Clues Below Ground

Use context and word parts to unlock academic vocabulary.

10.P.EICC.3.g "Determine the meanings of unfamiliar words and concepts by applying knowledge of context and of academic vocabulary and word parts. (I)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle unfamiliar academic words, underline the context clues that help explain them, and number any useful prefixes or suffixes. Your marks should show how you figured out each word's meaning.

Reading an Ancient Site

1. On a dry morning in 1974, farmers near Xi'an, China, noticed fragments of fired clay while digging a well. Archaeologists soon uncovered rows of life-size soldiers, horses, and chariots made to guard the tomb of Qin Shi Huang, China's first emperor. The figures were part of a vast underground complex. Although each soldier was formed from molds, artists added individual details, such as different hairstyles and facial features. This variation made the army appear less like a repeated decoration and more like a force prepared for duty.

2. Researchers must establish an artifact's provenance, or its documented history of ownership and location, before drawing large conclusions from it. Provenance matters because an object removed without records can lose clues about who used it and when. At the site, teams also study stratigraphy. In this method, they examine layers of soil, knowing that deeper undisturbed layers are generally older than layers above them. A bronze arrowhead found beside a soldier may seem small, yet its position can help scholars reconstruct activities within the complex and avoid guesses based only on appearance.

3. Excavation is not the only challenge. Once exposed to air and moisture, some painted surfaces can deteriorate, meaning they gradually break down. Conservators respond by stabilizing fragile materials so they do not crumble or fade further. They may use noninvasive tools, which gather information without cutting, scraping, or otherwise damaging an object. For example, imaging equipment can reveal cracks beneath a surface. This careful conservation protects evidence for future study, but it also requires patience: researchers sometimes leave an area covered until they have a safe plan for preserving what lies below.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What does provenance mean in paragraph 2? Identify one phrase that helped you determine its meaning.

2. Use the context in paragraph 2 to determine the meaning of stratigraphy.

3. What does deteriorate mean in paragraph 3? Which nearby details support your answer?

4. What does noninvasive mean in paragraph 3? Explain how the prefix non- supports your answer.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose an unfamiliar academic word from another text you are reading. In two sentences, paraphrase enough context to show the clue, then state the word's meaning and explain one context clue or word part that helped you infer it.

ANSWER KEY

Clues Below Ground

GRADE 10 · 10.P.EICC.3.g

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle unfamiliar academic words, underline the context clues that help explain them, and number any useful prefixes or suffixes. Your marks should show how you figured out each word's meaning. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does provenance mean in paragraph 2? Identify one phrase that helped you determine its meaning.	**Provenance means an artifact's documented history of ownership and location. The appositive phrase "its documented history of ownership and location" provides the meaning.**
2	Use the context in paragraph 2 to determine the meaning of stratigraphy.	**Stratigraphy is the study of soil layers, especially to understand their relative ages and what they reveal about a site.**
3	What does deteriorate mean in paragraph 3? Which nearby details support your answer?	**Deteriorate means to gradually break down or become damaged. The passage says surfaces can "gradually break down" and that materials may "crumble or fade further."**
4	What does noninvasive mean in paragraph 3? Explain how the prefix non- supports your answer.	**Noninvasive means not damaging or entering an object by cutting or scraping it. The prefix non- means not, and the passage says the tools work without cutting, scraping, or damaging.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The report described a reversible policy, one that could be changed or undone if the data changed. Reversible means able to be changed back, and the prefix re- suggests again or back.

Accept reasonable meanings supported by quoted or paraphrased context and, when applicable, an accurate explanation of a word part. For Part 3, the response should include two sentences, a context clue, an inferred meaning, and an explanation of at least one clue or word part.