

# PUBLISHED TEXTS

## EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

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

*“compose literary texts such as personal narratives and poetry using genre characteristics and craft”*

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

Published texts are real stories, poems, and books 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 text teaches or shows.**

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

## THIS WEEK’S FOCUS

### **Flexibility Beats Stubbornness**

from “The Oak and the Reeds” (Aesop, 1867)

Some fables teach through a contrast between two characters who face the same challenge differently. The Oak stands rigid and is destroyed by the wind. The Reeds bend and survive. The contrast IS the lesson. This week we study how two different responses to the same force teach the message.

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

**NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.**



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## Read the published fable.

This is the whole fable. Read it, then read it again. Watch for the contrast between the Oak and the Reeds.

### The Oak and the Reeds

A VERY LARGE OAK was uprooted by the wind and thrown across a stream. It fell among some Reeds, which it thus addressed: “I wonder how you, who are so light and weak, are not entirely crushed by these strong winds.” They replied, “You fight and contend with the wind, and consequently you are destroyed; while we on the contrary bend before the least breath of air, and therefore remain unbroken, and escape.”

**Stoop to conquer.**

SOURCE · PUBLIC DOMAIN

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

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

## PUBLISHED TEXTS

## TODAY'S THINKING JOB

## NOTICE

"I can notice the contrast between the Oak and the Reeds."

## EXACT TEKS WORDING

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

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## Notice the contrast.

Find what the Oak does and what the Reeds do. How are they different?

Oak: "**fight and contend** with the wind" → **destroyed**

Reeds: "**bend** before the least breath" → **unbroken**

**I CAN** | I can notice the contrast between the two characters' responses.



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## TODAY'S THINKING JOB

# CHOOSE

**“I can choose the real message.”**

### EXACT TEKS WORDING

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## Choose the message.

What lesson does the contrast teach?

**A** Flexibility and humility survive what rigidity cannot.

**B** “A very large Oak was uprooted by the wind.”

**C** “I wonder how you are not entirely crushed.”

**I CAN** | I can choose the message the contrast proves.



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## TODAY'S THINKING JOB

# SHOW

**“I can show how the contrast proves the message.”**

### EXACT TEKS WORDING

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

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## Show how the contrast works.

The Oak was strong. The Reeds were weak. Yet the Reeds survived. How does that reversal prove the message?

**The Oak was **large and strong** but is **destroyed**.**

**The Reeds were **light and weak** but **remain unbroken**. Strength lost; flexibility won.**

**I CAN** | I can show how the reversal of expectations proves the lesson.



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## TODAY'S THINKING JOB

# OWN

**“I can write a contrast that teaches a lesson.”**

### EXACT TEKS WORDING

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

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## Own it. Try the craft move.

Write two characters who face the same challenge differently. Let the outcome teach the lesson.

**A tall fence stood straight against the storm and cracked in half. A vine growing beside it bent flat to the ground and sprang back up when the storm passed. The vine said:**

**I CAN** | I can write two contrasting responses that prove a message.



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## TODAY'S THINKING JOB

## DEFEND

**“I can defend why contrast is stronger than telling.”**

## EXACT TEKS WORDING

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**Defend the author’s choice.**

The author could have written “Be flexible.” Why does the Oak-vs-Reeds contrast work better?

**“Be flexible” (told)  
vs. Oak destroyed, Reeds survive (shown). Which one makes the reader believe?**



I can defend why showing two contrasting outcomes is stronger than stating the lesson.



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## Write your own contrast fable.

Choose two characters who face the same challenge. Let one be rigid and one be flexible. Show the outcome, then let the flexible one speak the lesson.

**Choose two characters facing the same challenge.**  
**One is rigid, one is flexible.**  
**Show the outcome, then let the survivor speak the lesson.**

**I CAN** | I can write my own fable where contrasting responses teach the message.



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Answers, across the five thinking levels.

**NOTICE** The Oak **fight**s the wind and is destroyed. The Reeds **bend** and survive. The contrast IS the lesson.

**CHOOSE** **A.** Flexibility survives what rigidity cannot. B and C are story details.

**SHOW** The reader expects the strong Oak to win. When it loses, the reversal proves that flexibility, not strength, is what saves you.

**OWN** Answers vary. One example: The vine said, “**You stood tall and proud, but the storm was taller. I bowed, and the storm passed over me.**”

**DEFEND** Saying “be flexible” is forgettable. Watching the Oak lose and the Reeds win makes the reader feel the lesson. The contrast is the proof.

**YOUR TURN** Answers vary. One example: A stiff branch snapped under the snow. A willow branch drooped to the ground and bounced back when the snow melted.



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READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT • FROM “THE THIEF AND THE HOUSEDOG” (AESOP, TRANS. TOWNSEND, 1867)

**“A Thief came in the night to break into a house. He brought with him several slices of meat in order to pacify the Housedog. As the Thief threw him the pieces of meat, the Dog said, ‘If you think to stop my mouth, you will be greatly mistaken. This sudden kindness at your hands will only make me more watchful, lest under these unexpected favours to myself, you have some private ends to accomplish for your own benefit, and for my master’s injury.’”**

**What message does the author want the reader to learn?**

**A** Sudden kindness from a stranger may hide a selfish purpose.

**B** Dogs should never accept food from strangers.

**C** Thieves always carry meat with them.

**D** Housedogs are the smartest animals.

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The answer is A.

**Sudden kindness from a stranger may hide a selfish purpose.**

**Correct.**

**A**

The Dog sees through the bribe. The meat is not a gift; it is a tool. The author teaches that unexpected generosity from someone you do not know should make you cautious, not grateful.

**Dogs should never accept food from strangers.**

**B**

The story uses a dog to make a point about people. The message is about suspicious kindness, not about feeding dogs.

**Thieves always carry meat with them.**

**C**

The meat is a story detail. The message is about why sudden kindness should raise suspicion.

**Housedogs are the smartest animals.**

**D**

The Dog is wise in this story, but the message is about recognizing hidden motives, not about ranking animals.

