

FAMILY PACKET

Family Packet, Grade 4, Cluster 8, Module 1: PLACE - What Shapes a Society?

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 begins a four week research project about what shapes a society. Students learn that place creates possibilities and limits. They read about the Caddo people in East Texas, the kingdom of Mali, and regions of Texas. Then they use a thinking tool called R-E1-E2 to write a body paragraph with a reason, evidence, and an explanation. This packet shows you what is happening in class 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.

1 Family Letter

Dear Families,

This week your student begins a four week research project about what shapes a society. The class will read a source called "What Shapes a Society? Place, Resources, and Connections." Students will learn that place creates possibilities and limits, but people still make choices.

Students will use a thinking tool called R-E1-E2. R stands for Reason. E1 stands for Evidence 1. E2 stands for Explanation 1. Students write a body paragraph with one reason, one piece of credited evidence, and one explanation of what the evidence proves.

Ask your student to explain one change chain. What challenge or opportunity existed? What did someone decide or believe? What action followed? What changed immediately? What lasted?

With appreciation,

[Classroom teacher signature]

The Writing Academy, LLC

ASK FOR A DEMONSTRATION

Ask your student to show you the R-E1-E2 tool and explain what each letter 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 write a research body paragraph. A strong paragraph has three parts. R is the reason. E1 is the evidence. E2 is the explanation. Students choose evidence that proves the reason, give source credit, and explain what the evidence means.

The standard, in plain words

This week the work connects to Texas standards. Your student generates and clarifies research questions. Your student also gathers relevant information from sources and demonstrates understanding. In plain words, your student learns to ask good questions, find useful information, and explain what it means.

The R-E1-E2 tool your student uses



R (Reason)

The why or how the thesis is true



E1 (Evidence)

Credited text proof that supports the reason



E2 (Explanation)

What the evidence means and why it matters

How to help without giving the answer

- Ask your student to teach you R-E1-E2. Explaining it out loud is part of how the skill sticks.
- Ask your student to show you a quotation and a paraphrase and explain the difference.
- Ask what the evidence helps prove. Let your student name the reason and give the evidence.
- If your student is stuck, ask about the source. Ask which paragraph has the best proof.
- Let your student write the paragraph. Your job is to ask good questions, not to supply the answer.

place

the land, water, climate, plants, animals, and resources around a society

Example, place creates possibilities and limits.

research question

a question that guides a search for information

Example, my question helps me choose evidence.

thesis (central idea)

the answer a research paper proves

Example, my thesis has three reasons.

evidence

a source fact that supports a reason

Example, my evidence helps prove my reason.

quotation

the exact words from a source, set inside quotation marks

Example, my quotation has source credit.

paraphrase

a source idea restated in genuinely new words and sentence structure

Example, my paraphrase keeps the meaning and names the source.

copying too closely

changing only a few words while keeping the source's wording and order

Example, I revise the note into my own sentence.

corroboration

checking an idea against a second source

Example, I will corroborate this detail later.

geography

the landforms, water, climate, plants, animals, and natural resources of a place

Example, geography creates possibilities.

scarcity

having limited resources compared with what people want or need

Example, scarcity can lead to problem solving.

resource

something found in nature that people can use

Example, wind can be a resource.

trade

the exchange of goods between people or places

Example, trade connected communities.

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 one main thinking tool, called R-E1-E2. It has three parts that work together to build a strong body paragraph.

The three parts of R-E1-E2



R (Reason)

The why or how the thesis is true



E1 (Evidence)

Credited text proof that supports the reason



E2 (Explanation)

What the evidence means and why it matters

How the parts work together

Part	Job	Question to Ask
R	States the reason	What is the reason or way?
E1	Gives credited evidence	What proof supports the reason?
E2	Explains the evidence	What does the evidence mean and why does it matter?

Mini version to use at home

Try it together

Read this question from class, *How can a place create both opportunities and challenges for a society?* Have your student name the reason, choose one piece of credited evidence, and explain what the evidence proves.

Answer for families. The reason is that place creates possibilities and limits. The evidence is that the Caddo used rivers, forests, and fertile land for daily life. The explanation is that geography created connected possibilities for food, travel, and materials.

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 source.

5 Conversation Starters and a Simple Family Activity

- Ask your student to explain the difference between a report and a research paper.
- Ask your student to show you a quotation and a paraphrase from the source.
- Talk together about how the Caddo people used rivers and forests.
- Talk together about how Mali's location near trade routes helped it grow.
- Ask which part of the R-E1-E2 tool feels hardest.

Build a Change Chain

Choose one example from the source, such as the Caddo, Mali, or Texas. Say NEED OR OPPORTUNITY, then IDEA OR CHOICE, then ACTION, then CHANGE. Explain why it mattered.

Quote or Paraphrase

Read one sentence from a household text. Repeat it exactly as a quotation, then restate the same idea in new words and sentence structure as a paraphrase. Name the source both times.

6 What Strong Work Looks Like

Here is a strong body paragraph using R-E1-E2. Each part has its own job.

Prompt. How can a place create both opportunities and challenges for a society?

R (Reason)

One way societies are shaped is by the places, resources, and connections available to people.

E1 (Evidence)

In East Texas, Caddo communities used rivers for water and movement and forests for homes and tools.
(Source, paragraph 9)

E2 (Explanation)

This proves that place can create connected possibilities for food, travel, and materials, but people still decide how to use those resources.

Checklist for strong work

- ☐ The reason is clear and matches the prompt.
- ☐ The evidence is credited with a source and paragraph number.
- ☐ The evidence is labeled as a quotation or a paraphrase.
- ☐ The explanation tells what the evidence means and why it matters.
- ☐ The paragraph stays focused on one reason.

7 Progress at Home

My student can...

- ☐ explain what a research question is
- ☐ tell the difference between a quotation and a paraphrase
- ☐ give source credit for evidence
- ☐ use R-E1-E2 to write a body paragraph
- ☐ explain what evidence proves

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.