Reef in Motion

Notice how vivid language turns restoration into a scene.

7.T.SS.2 "Craft: Interpret and use language to craft engaging texts."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two phrases that help you picture the reef, and circle three verbs that make the action vivid. These choices show how precise, sensory language engages a reader.

Building a Living Reef

1 At low tide, volunteers step onto a muddy shoreline carrying heavy bags of oyster shells. The shells clatter into mesh bags, called reef bags, while salt wind brushes their faces. Soon, the bags will rest beneath the shallow water along the edge of the bay. There, tiny oyster larvae can attach to the rough shells and begin to grow. What looks like a pile of leftovers can become the first layer of a living reef.

2 Young oysters do more than build their own homes. As they feed, they pull water through their bodies and remove tiny particles from it. A crowded reef also forms a maze of sharp shells and narrow spaces. Small crabs tuck into the gaps, and fish dart between the ridges. Over time, the reef rises like a bumpy underwater wall, slowing waves before they pound the shore. One careful restoration project can change an empty patch of bottom into a busy neighborhood.

3 Restoring reefs takes patience. Workers must choose safe sites, place shells where tides can reach them, and return to check the bags after storms. The work matters because oyster reefs have declined in many places from pollution, overharvesting, and lost habitat. Still, each restored reef offers a clear picture of repair: shells settle, oysters cluster, and water swirls through a shelter full of life. The bay does not change overnight, but the shoreline gains a quieter, stronger guard.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which phrase in paragraph 1 appeals most to your sense of hearing?

2. What does the verb "dart" suggest about how the fish move in paragraph 2?

3. What comparison does the author use for the growing reef, and what picture does it create?

4. Why does the author call the restored reef a "quieter, stronger guard" at the end?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write exactly three sentences about a restoration scene that is not about oyster reefs. Include at least two precise verbs, one sensory detail, and one comparison.

ANSWER KEY

Reef in Motion

GRADE 7 · 7.T.SS.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two phrases that help you picture the reef, and circle three verbs that make the action vivid. These choices show how precise, sensory language engages a reader. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which phrase in paragraph 1 appeals most to your sense of hearing?	**"The shells clatter into mesh bags."**
2	What does the verb "dart" suggest about how the fish move in paragraph 2?	**The fish move quickly and suddenly between the ridges.**
3	What comparison does the author use for the growing reef, and what picture does it create?	**The reef is compared to "a bumpy underwater wall," creating a picture of a raised barrier that can slow waves.**
4	Why does the author call the restored reef a "quieter, stronger guard" at the end?	**The phrase makes the reef seem like a protector that helps guard the shoreline from waves.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Along the streambank, students press young willow shoots into cool, dark soil. Rain taps on their hoods as they pack the roots and carry away tangled plastic. The new plants stand like small green flags, ready to grip the muddy bank.

Accept other quoted sensory phrases and precise verbs when students explain their effect accurately. For Part 3, check for exactly three sentences, a non-oyster restoration scene, two precise verbs, a sensory detail, and a comparison.