Fire Report Focus

See how exact words help emergency teams act.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.2d "Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline four domain-specific words or phrases. Circle two details that give an exact measurement or location, then notice how these details make the report clear.

Reporting a Wildfire

1. On a dry summer afternoon, a fire lookout scans the forest from a tower. The observer notices a thin column of smoke rising beyond a ridge and records its location with a compass bearing. Instead of saying the smoke is "over there," the lookout reports, "Smoke at 240 degrees, approximately two miles southwest." This precise description helps dispatchers locate the possible fire quickly. The lookout also notes the smoke's color, height, and movement, because each detail can reveal how the fire is behaving.

2. Dispatchers send the report to firefighters and may use a map, radio, and weather data to plan a response. A wind shift can carry embers ahead of the main fire, creating new spots of ignition. Therefore, a report that says "windy" is less useful than one that states, "Winds are blowing northeast at 15 miles per hour." The direction and speed tell crews where flames and embers may travel. Accurate vocabulary allows people in different locations to understand the same conditions without guessing.

3. Firefighters classify a fire's behavior by observing fuels, terrain, and weather. Fuels are the materials that burn, such as dry grass, fallen needles, or tree branches. Steep slopes can make flames move uphill faster because heat rises and warms fuel above the fire. Humidity also matters. Low humidity removes moisture from vegetation, so leaves and grasses can ignite more easily. By using terms such as ignition, embers, humidity, and compass bearing, a report gives responders specific information they can use to protect people and land.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What exact location information does the phrase “Smoke at 240 degrees, approximately two miles southwest” provide?

2. What two exact details make the report about wind more useful than the word “windy”?

3. In paragraph 3, what does the term “fuels” mean? Give two examples from the passage.

4. Why is the word “terrain” more precise than simply saying “the land” in a fire report? Use a detail from the passage.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a three-sentence fire lookout report about this situation: At 2:00 p.m., you see a gray smoke column at a compass bearing of 120 degrees, about one mile southeast of Pine Ridge. Winds are blowing northwest at 10 miles per hour, and dry grass covers the area. Use at least four domain-specific terms from the passage and write 40 to 60 words.

ANSWER KEY

Fire Report Focus

GRADE 7 · W.7.2d

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline four domain-specific words or phrases. Circle two details that give an exact measurement or location, then notice how these details make the report clear. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What exact location information does the phrase “Smoke at 240 degrees, approximately two miles southwest” provide?	**It provides a compass direction of 240 degrees and an approximate distance and location, two miles southwest.**
2	What two exact details make the report about wind more useful than the word “windy”?	**The report gives the wind direction, northeast, and speed, 15 miles per hour.**
3	In paragraph 3, what does the term “fuels” mean? Give two examples from the passage.	**Fuels are materials that burn. Examples include dry grass, fallen needles, and tree branches.**
4	Why is the word “terrain” more precise than simply saying “the land” in a fire report? Use a detail from the passage.	**Terrain can describe features such as steep slopes, which can make flames move uphill faster.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At 2:00 p.m., I observed a gray smoke column at a compass bearing of 120 degrees, about one mile southeast of Pine Ridge. Winds are blowing northwest at 10 miles per hour, which may carry embers northwest. Dry grass is the main fuel, so low humidity could increase the risk of ignition.

Accept accurately quoted details or equivalent explanations for the short answers. For the writing task, accept reports that have three sentences, 40 to 60 words, at least four relevant domain-specific terms, and precise location, wind, and fuel information.