

FAMILY PACKET

Family Packet, Grade 5, PREP, Module 1: Genre Compass and Source Reading Genre

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 what strong writers do before the first draft. Students learn that a source passage does not choose the response genre. The writing job does. Students use a thinking tool called the Genre Compass to make five decisions in a row. 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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A note from the classroom about the week's learning.

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Easy ways to talk about the week's learning.

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En español

Todo este paquete también está disponible en español.

1 Family Letter

Dear Families,

This week your student learns what strong writers do before the first draft. The big idea is simple. A source passage does not choose the response genre. The writing job does. The same source can lead to a personal narrative, an informational piece, or an opinion piece, depending on the job.

Students will use a thinking tool called the Genre Compass. It has five steps in a row. Students move from Topic to Purpose to Audience to Response Genre to Planning Strategy. Students also learn a narrative planning tool called TRAILS, with six parts that help a story grow with depth.

Ask your student to walk through one writing direction using the Genre Compass out loud. Which topic did they choose? Which audience? Which response genre fits the job? Which planning strategy fits that genre? If your student can teach the five steps, the skill is sticking.

With appreciation,

[Classroom teacher signature]

The Writing Academy, LLC

ASK FOR A DEMONSTRATION

Ask your student to show you the Genre Compass and explain each step in order. If your student can teach it, the skill is sticking.

2 Family Tip Sheet

The skill, in plain words

Your student is learning to plan a piece of writing by separating the source genre from the response genre. A source can be a story, an article, a speech, or a poem. The response genre is the genre of what the student produces. A single source can lead to many different response genres. Students use the Genre Compass to make five decisions in a row, Topic, Purpose, Audience, Response Genre, and Planning Strategy.

The standard, in plain words

This week the work connects to Texas standards 5.11(A)(i) and 5.12(A)(i). Your student recognizes the distinguishing features of genres, including purpose and audience expectations. Your student also recognizes and analyzes the genres of sources and the genres students choose to write. In plain words, your student learns to read a writing job closely, name the genre choices, and explain how those choices change the writing.

The Genre Compass shapes your student uses



Topic

What the writing is about



Purpose

Why the writer is writing



Audience

Who will read the writing

How to help without giving the answer

- Ask your student to teach you the five steps of the Genre Compass. Explaining it out loud is part of how the skill sticks.
- Ask your student to name the source genre first, then name the response genre. The source does not choose the response.
- Ask what changes when the audience changes. Let your student name a new audience and predict what shifts.
- If your student is stuck, ask about the writing job. Ask what the writer is being asked to do.
- Let your student choose the response genre. Your job is to ask good questions, not to supply the answer.

genre

a category of writing with shared features

Example, narrative, informational, and opinion are common genres.

topic

what a piece of writing is about

Example, the topic is a true experience of changed thinking.

purpose

the reason the writer is writing

Example, the purpose is to narrate and reflect.

audience

the reader the writer has in mind

Example, classmates are the audience for this piece.

narrative

a genre that tells a true or made up story

Example, the narrative follows a real experience.

evidence

a fact or detail that supports a claim

Example, evidence from the source proves the reason.

source

a passage, text, or speaker that provides information

Example, the source is a short article about wolves.

assumption

an idea a reader believes before checking it

Example, I check the source before trusting my assumption.

investigate

to look closely to find facts or proof

Example, I investigate the claim before I write.

brainstorm

to generate many ideas quickly without judging

Example, we brainstorm topics for the new piece.

commission

a formal request to write a specific piece for a real use

Example, the principal commissioned a letter to new families.

recommendation

a suggestion that names a choice and explains why

Example, my recommendation explains the best option.

survey

a set of questions given to a group to gather data

Example, the survey asks classmates about reading habits.

viewpoint

the way a person sees or thinks about a topic

Example, two viewpoints can both be true.

percentage

a number out of one hundred that shows a share

Example, sixty percent of students voted yes.

source reliability

how trustworthy a source is based on its evidence and purpose

Example, a recent study has strong source reliability.

response ecosystem

the network of genres a writer can choose from for one source

Example, the response ecosystem includes narrative, informational, and opinion.

Genre Compass

a planning tool that names Topic, Purpose, Audience, Response Genre, and Planning Strategy

Example, the Genre Compass guides every decision in order.

TRAILS

a narrative planning tool with six parts (Topic, Relationships, Actions and Thoughts, Important Moment, Lesson, Setting)

Example, TRAILS helps a story grow with depth.

collective noun

a word that names a whole group, like flock or team

Example, flock and team are collective nouns.

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 the Genre Compass. It has five steps in a row that lead to a strong plan. Students also learn a second tool called TRAILS that helps a narrative grow with depth.

The five steps of the Genre Compass



How the five steps work together

Step	Job	Question to ask
Topic	Names the subject	What is this writing about?
Purpose	Names the reason to write	Why am I writing this?
Audience	Names the reader	Who will read this and what do they need?
Response Genre	Picks the genre and its features	What kind of writing best fits this job?
Planning Strategy	Picks the planning tool	What tool will help me plan this genre well?

TRAILS for narrative planning

Letter	What it names	What to plan
T	Topic	What the story is really about
R	Relationships	Who matters and how they connect
A	Actions, Thoughts, Dialogue	What happens and what the narrator thinks or says
I	Important Moment	The turn or turning point
L	Lesson or Lasting Effect	What changed and what the narrator learned
S	Setting	Where and when the story happens

Mini version to use at home

Try it together

Read this writing direction, *Write a true story about a time you changed your mind about something important, for your classmates to read.* Have your student name the topic, purpose, and audience first, then choose a response genre and a planning strategy.

Answer for families. The topic is a true experience of changed thinking. The purpose is to narrate and reflect. The audience is classmates. The response genre is personal narrative. The planning strategy is freewrite, then TRAILS.

- Ask your student to explain the difference between the reading genre and the response genre.
- Ask your student what TRAILS helps a narrative develop with depth.
- Talk together about how purpose and audience can change the writing.
- Ask why there is no single best planning strategy for every writing job.
- Ask how a reader's needs can change the details or the register of a piece.

Name the Job

Read a short writing direction aloud, such as "Write a one page letter to a new student joining our class." Have your student name the topic, the purpose, and the audience before choosing a response genre and naming a planning strategy.

Genre Signal Sort

Write three short writing directions on three small cards. With your student, sort each card by response genre, such as personal narrative, informational, or opinion. Defend each route with one reason out loud.

6 What Strong Work Looks Like

Here is a strong plan built with the Genre Compass. Each of the five steps has its own job.

Prompt. Write a true story about a time you changed your mind about something important, for your classmates to read.

Topic

A true experience of changed thinking.

Purpose

To narrate and reflect on the change.

Audience

Classmates who know the writer and want to learn from the change.

Response Genre

Personal narrative, with a strong beginning, a turn, and a reflection at the end.

Planning Strategy

Freewrite, then TRAILS to deepen the story.

Checklist for strong work

- ☐ The student names the source genre and the response genre as two different choices.
- ☐ The five steps of the Genre Compass appear in order, with one decision per step.
- ☐ The purpose and audience match the writing direction.
- ☐ The response genre fits the writing job, not just the source.
- ☐ The planning strategy matches the response genre.

7 Progress at Home

My student can...

- ☐ tell the difference between the source genre and the response genre
- ☐ name the five steps of the Genre Compass in order
- ☐ explain how purpose and audience change the writing
- ☐ choose a response genre that fits the writing job
- ☐ choose a planning strategy that fits the response genre
- ☐ use TRAILS to plan a personal narrative

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.