

Words With Purpose

Compare close word choices for audience and purpose.

8.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 group of closely related word choices in the passage. Circle each print or digital resource the council uses, then write 1, 2, or 3 beside each underlined group to show its paragraph.

Saving the Station

- ① When the Riverton Youth Council proposed changes to an unused rail station, its members chose each word carefully. The building was not “abandoned,” because city workers still inspected its roof and locked its doors. It was “vacant,” meaning no one currently used it for trains or offices. Calling the station “empty” would have been less precise, since old signal equipment and benches remained inside. The council checked a print dictionary and the city’s website before describing the site in its public letter.
- ② Next, the council discussed what should happen to the station’s brick walls. One member wrote that volunteers could “repair” loose bricks, a word for fixing damage. Another suggested “restore” the painted station sign so it would resemble its earlier appearance. The group avoided “rebuild,” which could suggest replacing a large part of the structure. A local preservation guide explained these differences. In the final letter, the council asked the mayor to fund repairs and restoration, not a complete rebuild.
- ③ The final paragraph of the letter needed a respectful but serious tone. The council could “request” funding, which sounds polite and formal. It could “urge” the mayor to act, which communicates stronger concern without giving an order. To “demand” funding would sound forceful and might weaken cooperation with city leaders. After reading examples in an online thesaurus, the students chose “urge.” Their letter explained that securing the roof before winter could protect the station and allow future community use.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 Why is vacant a more precise word than abandoned for the rail station?

2 Which word best describes making the painted station sign resemble its earlier appearance: repair, restore, or rebuild? Explain your choice.

3 Place request, urge, and demand in order from least forceful to most forceful. Then give one passage clue that supports your order.

4 What resource did the council consult before choosing urge? Explain why urge fits the council's audience and purpose.

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Imagine you are writing to your principal about a crowded lunch period. Look up the words in each set, suggest, recommend, insist, and busy, crowded, packed. Write 2 or 3 sentences that use one word from each set and explain why those choices fit your message.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each group of closely related word choices in the passage. Circle each print or digital resource the council uses, then write 1, 2, or 3 beside each underlined group to show its paragraph. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why is vacant a more precise word than abandoned for the rail station?	Vacant shows that no one currently uses the station, while abandoned would be inaccurate because city workers still inspect and secure it.
2	Which word best describes making the painted station sign resemble its earlier appearance: repair, restore, or rebuild? Explain your choice.	Restore, because it means returning the sign to its earlier appearance.
3	Place request, urge, and demand in order from least forceful to most forceful. Then give one passage clue that supports your order.	Request, urge, demand. Request is polite and formal, urge shows stronger concern, and demand sounds forceful.
4	What resource did the council consult before choosing urge? Explain why urge fits the council's audience and purpose.	They used an online thesaurus. Urge expresses serious concern while remaining respectful and not giving the mayor an order.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I recommend adding another lunch line because the cafeteria is packed during the first lunch period. I chose recommend because it offers a respectful suggestion, and packed because it shows that students have very little room to move.

Accept answers that use a resource to distinguish close word meanings and make choices that fit a respectful message to a principal. Students may choose different words if their explanation accurately supports the meaning, tone, and purpose.