

# Garden Word Detectives

Use reference tools to check spelling and sharpen word meanings.

**5.L.V.3.d** “Use print and digital reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses) to check spelling and determine or clarify the precise meaning of words and phrases. (I)”

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## 1 READ AND MARK \_\_\_\_\_ Read it twice

**YOUR JOB** Underline each word Maya checks or considers changing. Circle each reference material she uses, then number the underlined words in the order she works with them.

### Labels for the School Garden

- ① At the school garden, Maya read a sign that said, “Add compost to enrich the soil.” She knew compost was connected to food scraps, but she wanted a precise meaning. Maya opened the garden guide’s glossary. It explained that compost is decayed plant material and food waste used to improve soil. She wrote the meaning beside the sign before helping fill a planting bed.
- ② Later, Maya planned to label a row of flowers. Her notes called them “perennial,” but the spelling looked uncertain. She checked a print dictionary and found perennial, spelled p-e-r-e-n-n-i-a-l. The dictionary defined it as a plant that lives for more than two years. That meaning helped Maya choose the word for flowers that return each growing season in the garden.
- ③ Maya also wrote, “The leaves form a thick cover over the ground.” She wondered whether cover was the clearest word. In a digital thesaurus, she found mulch listed as a related garden word, but she checked a garden glossary before using it. The glossary said mulch is material spread over soil to protect it and hold moisture. Maya revised her sentence to name the mulch.

## 2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

- 1 Which reference material did Maya use to find the precise meaning of compost, and what did she learn?

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- 2 What is the correct spelling of the word Maya first wrote as "perenial"?

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- 3 Why did Maya check a glossary after looking in a thesaurus for a word related to cover?

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- 4 According to the glossary, what does mulch mean?

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## 3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Choose one word or phrase from a book, article, or class assignment that you want to check. Name the print or digital reference material you used, write the correct spelling and precise meaning, then write one revised sentence using the word correctly.

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**PART 1 • READ AND MARK**

Underline each word Maya checks or considers changing. Circle each reference material she uses, then number the underlined words in the order she works with them. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

**PART 2 • ANSWERS**

| # | QUESTION                                                                                              | ANSWER                                                                                                              |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Which reference material did Maya use to find the precise meaning of compost, and what did she learn? | <b>She used the garden guide's glossary. Compost is decayed plant material and food waste used to improve soil.</b> |
| 2 | What is the correct spelling of the word Maya first wrote as "perenial"?                              | <b>perennial</b>                                                                                                    |
| 3 | Why did Maya check a glossary after looking in a thesaurus for a word related to cover?               | <b>The thesaurus gave her a related word, but the glossary gave the precise meaning of mulch.</b>                   |
| 4 | According to the glossary, what does mulch mean?                                                      | <b>Mulch is material spread over soil to protect it and hold moisture.</b>                                          |

**PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)**

I checked the digital dictionary for camouflage. It is spelled c-a-m-o-u-f-l-a-g-e and means coloring or a pattern that helps an animal blend into its surroundings. Revised sentence: The stick insect's camouflage made it hard to see among branches.

Accept equivalent precise definitions when they match a reliable reference source. For Part 3, check that the student names a reference material, gives correct spelling and meaning, and uses the word correctly in an original sentence.