Words Beyond Words

Use context to separate direct meanings from implied associations.

11.L.V.3.b "Analyze relationships between words to determine connotative and denotative meanings for words and/or phrases across a variety of contexts. (I)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline four words or phrases whose meaning depends on nearby language. In the margin, write L beside a choice with a mainly literal meaning or I beside a choice with a strong implied association.

Restoring the Orpheum

1 At the edge of downtown, the 1926 Orpheum Theater reopened after a two-year restoration. Its weathered brick front still showed soot near the cornice, while new copper letters caught the morning light. Inside, workers had repaired cracked plaster, rewired the stage, and cleaned murals hidden beneath gray paint. The lobby did not look brand-new. Its scuffed marble floor and faded brass rails made the room feel seasoned, as if it had kept a record of every crowd that crossed it. Visitors entered quietly, pausing beneath the chandelier before reaching for their phones.

2 Restoration director Mina Alvarez called the project a careful negotiation, not a makeover. The crew stripped away unsafe wiring, but left a small burn mark beside the orchestra pit. It came from a 1948 electrical fire that closed the theater for months. Alvarez said the mark belonged to the building's story, although no label pointed it out. During the work, the team weathered supply delays and a winter leak that soaked part of the balcony. Yet they refused to rush the final repairs. A polished surface, Alvarez argued, could be impressive, but a flawless one might erase the theater's hard-earned character.

3 On opening night, a local reporter described the theater as “bright, not bleached.” The phrase appeared beside a photograph of restored red seats, each with its original wooden armrest. In the article, the reporter called the new lighting clear rather than harsh and described the remaining scratches as evidence, not damage. The article placed these descriptions beside ticket prices and showtimes. Readers could picture a usable theater that honored its age, rather than a museum piece sealed behind ropes. The crowd's applause filled the room, but the oldest feature may have been the silence just before the curtain rose.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Compare the two uses of weathered in paragraphs 1 and 2. What does the word mean in each context, and what association does its second use add to the crew?

2. What does seasoned suggest about the lobby that old would not suggest as strongly? Use the nearby details to support your answer.

3. How do the reporter's paired word choices, “bright, not bleached,” “clear rather than harsh,” and “evidence, not damage,” shape the reader's view of the restoration?

4. In the final sentence, what does silence denote, and what does the phrase “the oldest feature” imply about that silence?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose one phrase from the passage that is not used in Questions 1 through 4: “caught the morning light,” “careful negotiation,” or “sealed behind ropes.” In exactly two sentences, explain its direct meaning and its implied effect, using one detail from the passage as support.

ANSWER KEY

Words Beyond Words

GRADE 11 · 11.L.V.3.b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline four words or phrases whose meaning depends on nearby language. In the margin, write L beside a choice with a mainly literal meaning or I beside a choice with a strong implied association. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Compare the two uses of weathered in paragraphs 1 and 2. What does the word mean in each context, and what association does its second use add to the crew?	**For the brick front, weathered means worn by time and exposure. For the crew, it means endured difficulties, adding an association of resilience.**
2	What does seasoned suggest about the lobby that old would not suggest as strongly? Use the nearby details to support your answer.	**Seasoned suggests valued age and accumulated experience, not simply age. The scuffs, faded rails, and record of crowds make the lobby seem rich with history.**
3	How do the reporter's paired word choices, “bright, not bleached,” “clear rather than harsh,” and “evidence, not damage,” shape the reader's view of the restoration?	**They present the restoration as careful and respectful. The theater is renewed and usable without having its age, marks, or character stripped away.**
4	In the final sentence, what does silence denote, and what does the phrase “the oldest feature” imply about that silence?	**Silence denotes the quiet just before the curtain rises. Calling it the oldest feature implies a long-standing, meaningful tradition and creates anticipation.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

“Sealed behind ropes” literally suggests a space blocked off by barriers. In contrast to the reopened theater and its applauding crowd, it connotes an untouchable museum object rather than a place people can use.

Accept equivalent explanations that distinguish a phrase's direct meaning from its connotative effect and support the interpretation with relevant passage details. For the open response, require exactly two sentences, one direct-meaning explanation, and one supported implied-effect explanation.