

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 poems are real poems written by real poets and published for the world to read.

A poet paints pictures with words so the reader can see, hear, and feel something new.

When I study what a poet did, I can try that same craft in my own poem.

THIS WEEK’S FOCUS

The Surprise Answer

from “A diamond or a coal?” (Christina Rossetti, Sing-Song, 1893)

The poet asks a question and gives a surprising answer. A coal over a diamond? Yes, because usefulness matters more when it is cold. This week we notice how a surprise answer makes the reader rethink what they value.

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

NOTICE • CHOOSE • SHOW • OWN • DEFEND



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Read the published poem.

Read it aloud slowly. Listen to the rhythm and watch for the craft the poet uses.

A diamond or a coal?

A diamond or a coal?
A coal, sir, if you please:
One comes to care about the coal
What time the waters freeze.

SOURCE

Christina Rossetti, Sing-Song, 1893 (Project Gutenberg #76703, public domain)



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TODAY'S THINKING JOB

NOTICE

“I can notice the surprise in the poet’s answer.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

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Notice the surprise.

What is surprising about the poet’s choice?

The poet chooses a coal over a diamond. The surprise: usefulness outweighs beauty when you need warmth.

I CAN | I can notice the surprise in the poet’s answer.



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TODAY'S THINKING JOB

CHOOSE

"I can choose the line that best states the message."

EXACT TEKS WORDING

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Choose the message.

Which best states the author's message?

A "One comes to care about the coal What time the waters freeze."

B "A diamond or a coal?"

C "A coal, sir, if you please."

I CAN | I can choose the line that best states the message.



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TODAY'S THINKING JOB

SHOW

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

EXACT TEKS WORDING

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Show how it proves the message.

Why does the explanation in lines 3-4 make the surprise answer logical?

Why does the explanation in lines 3–4 make the surprise answer logical?

I CAN | I can show how the text proves the message.



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TODAY'S THINKING JOB

OWN

“I can try the craft move myself.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

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

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Own it. Try the craft move.

Write a question with a surprising answer, then explain why.

A surprising answer, then **explain why.**

I CAN | I can try the craft move myself.



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TODAY'S THINKING JOB

DEFEND

“I can defend why this craft move works.”

EXACT TEKS WORDING

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Defend the author’s choice.

Why is asking a question and then surprising the reader more powerful than just stating the lesson?

Why is asking a question and then surprising the reader more powerful than just stating the lesson?

I CAN | I can defend why this craft move works.



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Write your own surprise-answer poem.

Ask a question. Give a surprising answer. Explain why.

Question. Surprising answer. Explain why.

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 Coal over diamond. Usefulness over beauty in a time of need.

CHOOSE **A.** The freezing water explains the choice.

SHOW Need changes value. The context makes the coal win.

OWN Answers vary. One example: **"A ladder or a chair? The ladder, please, when the kite is stuck in the tree."**

DEFEND Questions + surprises = reader rethinking. Flat statements do not create that moment.

YOUR TURN Answers vary. One example: A whisper or a shout? A whisper, if you please. One whisper gets a friend to lean in close. A shout just pushes everyone away.



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READ THIS PASSAGE EXCERPT · FROM “THE DAYS ARE CLEAR” (CHRISTINA ROSSETTI, SING-SONG, 1893)

**“The days are clear,
Day after day,
When April’s here,
That leads to May,
And June**

**Must follow soon:
Stay, June, stay!
If only we could stop the moon
And June!”**

What is the poet’s purpose?

- A** To name the months of spring.
- B** To capture the feeling of wanting a beautiful time to last.
- C** To explain why June follows May.
- D** To describe clear weather.



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The answer is B.

A To name the months of spring.

The months are named, but the purpose is the wish for time to stop.

B To capture the feeling of wanting a beautiful time to last.

Correct.

The poet moves from April through June, then cries “Stay, June, stay!” The wish to stop the moon and June shows the longing to hold onto a good season.

C To explain why June follows May.

The calendar order is a detail. The purpose is the emotional wish.

D To describe clear weather.

Clear days set the mood, but the purpose is the wish for time to pause.

