Reef Word Detectives

Break apart long words as you read a reef report.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.5.3a "Use combined knowledge of all letter-sound correspondences, syllabication patterns, and morphology (e.g., roots and affixes) to read accurately unfamiliar multisyllabic words in context and out of context."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline every word with three or more syllables. Circle any prefix or suffix you can find in those words, then use the word parts to help you read each word.

Growing a Coral Reef

1. On a Caribbean island, scientists are rebuilding damaged coral reefs. A reef is a crowded underwater neighborhood where fish, crabs, and sea turtles find food and shelter. Storms, warmer water, and pollution can harm coral colonies. To help, divers collect small coral pieces from healthy areas. They attach the pieces to underwater frames, where the corals can grow safely.

2. At a reef nursery, workers monitor the growing corals each week. They measure branches and remove harmful algae. When a coral is large enough, the team transports it to a bare spot on the reef. Divers use a special underwater glue to secure it. This restoration work can increase the number of corals and create hiding places for young fish.

3. Restoring reefs takes patience. Coral animals build hard skeletons, but they grow slowly. A successful project also depends on community support. Local students may help by learning about water conservation and reducing plastic waste. These actions do not repair a reef overnight, yet they can prevent additional damage and protect the ocean habitat for the future.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. In paragraph 1, write rebuilding with a slash between its prefix and base word. What does the prefix mean?

2. Divide underwater from paragraph 2 into syllables with slashes.

3. Divide restoration from paragraph 2 into syllables. Then tell what process the word names in the passage.

4. In paragraph 3, divide conservation into syllables. What resource are the students learning to conserve?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose two multisyllabic words that do not appear in the passage. Write each word with syllable slashes. For one word, label a prefix, root, or suffix, then write one sentence that shows its meaning.

ANSWER KEY

Reef Word Detectives

GRADE 5 · RF.5.3a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline every word with three or more syllables. Circle any prefix or suffix you can find in those words, then use the word parts to help you read each word. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	In paragraph 1, write rebuilding with a slash between its prefix and base word. What does the prefix mean?	**re/building; re- means again.**
2	Divide underwater from paragraph 2 into syllables with slashes.	**un/der/wa/ter**
3	Divide restoration from paragraph 2 into syllables. Then tell what process the word names in the passage.	**res/to/ra/tion; the process of restoring or rebuilding the reef's corals.**
4	In paragraph 3, divide conservation into syllables. What resource are the students learning to conserve?	**con/ser/va/tion; water.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Unpredictable: un/pre/dict/a/ble, prefix un- means “not.” Transportation: trans/por/ta/tion. The unpredictable weather changed our picnic plan.

Accept standard syllable divisions written with either slashes or hyphens. Accept equivalent explanations that use passage context, such as “building the reef again” for restoration.