Words at Work

Read how vocabulary shifts among technical, public, and professional settings.

11.L.V.1 "General, Academic, & Specialized Vocabulary: Use expanding vocabulary knowledge to interpret texts and to craft effective communications across a wide variety of real-life, academic, disciplinary, technical, and professional contexts."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline at least five academic or specialized terms. Circle context clues that explain three terms, then box the two phrases in paragraph 2 that name the same pipes for different audiences.

Tracking Lead Service Lines

1. On Tuesday, Riverton's water utility began a block-by-block inventory of service lines, the pipes that connect water mains beneath streets to individual buildings. Crews are looking for lead because the metal can enter drinking water when corrosion, a chemical wearing away of pipe surfaces, releases particles. Federal rules require utilities to identify lead service lines and communicate results to customers. The project manager told residents that an inventory is not a construction schedule. First, workers must verify pipe materials, map locations, and rank sites by risk. Homes with young children and schools will receive priority attention.

2. To inspect a suspected line, a technician may enter a property only after obtaining the owner's permission. The technician examines the visible pipe near the water meter and may collect a sample. If the material cannot be confirmed, the utility records the line as "unknown" rather than guessing. That cautious label matters: an unknown line is not proof of lead, but it may need further investigation. In a field report, technicians use the specialized term "premise plumbing" for pipes inside a building. In a notice to residents, however, the utility says "the pipes in your home" so the information is clear without losing accuracy.

3. Replacement work involves more than digging up a pipe. Before construction, the utility prepares specifications, detailed requirements that contractors must meet, and opens a procurement process to select a qualified contractor. A contractor may need an easement, a legal right to use a portion of private land for a stated purpose, before reaching a line that crosses a yard. During a public meeting, the engineer explained that "temporary disruption" could include parked cars being moved and water service paused for several hours. Her phrase was professional but vague. A resident asked for the likely duration and a list of preparations, prompting a clearer answer.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why does the project manager say that an inventory is not a construction schedule? Use the meaning of inventory in your answer.

2. Why does the utility label an unconfirmed line as “unknown” instead of calling it lead?

3. What does “premise plumbing” mean in the field report, and why does the utility use different wording in a resident notice?

4. Which phrase in paragraph 3 is too vague for residents, and what information does the resident request to make it clearer?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 75-90 word notice to a neighbor about a planned water-line inspection or replacement. Use one specialized term from the passage, define it in everyday language, and include an exact time or duration plus one preparation the neighbor should make.

ANSWER KEY

Words at Work

GRADE 11 · 11.L.V.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline at least five academic or specialized terms. Circle context clues that explain three terms, then box the two phrases in paragraph 2 that name the same pipes for different audiences. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why does the project manager say that an inventory is not a construction schedule? Use the meaning of inventory in your answer.	**An inventory identifies and records the pipe materials and locations. Workers must verify materials, map sites, and rank risk before replacement work can be scheduled.**
2	Why does the utility label an unconfirmed line as "unknown" instead of calling it lead?	**"Unknown" is cautious because the line is not proven to be lead, but it may require further investigation.**
3	What does "premise plumbing" mean in the field report, and why does the utility use different wording in a resident notice?	**It means pipes inside a building. The resident notice uses "the pipes in your home" because it is clearer for a public audience.**
4	Which phrase in paragraph 3 is too vague for residents, and what information does the resident request to make it clearer?	**"Temporary disruption" is vague. The resident asks for the likely duration and a list of preparations.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

On Thursday, utility technicians will inspect service lines on Oak Street from 9:00 a.m. to noon. A service line is the pipe that carries water from the street main to a building. If your meter is indoors, an adult should be available to allow entry. The inspection usually takes about 20 minutes, and water may be briefly turned off only while the technician examines the pipe. Please move items away from the meter before 9:00 a.m.

Accept accurate paraphrases that use context to explain the terms and distinguish technical wording from audience-friendly wording. For Part 3, accept varied realistic notices that meet the word count and include a correctly explained term, a specific time or duration, and a preparation.