# Tide Pool Signals

Use clues to separate literal meanings from suggested meanings.

**ELA.7.V.1.3** "Apply knowledge of context clues, figurative language, word relationships, reference materials, and/or background knowledge to determine the connotative and denotative meaning of words and phrases, appropriate to grade level."

NAME _____ DATE _____

## 1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

**YOUR JOB** Circle each word or phrase in quotation marks. Underline nearby context clues, then write D if the quotation is used mainly for its dictionary meaning or C if it is used mainly for a suggested meaning.

### A Shoreline Study

1. At low tide, students from Bayview Middle School walked across a rocky shore to study tide pools. Their guide explained that a tide pool is a small basin of seawater left behind when the ocean pulls back. Sea stars clung to wet stones, while tiny crabs darted beneath brown seaweed. The guide called the pools "nurseries of the coast" because young animals can find food and shelter there. She warned students not to pry animals loose or carry them away.

2. One pool held purple sea anemones that waved their tentacles in the current. Although the water looked "murky," students leaned close to spot fish slipping through narrow cracks. At noon, the sunlit pools flashed blue and green. The guide compared them to "jeweled bowls," even though no jewelry rested inside. She used a field guide to identify a limpet, a snail with a cone-shaped shell. Its rough shell helped it avoid being swept away by waves during each high tide.

3. After their observations, students recorded each species in a chart and returned every stone to its place. The guide said that plastic litter can become a "silent invader" in a tide pool. Plastic does not grow or hunt, but it can trap animals or break into tiny pieces that spread with waves. Unlike a noisy storm, litter may remain unnoticed until it damages the habitat. Their notes would help the class plan a shoreline cleanup.

## 2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. In paragraph 1, what does "clung" mean? Which details help you determine its meaning?

2. What does the phrase "nurseries of the coast" mean in paragraph 1? Why is the phrase figurative rather than literal?

3. What does "murky" mean in paragraph 2? Use a context clue from the paragraph in your answer.

4. What connotation does "silent invader" give plastic litter? Name one detail that supports your answer.

## 3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write two sentences about a natural place. In the first sentence, use a phrase in quotation marks that has a suggested meaning. In the second sentence, explain the denotative meaning of one word in your phrase and the connotation of the whole phrase.

ANSWER KEY

# Tide Pool Signals

GRADE 7 · ELA.7.V.1.3

## PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle each word or phrase in quotation marks. Underline nearby context clues, then write D if the quotation is used mainly for its dictionary meaning or C if it is used mainly for a suggested meaning. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

## PART 2 · ANSWERS

| # | QUESTION | ANSWER |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | In paragraph 1, what does “clung” mean? Which details help you determine its meaning? | **“Clung” means held on tightly. The sea stars are on wet stones, and the guide warns students not to pry animals loose.** |
| 2 | What does the phrase “nurseries of the coast” mean in paragraph 1? Why is the phrase figurative rather than literal? | **It means tide pools are places where young animals can find food and shelter. It is figurative because the pools are not actual rooms or buildings for caring for children.** |
| 3 | What does “murky” mean in paragraph 2? Use a context clue from the paragraph in your answer. | **“Murky” means dark or cloudy and difficult to see through. Students had to lean close to spot fish.** |
| 4 | What connotation does “silent invader” give plastic litter? Name one detail that supports your answer. | **It gives litter a hidden, threatening connotation. It may remain unnoticed while trapping animals, breaking into pieces, or damaging the habitat.** |

## PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The old oak was a “guardian of the trail.” Denotatively, a guardian is a protector, and the phrase gives the oak a watchful, protective feeling.

Accept equivalent definitions and reasonable context clues from the passage. For the open task, accept any original two-sentence response that includes a figurative quoted phrase and accurately explains both a literal word meaning and the phrase's connotation.