

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 argument often begins by telling the reader why the writer is writing.

A principle is a big belief that every reason in the argument depends on.

When I state my principle first, every reason I give has something to stand on.

THIS WEEK’S FOCUS

Stating a Purpose and a Principle

from “The Declaration of Independence” by Thomas Jefferson and the Second Continental Congress (1776)

The writers begin by saying why they are writing: to declare the causes of the separation. Then they state the principle their whole argument rests on: all men are created equal, with rights to Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. This week we study how an argument names its purpose and its principle before giving reasons.

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

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



Read the published text.

The Declaration of Independence explains why the colonies chose to separate from Great Britain. Read the opening twice, slowly.

The Declaration of Independence (excerpt)

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the Powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.

SOURCE · PUBLIC DOMAIN

Thomas Jefferson and the Second Continental Congress, The Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776 (public domain, Project Gutenberg #1)

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





TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

“I can notice an argument’s purpose and principle.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

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

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Notice the purpose and the principle.

Find the words that tell the purpose. Then find the principle.

Purpose: they should declare the causes

Principle: all men are created equal

I CAN | I can notice the purpose and the principle in an argument.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose the intended audience.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

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

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Choose the audience.

The writers show “a decent respect to the opinions of mankind.” Who is their audience?

A Only King George

B People all over the world

C Only the soldiers in the colonies

I CAN | I can choose the audience the writer is speaking to.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can show how a principle supports a claim.”

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”

Show how the principle supports the claim.

How does the idea of unalienable rights support separating from Great Britain?

Principle: people have rights that cannot be taken away.
So when rights are taken away, people may declare the causes and separate.

I CAN | I can show how the principle gives the claim its reason.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can state a purpose and a principle.”

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.

Write the opening of an argument for a class change. State your purpose, then your principle.

Purpose: We are writing to explain why _____.

Principle: We believe that every student _____.

I CAN | I can write an argument opening with a purpose and a principle.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

“I can defend why the principle comes first.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

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Defend the author's choice.

Why state the principle before listing any complaints?

Principle first: **We hold these truths**
Then every reason is measured against it.

I CAN

I can defend why stating the principle first makes an argument stronger.



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Write your own argument opening.

Choose a change you want. Write an opening with a purpose, an audience, and a principle.

Tell your purpose.

Show respect for your audience.

State the principle your reasons depend on.

I CAN | I can write an argument opening that states my purpose and principle.



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Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE Purpose: **declare the causes which impel them to the separation.** Principle: **all men are created equal**, with unalienable rights.

CHOOSE **B. Mankind** means people everywhere. They wanted the whole world to understand their reasons.

SHOW If every person has rights that cannot be taken away, then a government that takes those rights loses its claim to rule. That supports separating.

OWN Answers vary. One example: **We are writing to explain why our class needs a quiet reading corner. We believe every student deserves a calm place to think.**

DEFEND The principle is the measuring stick. Once readers accept it, each reason that follows clearly breaks it, so the argument is hard to reject.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Check for a stated purpose, a named audience, and a principle.



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READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT · FROM “THE GETTYSBURG ADDRESS” (ABRAHAM LINCOLN, 1863)

“Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.”

What does the speaker mean by four score and seven years ago?

- A** At the start of the war
- B** Eighty-seven years before the speech
- C** Four years ago
- D** Seven years ago



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The answer is B.

- A At the start of the war**
The phrase points back to the nation's founding, not the war.
- B Eighty-seven years before the speech**
Correct.
A score is twenty. Four score and seven is 87 years, back to 1776.
- C Four years ago**
Four score is eighty, not four.
- D Seven years ago**
Seven is only part of the number.

