

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

The Punchline That Redefines the Argument

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

The Leopard shows his spots. The Fox changes the rules. Instead of comparing skins, the Fox compares inner and outer beauty. The author uses a redefinition to deliver the message. This week we notice how the Fox’s punchline changes the whole argument.

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 Fox and the Leopard

The Fox and the Leopard disputed which was the more beautiful of the two. The Leopard exhibited one by one the various spots which decorated his skin. But the Fox, interrupting him, said, “And how much more beautiful than you am I, who am decorated, not in body, but in mind.”

SOURCE

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





TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

“I can notice how the Fox redefines the argument.”

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Notice the redefinition.

Read the fable. Find the sentence where the Fox changes what “beautiful” means.

“And how much more beautiful than you am I, who am decorated, not in body, but in mind.”

I CAN | I can notice how the Fox redefines the argument.



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TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

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

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Choose the message.

Which sentence best states the author’s message?

A “Decorated, not in body, but in mind.”

B “The Leopard exhibited the various spots which decorated his skin.”

C “They disputed which was the more beautiful.”

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



TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

“I can show how the Leopard’s approach sets up the Fox’s punchline.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

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Show how the story proves the message.

How does the Leopard’s focus on his skin make the Fox’s answer more powerful?

The Leopard shows his **outer beauty** one spot at a time. The Fox replies with **inner beauty** in one sentence. The contrast makes the punchline land.

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 punchline that redefines an argument.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

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Own it. Try the craft move.

Read the practice story. Write the one-sentence punchline that changes the terms of the argument.

Two students argued over whose backpack was fancier. One said hers had more pockets, more zippers, and a better brand. The other smiled and said:

I CAN | I can write a punchline that redefines an argument.



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TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

"I can defend why the redefinition is a stronger craft move than a direct statement."

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Defend the author's choice.

Why is "decorated in mind" more powerful than the narrator saying "inner beauty matters more"?

Why does the Fox's punchline land harder than a flat statement about inner beauty?

I CAN | I can defend why the Fox's redefinition is a stronger craft move.



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Write your own fable where one character redefines the argument.

Two characters argue about something surface-level. Let one character change the definition in one sentence.

**Two characters argue about something on the surface.
Let one character redefine what matters in one sentence.**

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 “Decorated, not in body, but in mind.” The Fox redefines beauty to include the mind.

CHOOSE **A.** The Fox’s words redefine the whole argument.

SHOW The Leopard slowly shows his spots. The Fox replies with one sentence about inner beauty. The contrast proves the point.

OWN Answers vary. One example: **"Mine has a library book inside. That is the only decoration that matters."**

DEFEND The Fox does not argue back. He changes the game. That surprise makes the reader rethink everything.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. One example: Two birds argued over whose feathers were brighter. A plain brown wren landed between them and sang the most beautiful song anyone had ever heard. **"Color fades," the wren said. "But a song is remembered."**



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READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT • FROM “THE CROW AND THE RAVEN” (AESOP, TRANS. TOWNSEND, 1867)

“A Crow was jealous of the Raven, because he was considered a bird of good omen and always attracted the attention of men, who noted by his flight the good or evil course of future events. Seeing some travelers approaching, the Crow flew up into a tree, and perching herself on one of the branches, cawed as loudly as she could. The travelers turned towards the sound and wondered what it foreboded, when one of them said to his companion, ‘Let us proceed on our journey, my friend, for it is only the caw of a crow, and her cry, you know, is no omen.’”

What message does the author want the reader to learn?

- A** Crows are louder than ravens.
- B** Ravens are better than crows.
- C** Travelers should listen to bird calls.
- D** Pretending to be something you are not only makes you look foolish.

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The answer is D.

- A Crows are louder than ravens.**
The Crow cawed loudly, but the message is not about volume. It is about trying to be something you are not.
- B Ravens are better than crows.**
The story does not rank the birds. It teaches about pretending to be what you are not.
- C Travelers should listen to bird calls.**
The travelers correctly ignore the Crow. The message is about imitation, not about bird calls.
- D Pretending to be something you are not only makes you look foolish.**
Correct.
The Crow tried to act like a Raven and attract attention, but the travelers saw through it immediately. The author teaches that imitating others does not give you their qualities.

