

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?

A counterclaim is what someone on the other side believes.

A rebuttal answers the counterclaim and shows why the writer’s claim is stronger.

Agreeing with part of the other side, then answering it, makes me sound fair.

THIS WEEK’S FOCUS

Counterclaim and Rebuttal

from “The Book of the National Parks” by Robert Sterling Yard (1919)

Yard quotes the other side first: a member of Congress says parks are just playgrounds. Then he answers: this view entirely misses the point. He agrees with part of it, then shows why parks are far more. This week we study how a counterclaim and rebuttal make an argument stronger.

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

NOTICE → CHOOSE → SHOW → OWN → DEFEND.



Read the published text.

In 1919 some people asked why the country should spend money on national parks. Robert Sterling Yard answers them. Read it twice.

The Book of the National Parks (excerpt)

The idea still widely obtains that our national parks are principally playgrounds. A distinguished member of Congress recently asked: “Why make these appropriations? More people visited Rock Creek Park here in the city of Washington last Sunday afternoon than went to the Yosemite all last summer. The country has endless woods and mountains which cost the Treasury nothing.”

This view entirely misses the point. The national parks are recreational, of course. So are state, county and city parks.

But the national parks are far more than recreational areas. They are the supreme examples. They are the gallery of masterpieces.

SOURCE · PUBLIC DOMAIN

Robert Sterling Yard, The Book of the National Parks, Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1919 (public domain, Project Gutenberg #27513)

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



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

“I can notice a counterclaim and a rebuttal.”

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”

Notice the counterclaim and the rebuttal.

Find the other side's idea and the sentence that answers it.

Counterclaim: parks are principally playgrounds

Rebuttal: This view entirely misses the point.

I CAN | I can notice the counterclaim and the rebuttal.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose the sentence that concedes a point.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

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Choose the fair move.

Which sentence shows Yard agreeing with part of the other side?

- A** This view entirely misses the point.
- B** They are the gallery of masterpieces.
- C** The national parks are recreational, of course.

I CAN | I can choose where the writer fairly agrees with part of the other side.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can show how a rebuttal turns the argument.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

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

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Show how the rebuttal turns.

Which word turns the argument from agreeing to answering?

recreational, of course ...
But the national parks are **far more** than recreational areas.

I CAN | I can show the word that turns a concession into a rebuttal.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write a counterclaim and rebuttal.”

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 a counterclaim and a rebuttal about a school topic, such as recess or homework.

Some people say _____.
That is true, of course, _____.
But _____ is far more than _____.

I CAN | I can write a counterclaim, a concession, and a rebuttal.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

“I can defend why a writer quotes the other side.”

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 Yard quote the member of Congress word for word?

A real quote shows the other side **fairly.**
Then the rebuttal has a **real target.**

I CAN | I can defend why quoting the other side makes the rebuttal stronger.



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Write your own argument with a rebuttal.

Choose a claim. Quote or describe the other side, agree with part of it, then rebut it.

State the counterclaim fairly.
Agree with one part of it.
Turn with But and give your rebuttal.

I CAN | I can write an argument that answers the other side with a rebuttal.



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Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE Counterclaim: national parks are **principally playgrounds**. Rebuttal: **This view entirely misses the point.**

CHOOSE **C. of course** shows Yard admits parks are for fun too, before he shows they are much more.

SHOW **But** turns the argument. Yard agrees parks are fun, **but** claims they are far more: the supreme examples, a gallery of masterpieces.

OWN Answers vary. One example: **Some people say recess is just playtime. That is true, of course, since we play. But recess is far more than play: it is where we learn to solve problems with friends.**

DEFEND Quoting exactly shows Yard is fair and the argument is real. When he answers it, readers trust that he beat the real argument, not a weak version.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. Check for a counterclaim, a concession, a turning word, and a rebuttal with a reason.



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READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT · FROM “SHARP EYES” (JOHN BURROUGHS, 1886)

“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.”

According to the author, what happens when you learn to tell birds or plants apart?

A You stop noticing nature.

B Your real eyes change color.

C You need a telescope.

D It is as if new and keener eyes were added.



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The answer is D.

A **You stop noticing nature.**
He says the opposite: you notice more.

B **Your real eyes change color.**
He means a new way of seeing, not real eyes.

C **You need a telescope.**
He does not mention a telescope here.

D **Correct.**
He writes that it is as if new and keener eyes were added.

