Words That Map Change

How word class choices sharpen a field report.

11.L.V.2.d "Use knowledge of parts of speech to determine precise and effective words and phrases when constructing texts. (C)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three action verbs that describe changes or planned work. Circle five nouns or modifiers that make the marsh details more exact, then number one verb-modifier pair that sharpens meaning.

Notes from a Salt Marsh

1. At dawn, a field crew entered Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge in Maryland to map changes in a salt marsh. Instead of writing that "plants grew near the channel," the crew recorded where smooth cordgrass formed dense bands, where saltmeadow hay lined higher ground, and where common reed advanced in scattered clumps. The notes named organisms and locations rather than leaving readers to guess what the crew observed. Careful choices turned a brief field entry into information that another researcher could compare with later surveys and maps.

2. Later, the crew compared aerial photographs taken five years apart. In one inlet, sediment accumulated behind a low, temporary fence, and the open-water edge gradually narrowed. Nearby, several storms sent waves that cut a fresh notch into the bank. On the map, the two areas received different symbols: a thin blue line for the narrowing inlet and a jagged red mark for the newly cut bank. The report links each description to a visible feature, so readers can distinguish the changes without visiting the marsh.

3. Before leaving, the crew drafted a public update. Volunteers would inspect the marsh monthly, photograph new deposits, and remove small patches of common reed before the patches spread. The update also stated that the team would place markers beside unstable banks and record their positions after major storms. These verbs present a sequence of tasks, while the modifiers limit what readers should picture. A sentence saying only that people will help the area would not identify the work or its focus in a way residents can follow.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Rewrite “plants grew near the channel” using the three plant names and the more precise descriptions from paragraph 1.

2. Choose the most precise verb to complete this idea from paragraph 2: Storm waves _____ a fresh notch into the bank. Explain what the verb helps the reader understand.

3. Why is temporary a more effective adjective than plain in the phrase “a low, temporary fence”?

4. Compare “a thin blue line” with “a jagged red mark.” How do the modifiers help a map reader distinguish the two areas?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write exactly two sentences, 35 to 50 words, for a school garden update after heavy rain. Use at least two precise nouns, two action verbs, and one adjective or adverb. Underline two action verbs and circle one adjective or adverb.

ANSWER KEY

Words That Map Change

GRADE 11 · 11.L.V.2.d

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline three action verbs that describe changes or planned work. Circle five nouns or modifiers that make the marsh details more exact, then number one verb-modifier pair that sharpens meaning. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Rewrite "plants grew near the channel" using the three plant names and the more precise descriptions from paragraph 1.	**Smooth cordgrass formed dense bands, saltmeadow hay lined higher ground, and common reed advanced in scattered clumps.**
2	Choose the most precise verb to complete this idea from paragraph 2: Storm waves _____ a fresh notch into the bank. Explain what the verb helps the reader understand.	**Cut. It shows that the waves physically formed a notch in the bank.**
3	Why is temporary a more effective adjective than plain in the phrase "a low, temporary fence"?	**Temporary tells readers that the fence is not meant to remain permanently.**
4	Compare "a thin blue line" with "a jagged red mark." How do the modifiers help a map reader distinguish the two areas?	**Thin blue line represents the gradually narrowing inlet, while jagged red mark represents the bank that was newly cut by waves.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

After the storm, rivulets carved shallow channels beside the raised tomato beds, and wet mulch covered the gravel path. Garden club members will carefully clear the drain, photograph the displaced soil, and reset the border stones before tomorrow's planting.

Accept equivalent precise rewrites and explanations when students accurately identify how nouns, verbs, adjectives, or adverbs clarify the report. For Part 3, accept any two-sentence response of 35 to 50 words that meets the stated word-class and marking requirements.