Words With Purpose

Compare close words to choose a precise tone.

7.L.V.3.e "Determine or clarify the nuanced meanings of closely related words or phrases using available print and/or digital resources to make strategic decisions when speaking and writing. (C)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each pair or group of closely related words, circle the word Maya chose, and write D, T, or P above each resource she used: dictionary, thesaurus, or photo. These marks will show how meaning and source choice shaped her message.

Maya's Park Message

1. When Maya wrote a message to the parks department, she first planned to demand a new drinking fountain. Then she checked a learner's dictionary. Demand meant to ask forcefully, often as if the speaker expects obedience. Because Maya wanted to sound respectful, she changed demand to request. A request still asks for action, but it gives the reader room to consider the idea. Her word choice matched her purpose: inviting the department to work with students rather than ordering it to act.

2. Next, Maya described the cracked pavement near the basketball court. A thesaurus offered damaged, worn, and broken as related words, so she compared their dictionary entries. Broken suggested that something no longer worked. Damaged could describe harm of many kinds. Worn fit best because years of feet, wheels, rain, and sun had gradually rubbed away the surface. Choosing worn helped Maya be precise without making the path sound completely unusable. She also added a photo, since the image showed the condition more clearly than a stronger word could.

3. In her final sentence, Maya wrote, "Please consider repairing the path this spring." She did not write rebuilding because rebuilding usually means constructing something again after major loss or removal. Repairing meant fixing the existing path, which was what she wanted. Before sending the message, Maya asked the school librarian which source would best confirm each meaning. The librarian suggested a dictionary for definitions and a thesaurus for possible alternatives. Maya used both resources, then reread her message to make sure its tone was calm, accurate, and convincing.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why did Maya replace demand with request in her message to the parks department?

2. Why was worn a more precise choice than broken for the pavement?

3. What difference between repairing and rebuilding helped Maya choose repairing?

4. What did Maya use a dictionary to find, and what did she use a thesaurus to find?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a real or imagined school improvement. Use a dictionary and a thesaurus to compare two closely related action words, then write a 40 to 60 word request that uses the more precise word. After the request, add one sentence naming the two words and explaining your choice.

ANSWER KEY

Words With Purpose

GRADE 7 · 7.L.V.3.e

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each pair or group of closely related words, circle the word Maya chose, and write D, T, or P above each resource she used: dictionary, thesaurus, or photo. These marks will show how meaning and source choice shaped her message. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why did Maya replace demand with request in her message to the parks department?	**Demand sounds forceful and expects obedience, while request is more respectful and invites the department to consider the idea.**
2	Why was worn a more precise choice than broken for the pavement?	**Worn shows that the surface was gradually rubbed away over time. Broken suggests that something no longer works.**
3	What difference between repairing and rebuilding helped Maya choose repairing?	**Repairing means fixing the existing path. Rebuilding usually means constructing something again after major loss or removal.**
4	What did Maya use a dictionary to find, and what did she use a thesaurus to find?	**She used a dictionary for definitions and a thesaurus for possible alternatives.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Please install a covered bike rack beside the library entrance. Many students leave bicycles in the rain, and a rack with a roof would protect seats and books in baskets. This improvement would give riders a dry, organized place to secure their bikes before class. I chose install rather than add because install means putting a structure in place for use, while add is less specific.

For Part 3, accept any 40 to 60 word request that uses a suitable precise action word. The explanation should name two closely related words and accurately explain why the chosen word fits the situation better.