Words That Paint

Notice how precise language helps readers and listeners understand.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.3.3 "Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle six words or phrases that help you see, smell, hear, or picture something clearly. Draw a line from the first bird sentence to the stronger bird sentence that replaces it.

Morning in the Garden

1. On Saturday morning, our class stepped into the school garden. Dew shone on the bean leaves, and a ladybug climbed a tall sunflower stem. The air smelled like wet soil. "Look closely," Ms. Ruiz said. "This small garden is busy before the first bell rings." We opened our notebooks and listened to bees hum near the purple flowers.

2. Then we described what we saw. I first wrote, "A bird was in the garden." That sentence was true, but it did not show much. I changed it to, "A bright robin hopped between the lettuce rows and tugged at a worm." My new words helped readers picture the bird and its actions. Mateo replaced the word nice with fragrant when he wrote about mint.

3. At the end, each group shared one sentence aloud. We noticed that exact words made our ideas clearer. When Leila said, "The squash leaf is enormous," everyone looked at its wide, green shape. If she had said only, "The leaf is big," we would have understood less. Careful word choices can help a speaker paint a picture and help a listener understand.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which sentence gives a clearer picture of the bird? Write the sentence.

2. How do the words bright, hopped, and tugged help you picture the robin?

3. Why did Mateo choose fragrant instead of nice to describe the mint?

4. Why is enormous a stronger word than big for Leila's squash leaf?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write three sentences about a place you know. Replace one general word, such as nice, big, or went, with a more exact word or phrase. Underline your exact word or phrase.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 3 · L.3.3

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle six words or phrases that help you see, smell, hear, or picture something clearly. Draw a line from the first bird sentence to the stronger bird sentence that replaces it. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which sentence gives a clearer picture of the bird? Write the sentence.	**"A bright robin hopped between the lettuce rows and tugged at a worm."**
2	How do the words bright, hopped, and tugged help you picture the robin?	**They show the robin's color and actions, helping the reader picture it clearly.**
3	Why did Mateo choose fragrant instead of nice to describe the mint?	**Fragrant tells that the mint has a pleasant smell. Nice does not give that exact detail.**
4	Why is enormous a stronger word than big for Leila's squash leaf?	**Enormous tells that the leaf is very large and helps listeners picture its wide shape.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At recess, the rusty swing squeaked in the cool wind. A tiny sparrow darted across the blacktop. I walked past the sharp smell of fresh-cut grass.

Accept any circled words or phrases that create a clear sensory picture, including dew shone, wet soil, bees hum, bright robin, tugged, fragrant, enormous, and wide, green shape. For the writing task, accept three related sentences with at least one precise word or phrase that improves the picture or meaning.