Roots Below Rome

Use roots, Latin phrases, and context to unlock precise meanings.

ELA.12.V.1.2 "Apply knowledge of etymology, derivations, and commonly used foreign phrases to determine meanings of words and phrases in grade-level content."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the four numbered terms. Circle a nearby detail or word part that helps you infer each term's meaning, then write a brief meaning in the margin.

Water Under the City

(1) In 19 BCE, Marcus Agrippa completed the Aqua Virgo, an aqueduct that carried spring water toward Rome's Campus Martius. Much of its route ran subterranean (1). Survey maps trace covered channels below farmland, apartment blocks, and busy streets. Builders had to maintain a slight downhill grade over many kilometers, so the water could travel without pumps. The name Aqua Virgo is Latin, while the engineering reflects careful observation of water's movement. Centuries later, parts of the aqueduct still supply fountains in Rome, including the Trevi Fountain.

(2) Today, conservation teams inspect surviving segments in situ (2) when possible. Moving a stone lining to a laboratory can separate it from its mortar, neighboring soil, and exact position in the channel. At one inspection site, mineral deposits on the walls helped researchers reconstruct changes in the water supply. The team also consulted hydrogeologists, whose work connects water science and Earth science. Their report separates observations made during the inspection from conclusions reached after laboratory testing, allowing later researchers to review the evidence and methods independently.

(3) Preservation decisions can create tension. An ad hoc (3) repair may stop a leak before a heavy storm, but it can also introduce modern materials that complicate future analysis. Some residents favor the status quo (4), pointing to the district's long-established paths, stonework, and familiar water sounds. Others support carefully documented alterations that reduce flood risk and make maintenance safer. Rather than treating either position as automatically correct, planners compare costs, historical evidence, drainage data, and the needs of people who use the area now. Public meetings record these competing priorities before work begins.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Use the roots and the map details in paragraph 1. What does subterranean mean as it is used in the passage?

2. The Latin phrase in situ appears in paragraph 2. What does it mean, based on the effects of moving the stone lining?

3. Use the repair situation in paragraph 3 and your knowledge of the Latin phrase ad hoc. What kind of repair is ad hoc?

4. What does status quo mean in paragraph 3? Use the residents' preference and the contrast with proposed alterations to support your answer.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a grade-level content word built from Greek or Latin roots, or a commonly used foreign phrase, that does not appear in the passage. Write exactly two sentences: explain its meaning by naming the roots or translating the phrase, then use it correctly in a sentence about a historical site or an environmental decision.

ANSWER KEY

Roots Below Rome

GRADE 12 · ELA.12.V.1.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the four numbered terms. Circle a nearby detail or word part that helps you infer each term's meaning, then write a brief meaning in the margin. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Use the roots and the map details in paragraph 1. What does subterranean mean as it is used in the passage?	**Located underground or beneath Earth's surface.**
2	The Latin phrase in situ appears in paragraph 2. What does it mean, based on the effects of moving the stone lining?	**In its original place or at the original site.**
3	Use the repair situation in paragraph 3 and your knowledge of the Latin phrase ad hoc. What kind of repair is ad hoc?	**A repair made for a particular immediate need, often as a temporary or improvised solution.**
4	What does status quo mean in paragraph 3? Use the residents' preference and the contrast with proposed alterations to support your answer.	**The existing or current state of conditions.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The Latin phrase de facto means “in fact” or “in actual practice.” Although the canal had no official protection, it was de facto preserved because neighbors refused to let developers remove its stone walls.

Accept accurate synonyms for the four meanings when students connect them to roots, Latin usage, or relevant context details. For Part 3, accept any accurate explanation and correct two-sentence application using a term or phrase absent from the passage.