

Reef Words Matter

Precise language helps readers understand a scientific topic.

7W2.c "Use precise language and content-specific vocabulary to explain a topic."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle the four italicized content-specific terms and underline the six bold precise details or actions. These choices show how a writer explains coral reefs clearly.

Coral Reefs Under Stress

- ① Coral reefs are built by tiny animals called *polyps*. Each polyp produces a hard skeleton of calcium carbonate, and many skeletons join to form a reef. Reefs grow best in clear, shallow, sunlit water because the algae living inside coral need light. These algae supply much of the food that coral uses. Although reefs cover **less than 1 percent of the ocean floor**, they provide shelter and feeding areas for many sea animals, including fish and crabs.
- ② When water stays unusually warm, coral can experience *bleaching*. The heat stresses coral, causing it to push out its algae. Without algae, coral loses its main food source and turns pale. Bleached coral is not always dead, but it is weaker and more likely to die if hot water continues. In 2016, the northern third of Australia's Great Barrier Reef lost **about 67 percent of its shallow-water corals** after prolonged ocean heat that summer in northern waters.
- ③ Scientists monitor reefs by **measuring water temperature**, counting living coral, and recording *coral cover*, the percentage of a seafloor area covered by live coral. Communities can reduce *runoff*, water that carries soil and fertilizer into the sea during heavy rains. **Planting native vegetation along rivers** helps hold soil in place. **Using less fertilizer near waterways** keeps extra nutrients out of coastal water and protects nearby reef habitats. **Lowering greenhouse-gas emissions** can limit future ocean warming worldwide.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Which italicized term names the percentage of a seafloor area covered by live coral?

2 What happens to coral during bleaching, according to the passage? Use precise language from the text.

3 Which bold phrase gives a precise measurement of coral loss in the Great Barrier Reef?

4 How does the passage specifically define runoff?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write three sentences explaining how road salt can affect a freshwater pond. Use at least two content-specific terms and two precise details, such as a material, action, or result.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Circle the four italicized content-specific terms and underline the six bold precise details or actions. These choices show how a writer explains coral reefs clearly. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which italicized term names the percentage of a seafloor area covered by live coral?	coral cover
2	What happens to coral during bleaching, according to the passage? Use precise language from the text.	Heat stresses the coral, causing it to push out its algae. Without algae, it loses its main food source and turns pale.
3	Which bold phrase gives a precise measurement of coral loss in the Great Barrier Reef?	about 67 percent of its shallow-water corals
4	How does the passage specifically define runoff?	Runoff is water that carries soil and fertilizer into the sea during heavy rains.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

After winter storms, runoff can carry dissolved road salt into a freshwater pond. Higher salinity can make it harder for aquatic organisms, such as frogs and insects, to keep the right amount of water in their bodies. Using less salt near storm drains can reduce the amount that reaches the pond.

Accept equivalent accurate wording for the short answers when it keeps the passage's specific meaning. For the open response, accept any accurate three-sentence explanation with at least two relevant content-specific terms and two concrete details.