Words That Work

Notice how precise words make a test easy to picture.

5.4.W.1 "Students will use grade-level vocabulary in writing to clearly communicate ideas."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline four precise words that help you picture the bridge or its test. Be ready to explain what each word tells you.

The Paper Bridge Test

1. Our class had to build a bridge from one sheet of paper. It needed to span the space between two stacks of books and hold ten pennies. At first, I laid the paper flat across the gap. The middle sagged as soon as I placed a penny on it. The paper was too flexible to support even a small load.

2. I tried a different design. I folded the same sheet back and forth, making even creases like the folds of a fan. The folds formed ridges that ran from one book stack to the other. When I placed a penny on the bridge, it stayed level. I added more pennies, spreading them across the ridges instead of piling them in one spot.

3. The folded bridge held all ten pennies without bending much. Our first bridge failed because its flat center could not carry the load. The new shape helped distribute the weight across several folds. After the test, I described both designs in my notebook. A classmate who had missed the experiment could picture exactly why one bridge held the pennies and the other did not.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why is “sagged” clearer than “moved” for describing what happened to the flat paper?

2. What does “span” tell you the bridge needed to do?

3. Which word names the raised parts made by folding the paper? How does it help you picture the new bridge?

4. What does “distribute” tell you about the weight that “hold” would not?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you tested a paper airplane made from one sheet of paper. In four or five sentences, describe its first flight, one change you made, and its next flight. Use at least three precise words that help a reader picture its motion or design.

ANSWER KEY

Words That Work

GRADE 5 · 5.4.W.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline four precise words that help you picture the bridge or its test. Be ready to explain what each word tells you. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why is "sagged" clearer than "moved" for describing what happened to the flat paper?	**"Sagged" shows that the middle drooped downward under the penny.**
2	What does "span" tell you the bridge needed to do?	**It needed to reach across the gap between the book stacks.**
3	Which word names the raised parts made by folding the paper? How does it help you picture the new bridge?	**"Ridges" names the raised folds running from one book stack to the other.**
4	What does "distribute" tell you about the weight that "hold" would not?	**It tells you the weight was spread across several folds.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

My first paper airplane tilted to the left and dropped beside my desk. I noticed that one wing had a loose crease. I pressed the fold flat and launched the plane again from the same spot. This time it glided straight across the room before landing near the door.

For Part 1, accept words such as "span," "sagged," "creases," "ridges," and "distribute" when students can explain what each makes clear. For Part 3, look for four or five sentences with a clear change between flights and at least three precise words describing the plane or its motion.