

PUBLISHED TEXTS

EXACT TEKS WORDING (FROM TEA)

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

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

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

Published texts are real stories 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 story teaches.

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

THIS WEEK’S FOCUS

Self-Interest Changes Everything

from “The Peasant and the Apple-Tree” (Aesop, trans. George Fyler Townsend, 1867)

The Peasant ignores the creatures who ask for mercy. He only stops when he finds something HE wants. The author lets the Peasant’s own behavior deliver the message about self-interest. This week we notice how self-interest drives the action and try that craft move in our own writing.

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

NOTICE · CHOOSE · SHOW · OWN · DEFEND



PUBLISHED TEXTS

Read the published text.

Read it aloud slowly. Watch for the craft move the author uses.

The Peasant and the Apple-Tree

A Peasant had in his garden an Apple-Tree which bore no fruit but only served as a harbor for the sparrows and grasshoppers. He resolved to cut it down, and taking his axe in his hand, made a bold stroke at its roots. The grasshoppers and sparrows entreated him not to cut down the tree that sheltered them, but to spare it, and they would sing to him and lighten his labours. He paid no attention to their request, but gave the tree a second and a third blow with his axe. When he reached the hollow of the tree, he found a hive full of honey. Having tasted the honeycomb, he threw down his axe, and looking on the tree as sacred, took great care of it.

SOURCE

Aesop, trans. George Fyler Townsend, 1867 (Project Gutenberg #21, public domain)



PUBLISHED TEXTS

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

“I can notice the moment when self-interest changes a character’s behavior.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

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

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Notice the change.

Read the fable. Find the moment when the Peasant stops cutting and changes his mind.

He ignored the sparrows and grasshoppers. When he found a hive full of honey, he threw down his axe and took great care of the tree.

I CAN | I can notice the moment when self-interest changes a character’s behavior.



PUBLISHED TEXTS

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

“I can choose the sentence that best states the author’s message.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

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Choose the message.

Which sentence best states the author’s message?

A The sparrows and grasshoppers begged him to stop.

B He resolved to cut down the tree.

C Self-interest alone moves some people.

I CAN | I can choose the sentence that best states the author’s message.



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TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can show how the story proves the message.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

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

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Show how the story proves the message.

How does the Peasant’s reaction to the honey prove the author’s message?

The creatures offered **singing and comfort**. He ignored them. But **honey** (something for himself) changed everything.

I CAN | I can explain how the story’s details prove the message about self-interest.



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TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write a moment where self-interest changes a character’s mind.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

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

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

Own it. Try the craft move.

Read the practice story. Write the moment when the character changes because of self-interest.

A girl was about to throw away an old box. Her little brother asked her to keep it for his art project. She reached for the trash can, then noticed something inside the box.

I CAN | I can write a moment where self-interest changes a character’s mind.



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TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend why the author shows the change instead of just telling us the Peasant is selfish."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

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Defend the author's choice.

Why is it more powerful to watch the Peasant change than to be told he is selfish?

The narrator could have said: "The Peasant was a selfish man." Why is showing the change better?

I CAN

I can defend why showing the change is a stronger craft choice than labeling the character.



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Write your own fable about self-interest.

Choose a character who ignores a good reason to change but then changes for a selfish reason. Show the contrast.

**Choose a character who ignores a good reason to change.
Then show them changing for a selfish reason.
Let the reader see the contrast.**

I CAN | I can write my own story and use the craft move we studied all week.



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Answers, across the five thinking levels.

NOTICE The Peasant only saved the tree when he found honey. Self-interest, not kindness, changed his mind.

CHOOSE C. Self-interest alone moves some people. The other choices describe events.

SHOW He rejected singing (kindness) but accepted honey (profit). The contrast proves the message.

OWN Answers vary. One example: **"She found a ten-dollar bill in the bottom of the box. Suddenly the box was worth keeping."**

DEFEND When the reader watches the change happen, the reader draws the conclusion. Showing is more powerful than labeling the character as selfish.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. One example: A boy was about to share his last cookie with a friend. Then he saw the friend had two cookies. He ate his own and said, **"I was going to share, but now I see you already have enough."**



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READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT · FROM “THE FLEA AND THE WRESTLER” (AESOP, TRANS. TOWNSEND, 1867)

“A Flea settled upon the bare foot of a Wrestler and bit him, causing the man to call loudly upon Hercules for help. When the Flea a second time hopped upon his foot, he groaned and said, ‘O Hercules! if you will not help me against a Flea, how can I hope for your assistance against greater antagonists?’”

What message does the author want the reader to learn?

A Wrestlers should not call for help.

B Fleas are too small to matter.

C If you cannot handle a small problem on your own, you cannot expect help with bigger ones.

D Hercules does not care about wrestlers.



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The answer is C.

A **Wrestlers should not call for help.**

The story is not about whether wrestlers should ask for help. It is about solving small problems yourself.

B **Fleas are too small to matter.**

The Flea does matter, that is why the Wrestler calls for help. The lesson is about handling small challenges.

C **If you cannot handle a small problem on your own, you cannot expect help with bigger ones.**
Correct.

The Wrestler calls on Hercules to fight a tiny Flea. The author teaches that if you cannot manage small troubles yourself, no one will trust you with larger challenges.

D **Hercules does not care about wrestlers.**

The story is not about Hercules caring or not caring. It is about the Wrestler needing to handle small problems himself.

