

Clues in the Marsh

Use nearby details to check the meaning of unfamiliar words.

4RF4.b "Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each word that may be new or confusing, then circle the nearby words that help you figure out its meaning or correct your first idea.

Maya at the Salt Marsh

- ① At low tide, Maya joined a park ranger beside a salt marsh. The ranger dipped a cup into a shallow pool and said the water was brackish. Maya first thought brackish meant fresh, but she reread the next sentence. "It has some salt from the sea and some fresh water from the river," the ranger explained. The mixed water helped certain grasses grow.
- ② Near the path, Maya noticed a heron standing so still that it looked like a statue. The bird waited, then quickly speared a small fish with its beak. A sign asked visitors to be quiet so the heron could hunt. Maya read that the heron was a patient predator. From its long wait and quick catch, she understood that predator was an animal that hunts other animals for food.
- ③ Before leaving, the ranger pointed to a patch of dry-looking plants. "These plants are dormant during the hottest months," he said. Maya wondered whether dormant meant dead. She read on: "When cooler, wetter weather returns, new green shoots will rise from the roots." Maya corrected her thinking. The plants were alive, but they were resting and not growing above the ground for a time.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 Maya first thinks brackish means fresh. What details should make her correct that idea?

2 Reread the sentences about the heron. What does predator mean? Which details help you know?

3 Does dormant mean dead in paragraph 3? Use a detail from the paragraph to explain.

4 What does speared most likely mean when the heron speared a fish with its beak?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Write three sentences about an animal or place. Use one made-up word in the first sentence, underline it both times, and include clues that show its meaning. In the third sentence, tell what the made-up word means.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each word that may be new or confusing, then circle the nearby words that help you figure out its meaning or correct your first idea. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Maya first thinks brackish means fresh. What details should make her correct that idea?	The water has some salt from the sea and some fresh water from the river. It is mixed water, not only fresh water.
2	Reread the sentences about the heron. What does predator mean? Which details help you know?	A predator is an animal that hunts other animals for food. The heron waits, catches a fish, and hunts.
3	Does dormant mean dead in paragraph 3? Use a detail from the paragraph to explain.	No. The plants are alive because new green shoots will rise from their roots when cooler, wetter weather returns.
4	What does speared most likely mean when the heron speared a fish with its beak?	It means the heron quickly struck and caught the fish with its beak.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The desert lizard was sunwary, so it hid under a cool rock when the noon light became hot. It came out again after sunset, when the sand cooled. Sunwary means careful about hot sunlight.

Accept reasonable meanings when the student uses nearby clues to support the meaning of the made-up word. For the passage questions, accept equivalent wording that uses accurate details from the text.