

FAMILY PACKET

Family Packet, Grade 3, Cluster 3, Module 3: Magnifying Reasons for WHY Prompts

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 magnify reasons for WHY prompts. Students brainstorm many possible reasons, group ideas with similar meanings, and narrow each group into one big idea. They choose three different big ideas and write one topic sentence for each. 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 their three topic sentences. 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 magnify reasons for WHY prompts. Students brainstorm many possible reasons, group ideas with similar meanings, and narrow each group into one big idea. They choose three different big ideas and write one topic sentence for each. These three topic sentences help build the body of an Extended Constructed Response (ECR).

We will read the poem "Why We Need Laws" and the drama "The Lunchroom Discoveries." Our model groups reasons about laws into Conflict, Fairness, and Safety and Order. Ask your student to explain how the three topic sentences support the thesis (central idea).

At home, ask WHY a familiar rule is useful. Invite many reasons, group similar ones, and have your student say three different topic sentences. Listening to the thinking is enough, and no special materials are needed.

With appreciation,

With appreciation,

[Classroom teacher signature]

The Writing Academy, LLC

ASK FOR THE GROUPS

Ask your student to explain which smaller reasons belong under each topic sentence and how all three support the thesis (central idea).

2 Family Tip Sheet

The skill, in plain words

Your student is learning to magnify reasons for WHY prompts. Students brainstorm many possible reasons, group ideas with similar meanings, and narrow each group into one big idea. Then they choose three different big ideas and write one topic sentence for each. The topic sentences build the body of an extended constructed response.

The standard, in plain words

This week the work connects to a Texas standard for composing informational texts. Your student develops the central idea through three distinct paragraph-sized reasons and topic sentences. In plain words, your student learns to organize a longer answer into clear parts, each with its own big idea.

The three steps to magnify reasons



Brainstorm

Gather many possible reasons
before choosing



Group

Put ideas with similar meanings
together



Narrow

Name one big idea that covers
each group

How to help without giving the answer

- Ask why it is helpful to brainstorm many reasons before choosing three.
- Ask which of your student's reasons belong together and what meaning they share.
- Ask what big idea names each group.
- Ask your student to read the three topic sentences and tell how the reasons are different.
- Let your student write the topic sentences. Your job is to ask good questions, not to supply the answer.

brainstorm

to gather many possible ideas before choosing

Example, I brainstorm many reasons.

group

to put ideas with similar meanings together

Example, I group like-minded reasons.

narrow

to name one big idea that covers a group

Example, I narrow these details into fairness.

topic sentence

a complete sentence naming the main reason a paragraph will explain

Example, my topic sentence grows from one group.

reason

why something is true

Example, one reason we need rules is safety.

big idea

the main thought that names a group

Example, fairness is the big idea of that group.

thesis (central idea)

the sentence that gives the overall answer

Example, the topic sentences support the thesis (central idea).

evidence

proof taken straight from the passage

Example, each reason needs evidence from the passage.

explanation

telling what the evidence shows

Example, the explanation connects the proof to the reason.

conflict

a problem or struggle in a text

Example, arguments over land are a conflict.

fairness

treating people the right way

Example, unequal food shares hurt fairness.

safety

being protected from harm

Example, laws create safety and order.

Tip for talking together. When your student names a big idea for a group, ask what every detail in the group has in common. The shared meaning is what makes the big idea strong.

4 Our Thinking Tool

This week your student uses the TREES chart to build the body of an extended constructed response. The topic sentences grow from the thesis (central idea) like branches from a trunk.

How a topic sentence grows



Brainstorm

Gather many possible reasons before choosing



Group

Put ideas with similar meanings together



Narrow

Name one big idea and write a topic sentence

The model groups

Group	Smaller reasons	Topic sentence
Conflict	Arguments over land, loud voices, disagreements spreading	Laws helped stop arguments from growing into bigger conflicts.
Fairness	Unequal food shares, strong voices winning	Laws protected fairness when some people took more than others.
Safety and Order	No clear rules, problems growing	Laws created safety and order for the community.

Mini version to use at home

Try it together

Ask, WHY do we need rules for playing together? Brainstorm at least six ideas, group the ones with similar meanings, and name one big idea for each group. Say three different topic sentences using, One reason we need rules is because _____.

Answer for families. Three topic sentences name three different big ideas, for example, one reason we need rules is because they stop arguments, another is because they keep everyone safe, and a third is because they make the game fair.

TRACKS While reading, students also look for evidence in the passage using TRACKS, which stands for **Time, Reactions, Actions, Character or Concept, Key Knowledge, and Scenery or Setting**. Ask your student what TRACKS they found in this week's passages.

5 Conversation Starters and a Simple Family Activity

- Ask why it is helpful to brainstorm many reasons before choosing three.
- Ask which of your student's reasons belong together and what meaning they share.
- Ask what big idea names each group.
- Ask your student to read the three topic sentences and tell how the reasons are different.
- Choose one topic sentence and ask which smaller reasons help explain it and how it supports the thesis (central idea).

A Room Full of Reasons

Ask, WHY do we need rules for playing together? Brainstorm at least six ideas without choosing a favorite. Say which ideas belong together, such as disagreements, fairness, and safety.

Three Big Ideas

Name one big idea for each group from your conversation. Say three different topic sentences using, One reason we need rules is because _____. Ask your student to connect two smaller reasons to one of the sentences.

6 What Strong Work Looks Like

Here are three strong topic sentences for this week's writing prompt. Each one comes from a different group and supports the thesis (central idea).

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

Topic sentence 1, Conflict

Laws were needed because they helped stop arguments from growing into bigger conflicts.

Topic sentence 2, Fairness

Laws were also needed because they protected fairness when some people tried to take more than others.

Topic sentence 3, Safety and Order

Finally, laws created safety and order for the community, and the poem shows that people could not solve problems without rules.

Checklist for strong work

- ☐ The student brainstormed many reasons before choosing three.
- ☐ The reasons are grouped by meaning, not by paragraph order.
- ☐ Each group has a name that fits every detail inside it.
- ☐ Three topic sentences name three different big ideas.
- ☐ Each topic sentence supports the thesis (central idea).

7 Progress at Home

My student can...

- ☐ brainstorm many possible reasons before choosing
- ☐ group ideas with similar meanings together
- ☐ name one big idea that covers each group
- ☐ write three different topic sentences
- ☐ explain how the topic sentences support the thesis (central idea)

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.