

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

Freedom Versus Comfort

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

The Wolf sees the Housedog’s full belly and his heavy collar. In one sentence, the Wolf chooses freedom over comfort. The author lets the Wolf’s choice deliver the message. This week we read a published fable, notice how the character’s choice IS the message, 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 Wolf and the Housedog

A Wolf, meeting a big well-fed Mastiff with a wooden collar about his neck asked him who it was that fed him so well and yet compelled him to drag that heavy log about wherever he went. “The master,” he replied. Then said the Wolf: “May no friend of mine ever be in such a plight; for the weight of this chain is enough to spoil the appetite.”

SOURCE

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





TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

“I can notice the moment a character chooses and that choice delivers the message.”

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Notice the choice.

Read the fable. Find the sentence where the Wolf makes his choice.

“May no friend of mine ever be in such a plight; for the weight of this chain is enough to spoil the appetite.”

I CAN | I can notice the moment a character’s choice delivers the message.



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 “A Wolf, meeting a big well-fed Mastiff.”

B “The master feeds him well.”

C “The weight of this chain is enough to spoil the appetite.”

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



PUBLISHED TEXTS

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 contrast between the Wolf’s life and the Dog’s life prove the message?

The Dog is well-fed but chained. The Wolf is lean but free. The contrast makes the Wolf’s choice meaningful.

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



PUBLISHED TEXTS

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can write a character’s choice that delivers the message.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

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Own it. Try the craft move.

Read the practice story. Write the sentence where the free character states the lesson.

A wild cat saw a house cat with a full bowl of food and a closed door. The wild cat looked at the food, then at the open sky, and said:

I CAN | I can write a character’s choice that delivers the message.



PUBLISHED TEXTS

TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

“I can defend why the Wolf’s one-line choice is a stronger ending than a narrator’s summary.”

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Defend the author’s choice.

Why does the Wolf’s single sentence work better than the narrator saying “Freedom is better than comfort”?

The narrator could have explained the lesson. Why is the Wolf’s one sentence stronger?

I CAN

I can defend why a character’s choice is stronger than a narrator’s summary.



PUBLISHED TEXTS

Write your own fable about choosing between comfort and freedom.

Show two characters with different lives. Let one character speak a single sentence that names the trade-off.

Show two characters with different lives.

Let one character speak one sentence that names the trade-off.

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 weight of this chain is enough to spoil the appetite.” The Wolf chooses freedom over food.

CHOOSE C. The Wolf’s words reveal the trade-off: comfort at the cost of freedom is not worth it.

SHOW The Dog is well-fed but chained. The Wolf is hungry but free. That contrast makes the Wolf’s choice meaningful.

OWN Answers vary. One example: **“I would rather catch my own mouse than eat from a bowl I cannot leave.”**

DEFEND The Wolf speaks from experience. His personal choice is more persuasive than a narrator’s opinion.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. One example: A goldfish saw a minnow in the river. The minnow had no glass walls and no one dropped food in. The minnow said, **“I swim wherever I want. That is worth more than any bowl.”**



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READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT • FROM “THE DANCING MONKEYS” (AESOP, TRANS. TOWNSEND, 1867)

“A Prince had some Monkeys trained to dance. Being naturally great mimics of men’s actions, they showed themselves most apt pupils, and when arrayed in their rich clothes and masks, they danced as well as any of the courtiers. The spectacle was often repeated with great applause, till on one occasion a courtier, bent on mischief, took from his pocket a handful of nuts and threw them upon the stage. The Monkeys at the sight of the nuts forgot their dancing and became (as indeed they were) Monkeys instead of actors.”

What message does the author want the reader to learn?

- A** Monkeys make poor dancers.
- B** No amount of training can change someone’s true nature.
- C** Courtiers should not throw nuts.
- D** Princes should not train animals.

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The answer is B.

A Monkeys make poor dancers.
The Monkeys danced well until the nuts appeared. The message is about nature winning over training.

B No amount of training can change someone's true nature.
Correct.
The Monkeys danced perfectly until nuts reminded them of their real nature. The author teaches that a disguise or training cannot hide who you truly are.

C Courtiers should not throw nuts.
The courtier's mischief revealed the truth, but the lesson is about nature, not about the courtier.

D Princes should not train animals.
The story is not about whether training animals is right. It is about how true nature reveals itself.

