
He says parks are useful not only for timber, but as fountains of life.

