

# 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

### Mystery in a Poem

from “Windy Nights” by Robert Louis Stevenson (1885)

A poet can create mystery by describing something without fully explaining it. Stevenson describes a rider galloping through the night but never says who the rider is. The unanswered question IS the craft move. This week we study how mystery pulls the reader in.

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

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



## Read the published poem.

Read it aloud slowly. Listen for the mystery. Who is the rider? The poet never tells.

### Windy Nights

Whenever the moon and stars are set,  
Whenever the wind is high,  
All night long in the dark and wet,  
A man goes riding by.  
Late in the night when the fires are out,  
Why does he gallop and gallop about?

Whenever the trees are crying aloud,  
And ships are tossed at sea,  
By, on the highway, low and loud,  
By at the gallop goes he.  
By at the gallop he goes, and then  
By he comes back at the gallop again.

SOURCE • PUBLIC DOMAIN

From *A Child's Garden of Verses* by Robert Louis Stevenson, published 1885 (public domain)

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



## PUBLISHED TEXTS

## TODAY'S THINKING JOB

## NOTICE

**"I can notice the mystery the poet creates."**

## EXACT TEKS WORDING

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

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

## Notice the mystery.

Find the question the poet asks but never answers. What makes it mysterious?

**"Why does he gallop and gallop about?"**

**The poet describes the rider but never says who he is or why he rides.**

**I CAN** | I can notice the unanswered question that creates mystery.



# PUBLISHED TEXTS

## TODAY'S THINKING JOB

# CHOOSE

**“I can choose the line that builds the most mystery.”**

### EXACT TEKS WORDING

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

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

## Choose the most mysterious line.

Which line makes the mystery feel strongest?

**A** “By at the gallop he goes, and then / By he comes back at the gallop again”

**B** “Whenever the moon and stars are set”

**C** “And ships are tossed at sea”

**I CAN** | I can choose the line that builds the strongest sense of mystery.



# PUBLISHED TEXTS

## TODAY'S THINKING JOB

# SHOW

**“I can show how the unanswered question pulls the reader in.”**

### EXACT TEKS WORDING

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

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

## Show how the mystery works.

The rider comes and goes but is never explained. How does NOT answering the question make the poem stronger?

**“By at the gallop he goes, and then / By he comes back”**  
**The endless loop with no explanation creates a feeling that never resolves.**  
**That IS the mystery.**

**I CAN** | I can show how leaving a question unanswered creates a lasting feeling.



# PUBLISHED TEXTS

## TODAY'S THINKING JOB

# OWN

**“I can write lines that create mystery.”**

### EXACT TEKS WORDING

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

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

## Own it. Try the craft move.

Write 2 to 4 lines that describe something mysterious. Ask a question but do NOT answer it.

**Whenever the clock strikes twelve at night,  
A light appears in the \_\_\_\_\_.  
Who turns it on? Who turns it off?**

**I CAN** | I can write lines that create mystery through an unanswered question.



## PUBLISHED TEXTS

## TODAY'S THINKING JOB

## DEFEND

**“I can defend why NOT answering the question makes the poem stronger.”**

## EXACT TEKS WORDING

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

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

**Defend the poet’s choice.**

The poet could have explained who the rider is. Why does the mystery work better than an answer?

**“Why does he gallop and gallop about?”**

**An answer would end the poem. The question keeps it alive. Why?**

**I CAN** | I can defend why mystery is sometimes more powerful than an answer.



# PUBLISHED TEXTS

## Write your own mystery poem.

Describe something strange that happens at a certain time. Ask a question. Do NOT answer it.

**Describe something strange and unexplained.**  
**Ask a question the reader wants answered.**  
**Do NOT answer it.**

**I CAN** | I can write my own poem where mystery pulls the reader in.



# PUBLISHED TEXTS

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

**NOTICE** The poet asks “**Why does he gallop and gallop about?**” but never answers. The unanswered question is the mystery.

**CHOOSE A.** The rider going and coming back, endlessly, with no explanation, creates the strongest mystery.

**SHOW** The rider never stops and is never explained. The endless loop without an answer makes the reader wonder forever. The mystery is what gives the poem its power.

**OWN** Answers vary. One example: “**Whenever the clock strikes twelve at night, / A light appears in the empty room. / Who turns it on? Who turns it off? / And why does it shine in the silent gloom?**”

**DEFEND** An answer would close the door. The unanswered question leaves the door open, and the reader keeps walking through it. Mystery lasts longer than explanation.

**YOUR TURN** Answers vary. One example: “**Every morning at the edge of the pond, / Footprints appear in the fresh wet sand. / No one sees who walks that way. / The prints are gone by the end of day.**”



# PUBLISHED TEXTS

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

**“A Dove shut up in a cage was boasting of the large number of young ones which she had hatched. A Crow hearing her, said: ‘My good friend, cease from this unseasonable boasting. The larger the number of your family, the greater your cause of sorrow, in seeing them shut up in this prison-house.’”**

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

- A** Crows are wiser than doves.
- B** Cages are the best place to raise birds.
- C** Do not boast about something that is really a source of sorrow.
- D** Having a large family is always a good thing.



# PUBLISHED TEXTS

## The answer is C.

**Crows are wiser than doves.**

- A** The Crow delivers the message, but the story is about the Dove's misplaced pride, not about which bird is wiser.

**Cages are the best place to raise birds.**

- B** The story shows the opposite. The cage is the problem, not the solution.

**Do not boast about something that is really a source of sorrow.**

**Correct.**

- C** The Dove is proud of her many young, but the Crow points out they are all trapped in a cage. What seems like a blessing is actually a sorrow. The author teaches that context changes the meaning of a boast.

**Having a large family is always a good thing.**

- D** The Crow's point is that a large family in a cage is not a blessing. Context matters.

