

Turtle Word Detectives

Use nearby words to figure out unfamiliar vocabulary.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.3.4a "Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each word or phrase whose meaning is explained by nearby words. Circle the words that give you the clue.

A Hatchling's Journey

- ① On a warm summer night, tiny sea turtle hatchlings emerge from nests in the sand. To emerge means to come out, and the hatchlings push through the soft grains toward the surface. Their journey begins as soon as they reach open air. Moonlight shining over the water helps guide many babies toward the ocean, where waves move back and forth along the shore.
- ② Each hatchling is fragile, or easy to harm, because its shell is still soft. Crabs, birds, and fish may hunt the small turtles. A hatchling may also face obstacles, such as driftwood, deep footprints, or bright lights from buildings. These things can block its path. Moving quickly gives a hatchling a better chance to reach the sea safely.
- ③ After entering water, hatchlings swim in a frenzy, a burst of fast movement. They use this burst to leave shallow water, where hungry fish often wait. Later, young turtles may drift with ocean currents, streams of moving water. The currents carry them across wide areas of the sea. Only some hatchlings survive long enough to become adults and return to beaches to lay eggs.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 What does emerge mean in paragraph 1? Which nearby words help you know?

2 What does fragile mean in paragraph 2?

3 What does obstacles mean in paragraph 2? Use the examples around the word to explain.

4 What does frenzy mean in paragraph 3? Which words give the clue?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Write two sentences about an animal. In the first sentence, use a word that may be new to a reader. In the second sentence, give a context clue that explains the word without using the word means.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each word or phrase whose meaning is explained by nearby words. Circle the words that give you the clue. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does emerge mean in paragraph 1? Which nearby words help you know?	Emerge means to come out. The clue is “push through the soft grains toward the surface.”
2	What does fragile mean in paragraph 2?	Fragile means easy to harm.
3	What does obstacles mean in paragraph 2? Use the examples around the word to explain.	Obstacles are things that block a path, such as driftwood, deep footprints, or bright lights.
4	What does frenzy mean in paragraph 3? Which words give the clue?	Frenzy means a burst of fast movement. The clue is “a burst of fast movement.”

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A snowshoe hare is camouflaged in winter. Its white fur blends with snow, so predators have trouble seeing it.

Accept student answers that give a reasonable meaning supported by nearby words in the passage. For Part 3, accept any two sentences about an animal if the second sentence clearly helps explain the new word without directly defining it with “means.”