

Where's Burgess?

Test and Disprove the Explanation

TIME

PRIMARY SKILL

OBJECTIVE

STUDENT EVIDENCE

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

30 minutes full · 15 minutes short Use observations to test and disprove a hypothesis Separate observations from explanations, test a plausible but wrong hypothesis against the evidence, disprove it, and build a new explanation from an observation made somewhere unexpected.

An observation list, the wrong hypothesis, the evidence that disproves it, and the new explanation supported by the unexpected observation.

How does a reader show that an explanation is wrong instead of simply replacing it with another one?

Before teaching

Read or play the complete book before the timed lesson. Keep the book available so claims and evidence can be checked against the text.

Materials:	the book, Student Evidence page, pencil.
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Lesson sequence

TIME	TEACHING MOVE
4 min	Collect observations first List what Reece observes before choosing an explanation.
7 min	State the first hypothesis Turn the initial explanation into a clear claim.
7 min	Test and disprove it Identify the observation or event that the hypothesis cannot explain.
7 min	Find the unexpected observation Locate the clue that comes from somewhere the first hypothesis did not account for.
5 min	Build the new explanation Use that observation to state the better explanation and show why it fits the evidence.

ELA SKILL LESSON · TEACHER SUPPORT

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Access routes

SOLO	Use the book independently to complete the evidence page. Require book-based support for the reasoning.
SUPPORTED	Pause at the key evidence moments. Rephrase the task orally, then have students point to or record evidence before explaining.
LISTENING	Use narration and illustrations. Let students respond orally or by selecting from teacher-read options, then justify the choice from the book.

EXTEND

Ask students to test the same reasoning move on a second moment or explain why a tempting alternative is weaker.

Teacher guidance

Keep the lesson on use observations to test and disprove a hypothesis. The source unit places this move inside What they tried next; this standalone version should preserve the source unit's reasoning sequence rather than turn the task into generic problem solving.

Assessment

- Students keep observations separate from explanations.
- The first explanation is not merely superseded; it is explicitly tested and disproved.
- The new explanation grows from an observation made somewhere unexpected, preserving the source unit's distinctive reasoning move.

Short route · 15 minutes 3 min - name/model the skill. 8 min - gather the minimum evidence required on the student page. 4 min - explain the answer and verify it against the book.

Watch for

Saying 'the first theory was wrong' only because the story later gives another answer, without naming the evidence that disproves it.

Source note

This version restores the source unit's sharper sequence: wrong hypothesis -> test -> disproved -> new explanation built from an unexpected observation.

STUDENT EVIDENCE · GRADES 2-3

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Name _____ Date _____ Record the observations, the wrong hypothesis, the evidence that disproves it, and the new explanation.

PART**YOUR EVIDENCE****OBSERVATION 1****OBSERVATION 2****WRONG HYPOTHESIS****WHAT DISPROVES IT****UNEXPECTED OBSERVATION****NEW EXPLANATION****EXIT CHECK**

The first hypothesis must be rejected because _____.

TEACHER KEY · GRADES 2-3

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Strong response

An observation list, the wrong hypothesis, the evidence that disproves it, and the new explanation supported by the unexpected observation.

Expected evidence

- Students keep observations separate from explanations.
- The first explanation is not merely superseded; it is explicitly tested and disproved.
- The new explanation grows from an observation made somewhere unexpected, preserving the source unit's distinctive reasoning move.

Watch for

Saying 'the first theory was wrong' only because the story later gives another answer, without naming the evidence that disproves it.

Independent success

The student completes the required evidence product and can explain the reasoning sequence without relying only on recall or a teacher-supplied answer.

Unit source

What they tried next · Where's Burgess? by Laurie Elmquist