

FAMILY PACKET

Family Packet, Grade 4, Cluster 4, Module 3: Understanding Others and Rebuttal

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 two CREATURES writing moves, U, Understanding Others, and R, Rebuttal. Students practice stating another reasonable viewpoint accurately and respectfully before answering that exact point with reasoning and evidence. The goal is fairness and thoughtful response, not attacking a person. 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.

Ask your student to teach you what they learned. 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.

Family Letter

Dear Families,

This week your student is learning two CREATURES writing moves, U, Understanding Others, and R, Rebuttal. Fourth-grade writers practice stating another reasonable viewpoint accurately and respectfully before answering that exact point with reasoning and evidence. The goal is fairness and thoughtful response, not attacking a person or writing an advanced counterargument essay.

We will read *The Wealth of Mansa Musa* and *Four Regions, One Big Adventure*. At home, ask your student why listening carefully can make an argument more credible.

Your student can practice the frame, *Some readers may argue, and respond with, That point is reasonable, however.* Ask how the response returns to the claim.

With appreciation,

[Classroom teacher signature]

The Writing Academy, LLC

ASK FOR THE OTHER SIDE

Ask your student to state another viewpoint fairly and then answer that exact point with reasoning or evidence. If your student can do both, the skill is sticking.

Family Tip Sheet

The skill, in plain words

Your student is learning U, Understanding Others, and R, Rebuttal. U states another reasonable viewpoint accurately, respectfully, and specifically. R responds to that exact viewpoint with reasoning and evidence, then returns to the claim. The practice is gentle and age-appropriate, and it makes the argument more credible because the writer answers a real idea, not a weaker version of it.

The standard, in plain words

This week the work connects to Texas standards for writing. Your student develops drafts with coherent organization and composes opinion and argumentative texts with a clear position, using genre characteristics and craft. In plain words, your student learns to hear another view, represent it fairly, and respond respectfully.

Fair frames for the other side

Move	Frame
U, Understanding Others	Some readers may argue that blank.
U, Understanding Others	Another reasonable view is that blank.
R, Rebuttal	That point is reasonable, however blank.
R, Rebuttal	However, the stronger evidence shows blank.

How to help without giving the answer

- Ask your student to state the other side fairly.
- Ask what the other side would say is its strongest point.
- Ask which reasoning or evidence answers that exact point.
- Ask how the response returns to the claim.
- Let your student decide whether the claim stays or becomes more precise.

Key Words

Understanding Others

the CREATURES move that states another viewpoint accurately and respectfully

Example, U names the other side fairly.

rebuttal

a response that answers another position

Example, the rebuttal answers the actual point.

viewpoint

a way of seeing an issue

Example, some readers may argue that trade mattered more.

fair

accurate and respectful

Example, a fair statement does not twist the other side.

intellectual fairness

representing an idea accurately before answering it

Example, fairness makes the argument credible.

straw-man response

an unfair response to a weakened version of another view

Example, avoid a straw-man response.

reasoning

thinking that explains how evidence supports a position

Example, the reasoning answers the point with evidence.

claim refinement

making a claim more precise after considering another viewpoint

Example, the writer refines the claim after hearing the other side.

rebuttal frame

wording that respectfully begins the answer to another view

Example, that point is reasonable, however, is a rebuttal frame.

central claim

the main position the writer defends

Example, the rebuttal returns to the central claim.

credible

believable and worthy of trust

Example, fair thinking makes the argument credible.

acknowledge

to recognize a point as valid

Example, the writer acknowledges a reasonable point.

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.

Our Thinking Tool

This week your student adds two moves to the CREATURES roadmap, U, Understanding Others, and R, Rebuttal. A fair response states the other side accurately before answering the actual point.

Understanding Others

- State the other viewpoint accurately.
- State it respectfully.
- State it specifically, with the real reason the other side gives.

Rebuttal

- Answer the exact point with reasoning or evidence.
- Return to your claim.
- Do not attack a person or twist the other side.

Fair frames to use

Frame	When to use it
Some readers may argue that blank.	To state another viewpoint
Another reasonable view is that blank.	To state another viewpoint
That point is reasonable, however blank.	To begin the rebuttal
However, the stronger evidence shows blank.	To answer with proof

Mini version to use at home

Try it together

Pick a family topic with two sides, such as, Should screen time have a limit? Have your student state the other side fairly, then answer that exact point with one reason and return to their own claim.

Answer for families. Other side, some readers may argue that screen time helps friends stay connected. Rebuttal, that point is reasonable, however, time for homework and sleep matters more for the school week. The response returns to the claim about a limit.

TRACKS While reading, students use TRACKS, which stands for **Time, Reactions, Actions, Character or Concept, Key Knowledge, and Scenery or Setting**, to find evidence that could support more than one position. Ask your student what TRACKS they found in this week's passages.

5 Conversation Starters and a Simple Family Activity

- What makes a statement of another viewpoint fair and accurate?
- How is rebutting an idea different from attacking a person?
- Why can acknowledging a reasonable point strengthen a writer's credibility?
- When might another viewpoint help you refine a claim?
- Which evidence from *The Wealth of Mansa Musa* or *Four Regions, One Big Adventure* could support more than one reasonable position?

Hear, Then Respond

Read this viewpoint, Some readers may argue that supporting learning had the greater impact because Timbuktu became a respected center of study. Then respond, That point is reasonable, however, protected trade affected the kingdom more broadly by bringing more merchants, goods, and wealth into Mali. Ask your student to explain how the response answers the actual point respectfully.

Compare Viewpoints

Ask your student to choose one passage and name two reasonable positions. For The Wealth of Mansa Musa, the positions can compare the impact of protected trade and supporting learning. For Four Regions, One Big Adventure, the positions can compare climate and natural resources as influences on work opportunities. Ask which position the evidence supports and whether the claim should remain or become more precise.

What Strong Work Looks Like

Here is a strong response to this week's writing prompt. Each part has its own job.

Prompt. Argue whether protecting trade or supporting learning had the greater long-term impact on Mali.

Claim

Supporting learning had the greater long-term impact on Mali because knowledge could continue strengthening the kingdom for generations.

Reason, evidence, and thinking

Timbuktu became known for study in subjects such as math, science, and religion. This supports the claim because knowledge can be shared and passed on, extending its influence beyond one moment.

Understanding Others

Some readers may argue that protected trade mattered more because safe routes immediately increased merchants, goods, and wealth.

Rebuttal

That economic impact was important, however, support for learning gave Mali a lasting intellectual reputation and created knowledge that could continue benefiting people after individual trade journeys ended.

Checklist for strong work

- ☐ The other viewpoint is stated accurately and respectfully.
- ☐ The rebuttal answers the actual point.
- ☐ The rebuttal uses reasoning or evidence.
- ☐ The response returns to the claim.
- ☐ The writer avoids a straw-man response.

Progress at Home

My student can...

- ☐ state another viewpoint accurately
- ☐ state it respectfully
- ☐ answer the actual point with reasoning
- ☐ answer with evidence
- ☐ return to my claim
- ☐ tell the difference between rebutting an idea and attacking a person

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.