

FAMILY PACKET

Family Packet, Grade 4, Cluster 8, Module 4: SYNTHESIS - What Shapes Our World?

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 finishes a four week research project about what shapes a society. Over the past month, students gathered research notes from at least four approved sources about geography, trade, government, culture, leadership, and historical evidence. This week they turn those notes into one clear, well-supported five paragraph research paper. Students write a SET introduction, assemble three R-E1-E2 body paragraphs, and add an R1-R2-R3 conclusion. They use at least four approved sources, direct quotations, paraphrased evidence, source credit, and cross-source synthesis. 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 completes a four week research project. Over the past month, students have gathered research notes from at least four approved sources about what shapes a society. This week they turn those notes into one clear, well-supported five paragraph research paper.

Students write a SET introduction. S stands for Statement, a clear sentence that names the topic and why it matters. E stands for Evidence-reference, a sentence that names the sources and what they show. T stands for Thesis, the central idea the paper will prove.

After the introduction, students assemble three R-E1-E2 body paragraphs. Each paragraph has a Reason, a piece of Evidence with source credit, and an Explanation of what the evidence proves. Students finish with an R1-R2-R3 conclusion that Restates the thesis, Restates the three reasons, and reaches a Resolution about the topic.

Ask your student to show you the finished paper and to point out where each part appears. Watch how the SET introduction connects to the three R-E1-E2 body paragraphs and to the R1-R2-R3 conclusion.

With appreciation,

[Classroom teacher signature]

The Writing Academy, LLC

ASK FOR A DEMONSTRATION

Ask your student to point out each SET part in the introduction, each R-E1-E2 part in a body paragraph, and each R1-R2-R3 part in the conclusion. The whole paper should read as one connected argument.

2 Family Tip Sheet

The skill, in plain words

Your student is learning to write a complete five paragraph research paper. The paper has three main parts. The introduction uses SET, which stands for Statement, Evidence-reference, and Thesis. Each body paragraph uses R-E1-E2, which is Reason, Evidence, and Explanation. The conclusion uses R1-R2-R3, which is Restate thesis, Restate reasons, and Resolution.

The standard, in plain words

This week the work connects to Texas standards 4.13A through 4.13H, and to standards 4.11B, 4.11C, and 4.11D. Your student generates research questions, gathers information from multiple sources, organizes evidence, integrates quotations and paraphrases, credits sources, and produces a written research paper. In plain words, your student turns a month of research into one clear, well-supported paper.

The SET tool your student uses for the introduction



S (Statement)

Names the topic and why it matters



E (Evidence-reference)

Names the sources and what they show



T (Thesis)

States the central idea the paper will prove

How to help without giving the answer

- Ask your student to teach you SET, R-E1-E2, and R1-R2-R3. Explaining it out loud is part of how the skill sticks.
- Ask your student to show you the SET introduction in the finished paper. Have them point out the S, the E, and the T.
- Ask what each piece of evidence helps prove. Let your student name the reason and give the evidence.
- If your student is stuck, ask about the SET introduction. Ask which sentence is the statement, which is the evidence-reference, and which is the thesis.
- Let your student write the paper. Your job is to ask good questions, not to supply the answer.

3 Key Words

synthesis

putting pieces together to make one connected answer

Example, my paper shows synthesis of four sources.

thesis (central idea)

the answer a research paper proves

Example, my thesis names the central idea.

corroborate

checking an idea against a second source

Example, I will corroborate this detail with another source.

legacy

something a person or group leaves behind for the future

Example, the Magna Carta left a legacy of limited power.

generation

all the people born and living around the same time

Example, a choice can affect the next generation.

vegetation

the plants that grow in a place

Example, dense vegetation gave food and shelter.

Runnymede

a place in England where King John agreed to limit his power

Example, at Runnymede, nobles forced the king to share power.

Tejano

a person of Mexican heritage who lives in Texas

Example, Tejano settlers shaped Texas culture and land.

place

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

Example, place creates possibilities and limits.

people

the human beings who live in a society

Example, people make choices to solve problems.

idea

a thought or plan someone has

Example, an idea can change a whole society.

choice

a decision someone makes

Example, a choice can leave changes that last.

change

what happens when something becomes different

Example, change can happen quickly or slowly.

past

the time before now

Example, the past shapes the present.

work

effort or activity done to reach a goal

Example, hard work can build a new future.

land

the ground of a place

Example, fertile land helped societies grow.

need

something a person or group must have to survive or succeed

Example, water is a basic need.

last

to continue for a long time

Example, good laws can last for centuries.

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.

This week your student puts three thinking tools together to build one five paragraph research paper. The introduction uses SET. Each body paragraph uses R-E1-E2. The conclusion uses R1-R2-R3.

The three parts of a SET introduction



S (Statement)

Names the topic and why it matters



E (Evidence-reference)

Names the sources and what they show



T (Thesis)

States the central idea the paper will prove

How the parts work together in the paper

Part	Job	Question to Ask
S	States the topic	What is the broad topic and why does it matter?
E	References the sources	What sources are used and what do they show?
T	States the thesis	What is the central idea the paper will prove?
R-E1-E2	Builds a body paragraph	What is the reason, the evidence, and the explanation?
R1-R2-R3	Builds the conclusion	How is the thesis restated, the reasons restated, and the resolution reached?

Mini version to use at home

Try it together

Read this question from class, *How do people, places, and ideas shape societies?* Have your student write the S statement, the E evidence-reference, and the T thesis for a SET introduction. Then have them sketch one R-E1-E2 body paragraph and one R1-R2-R3 conclusion.

Answer for families. The S names the topic. The E names at least four approved sources and what they show. The T states the central idea, such as geography creates possibilities, people make choices, and those choices can leave changes that last. The body paragraph gives a reason, evidence with source credit, and an explanation. The conclusion restates the thesis, restates the reasons, and reaches a resolution.

TRACKS While reading, students also look for evidence in the passages 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 the sources used for this week's paper.

- Ask your student how geography can create both possibilities and challenges.
- Ask your student what happens when resources, trade, and ideas connect communities.
- Talk together about how a person's choices or talents can create lasting change.
- Talk together about the difference between collecting facts and proving an answer.
- Ask your student why every fact needs to earn its place in the paper.

Evidence Earns Its Place

Have your student read one research note and complete the sentence, "This evidence helps prove ____ because ____." If the connection is unclear, the fact does not yet earn a place in the paper.

Build the Paper

Together, sort sentence cards into a SET introduction, three R-E1-E2 body paragraphs, and an R1-R2-R3 conclusion. Ask your student to explain the job of each part.

6 What Strong Work Looks Like

Here is a strong SET introduction. Each part has its own job and connects to the body paragraphs and conclusion that follow.

Prompt. How do people, places, and ideas shape societies?

S (Statement)

Societies are shaped by many forces, and the choices people make can affect generations they will never meet.

E (Evidence-reference)

Research about geography, trade, government, culture, leadership, and historical evidence reveals how those forces work together.

T (Thesis)

People, places, and ideas shape societies because geography creates possibilities, people make choices to solve problems or use opportunities, and those choices can leave changes that last.

Checklist for strong work

- ☐ The SET introduction has all three parts in the right order.
- ☐ Each body paragraph uses R-E1-E2 with credited evidence and a clear explanation.
- ☐ The R1-R2-R3 conclusion restates the thesis, restates the reasons, and reaches a resolution.
- ☐ At least four approved sources are used with source credit.
- ☐ The paper shows cross-source synthesis, not just a list of facts.

7 Progress at Home

My student can...

- ☐ name the three parts of a SET introduction
- ☐ name the three parts of an R-E1-E2 body paragraph
- ☐ name the three parts of an R1-R2-R3 conclusion
- ☐ explain how the three tools work together as one paper
- ☐ use at least four approved sources with source credit
- ☐ show cross-source synthesis in the body paragraphs and conclusion

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.