

Central Idea and Evidence Across Two Texts

Grade: 6 **Subject:** Reading / Language Arts **Time:** ~45 min core + ~15 min extension **Work mode:** Independent · pencil only RLA

Start Here

This is a **reading and writing task**. You will read **two short informational texts** about the same topic, then answer questions and write a short response using a pencil. You do **not** need a computer or any device. Work by yourself and do your best thinking. Every question about the texts can be answered **from the texts themselves** — the answers are on the page. Both texts have their paragraphs numbered **[1], [2], [3]**... so you can point to exactly where you found something. Write in complete sentences where you are asked to explain. If a question is hard, skip it, keep going, and come back. Reading the texts aloud quietly to yourself is allowed and encouraged.

Start Notice & Predict 5 min

Look only at the two titles below before you read: "The Return of the Night Sky" and "Cities That Turned Off the Lights."

1From the **two titles alone**, write **one thing you notice** and **one thing you predict** both texts might be about.

2The **central idea** of a text is the most important point the writer wants you to understand about the topic — not just the topic word itself. In your own words, what is the difference between a **topic** (like "dogs") and a **central idea** (like "dogs can be trained to help people")?

Build Read Two Texts 10 min

Words to know (from the texts)

artificial

made by people, not natural.

glare

strong, harsh light that is hard to look at.

migrate

to travel from one place to another, often with the seasons.

ordinance

a local law or rule made by a city or town.

shield

a cover that blocks or aims light in one direction.

Text A: "The Return of the Night Sky" — an original informational text

[1] On a clear night far from any city, you can see thousands of stars. Closer to town, most of those stars disappear. The reason is *light pollution* — the extra brightness that fills the sky when *artificial* lights from streets, signs, and buildings shine upward. Scientists say the glow now hides the stars from most people who live in or near cities.

[2] Light pollution is not only a problem for stargazers. Many animals depend on natural darkness. Baby sea turtles hatch at night and crawl toward the brightest light, which used to be the moon reflecting on the ocean. Near lit-up beaches, they crawl the wrong way and never reach the water. Birds that *migrate* at night can become confused by bright city lights and crash into buildings.

[3] The good news is that this kind of pollution is one of the easiest to fix. Unlike smoke in the air or trash in a river, extra light disappears the instant a bulb is switched off or pointed downward. A simple *shield* on a streetlight can send light to the ground, where it is needed, instead of up into the sky. When people aim lights carefully, the stars begin to return — sometimes within a single night.

Text B: "Cities That Turned Off the Lights" — an original informational text

[1] Some communities have decided to take action against light pollution. In 2001, the town of Flagstaff, Arizona, passed one of the first "dark sky" *ordinances* in the world. The rules limit how bright outdoor lights can be and require many lights to point downward. Today Flagstaff is known as a place where visitors can still see the Milky Way stretch across the sky.

[2] Cutting light does more than reveal stars. A light that shines sideways into your eyes creates *glare*, which can actually make it harder to see at night. Lights that are shielded and aimed down light the sidewalk without blinding drivers. Cities that switched to these lights report that streets feel safer and easier to see, not darker.

[3] There is another reason cities act: money. A light pointed at the sky wastes the electricity used to make it. When a town replaces old fixtures with shielded, lower-power lights, it can cut its energy bill by a large amount each year. For many city leaders, saving money is the argument that finally turns off the extra lights — and gives the night sky back at the same time.

3Retrieval. According to **Text A, paragraph [1]**, what causes light pollution? Answer using details from the text.

Apply Read Closely 20 min

Every answer in this section is in one or both texts. Point to the paragraph in your head before you write.

4Central idea — Text A. What is the **central idea** of Text A? Write it as a full sentence (not just a topic word), and name one paragraph that helped you decide.

5Central idea — Text B. What is the **central idea** of Text B? Write it as a full sentence, and name one paragraph that helped you decide.

6Inference. In **Text B, paragraph [3]**, the writer says money "is the argument that finally turns off the extra lights." What can you **infer** about why some city leaders act on saving money more than on saving the stars? Explain your thinking.

7Text evidence. Which sentence **best** supports the idea that light pollution is easier to fix than other kinds of pollution? Fill in the circle for ONE choice.

- "On a clear night far from any city, you can see thousands of stars." (Text A [1])
- "Extra light disappears the instant a bulb is switched off or pointed downward." (Text A [3])
- "Birds that migrate at night can become confused by bright city lights." (Text A [2])
- "Today Flagstaff is known as a place where visitors can still see the Milky Way." (Text B [1])

7b. In one sentence, explain why the sentence you chose supports that idea.

8Compare the two texts. Use the chart to compare. Answer **only from the texts** and name a paragraph for each.

What both texts AGREE on

One idea both Text A and Text B share (with a paragraph from each):

How the two texts are DIFFERENT

One thing each text focuses on that the other does not (name the text and paragraph):

Explain Write an Evidence-Based Paragraph 5–10 min

Question 9. Both texts share a **central idea** about light pollution. Write **one sentence stating that shared central idea**, then support it with **one piece of evidence from Text A AND one piece of evidence from Text B** (name the paragraph for each), and explain how your evidence supports the idea. Use the frame below.

Sentence stems you may use: "A central idea shared by both texts is..." · "Evidence from Text A is... (paragraph ____)." · "Evidence from Text B is... (paragraph ____)." · "This evidence supports the central idea because..."

Claim (the shared central idea)

Evidence (one from Text A, one from Text B, with paragraph #)

Reasoning (how the evidence supports the idea)

Close ACE Wrap-Up 5 min

Articulate

Say the **shared central idea** of the two texts in your **own words**, in one sentence, as if telling a friend the main point.

Connect

Point to **one sentence** in either text (name the text and paragraph) that shows that central idea most clearly.

Extend

Name **one thing your school or town could do** about light pollution, based on what you read.

Continue Early Finisher optional · ~15 min

If you finish early (no new materials needed):

Write a headline and a caption. On the back of this page, write a **newspaper headline** (one line) that captures the shared central idea of both texts. Then write a **two-sentence caption** that uses one detail from Text A and one detail from Text B. Underline the two details you borrowed and label each with its text and paragraph number.

Turn in: Hand in this whole packet with your name, class period, and date filled in. Make sure questions 1–9 and the ACE box are answered. The early-finisher headline is optional but turn it in too if you did it.

G06_RLA_CentralIdea_01 — Central Idea and Evidence Across Two Texts Student Packet