Words That Move

Study how word choice shapes purpose and audience.

8.T.SS.2.b "Use figurative language, literary devices, or connotative language for intentional effects when creating texts to achieve specific purposes or appeal to the target audience. (C)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three phrases that use figurative or strongly connotative language, then number them 1–3. Beside each number, write the effect the phrase is meant to have on student volunteers, such as concern, responsibility, or motivation.

A Message for the River Club

(1) On Saturday, our town's river will not ask us for help in words. It will speak through plastic bottles caught in reeds and foam clinging to the banks. Students who join the River Club cleanup will meet at Maple Landing at 9:00 a.m. Bring gloves, a refillable water bottle, and a willingness to get muddy. Every bag we fill clears a small path for turtles, fish, and birds that depend on this water each day.

(2) Some people see litter as somebody else's problem, a mess that belongs to no one. But a river is not a trash can with a current. It is a moving neighborhood, and its residents cannot pack up and leave. When we lift one dented can from the mud, we do more than clean a shore. We choose to be the kind of neighbors who notice, act, and protect creatures that cannot speak for themselves in return.

(3) Your hands may smell like river mud, and your shoes may carry home a few stubborn pebbles. That is proof that you showed up when the river needed a team. Invite a friend, a sibling, or a neighbor. A fuller cleanup crew means faster work, safer banks, and a stronger message: this place matters. The river winds past our schools, parks, and homes like a blue thread sewing the town together. Let us keep that thread bright.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What phrase gives the river a human action in paragraph 1? What effect does this personification have on the reader?

2. In paragraph 2, what does the writer mean by calling the river “a moving neighborhood”? How does this metaphor support the message?

3. How does the list “notice, act, and protect” affect the message in paragraph 2?

4. Who is the main audience for this message? Give two details that show how the writer appeals to that audience.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 55–70-word announcement inviting classmates to join a different school action, such as a book drive, garden day, or recycling campaign. Use one metaphor or personification, a list or repetition, and at least one connotative word to make students want to join.

ANSWER KEY

Words That Move

GRADE 8 · 8.T.SS.2.b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline three phrases that use figurative or strongly connotative language, then number them 1–3. Beside each number, write the effect the phrase is meant to have on student volunteers, such as concern, responsibility, or motivation. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What phrase gives the river a human action in paragraph 1? What effect does this personification have on the reader?	**"It will speak through plastic bottles caught in reeds and foam clinging to the banks." It makes pollution seem like a signal that needs attention.**
2	In paragraph 2, what does the writer mean by calling the river "a moving neighborhood"? How does this metaphor support the message?	**The river is compared to a neighborhood where animals live. The metaphor makes readers feel responsible for protecting its living residents.**
3	How does the list "notice, act, and protect" affect the message in paragraph 2?	**The active list makes helping seem like a clear shared responsibility and urges readers to take action.**
4	Who is the main audience for this message? Give two details that show how the writer appeals to that audience.	**The audience is students who could volunteer. The writer gives practical details such as the meeting time and supplies, and asks readers to invite a friend, sibling, or neighbor.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Books are bridges waiting to carry new readers across unknown worlds. This Thursday, donate gently used novels, comics, or biographies to the library book drive. A bare shelf feels lonely, but a full shelf opens doors. Bring one book, share one story, welcome one reader. Place donations in the bright blue cart outside the library before lunch.

Accept other accurately identified figurative or connotative phrases when students explain a reasonable intended effect on the audience. For Part 3, accept responses of 55–70 words that address classmates, invite participation in a school action, and include the required language choices.