

Words at Work

Notice how sentence beginnings and precise verbs shape a field journal.

6L3 "Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline four sentence beginnings that use a word or phrase other than a person's name, and circle five precise action verbs that make the prairie work clear.

A Prairie Workday

- ① On Saturday, Maya joined volunteers at a prairie restoration near her town. The field looked quiet at first, but it held many small lives. Monarch caterpillars chewed milkweed leaves, and grasshoppers sprang from the path. Maya carried a bucket of native seeds: coneflower, little bluestem, and black-eyed Susan. Instead of scattering them quickly, she pressed each seed into loose soil. Her careful work could help new plants grow next spring, when pollinators would need nectar and shelter.
- ② By noon, dark clouds gathered above the open field. Maya checked the sky, then listened to the leader's clear directions. "Pack the tools first," he said, "and walk to the shed together." Everyone moved quickly because thunder can signal dangerous lightning nearby. At the shed, rain drummed on the metal roof. The volunteers waited, shared apple slices, and compared the seeds they had planted. Although the storm lasted only twenty minutes, it changed the afternoon's plan. Still, nobody complained. They simply reorganized the tasks.
- ③ After the rain stopped, the group returned to the prairie. Sunlight flashed on wet stems, while puddles reflected the moving clouds. Maya noticed that the ground was softer, so she used a small trowel instead of pushing seeds with her fingers. Before leaving, she wrote three notes in her field journal: where she planted, which seeds she used, and what weather she observed. These precise details would help the volunteers decide which methods worked well over several growing seasons at this site.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What does the verb “sprang” suggest about how the grasshoppers moved?

2 Why does the leader's quoted direction, “Pack the tools first,” fit the storm situation?

3 Which sentence begins with “Although,” and what two ideas does this beginning connect?

4 Why are Maya's journal notes about location, seeds, and weather useful to the volunteers?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write four sentences about an outdoor task you have done or could do. Begin each sentence differently, use at least three precise action verbs, and include one sentence that explains why a detail you noticed matters.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline four sentence beginnings that use a word or phrase other than a person's name, and circle five precise action verbs that make the prairie work clear. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does the verb “sprang” suggest about how the grasshoppers moved?	It suggests that the grasshoppers moved suddenly and quickly.
2	Why does the leader's quoted direction, “Pack the tools first,” fit the storm situation?	The direct command gives clear, urgent instructions for getting to safety.
3	Which sentence begins with “Although,” and what two ideas does this beginning connect?	“Although the storm lasted only twenty minutes, it changed the afternoon's plan.” It connects the storm's short length with its important effect on the plan.
4	Why are Maya's journal notes about location, seeds, and weather useful to the volunteers?	The precise details can help the volunteers compare methods and decide what works well over time.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Before school, I inspected the garden bed beside the library. Tiny beetles crawled under the damp leaves, and a robin tugged a worm from the soil. Using a hand rake, I loosened the packed dirt around the bean plants. These observations can help our class choose when to water and where to add mulch.

Accept reasonable explanations that connect specific language choices to clarity, urgency, sequence, or meaning. For the open response, check for four differently begun sentences, at least three precise action verbs, and an explanation of why an observed detail matters.