Words That Warm

How word choices shape an explanation of city heat

RI.7.4 "Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative and technical meanings; analyze the impact of word choices on meaning and tone."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one technical term and the nearby words that help explain it, circle two comparisons, and number two words or phrases that shape the passage's tone.

A Cooler Way Through the City

1 On a hot afternoon, two sidewalks in the same city can feel like different seasons. A bare stretch of pavement absorbs sunlight and gives off heat long after sunset. Across the street, trees cast shade over a path, and leaves release water vapor that helps cool the air. Scientists call the pattern of warmer built-up areas compared with nearby greener places the urban heat island effect. The name does not mean the city is surrounded by water; it describes a difference in temperature.

2 A roof's albedo is the share of sunlight it reflects rather than absorbs. A pale roof usually has higher albedo than a dark one, so it often heats up less in direct sun. Still, shade can change how a place feels more than a roof's color does for someone walking below. At a bus stop without a shelter, the pavement can act like a heat bank, holding warmth and paying it back into the air at dusk. That delayed release can make a wait for the evening bus feel surprisingly uncomfortable.

3 Planting trees might seem like a simple fix, but roots need space and young trees need years to grow wide crowns. In places where trees cannot fit, a shelter can provide a patch of shade right away. City planners also test lighter paving materials, but glare and maintenance matter too. A patchwork of protection is taking shape, one block at a time. It may not erase summer heat, but it could turn a punishing walk into a more bearable trip.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What does “albedo” mean in this passage? How does the roof example help you understand the term?

2. What does the comparison “heat bank” suggest about pavement? How does it help explain the wait at the bus stop?

3. How would the tone change if “punishing walk” became “hot walk”? Explain what “punishing” adds.

4. What does “patchwork of protection” suggest about ways to cool city streets? How does the phrase shape the passage’s message?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write three sentences describing a crowded school hallway. Use an original figurative comparison in sentence one, a tone-setting adjective in sentence two, and explain how both choices affect meaning and tone in sentence three.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one technical term and the nearby words that help explain it, circle two comparisons, and number two words or phrases that shape the passage's tone. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does "albedo" mean in this passage? How does the roof example help you understand the term?	**Albedo is the share of sunlight a surface reflects. The pale roof has higher albedo than the dark roof, so it usually heats up less.**
2	What does the comparison "heat bank" suggest about pavement? How does it help explain the wait at the bus stop?	**The pavement holds heat and releases it later, as a bank holds and returns something. The comparison helps explain why the bus stop can still feel hot at dusk.**
3	How would the tone change if "punishing walk" became "hot walk"? Explain what "punishing" adds.	**"Hot walk" sounds more neutral. "Punishing" makes the heat seem severe and the walk difficult to endure.**
4	What does "patchwork of protection" suggest about ways to cool city streets? How does the phrase shape the passage's message?	**It suggests that several different changes can help in different places. The phrase emphasizes that no single fix will cool every street.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The hallway between classes sounded like a beehive. A calm voice from the office rose above the noise. "Beehive" suggests a busy, buzzing crowd, while "calm" makes the voice seem reassuring.

Accept other interpretations when students support them with the passage's wording. For Part 3, check that the response has three sentences and explains the effects of both an original comparison and an adjective.