Beneath the Clues

Use word parts and context to interpret an archaeological report.

10.L.V.2 "Word Analysis: Use word knowledge and word analysis skills to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases and to communicate effectively for a variety of purposes."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three words whose meanings you can infer from word parts or nearby clues. In the margin, write a brief meaning for each underlined word.

Reading a Hidden Landscape

1 Before archaeologists dig at a site, they often survey the ground with tools that reveal patterns hidden below the surface. At a Roman settlement in Britain, researchers pushed a magnetometer across a field in careful lines. The device recorded tiny changes in Earth's magnetic field. On a map, those changes formed rectangles, arcs, and darker patches. A buried wall can alter the readings differently from loose soil, so a shape on the map may suggest a building, road, or hearth. The map is not a photograph. It is a set of clues that archaeologists must interpret cautiously.

2 At the British site, the survey revealed a cluster of regular outlines beside a curving band. The team sought corroboration by comparing the map with aerial images and earlier field notes. When several sources pointed to the same possible road, that explanation became more credible. A sharp, isolated signal, however, might be an anomaly caused by a modern metal object. Repeated shapes arranged in a pattern are more likely to reflect past human activity. The researchers therefore treated their first interpretations as provisional, not final, while they planned limited excavations to test the strongest claims.

3 To investigate the subterranean remains without disturbing the field, the group used ground-penetrating radar, which sends pulses into the soil and records returning signals. The results suggested a large oval space near the settlement's edge. Because an oval could be a natural feature or a constructed enclosure, the archaeologists did not announce a discovery. They proposed a tentative explanation and chose a few small test locations. Their restrained language matters. Public reports can spread quickly, and a confident-sounding claim may be repeated long before later evidence confirms, revises, or rejects it.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Use the prefix sub- and details from paragraph 3 to determine the meaning of subterranean. What does the word mean?

2. What does corroboration most nearly mean in paragraph 2? Identify the details that help you determine its meaning.

3. Determine the meaning of anomaly as it is used in paragraph 2. Why might a modern metal object create an anomaly?

4. In paragraph 3, what does confident-sounding suggest about a claim that later evidence might reject?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write exactly two sentences for a public update about a survey finding. Include one word with a meaningful prefix and one precise word whose meaning a reader can infer from context, and show why the finding is not yet certain.

ANSWER KEY

Beneath the Clues

GRADE 10 · 10.L.V.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline three words whose meanings you can infer from word parts or nearby clues. In the margin, write a brief meaning for each underlined word. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Use the prefix sub- and details from paragraph 3 to determine the meaning of subterranean. What does the word mean?	**Subterranean means below the ground. The remains are under the field, which the team investigates without disturbing.**
2	What does corroboration most nearly mean in paragraph 2? Identify the details that help you determine its meaning.	**Corroboration means supporting confirmation from additional evidence. The team compares the map with aerial images and field notes, and several sources point to the same road.**
3	Determine the meaning of anomaly as it is used in paragraph 2. Why might a modern metal object create an anomaly?	**An anomaly is an unusual reading that does not fit the larger pattern. A modern metal object could create one sharp, isolated signal instead of repeated patterned shapes.**
4	In paragraph 3, what does confident-sounding suggest about a claim that later evidence might reject?	**It suggests that the claim may appear certain or convincing in tone, even though it has not been proven.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

During the park survey, a subsurface scanner showed several straight lines beneath the grass. The inconclusive image could represent old pipes or a buried walkway, so the team will collect more evidence before making a public claim.

Accept equivalent meanings when students support them with accurate context or word-part evidence from the passage. For Part 3, accept varied topics if the response has exactly two sentences, uses the required language choices accurately, and communicates appropriate uncertainty.