

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

A Comeback That Teaches the Lesson

from “The Fir-Tree and the Bramble” (Aesop, 1867)

Some fables end with one character delivering a comeback so sharp it carries the entire lesson. The Fir-Tree boasts about being useful, and the Bramble replies with a warning about axes. The Bramble’s answer IS the message. This week we study how a well-crafted comeback can teach more than a long speech.

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

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.

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Grade 4 · Prepare Cluster · Published Texts & Mentor Texts

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SLIDE 1 OF 11 ·

Introduce the Week

 ~5 min

“ ” = say word-for-word · ▶ = teacher direction

“This week we study a comeback that teaches the lesson.”

▶ Show the cover. Read the TEKS wording aloud.

“Our mentor text is The Fir-Tree and the Bramble.”

▶ Preview the five thinking levels.

PREP & MATERIALS: slide deck for Prepare Cluster Module 4 · “The Fir-Tree and the Bramble” (Aesop, trans. Townsend, 1867) · tracking sheet · pencils

THE MENTOR TEXT

The Fir-Tree and the Bramble · The Oxen and the Axle-Trees (test)

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask what a comeback that teaches the lesson means.

RAISE THE THINKING

Ask how this differs from last week.

Read the published fable.

This is the whole fable. Read it, then read it again. Listen for the Bramble's comeback.

The Fir-Tree and the Bramble

A FIR-TREE said boastingly to the Bramble, "You are useful for nothing at all; while I am everywhere used for roofs and houses." The Bramble answered: "You poor creature, if you would only call to mind the axes and saws which are about to hew you down, you would have reason to wish that you had grown up a Bramble, not a Fir-Tree."

Better poverty without care, than riches with.

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.

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Read the Published Text

 ~6 min

" " = say word-for-word · ▶ = teacher direction

"This is our published mentor text."

▶ Read the text aloud twice.

"Notice the craft move."

▶ Point to the key moment.

"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: See slide.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Point to the craft move.

COMMON MISCONCEPTION

Confusing a detail with the craft.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Keep it joyful.

RAISE THE THINKING

What did you notice?

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

"I can notice the comeback that carries the lesson."

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 comeback.

Find the Bramble's reply. How does one sentence turn the Fir-Tree's boast upside down?

Boast: "I am everywhere used for **roofs and houses."**

Comeback: "Call to mind the **axes and saws which are about to hew you down."**

I CAN | I can notice the comeback that flips the boast into a warning.

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Monday · NOTICE

~4 min

" " = say word-for-word · ▶ = teacher direction

"Today's job is NOTICE."

▶ Read the task.

"Find the craft move."

▶ Students write on NOTICE row.

ANSWER KEY: See slide.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Read the craft move aloud.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Foundational level.

RAISE THE THINKING

What do you feel?

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose the real message."

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 message.

What does the Bramble's comeback really teach?

A Being useful makes you a target; being overlooked keeps you safe.

B "A Fir-Tree said boastingly to the Bramble."

C "You are useful for nothing at all."

I CAN | I can choose the message the comeback delivers.

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Tuesday · CHOOSE

 ~4 min

" " = say word-for-word · ▶ = teacher direction

"Today's job is CHOOSE."

▶ Read the task.

"Which is the best example?"

▶ Choose privately, share.

ANSWER KEY: A.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Why is A strongest?

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Developing level.

RAISE THE THINKING

What makes it stronger?

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

"I can show how the comeback reverses the boast."

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 reversal works.

The Fir-Tree sees usefulness as a strength. The Bramble sees it as a danger. How does the comeback reverse the meaning?

Fir-Tree: used for roofs = strength

Bramble: axes hew you down = the same usefulness is the danger

I CAN | I can show how the comeback turns a strength into a weakness.

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Wednesday · SHOW

 ~4 min

" " = say word-for-word · ▶ = teacher direction

"Today's job is SHOW."

▶ Read the task.

"Explain how it works."

▶ Take 2-3 answers.

ANSWER KEY: See slide.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Point to the words.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent level.

RAISE THE THINKING

What would change without it?

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend why a comeback is stronger than a lecture."

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 author's choice.

The Bramble could have given a long speech. Why does one sharp sentence work better?

**"You would have reason to wish that you had grown up a Bramble."
One sentence. No argument needed. Why does brevity make the comeback
land harder?**

I CAN | I can defend why a single sharp comeback teaches more than a long speech.

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Friday · DEFEND

 ~4 min

" " = say word-for-word · ▶ = teacher direction

"Today's job is DEFEND."

▶ Read the task.

"Why does this move make it stronger?"

▶ Write a because statement.

ANSWER KEY: See slide.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Explain why.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Reflective level.

RAISE THE THINKING

Name another text with this move.

Write your own comeback fable.

Choose a character who boasts about a strength. Let another character point out the hidden danger in that strength with one sharp sentence.

**Choose a character who boasts about a strength.
Let another character deliver one sharp comeback.
The comeback turns the strength into a warning.**

I CAN | I can write my own fable where a comeback teaches the lesson.

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YOUR TURN

 ~6 min

“ ” = say word-for-word · ▶ = teacher direction

“Your turn.”

▶ Read the task.

“Use the craft move.”

▶ Circulate.

ANSWER KEY: Answers vary.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Scan for the move.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Independent practice.

RAISE THE THINKING

Check your move.

Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE The Bramble says “**call to mind the axes and saws which are about to hew you down.**” One sentence turns the boast into a warning.

CHOOSE **A.** Being useful makes you a target. B and C are the boast, not the lesson.

SHOW The Fir-Tree’s usefulness is exactly what attracts the axes. The same quality that makes it proud is what will bring it down. The reversal proves the message.

OWN Answers vary. One example: The bicycle said, “**Everyone wants to ride in you, but everyone also wants to steal you. I rust in peace while you worry in your garage.**”

DEFEND A lecture gives the listener time to argue. A single comeback hits before the listener can react. Brevity is the blade.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. One example: A popular app boasted to a notebook, “Everyone uses me.” The notebook said, “**And when the battery runs out, everyone opens me.**”

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Review the Answers

 ~4 min

“ ” = say word-for-word · ▶ = teacher direction

“Check our work.”

▶ *Reveal answers.*

“If you missed one, that is your learning.”

▶ *Celebrate explanations.*

ANSWER KEY: See slide.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Explain how it works.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

OWN turns into DEFEND.

RAISE THE THINKING

What would change?

READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT · FROM “THE OXEN AND THE AXLE-TREES” (AESOP, TRANS. TOWNSEND, 1867)

“A heavy Wagon was being dragged along a country lane by a team of Oxen. The Axle-trees groaned and creaked terribly; whereupon the Oxen, turning round, thus addressed the wheels: ‘Hullo there! why do you make so much noise? We bear all the labor, and we, not you, ought to cry out.’”

What message does the author want the reader to learn?

- A** Wheels should be better oiled.
- B** Oxen are stronger than wheels.
- C** Heavy wagons should not be used on country lanes.
- D** Those who do the least work often complain the most.

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Show What You Know

 ~4 min

“ ” = say word-for-word · ▶ = teacher direction

“Test on ‘The Oxen and the Axle-Trees.’”

▶ Read text and question.

“Read all four choices.”

▶ Choose privately.

ANSWER KEY: D.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Choose by purpose.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

DEFEND in action.

RAISE THE THINKING

Why is each wrong?

The answer is D.

A **Wheels should be better oiled.**

Oiling is a practical fix, not the message. The story is about who has the right to complain.

B **Oxen are stronger than wheels.**

The story is not comparing strength. It is comparing effort and complaining.

C **Heavy wagons should not be used on country lanes.**

The lane is the setting. The message is about the gap between effort and complaint.

D **Those who do the least work often complain the most.**

Correct.

The Axle-trees groan while the Oxen do all the pulling. The Oxen point out the injustice. The author teaches that complaining belongs to those who earn it, not to those who do nothing.

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The Answer, and Why

 ~4 min

“ ” = say word-for-word · ▶ = teacher direction

“The answer is D.”

▶ Reveal reasons.

“Each wrong choice does not match.”

▶ Write one sentence.

ANSWER KEY: See slide.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Explain why D fits.

RPLD EVIDENCE & ADVICE

Highest DEFEND move.

RAISE THE THINKING

Write a new question.