Beaver Word Detectives

Use context clues and word parts to unlock precise meanings.

6.L.V.2 "Word Analysis: Use word knowledge and word analysis skills to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases and to communicate effectively for a variety of purposes."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline four words whose meanings you can infer, and circle the nearby words or word parts that help you infer each meaning.

Beavers at Work

1 At sunset, a team of biologists walked beside a stream in northern Minnesota. They were checking on beavers that had been relocated, or moved from one habitat to another. The animals had built a lodge from branches and mud near the water. Because beavers are nocturnal, they rest mostly during daylight and become active after dark. The team saw fresh bark chips, a clue that the hidden animals had been busy. Their work could change the stream's flow and create new wetland areas.

2 The next morning, the biologists examined a dam, a wall of sticks that slows water. Behind it, the stream had spread across a low field. This ponding can be beneficial, meaning helpful, because it gives frogs, ducks, and young fish places to feed or hide. However, water that spreads too far can flood a trail. To prevent that problem, workers installed a simple pipe through the dam. The pipe lets some water pass while leaving the beavers' home in place. This solution reduces conflict between people and wildlife.

3 Biologists will continue to monitor the site, or watch it carefully over time. They measure water depth, note animal tracks, and inspect the pipe after heavy rain. This regular monitoring helps them respond before a small concern becomes serious. Beaver projects are not identical everywhere. A dry year, a steep valley, or nearby roads can make results unpredictable, or hard to know in advance. By studying each location, scientists can choose plans that protect both the stream ecosystem and the people who use the land.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What does relocated mean? Which words in the passage help you determine its meaning?

2. What does nocturnal mean in this passage? Use the beavers' behavior as evidence.

3. What does beneficial mean? Give one detail that supports your answer.

4. How do the prefix un- and the nearby clue help you understand unpredictable?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write exactly two sentences about an outdoor place. Use one challenging word in the first sentence, underline it, and give a context clue in the second sentence that helps a reader infer its meaning.

ANSWER KEY # Beaver Word Detectives

GRADE 6 · 6.L.V.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline four words whose meanings you can infer, and circle the nearby words or word parts that help you infer each meaning. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does relocated mean? Which words in the passage help you determine its meaning?	**Relocated means moved from one habitat to another. The words "moved from one habitat to another" give the meaning.**
2	What does nocturnal mean in this passage? Use the beavers' behavior as evidence.	**Nocturnal means active at night. The passage says beavers rest during daylight and become active after dark.**
3	What does beneficial mean? Give one detail that supports your answer.	**Beneficial means helpful. It gives frogs, ducks, and young fish places to feed or hide.**
4	How do the prefix un- and the nearby clue help you understand unpredictable?	**The prefix un- means not, so unpredictable means not able to be known ahead of time. The passage says "hard to know in advance."**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The hikers walked through a __dense__ forest. The trees grew so close together that little sunlight reached the ground.

Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text. Accept reasonable meanings supported by nearby words, details, or word parts in the passage. For Part 3, accept any two-sentence response with an underlined challenging word and a clear context clue that reveals its meaning.