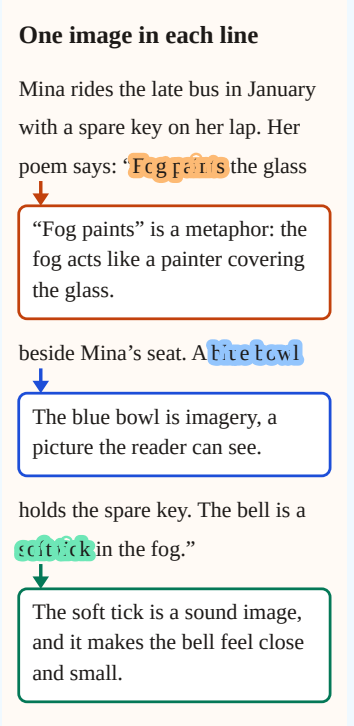
English Language Arts 10-1

Unit 4: Create and refine texts

Developing content

Imagery in a short poem

- Mina rides the late bus in January with a spare key on her lap. The first draft of her poem says: “Fog paints the glass beside Mina’s seat. A blue bowl holds the spare key. The bell is a soft tick in the fog.”
- “Fog paints” is a metaphor: the fog acts like a painter covering the glass.
- The blue bowl is imagery, a picture the reader can see.
- The soft tick is a sound image, and it makes the bell feel close and small.



Ideas and organizers

- Mina finishes the poem as four lines titled “Bus Window, January.” Its controlling idea is that the spare key feels heavier each time the bus nears Mina’s stop.
- Supporting details are the fog on the glass, the blue bowl on her lap, and the single tick of the key.
- A thought web puts the key in the center, and a storyboard gives each of the four lines its own box.

Key terms

controlling idea

The one idea that holds a text together, such as the spare key feeling heavier as the bus nears the stop.

thought web

A drawing with the topic in the middle and details on the spokes, such as fog, bowl, and window around the key.

supporting detail

A concrete piece that holds up the main idea, such as the blue bowl, the fog, or the tick of the key.

A model poem

- Line one: “Fog paints the glass beside Mina’s seat.” Line two: “A blue bowl holds the spare key on her lap.”
- Line three: “The key ticks once when the bus takes a turn.” Line four: “She watches the stop where the spare key belongs.”
- The controlling idea, the key growing heavier near the stop, is the sentence a reader could write in the margin.

Example

- Jamal's transit card is bent and sticks in his coat pocket on cold mornings. The doorway beeps when the card fails, and January air hits his face while he tries again.
- Controlling idea: the bent card makes every doorway a small test.
- The thought web puts transit card in the middle, with bent corner, coat pocket, doorway beep, and January air on the spokes.

Practice with an object

- Priya's phone case is cracked across the back, with a strip of blue tape on the corner. She checks the tape every time she sets the phone on a desk.
- Write a controlling idea in one sentence, and build a thought web with the case in the middle and three supporting details.

Review

- A library novel falls open on the bus seat, and a faded receipt marks a page Mina once needed for class. The ink on the receipt has gone grey.
- Write a controlling idea and three supporting details, as if they were spokes on a thought web.