Words at Work

How word choices build an idea

7.CL.1 "Evaluate the contributions of informational text elements, including categories, point of view, purpose, and figurative, connotative, and technical word meanings, to develop central and supporting ideas."

NAME _____ DATE _____

TECHNICAL WORD

A technical word names something precisely in a field of study. It supports an idea with an exact detail.

A **seismometer** measures ground motion during earthquakes.

FIGURATIVE WORD

A figurative word describes something through a comparison rather than its literal meaning. It helps readers picture an idea.

The comet's tail was a silver **ribbon**.

1 SORT

8 items

Read the passage, circle the type of each numbered bold word, then choose one word of each type and explain how each helps develop the main idea: "City trees protect neighborhoods from heat, rain, and pollution: pavement becomes a **furnace** on hot days, but trees act like **umbrellas**; a tree's **canopy** blocks sunlight, and **transpiration**, the release of water vapor from leaves, cools the air; tree roots help keep soil **permeable**, so it can absorb rain like a **sponge**; leaves trap **particulates**, tiny bits of pollution, while their shade forms a **shield** against midday heat."

1.	**canopy**	TECHNICAL FIGURATIVE
2.	**furnace**	TECHNICAL FIGURATIVE
3.	**umbrellas**	TECHNICAL FIGURATIVE
4.	**transpiration**	TECHNICAL FIGURATIVE
5.	**permeable**	TECHNICAL FIGURATIVE
6.	**sponge**	TECHNICAL FIGURATIVE
7.	**particulates**	TECHNICAL FIGURATIVE
8.	**shield**	TECHNICAL FIGURATIVE

2 PROVE IT

Explain your thinking

Choose one word of each type and explain how each helps develop the main idea: "City trees protect neighborhoods from heat, rain, and pollution: pavement becomes a **furnace** on hot days, but trees act like **umbrellas**; a tree's **canopy** blocks sunlight, and **transpiration**, the release of water vapor from leaves, cools the air; tree roots help keep soil **permeable**, so it can absorb rain like a **sponge**; leaves trap **particulates**, tiny bits of pollution, while their shade forms a **shield** against midday heat."

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

3 MAKE YOUR OWN

One of each

Write two new sentences about how city trees help: use a new technical word in one sentence and a new figurative comparison in the other.

TECHNICAL _____

FIGURATIVE _____

CHALLENGE

Using your two new sentences, explain in two sentences which word gives a more exact detail and which creates a stronger picture of how trees help.

ANSWER KEY

Words at Work

GRADE 7 · 7.CL.1

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	**canopy**	**TECHNICAL**	Names the cover of leaves that blocks sunlight.
2	**furnace**	**FIGURATIVE**	Compares hot pavement to a source of intense heat.
3	**umbrellas**	**FIGURATIVE**	Compares trees to objects that provide shelter.
4	**transpiration**	**TECHNICAL**	Names the process that releases water vapor from leaves.
5	**permeable**	**TECHNICAL**	Precisely describes soil that lets water pass through.
6	**sponge**	**FIGURATIVE**	Compares rain-absorbing soil to a sponge.
7	**particulates**	**TECHNICAL**	Names the tiny bits of pollution trapped by leaves.
8	**shield**	**FIGURATIVE**	Compares tree shade to protection from heat.

PART 2 · PROVE IT

Task: Choose one word of each type and explain how each helps develop the main idea: "City trees protect neighborhoods from heat, rain, and pollution: pavement becomes a **furnace** on hot days, but trees act like **umbrellas**; a tree's **canopy** blocks sunlight, and **transpiration**, the release of water vapor from leaves, cools the air; tree roots help keep soil **permeable**, so it can absorb rain like a **sponge**; leaves trap **particulates**, tiny bits of pollution, while their shade forms a **shield** against midday heat."
Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item.

PART 3 · MAKE YOUR OWN (SAMPLE ANSWERS)

- **TECHNICAL**: Tree roots reduce **erosion** by holding soil in place.
- **FIGURATIVE**: On a scorching block, a tree is a cool **oasis**.

Challenge: The technical word erosion gives an exact detail about how tree roots protect soil. The figurative word oasis helps readers picture relief from heat.

For Part 2, accept explanations that connect each word to the passage's main idea that city trees protect neighborhoods. For example, canopy names the leaf cover that blocks sunlight, while furnace emphasizes how hot pavement can become.