

FAMILY PACKET

Family Packet, Grade 5, Cluster 3, Module 2: Hidden WHY and HOW Prompt Clues

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 is learning to be a prompt detective. Students read the whole sentence-statement prompt, underline the clue word or phrase, and decide whether the prompt signals WHY thinking or HOW thinking. Words such as significance and importance point toward WHY. Words such as reveal and develop point toward HOW. 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.

1 Family Letter

Dear Families,

This week your student is learning how to be a prompt detective. Students will read the poem "Our Rights, Our Voices" and the drama "A Voice of Their Own." They will look for clue words that reveal whether a sentence-statement prompt asks for WHY thinking or HOW thinking.

Words such as importance, significance, value, meaning, purpose, and reasons point toward WHY thinking. Words such as ways, reveal, influence, show, develop, and shape point toward HOW thinking. Your student will underline the clue, label the prompt, and write a thesis (central idea) that does the same job.

Please ask, "What word tells you whether to explain why something matters or how an idea develops?" Then ask for one detail from either passage that could support the thinking.

With appreciation,

Your student's teacher

The Writing Academy, LLC

ASK FOR A DEMONSTRATION

Ask your student to underline the clue word in any sentence-statement prompt and defend the label, WHY or HOW. If your student can teach it, the skill is sticking.

2 Family Tip Sheet

The skill, in plain words

Your student is learning to read a sentence-statement prompt like a detective. Some prompts do not say WHY or HOW directly. They hide the clue inside a word such as significance or reveal. Students underline the clue, decide whether the prompt asks WHY or HOW, and then write a thesis (central idea) that matches the real job.

The standard, in plain words

This week the work connects to two Texas standards. Your student develops a focused, structured, coherent draft with specific facts. Your student also composes a short informational text with a clear central idea. In plain words, your student learns to match the central idea to the exact prompt and to support it with evidence.

Clue words that reveal the thinking job

Hidden WHY clues	Hidden HOW clues
importance, significance, value	ways, reveal, influence
meaning, purpose, reasons	show, develop, shape

How to help without giving the answer

- Ask your student to underline the clue word and read it aloud.
- Ask whether the clue points to WHY thinking or HOW thinking, and why.
- Ask your student to say what the prompt really wants explained.
- If your student is stuck, compare two prompts, one with significance and one with reveal.
- Let your student write the thesis (central idea). Your job is to ask good questions, not to supply the answer.

prompt

the statement that gives a writing job

Example, Explain the significance of the rights named in "Our Rights, Our Voices."

clue word

the word that reveals the thinking job

Example, significance is the clue word in the prompt above.

classify

to sort ideas by shared features

Example, classify the prompt as hidden WHY or hidden HOW.

thesis (central idea)

the central sentence that answers a prompt

Example, the rights are significant because they protect people's freedoms.

significance

why something matters

Example, significance is a hidden WHY clue.

reveal

to show something that was hidden

Example, reveal is a hidden HOW clue.

reason

an idea that explains why something is important

Example, one reason is that rights guide fair laws.

way

a method that explains how something develops

Example, one way is through representation.

evidence

specific proof from a text

Example, the poem says rights protect us every day.

explanation

thinking that tells how evidence proves an idea

Example, the explanation says what the evidence means.

develop

to grow or build an idea step by step

Example, the drama develops the idea of self-government.

coherent

clear and logically connected

Example, a coherent response matches the prompt's thinking job.

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 TREES, to organize the informative response. Before the response begins, the prompt detective step decides the thinking job, WHY or HOW.

TREES, the organizer for the full response

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

R Reason or Way, tells why or how the thesis (central idea) is true.

E Evidence, gives text proof.

E Explanation, says what the detail means.

S Summary, brings the response together.

Students also use CSI to test each detail before it enters the response.

Prompt detective, the thinking job

Clue pattern	Thinking job	What the thesis explains
significance, importance, purpose	Hidden WHY	Reasons something matters
reveal, develop, shape	Hidden HOW	A way an idea grows or shows

Mini version to use at home

Try it together

Read this prompt from class, *Explain the significance of the rights named in "Our Rights, Our Voices."* Have your student underline the clue word, decide the thinking job, and defend the choice using the prompt language.

Answer for families. The clue word is significance. It points to hidden WHY thinking, because significance asks why the rights matter.

TRACKS While reading, students also look for details 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 the poem and drama.

5 Conversation Starters and a Simple Family Activity

- Which words can signal hidden WHY thinking?
- Which words can signal hidden HOW thinking?
- How does the poem show the importance of rights or fair treatment?
- What does the drama reveal about the colonists' wish for representation?
- How does a thesis (central idea) change when the prompt changes from significance to reveal?

Prompt Detective

Write two sentence-statement prompts together using only the poem or drama. Include a WHY clue such as importance or purpose in one prompt and a HOW clue such as reveal or develop in the other. Take turns underlining the clue, naming the thinking job, and defending the choice.

Passage Talk

Read a short portion of either passage together. Ask your student to name one important idea, point to a detail that supports it, and explain how the detail connects. Finish by asking which clue word would help turn that idea into a sentence-statement prompt.

6 What Strong Work Looks Like

Here is a strong response to a hidden WHY prompt. The clue word is underlined, the thinking job is named, and the thesis (central idea) matches the prompt.

Prompt. Explain the significance of the rights named in "Our Rights, Our Voices."

Thesis (central idea)

The rights named in "Our Rights, Our Voices" are significant because they protect people's freedoms, require fair treatment in courts, and guide laws that affect everyone.

Evidence

The poet says, "These rights protect us every day," which shows why the protections matter beyond one situation.

Explanation

This detail proves that rights are not distant ideas. They shape daily life, which is why their significance matters.

Checklist for strong work

- ☐ The clue word is underlined and read aloud.
- ☐ The student names hidden WHY or hidden HOW and defends the choice.
- ☐ The thesis (central idea) matches the thinking job of the prompt.
- ☐ The evidence connects directly to the prompt.
- ☐ The explanation says what the detail proves.

7 Progress at Home

My student can...

- ☐ underline the clue word or phrase in a prompt
- ☐ decide whether a prompt asks hidden WHY or hidden HOW
- ☐ defend the choice using the prompt language
- ☐ write a thesis (central idea) that matches the thinking job
- ☐ choose evidence that directly connects to the prompt
- ☐ explain what the detail 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.