Roots in the Ruins

Use Latin roots to infer the meanings of words in an informational text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.7.4b "Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., belligerent, bellicose, rebel)."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle each word built from aqua, terra, port, or duct, and write the root or roots you find above it. Use the roots and the surrounding details to infer what the words mean.

Rome's Water Pathways

1. On a dry morning in ancient Rome, workers checked a long aqueduct that carried spring water toward the city. Much of the channel stood above ground on stone arches, but some sections ran underground. At a fountain, citizens filled jars while a public bath received a steady flow. Engineers had planned a gentle downhill path from the hills. If the slope was too steep, rushing water could crack the channel. If it was too flat, the water would barely move.

2. During repairs, a crew used portable lamps in a subterranean tunnel. Their supervisor kept a map of the surrounding terrain, because the route crossed rocky ground and soft soil. Near the river, laborers loaded replacement tiles onto a cart for transport. A guard watched the cargo until it reached the work site. The team also inspected a narrow duct, where leaves sometimes collected after storms. Clearing the blockage helped water continue toward homes, markets, and baths.

3. Centuries later, archaeologists can trace parts of Rome's water system across the terrain. They examine mineral marks inside old ducts and compare them with records from nearby springs. In one dig, an aquatic plant seed was found in damp soil beside a broken pipe. The discovery did not prove that water still flowed there, but it gave the team a clue to investigate. By studying each section, researchers can reconstruct how people brought water across long distances and kept a crowded city supplied.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. The word aqueduct contains aqua and duct. Based on the common meanings of these roots, what does aqueduct most likely name?

2. Subterranean contains a form of the root terra. What does this root suggest about the location of the tunnel?

3. Portable and transport share the root port. What idea does port add to both words? Use the details about lamps and tiles to help you.

4. The word duct appears in the passage. Based on its root and the details about water flow, what job does a duct most likely have?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose two roots from aqua, terra, port, and duct. Write two sentences, each using a different word that contains one of the roots. After each sentence, add a parenthetical explanation of how the root helps you understand the word.

ANSWER KEY

Roots in the Ruins

GRADE 7 · L.7.4b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle each word built from aqua, terra, port, or duct, and write the root or roots you find above it. Use the roots and the surrounding details to infer what the words mean. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	The word aqueduct contains aqua and duct. Based on the common meanings of these roots, what does aqueduct most likely name?	**A channel or structure that carries water.**
2	Subterranean contains a form of the root terra. What does this root suggest about the location of the tunnel?	**It is under or in the ground.**
3	Portable and transport share the root port. What idea does port add to both words? Use the details about lamps and tiles to help you.	**Port means carry or move from one place to another.**
4	The word duct appears in the passage. Based on its root and the details about water flow, what job does a duct most likely have?	**It carries or directs water through a passage.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A worker checked the imported pipes before the repair (port means carry, so imported means carried in). A terrestrial lizard hid beneath a warm rock (terra means earth or land, so terrestrial describes land).

For the marking job, expect aqueduct, portable, subterranean, terrain, transport, duct, ducts, and aquatic, with aqueduct labeled aqua and duct. Accept equivalent root-based meanings when students connect aqua to water, terra to earth or land, port to carrying, and duct to leading or carrying.