

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

Turning the Blame Back

from “The Rivers and the Sea” (Aesop, trans. George Fyler Townsend, 1867)

The Rivers blame the Sea for making them salty, but the Sea replies with perfect logic: stop flowing into me. The author uses a clever reversal to deliver the message. This week we read a published fable, notice how the author turns blame back on the accuser, 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 Rivers and the Sea

The Rivers joined together to complain to the Sea, saying, “Why is it that when we flow into your tides so potable and sweet, you work in us such a change, and make us salty and unfit to drink?” The Sea, perceiving that they intended to throw the blame on him, said, “Pray cease to flow into me, and then you will not be made briny.”

SOURCE

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





TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

“I can notice how one character turns blame back on another.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

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Notice the reversal.

Read the fable. Find the sentence where the Sea turns the blame back on the Rivers.

“Pray cease to flow into me, and then you will not be made briny.”

I CAN | I can notice how one character turns blame back on another.



PUBLISHED TEXTS

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

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

EXACT TEKS WORDING

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

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Choose the message.

Which sentence best states the author’s message?

A “Pray cease to flow into me, and then you will not be made briny.”

B “The Rivers joined together to complain to the Sea.”

C “Why is it that you make us salty and unfit to drink?”

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

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Show how the story proves the message.

How does the Rivers’ own choice prove the Sea’s point?

The Rivers **choose to flow into the Sea. The Sea does not force them. So the change is the Rivers’ own doing.**

I CAN | I can explain how the story’s details lead to the author’s message.



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write a reversal that turns blame back.”

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 one-sentence answer that turns the blame back.

A student complained to the librarian that the books on her desk were too heavy. The librarian smiled and said:

I CAN | I can write a reversal that turns blame back.



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TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

“I can defend why the reversal is a stronger craft move than a direct lesson.”

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Defend the author’s choice.

Why is the Sea’s one-sentence answer more powerful than a long explanation?

The Sea could have explained the science of salt water. Why is “stop flowing into me” better?

I CAN | I can defend why the reversal is a stronger craft move than a direct lesson.



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Write your own fable where one character turns blame back on another.

Choose a character who complains about a problem they caused themselves. Let another character answer with a one-sentence reversal.

Choose a character who complains about a problem they caused.

Let another character answer with one sentence that turns the blame back.

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 “Pray cease to flow into me, and then you will not be made briny.” The Sea turns the Rivers’ complaint into their own fault.

CHOOSE A. The Sea’s answer is the message: stop doing what causes the problem.

SHOW The Rivers flow into the Sea by choice. The Sea does not force them. That proves the complaint is self-caused.

OWN Answers vary. One example: **“You chose those books yourself. Bring fewer next time, and the load will be lighter.”**

DEFEND The reversal uses the Rivers’ own logic against them. Short, clear, impossible to argue with.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. One example: A fish swam into a shallow stream and complained it was too crowded. A turtle said, **“This stream was empty before you swam into it.”**



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READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT • FROM “THE SHE-GOATS AND THEIR BEARDS” (AESOP, TRANS. TOWNSEND, 1867)

“The She-Goats having obtained a beard by request to Jupiter, the He-Goats were sorely displeased and made complaint that the females equaled them in dignity. ‘Allow them,’ said Jupiter, ‘to enjoy an empty honour and to assume the badge of your nobler sex, so long as they are not your equals in strength or courage.’”

What message does the author want the reader to learn?

- A** Beards make goats stronger.
- B** Jupiter is unfair to He-Goats.
- C** Looking like someone does not make you equal to them in what truly matters.
- D** She-Goats should not ask for beards.



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The answer is C.

A **Beards make goats stronger.**

The beards do not change the She-Goats' strength. The lesson is about outward appearances.

B **Jupiter is unfair to He-Goats.**

Jupiter tells the He-Goats not to worry. The lesson is about empty honors, not fairness.

C **Looking like someone does not make you equal to them in what truly matters.**
Correct.

Jupiter says the She-Goats can have the badge, but they still lack the He-Goats' strength and courage. The author teaches that appearances do not equal real qualities.

D **She-Goats should not ask for beards.**

The story is not about whether they should ask. It is about what outward signs actually mean.

