Words for the Audience

Trace how precise vocabulary shifts with purpose and audience.

12.L.V.1.b "Use grade-level general, academic, disciplinary, technical, and professional vocabulary to communicate clearly and precisely, adjusting style as appropriate in a variety of settings. (C)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three words or phrases that fit a technical or professional audience, circle two clues about audience or purpose, and number one place where the writer avoids an unsupported claim. Your markings should show how vocabulary makes each message clear and precise.

Reporting Water-Test Information

1. When a school district reports drinking-water tests, word choice affects what families understand and what staff can do. A family newsletter might say that technicians collected water samples from selected fountains and sent them to an accredited laboratory. That sentence uses general and professional vocabulary without assuming readers know laboratory procedures. A facilities report, however, may identify the sampling location, collection time, chain of custody, and analytical method. Those terms are more precise because maintenance staff need records they can verify, compare, and use when planning repairs or follow-up testing.

2. Federal Lead and Copper Rule compliance does not treat every individual fixture result as a separate pass-or-fail decision. For a water system's required compliance samples, the action-level comparison is generally based on the 90th-percentile result, meaning a value that represents the higher end of the sampled results. A district may still test a particular fountain to investigate local conditions, communicate promptly, or decide whether to remove it from service. In a public update, writers should distinguish a local finding from the system-wide compliance calculation. Precise wording prevents a single sample from being presented as the federal compliance result.

3. Audience also shapes tone and detail. A principal's message to families could state, "We closed the fountain while we review the test result and will share the next update on Friday." The message is direct, calm, and avoids claims the evidence does not support. A memorandum to the water utility might request "the compliance sampling plan, laboratory report, and 90th-percentile calculation for the current monitoring period." This formal request names the documents needed for review. Neither version is automatically better. Effective writers select vocabulary that fits the audience, purpose, and level of technical knowledge while preserving the same accurate facts.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which phrase in paragraph 1 names a record that helps staff verify how a sample was handled?

2. Why is the term "90th-percentile result" more precise than describing each fixture result as a separate federal pass-or-fail decision?

3. Which message in paragraph 3 is written for a technical or professional audience? Give two terms from that message that show its intended audience.

4. What wording in the principal's family message makes the update appropriately cautious? Explain why it is effective.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A district's main elevator will be unavailable for two days while a contractor inspects a worn door sensor. Write exactly two sentences. In the first, give families a clear update using general vocabulary. In the second, write a facilities work-order note using at least two precise technical or professional terms.

ANSWER KEY

Words for the Audience

GRADE 12 · 12.L.V.1.b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline three words or phrases that fit a technical or professional audience, circle two clues about audience or purpose, and number one place where the writer avoids an unsupported claim. Your markings should show how vocabulary makes each message clear and precise. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which phrase in paragraph 1 names a record that helps staff verify how a sample was handled?	**chain of custody**
2	Why is the term "90th-percentile result" more precise than describing each fixture result as a separate federal pass-or-fail decision?	**It identifies a system-wide compliance calculation based on the higher end of required sample results, not a separate decision for every fixture.**
3	Which message in paragraph 3 is written for a technical or professional audience? Give two terms from that message that show its intended audience.	**The memorandum to the water utility. Accept any two: compliance sampling plan, laboratory report, 90th-percentile calculation, current monitoring period.**
4	What wording in the principal's family message makes the update appropriately cautious? Explain why it is effective.	**"While we review the test result" and "will share the next update on Friday" are cautious because they state the action and timeline without making an unsupported claim about the result.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The main elevator will be unavailable for two days while a contractor checks a door sensor, and staff will direct visitors to an accessible entrance. Facilities work order: The contractor will inspect the worn door sensor, document the malfunction, and verify safe operation before returning the elevator to service.

Accept reasonable markings that identify audience clues, technical or professional vocabulary, and cautious wording supported by the passage. For the writing task, accept two accurate sentences that clearly shift vocabulary and style for families and facilities staff.