Which Meaning Fits?

Use context and reference entries to make precise word choices.

L.11-12.4.c "Consult general and specialized reference materials to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the context clues in each quoted caption or camera note. Circle the reference meaning that fits each bold word.

The Photo Exhibit Reference Desk

1. At a student photo exhibit, a caption can fail even when the picture succeeds. A writer describing a baseball game might call a thrown ball a *pitch*. A general dictionary offers several meanings for that spelling, including a noun for a throw and a noun for how high or low a sound seems. The sentence about the game selects the first meaning; matching letters alone would not. Reference entries also mark part of speech and pronunciation. When a term belongs to a field such as photography, a subject glossary may sharpen a broad dictionary meaning.

2. Now consider the captions Mira is editing for photographs taken beside a river. One says, "The **current** carried a yellow leaf beneath the bridge." Her general dictionary lists *current* as a noun meaning a flow of water or air and as an adjective meaning happening now. Another caption says, "We **conduct** a test before adjusting the camera." For *conduct*, the dictionary shows a verb, pronounced kun-DUKT, meaning to carry out an activity; it also shows a noun, pronounced KON-dukt, meaning behavior. Mira must use each whole sentence to choose an entry, not spelling alone.

3. Two more notes come from the exhibit's camera log. "A higher-resolution camera let us record finer details," reads one. A general dictionary gives *resolution* a meaning of a firm decision; a photography glossary uses it for the amount of detail an image can represent, often described by pixel dimensions. Another note says, "A longer **exposure** made the night sky brighter." A general dictionary includes a meaning of *exposure* as a state of being unprotected. The camera glossary describes it as the amount of light that reaches the image sensor. The surrounding words determine which definition is useful.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. In the river caption, which part of speech and dictionary meaning fit *current*? Name a clue.

2. In the test caption, which pronunciation and part of speech fit *conduct*? Explain your choice.

3. For *resolution* in the camera note, which reference meaning fits better, the general dictionary meaning or the photography glossary meaning? Why?

4. Which reference meaning fits *exposure* in the night-sky note? Identify the clue that rules out the other meaning.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a word from another class that is not in the passage. Consult a general dictionary and a subject-specific glossary, then write a short paragraph naming both sources, giving the word's part of speech and pronunciation, comparing their meanings, and using your own sentence to show which meaning fits.

ANSWER KEY

Which Meaning Fits?

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the context clues in each quoted caption or camera note. Circle the reference meaning that fits each bold word. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	In the river caption, which part of speech and dictionary meaning fit *current*? Name a clue.	**Noun, a flow of water or air. The leaf moves beneath a bridge.**
2	In the test caption, which pronunciation and part of speech fit *conduct*? Explain your choice.	**kun-DUKT, verb. "Conduct a test" means carry out a test.**
3	For *resolution* in the camera note, which reference meaning fits better, the general dictionary meaning or the photography glossary meaning? Why?	**The photography glossary meaning, the amount of detail an image can represent. The note concerns recording finer details with a camera.**
4	Which reference meaning fits *exposure* in the night-sky note? Identify the clue that rules out the other meaning.	**The camera glossary meaning, the amount of light reaching the image sensor. A longer exposure making the sky brighter points to light, not being unprotected.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

In math class, I wrote, "The matrix has three rows and two columns." Merriam-Webster lists *matrix* as a noun pronounced MAY-triks and gives a general meaning of a setting in which something develops. The Math is Fun Illustrated Mathematics Dictionary defines a matrix as a rectangular array of numbers arranged in rows and columns. The math glossary specifies a structure rather than a setting. Its meaning fits my sentence because rows and columns describe that array.

Accept equivalent wording when the chosen meaning, part of speech, and pronunciation match the context. For Part 3, check that the student names two relevant references and explains why one meaning fits the original sentence.