

Forest Floor Science

Notice how precise language and evidence create an informative science style.

5W2.f "Establish a style aligned to a subject area or task."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the three italicized science terms, then circle the two sentences that contain bold cause-and-effect connectors, to see how precise vocabulary and logical links create a science style.

Leaves Become Soil

- ① On a damp forest floor, dead leaves begin to change. Tiny *decomposers*, living things that break down dead material, feed on the leaves. Some decomposers are bacteria, while others are fungi. Their work returns nutrients to the soil. This quiet process supports new plant growth and keeps fallen material from building up year after year on the ground.
- ② Moisture affects how quickly this change happens. Many *bacteria* in leaf litter grow when water and food are available. A leaf pile stays wetter near the ground. **Because** water helps bacteria carry out life processes, damp leaves usually break down faster than dry leaves. Temperature also matters. Cold weather can slow the activity of many decomposers.
- ③ When decomposers finish breaking down a leaf, *nutrients* become available in the soil. Plant roots take in these materials and use them to grow. **Therefore**, a forest can reuse matter instead of losing it. Scientists describe this cycle with observations and evidence, rather than guesses. Understanding decomposition helps people decide what to add to a compost pile.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What are the three italicized science terms? How do these terms help create a science style?

2 In paragraph 2, what cause and effect are connected by the bold word?

3 What words define decomposers in paragraph 1? How does the definition help the reader?

4 What exact phrase contrasts scientific evidence with unsupported ideas? What style does it create?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write exactly four sentences for a science notebook about how a seed begins to grow. Use one precise science term followed by a short definition in commas, use **because** or **therefore** to show cause and effect, and include one observation.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the three italicized science terms, then circle the two sentences that contain bold cause-and-effect connectors, to see how precise vocabulary and logical links create a science style. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What are the three italicized science terms? How do these terms help create a science style?	decomposers, bacteria, and nutrients. They use precise subject-area vocabulary.
2	In paragraph 2, what cause and effect are connected by the bold word?	Water helps bacteria carry out life processes, so damp leaves usually break down faster than dry leaves.
3	What words define decomposers in paragraph 1? How does the definition help the reader?	"living things that break down dead material." The definition explains the precise science term.
4	What exact phrase contrasts scientific evidence with unsupported ideas? What style does it create?	"with observations and evidence, rather than guesses." It creates an objective, evidence-based science style.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A seed absorbs water through its coat. The embryo, a young plant inside a seed, begins to use stored food. **Because** water starts important chemical changes, the embryo can grow a root. Scientists can observe the root pushing into the soil.

Accept equivalent explanations that identify precise science vocabulary, definitions, logical cause-and-effect links, and an objective focus on evidence. For the open response, accept any accurate four-sentence science notebook entry that meets every listed style requirement.