

Words That Matter

Use context and precise vocabulary to understand a science text.

7L6 “Acquire and accurately use general academic and content-specific words and phrases; apply vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle four vocabulary words whose meanings are explained nearby, then underline the words that explain each one; number two academic words that describe how scientists use results.

Saving Coral Reefs

- ① Along Florida’s coast, scientists are restoring coral reefs, underwater communities built by tiny animals called polyps. Reefs provide habitat, or living space, for fish, crabs, and sea turtles. They also reduce the force of waves before storms reach shore. However, unusually warm water can cause coral bleaching. During bleaching, corals lose the algae that live inside them. Without those algae, which supply much of the coral’s food, the reef may become weak or die over time.
- ② To help damaged reefs recover, researchers grow young corals in underwater nurseries. After several months, divers attach the corals to bare reef surfaces. This process is not a quick fix. Scientists monitor, or carefully observe, the transplanted corals to see whether they survive, grow, and reproduce. They compare results from different sites because currents, temperatures, and predators can affect success. The data help teams evaluate which methods are most effective, meaning they produce the strongest results.
- ③ Restoration alone cannot protect every reef. Communities can reduce pollution that washes into the ocean and can limit activities that damage coral. Visitors can also learn why reefs matter, then choose reef-safe practices, such as keeping distance from wildlife and carrying away trash. Clear vocabulary helps people discuss these choices. For example, calling a reef “important” is vague. Explaining that a reef provides habitat and reduces wave force gives readers precise reasons to care and supports a more informed decision.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What does *habitat* mean in the first paragraph? Which nearby words help you infer its meaning?

2 What does *monitor* mean as scientists study transplanted corals?

3 In paragraph 2, what does *evaluate* mean? Use the sentence about data and effective methods to explain.

4 Why is the statement that a reef is “important” vague? Give the two precise reasons from paragraph 3.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose a science, history, or school topic you know. Write 3 or 4 sentences explaining why it matters, using two content-specific words and one academic word. Include context clues that help a reader infer each content-specific word.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Circle four vocabulary words whose meanings are explained nearby, then underline the words that explain each one; number two academic words that describe how scientists use results. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does <i>habitat</i> mean in the first paragraph? Which nearby words help you infer its meaning?	Habitat means a living space. The nearby words are "or living space."
2	What does <i>monitor</i> mean as scientists study transplanted corals?	Monitor means to carefully observe.
3	In paragraph 2, what does <i>evaluate</i> mean? Use the sentence about data and effective methods to explain.	Evaluate means to judge or determine which methods work best by using data.
4	Why is the statement that a reef is "important" vague? Give the two precise reasons from paragraph 3.	"Important" does not give a specific reason. A reef provides habitat and reduces wave force.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

During photosynthesis, plants use sunlight to make glucose, a sugar that stores energy. Their chlorophyll, the green pigment in leaves, captures much of that light. Students can evaluate how shade affects a plant by comparing its growth with the growth of a plant in full sun.

Accept equivalent meanings supported by the passage. For the open response, accept a clear 3- or 4-sentence explanation with two accurately used content-specific terms, one academic term, and useful context clues.