Words That Measure

Use precise vocabulary to make a proposal clear and testable.

11.4.W.1 "Students will use precise, grade-level vocabulary in writing to clearly communicate complex ideas."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle four precise terms that name a process, constraint, or measure. Underline one sentence that shows why a specific measure is more useful than a simple count.

More Than a Tree Count

1 At noon, two blocks can feel like different cities. On Alder Street, a continuous tree canopy shades the sidewalk; on nearby Bell Street, small saplings leave most pavement exposed. Canopy coverage measures the extent of overhead foliage, while a tree count records only how many trees stand nearby. Shade limits the sunlight absorbed by asphalt and concrete. Trees also release water vapor through transpiration, which can cool surrounding air. For a pedestrian waiting at a bus stop, the difference between dense shade and exposed pavement is more immediate than the total number of trees on a city map.

2 Planting more trees on Bell Street would not produce instant relief. Young trees need years to grow broad crowns, and some may die before they provide substantial shade. Sidewalk width, buried utilities, and access for wheelchairs can also limit planting sites. A plan that promises to "add greenery" hides these constraints. A more useful plan would identify feasible planting spaces, select species suited to local conditions, and fund watering during establishment. These details distinguish a realistic increase in future canopy coverage from a planting ceremony that counts seedlings without considering whether they will survive.

3 City officials should prioritize the most exposed bus stops, not simply the streets with the fewest trees. That distinction directs resources toward people facing the greatest midday heat. Officials could track canopy coverage at those stops over time and report the survival rate, the percentage of planted trees still alive after a stated period. They should also measure shade at the hour when riders actually wait. No single measure proves that a street is comfortable in every season, but these specific measures would show whether the project is reducing exposure rather than merely increasing its planting total.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why does “canopy coverage” communicate more about potential shade than “tree count” does?

2. Replace “add greenery” with a more precise description of the proposed plan. Include two actions named in paragraph 2.

3. Which words in paragraph 2 prevent readers from assuming that new trees will provide immediate shade? Explain the distinction they make.

4. What does “survival rate” measure, and why would it tell officials more than a planting total alone?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 70 to 90 word proposal for a school water-refill station that could reduce disposable bottle waste. Use at least three precise terms to name actions or measures, and explain one condition that could affect your results.

ANSWER KEY

Words That Measure

GRADE 11 · 11.4.W.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle four precise terms that name a process, constraint, or measure. Underline one sentence that shows why a specific measure is more useful than a simple count. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why does "canopy coverage" communicate more about potential shade than "tree count" does?	**Canopy coverage measures the extent of overhead foliage; a tree count says how many trees are present but not how much foliage they provide.**
2	Replace "add greenery" with a more precise description of the proposed plan. Include two actions named in paragraph 2.	**The plan would identify feasible planting spaces and select tree species suited to local conditions.**
3	Which words in paragraph 2 prevent readers from assuming that new trees will provide immediate shade? Explain the distinction they make.	**"Young trees need years to grow broad crowns" distinguishes planting trees now from receiving substantial shade later.**
4	What does "survival rate" measure, and why would it tell officials more than a planting total alone?	**It measures the percentage of planted trees still alive after a stated period. Unlike a planting total, it shows how many trees have survived.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Install a water-refill station beside the cafeteria so students can refill reusable bottles during lunch. Count the single-use bottles discarded in cafeteria bins for one week before installation, then repeat the count after six weeks. This comparison could indicate whether bottle waste decreased, though changes in lunch attendance might also affect the total. Assign a staff member to inspect the dispenser daily and replace filters according to the manufacturer's schedule. Clear instructions beside the station would help students use it without slowing the lunch line.

Accept other accurate terms and revisions grounded in the passage. For the proposal, look for specific actions and measures, plus a condition that limits how confidently the results can be interpreted.