

Trim the Draft

Read a museum-caption draft for concise, precise language.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.3a "Choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy.*"

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline wordy phrases that could be shortened, and circle repeated words or word pairs that state the same idea. Number the claim that needs more precise wording.

Monarch Migration Caption

- ① Each autumn, thousands of monarch butterflies gather at central Mexico's oyamel fir forests after traveling south from Canada and the United States. A student reporter is preparing a museum caption about the migration. The draft says the insects "make a journey that is long in length" and arrive "at this point in time" during late October. It also describes their route, resting places, and winter habitat. The reporter wants visitors to understand that the butterflies travel from Canada and the United States to the mountain forests of central Mexico.
- ② Monarchs cannot survive freezing temperatures for long periods, so the mountain forests provide a sheltered winter site. In one sentence, the reporter writes, "The tall trees offer shade, and they also provide shade from sun and wind." Another sentence calls the forest a "safe refuge" for the insects. The reporter has limited space on the label. Each sentence must tell visitors why the oyamel fir forests are important to monarchs during the winter months without using more words than necessary.
- ③ To describe the trip, the reporter adds that monarchs "use the ability to sense Earth's magnetic field." Scientists have evidence that monarchs use a sun compass and can sense Earth's magnetic field. The reporter also writes that the butterflies follow "the exact same route every year." Migration paths can shift with weather and wind. Before publishing, the museum editor checks every sentence. The editor wants the caption to make accurate claims and give readers clear information in a small museum display space.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 In paragraph 1, rewrite "make a journey that is long in length" as one concise phrase.

2 In paragraph 2, which word from "safe refuge" could remain to avoid repeating the same idea?

3 Rewrite the sentence about the tall trees in paragraph 2 as one concise sentence that keeps both ideas about protection.

4 Which claim in paragraph 3 needs more precise wording, and why?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Write a 40- to 60-word museum label about an animal or natural feature you know. Include one precise fact, and avoid redundant word pairs and wordy phrases.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline wordy phrases that could be shortened, and circle repeated words or word pairs that state the same idea. Number the claim that needs more precise wording. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	In paragraph 1, rewrite “make a journey that is long in length” as one concise phrase.	travel a long distance
2	In paragraph 2, which word from “safe refuge” could remain to avoid repeating the same idea?	refuge
3	Rewrite the sentence about the tall trees in paragraph 2 as one concise sentence that keeps both ideas about protection.	The tall trees provide shade from the sun and shelter from wind.
4	Which claim in paragraph 3 needs more precise wording, and why?	“the exact same route every year” needs revision because weather and wind can shift migration paths.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The peregrine falcon is a powerful hunter that nests on cliffs and tall city buildings. During a hunting dive, it can exceed 200 miles per hour. Its pointed wings help it turn quickly in the air, allowing it to catch other birds.

Accept concise revisions that preserve the passage’s meaning and facts. For the open task, accept any accurate topic, provided the response is 40 to 60 words, includes a precise fact, and avoids unnecessary repetition.