

FAMILY PACKET

Family Packet, Grade 3, Cluster 3, Module 1: Prompt Analysis and Thesis (central idea) Writing

A warm, plain language guide to what your student is learning this week, with easy ways to talk and work together at home. **Every page is in English and Spanish.**

Welcome, families. This week your student learns to shape a writing prompt, circle the important nouns, box the important verb, and triangle the clue word WHY or HOW. Students also find the problem or conflict in a text and write a complete thesis (central idea) that answers the exact prompt. This packet shows you what is happening in class, the words your student is learning, the thinking tool your student uses, and simple ways to help from home. You and your student can work through it together in about ten minutes.

Ask your student to teach you the three prompt shapes. Teaching it out loud is part of how the learning sticks.

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En español

Todo este paquete también está disponible en español.

1 Family Letter

Dear Families,

This week your student is learning to shape a writing prompt, circle important nouns, box the important verb, and draw a triangle around the clue word WHY or HOW. WHY asks for reasons, and HOW asks for a way something happened. Your student will find the problem or conflict in a text and write a complete thesis (central idea) that answers the exact prompt.

We will read the poem "Why We Need Laws" and the drama "The Lunchroom Discoveries." Students use the conflicts in these texts to guide their thinking about laws, fairness, safety, and discovery. Ask your student to show the three prompt shapes, explain WHY or HOW, and share a thesis (central idea). The ECR (TREES) chart connects that thesis to a reason or way, evidence, explanation, and significance.

With appreciation,

With appreciation,

[Classroom teacher signature]

The Writing Academy, LLC

ASK FOR A DEMONSTRATION

Ask your student to show you the three prompt shapes on one prompt and explain what each shape means. If your student can teach it, the skill is sticking.

2 Family Tip Sheet

The skill, in plain words

Your student is learning to shape a writing prompt before answering it. Students circle the important nouns, box the important verb, and triangle the clue word WHY or HOW. They also find the problem or conflict in a text. When students name the thinking the prompt needs, they can write a thesis (central idea) that answers the exact question.

The standard, in plain words

This week the work connects to two Texas standards. Your student plans a first draft before writing and composes an informational text with a clear central idea. In plain words, your student learns to plan before writing and to keep one clear main idea through a longer answer.

The three prompt shapes your student uses



Red circle

The important nouns, the topic the question is about



Yellow box

The important verb, the action the question asks for



Green triangle

The clue word, WHY or HOW

How to help without giving the answer

- Ask your student to teach you the three prompt shapes. Explaining it out loud is part of how the skill sticks.
- Ask what the prompt really asks, WHY or HOW. Let your student name it and give the reason.
- Ask what problem or conflict the text shows and how it helps the thesis (central idea).
- Ask your student to read one thesis (central idea) and tell which clue word helped write it.
- Let your student write the thesis (central idea). Your job is to ask good questions, not to supply the answer.

prompt

the question or task a writer is asked to answer

Example, I shape the prompt before I write.

clue word

a word that tells what kind of thinking a prompt needs

Example, the clue word why tells me the prompt needs reasons.

thesis (central idea)

a complete sentence that clearly answers the prompt

Example, my thesis (central idea) matches the prompt.

conflict

a problem or struggle in a text

Example, the conflict helps me think of my reason or way.

WHY

a clue word that asks for reasons

Example, WHY asks for reasons, often using because.

HOW

a clue word that asks for a way something happened

Example, HOW asks for a way, often using through or by.

reason

why something happened or why something is true

Example, one reason laws matter is that they keep people safe.

way

how something happens

Example, a way is how taking turns solved a problem.

evidence

proof taken straight from the passage

Example, the evidence supports the thesis (central idea).

explanation

telling what the evidence shows

Example, the explanation connects the proof to the idea.

significance

why something matters

Example, the significance is the bigger lesson for others.

fairness

treating people the right way

Example, laws help protect fairness for everyone.

Tip for reading together. When a new word appears in a passage, pause and let your student use the sentence around it to figure out the meaning before you explain. Naming the guess out loud builds confidence.

4 Our Thinking Tool

This week your student uses the TREES chart, which grows an extended constructed response like a tree, and shapes the prompt first with the three shapes.

The three prompt shapes



Red circle

The important nouns, the topic the question is about



Yellow box

The important verb, the action the question asks for



Green triangle

The clue word, WHY or HOW

The TREES chart

T Thesis (central idea), one sentence that answers the exact prompt.

R Reasons or Ways, the support that grows from the thesis.

E Evidence, proof from the passage for each reason.

E Explanation, telling what the evidence shows.

S Significant Inferencing, the bigger idea beyond the text.

Mini version to use at home

Try it together

Use this prompt, Explain HOW taking turns solved a problem at home. Have your student circle the important nouns, box the important verb, and triangle HOW with hand motions. Name the problem, then say a complete thesis (central idea) using, Taking turns solved the problem by _____.

Answer for families. A complete thesis (central idea) names the problem and a way, for example, taking turns solved the problem at home by giving every child a fair chance to choose.

TRACKS While reading, students also look for evidence in the passage using TRACKS, which stands for **T**ime, **R**eactions, **A**ctions, **C**haracter or **C**oncept, **K**ey **K**nowledge, and **S**cenery or **S**etting. Ask your student what TRACKS they found in this week's passages.

5 Conversation Starters and a Simple Family Activity

- Ask your student to show how to circle nouns, box the verb, and triangle the clue word on one prompt.
- Ask what a WHY prompt asks the writer to explain.
- Ask what a HOW prompt asks the writer to explain.
- Choose one passage and ask what problem people needed to solve and how it helped the thesis (central idea).
- Ask your student to read one thesis (central idea) and tell which clue word helped write it.

Clue-Word Hunt

Ask a family member to say an everyday question with WHY or HOW, such as, Explain WHY we need a rule for taking turns. Have your student shape the prompt with hand motions and say, WHY asks for reasons, or HOW asks for a way something happened.

Shape and Say a Thesis (central idea)

Use one prompt, Explain HOW taking turns solved a problem at home. Have your student circle the important nouns, box the important verb, and triangle HOW with hand motions. Name the problem, then say a complete thesis (central idea) using, Taking turns solved the problem by _____.

6 What Strong Work Looks Like

Here is a strong thesis (central idea) for this week's writing prompt, with evidence and explanation. Notice how the thesis answers the exact prompt.

Prompt. Explain WHY laws were needed in "Why We Need Laws."

Thesis (central idea)

Laws were needed because people argued, fairness was lost, and problems grew without rules.

Evidence

In the poem, some people took more food while others had too little.

Explanation

This shows that clear laws were needed to protect people from unfair actions and help the community become safe and fair.

Checklist for strong work

- ☐ All three prompt shapes appear, and each mark sits on the correct word.
- ☐ The student names WHY or HOW and gives the clue word as the reason.
- ☐ The student names the problem or conflict in the text.
- ☐ The thesis (central idea) answers the exact prompt.
- ☐ The evidence supports the thesis, and the explanation shows the connection.

7 Progress at Home

My student can...

- ☐ circle the important nouns a prompt is about
- ☐ box the important verb the prompt asks for
- ☐ triangle the clue word and name WHY or HOW
- ☐ find the problem or conflict in a text
- ☐ write a thesis (central idea) that answers the exact prompt

Student name

Family signature

Date

Please sign and send this page back to school with your student. The teacher will celebrate the progress together with your student.