

Hyphens at Work

A model text on compound terms and modifiers.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.11-12.2a "Observe hyphenation conventions."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Number the 19 hyphenated expressions in the passage. Then circle the unhyphenated phrase long term in the final sentence of paragraph 2 to compare its use with long-term.

Designing Shade

- ① At a public library in Phoenix, a student design team proposed a shade-centered courtyard for people waiting outside. Their plan used wide-canopied desert trees, light-colored paving, and refill stations to lower heat exposure. A well-designed courtyard can make a bus stop safer during extreme heat, the team explained. The group also wanted drought-tolerant plants, which need less water than a lawn. Before presenting, members gathered temperature readings at several sun-exposed locations. They compared those readings with data from a covered walkway and made a simple, evidence-based map of the hottest areas.
- ② The team's proposal included a low-cost test before any construction began. Volunteers placed thermometers at knee-high, waist-high, and eye-level positions, because pavement can radiate heat differently near the ground. They recorded conditions at fifteen-minute intervals from noon to sunset. This careful data-collection method gave the team more than one temperature for each site. In their report, they described the result as a long-term concern for neighborhoods with few shaded routes. After the study, however, the concern remained long term: summer heat would continue to affect daily travel.
- ③ To test the proposal, the library built a small-scale mock-up beside its entrance. The temporary structure held fabric panels at different angles, allowing observers to see where shade fell at 3:00 p.m. Staff members invited local residents to complete a one-page survey about comfort and access. The survey asked whether the layout was user-friendly for parents with strollers, older adults, and wheelchair users. A state-of-the-art cooling system was not part of the modest project. Instead, the team focused on practical changes that could be installed quickly and maintained by the community.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 List the seven hyphenated modifiers in paragraph 1.

2 Why is long-term hyphenated in “a long-term concern” but written without a hyphen in “the concern remained long term”?

3 What three hyphenated terms describe the thermometer positions in paragraph 2? What do the hyphens show?

4 Paragraph 3 uses mock-up but writes wheelchair users without a hyphen. Explain the difference.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write two connected sentences about a practical improvement at your school. In the first sentence, use a hyphenated two-word compound before a noun. In the second sentence, use the same words after a linking verb without a hyphen.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Number the 19 hyphenated expressions in the passage. Then circle the unhyphenated phrase long term in the final sentence of paragraph 2 to compare its use with long-term. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	List the seven hyphenated modifiers in paragraph 1.	shade-centered; wide-canopied; light-colored; well-designed; drought-tolerant; sun-exposed; evidence-based
2	Why is long-term hyphenated in “a long-term concern” but written without a hyphen in “the concern remained long term”?	Long-term comes before and modifies the noun concern. Long term follows the linking verb remained, so it is not hyphenated.
3	What three hyphenated terms describe the thermometer positions in paragraph 2? What do the hyphens show?	knee-high, waist-high, and eye-level. The hyphens show that the words work together as compound modifiers before positions.
4	Paragraph 3 uses mock-up but writes wheelchair users without a hyphen. Explain the difference.	Mock-up is a conventionally hyphenated compound noun. Wheelchair is a closed compound word that modifies users, so no hyphen is needed.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The student council proposed a low-cost rain garden beside the parking lot. The design would be low cost because students could use donated native plants.

For the marking job, students should number 19 hyphenated expressions and circle long term in the last sentence of paragraph 2. Accept other original responses that correctly hyphenate a compound modifier before a noun and remove the hyphen when the same words follow a linking verb.