Words Shape Action

Use context and audience to choose precise vocabulary.

8.L.V.1 "General, Academic, & Specialized Vocabulary: Use a variety of approaches to continuously build vocabulary across a range of real-life, academic..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three words whose meanings you can infer from nearby clues, circle two academic words, and box one specialized science word. These marks will help you notice how word choice changes across real-life, academic, and scientific contexts.

Cleaning Maple Creek

1. On Saturday, volunteers gathered beside Maple Creek to remove litter from its banks. At first, the work seemed simple: fill bags, sort bottles, and carry heavy tires to a collection truck. Then Maya noticed that the creek water moved more slowly near a pile of tangled branches. She told the group that the pile might block the current. Her observation changed the plan. Instead of pulling everything out at once, the volunteers asked a park worker which materials should remain to protect fish and insects.

2. The park worker explained that some branches form habitat, a place where living things can find food or shelter. In a stream, these woody piles may create small pools and slower edges. Those areas can give young fish a refuge from fast water. The worker also used the word erosion to describe soil being carried away by moving water. Removing every branch could increase erosion because roots and wood help hold the bank together. The volunteers separated trash from natural debris before continuing their cleanup.

3. After the cleanup, Maya wrote a brief report for the town council. She stated that the project removed 46 bags of trash and protected stream habitat. Her report included evidence, such as the number of bags and photographs of the creek bank. She recommended placing covered bins near the trailhead to reduce future litter. The council members wanted a clear proposal, not just a complaint. By choosing precise words for different audiences, Maya could explain the science of the creek and persuade leaders to support the next cleanup.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. In paragraph 1, what does current mean? Which nearby words support that meaning?

2. Use paragraph 2 to explain erosion. What causes it in this passage?

3. What is the difference between litter and natural debris as the passage uses those terms?

4. Which two academic words in paragraph 3 show that Maya supports a plan with information? Explain how she uses them.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write exactly three sentences proposing an improvement at your school or in your neighborhood. Use one general word, one academic word, and one specialized word, and include a context clue that explains the specialized word.

ANSWER KEY

Words Shape Action

GRADE 8 · 8.L.V.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline three words whose meanings you can infer from nearby clues, circle two academic words, and box one specialized science word. These marks will help you notice how word choice changes across real-life, academic, and scientific contexts. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	In paragraph 1, what does current mean? Which nearby words support that meaning?	**Current means moving creek water. The phrase "creek water moved more slowly" supports this meaning.**
2	Use paragraph 2 to explain erosion. What causes it in this passage?	**Erosion is soil being carried away by moving water. Removing branches could increase it because roots and wood help hold the bank together.**
3	What is the difference between litter and natural debris as the passage uses those terms?	**Litter is discarded trash, such as bottles or tires. Natural debris is material from nature, such as branches and wood.**
4	Which two academic words in paragraph 3 show that Maya supports a plan with information? Explain how she uses them.	**Evidence and proposal. Maya uses numbers and photographs as evidence, then gives a proposal to place covered bins near the trailhead.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our courtyard needs more shade during lunch. My proposal uses evidence from a student survey showing that 38 students avoid the sunny benches. A pergola, an open structure that supports climbing plants and creates shade, would make the courtyard cooler.

Accept reasonable context-based explanations and marking choices when students use nearby details to support their thinking. For Part 3, accept any clear three-sentence proposal that uses general, academic, and specialized vocabulary and explains the specialized term with a context clue.