Cut the Clutter

Use precise terms to explain a rain garden without repeating ideas.

9-10.W.2.d "Choose language and content-specific vocabulary that express ideas precisely and concisely to manage the complexity of the topic, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle the terms runoff, infiltration, permeable, and overflow. Underline the nearby words that explain what each term means.

Editing a Rain Garden Explanation

1 At the edge of a school parking lot, a shallow rain garden catches runoff, rainwater that flows across hard surfaces. A curb opening directs water into the planted basin instead of sending it straight to a storm drain. There, stems slow the flow while soil traps some sediment. The garden does not make pollution vanish, but it can reduce the amount of dirty water entering nearby drains. A student's first draft describes the same process this way: "Rainwater that falls down from the sky moves across roads and streets." That sentence needs a sharper subject and fewer repeated ideas.

2 Infiltration, the movement of water into soil, depends partly on how quickly that soil absorbs water. The garden's soil often includes sand and organic matter, which help water move downward and support plants. A path beside the garden might use permeable paving, a surface that lets water pass through rather than forcing it to run across the top. In the student's notes, two sentences still sound bulky: "Water goes down into the ground by moving downward into the soil." Another says, "This special pavement is pavement that lets water go through it." Both hide useful distinctions beneath repeated words.

3 During a long storm, the garden may fill faster than water can soak into the ground. An outlet then carries overflow, excess water that leaves the basin when it fills. This feature protects nearby pavement from standing water, but the outlet must connect to a safe drainage route. Even a well-designed garden needs maintenance: fallen leaves can block the inlet, and trash can smother plants. The student's final note reads, "Extra water that is more than the garden can hold goes out through an outlet." A concise revision should keep the outlet and the reason water reaches it, without repeating the idea of excess.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Rewrite the student's sentence in paragraph 1 in eight words or fewer. Use a precise, topic-specific noun.

2. Rewrite the first quoted sentence in paragraph 2 in eight words or fewer. Use a precise verb.

3. Rewrite the second quoted sentence in paragraph 2 in nine words or fewer. Use a precise adjective from the passage.

4. Rewrite the quoted sentence in paragraph 3 in ten words or fewer. Keep both the reason the water leaves and where it goes.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a familiar school process other than managing rainwater. Write a 60 to 85 word informational paragraph explaining how it works, using precise language without needless repetition. Underline exactly two accurate, topic-specific terms.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle the terms runoff, infiltration, permeable, and overflow. Underline the nearby words that explain what each term means. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Rewrite the student's sentence in paragraph 1 in eight words or fewer. Use a precise, topic-specific noun.	**Runoff flows across roads.**
2	Rewrite the first quoted sentence in paragraph 2 in eight words or fewer. Use a precise verb.	**Water infiltrates the soil.**
3	Rewrite the second quoted sentence in paragraph 2 in nine words or fewer. Use a precise adjective from the passage.	**Permeable paving lets water pass through.**
4	Rewrite the quoted sentence in paragraph 3 in ten words or fewer. Keep both the reason the water leaves and where it goes.	**When the garden fills, overflow exits through an outlet.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

To borrow a library book, first check the catalog for its call number, the code that shows where it belongs on a shelf. Find the book, then bring it to the circulation desk with your library card. A staff member scans the book and records a due date. If someone else has checked it out, place a hold so you can borrow it after that person returns it.

Accept equivalent concise rewrites that meet each word limit and preserve the stated meaning. For the open response, check for 60 to 85 words, an accurate process, exactly two underlined topic-specific terms, and no needless repetition.