Words on the Wing

Use context clues to sort general, academic, and science vocabulary.

6.L.V.1.a "Acquire a range of general, academic, and disciplinary vocabulary through grade-level print, digital, and/or multimodal texts or content. (I)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one general word, circle three academic words, and number three science words whose nearby words explain their meanings. Draw an arrow from each numbered science word to its context clue.

Following Monarchs

(1) Each fall, millions of monarch butterflies begin a long migration from Canada and the United States to mountain forests in central Mexico. Migration is a seasonal journey that animals make between places. Monarchs cannot survive a cold northern winter, so they follow a route south. The route may stretch thousands of miles. A single butterfly does not complete the round trip. Instead, several generations travel north in spring, while a later generation returns south in autumn each year.

(2) Scientists study this movement by attaching a tiny tag to a butterfly's wing. The tag has a code, or a set of letters and numbers, that identifies the insect. When someone finds a tagged monarch, the finder can report the code and location. Researchers analyze, or examine closely, these reports. Their evidence helps them estimate where butterflies travel and how long the trip takes. This information can reveal which habitats, places where organisms live, monarchs need along their route.

(3) Tracking data can support conservation, the protection of living things and their environments. For example, volunteers may plant milkweed, the only plant monarch caterpillars eat, in school gardens. Scientists also monitor forest areas in Mexico where monarchs rest during winter. To evaluate, or judge carefully, whether these actions help, researchers compare butterfly counts from different years. A larger count does not prove that one action caused the change, but it gives scientists information to investigate. Careful vocabulary helps readers understand both the data and the conservation plan.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What does the phrase "seasonal journey" tell you that migration means?

2. What does analyze mean in paragraph 2? Use the context clue in the sentence.

3. Which science word means "places where organisms live"?

4. In paragraph 3, what does evaluate mean when researchers evaluate whether an action helps monarchs?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write 3 sentences about a topic you are learning. Use one general word, one academic word, and one disciplinary word, and give a context clue that explains each word.

ANSWER KEY

Words on the Wing

GRADE 6 · 6.L.V.1.a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one general word, circle three academic words, and number three science words whose nearby words explain their meanings. Draw an arrow from each numbered science word to its context clue. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does the phrase "seasonal journey" tell you that migration means?	**Migration is a journey animals make between places during certain seasons.**
2	What does analyze mean in paragraph 2? Use the context clue in the sentence.	**Analyze means to examine closely.**
3	Which science word means "places where organisms live"?	**Habitats.**
4	In paragraph 3, what does evaluate mean when researchers evaluate whether an action helps monarchs?	**It means to judge carefully whether the action helps, using information such as butterfly counts.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

During a volcanic eruption, magma, melted rock beneath Earth's surface, may rise through a narrow path to the crater. Scientists investigate, or study carefully, the rock and gas to understand what happened. A nearby town can follow a safe route, or path, away from the volcano.

Accept reasonable word classifications when students can point to context clues in the passage. Academic words may include analyze, evidence, estimate, evaluate, compare, and investigate, while science words may include migration, habitat, organism, conservation, milkweed, and caterpillar.