Adjective Detectives

Do these describing words work as a pair or in layers?

7.5.R.2 "Students will recognize and explain the impact on meaning of parts of speech in sentences: • nouns • gerunds • subject and verb agreement • cumulative and coordinate adjectives • demonstrative pronouns • vague pronouns (i.e...."

NAME _____ DATE _____

EQUAL ADJECTIVES

EQUAL adjectives each describe the noun on their own. You can put and between them or switch their order, and a comma separates them.

A bright, cheerful mural filled the hallway.

LAYERED ADJECTIVES

LAYERED adjectives build one description in a set order. Adding and or switching their order sounds wrong or changes the meaning, so they do not need a comma.

A tiny silver bell rang at noon.

1 SORT

8 items

Circle EQUAL or LAYERED for each sentence, then choose one item from each category and explain how the and test helped you decide.

1.	A **round glass** vase sat on the shelf.	EQUAL	LAYERED
2.	The **calm, gentle** nurse spoke softly.	EQUAL	LAYERED
3.	A **cold, windy** morning greeted us.	EQUAL	LAYERED
4.	We followed the **long dirt** trail.	EQUAL	LAYERED
5.	He carried a **small leather** pouch.	EQUAL	LAYERED
6.	They admired an **old stone** tower.	EQUAL	LAYERED
7.	The **clever, curious** fox sniffed the grass.	EQUAL	LAYERED
8.	The **soft, warm** blanket covered the bed.	EQUAL	LAYERED

2 PROVE IT

Explain your thinking

Choose one item from each category and explain how the and test helped you decide.

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

3 MAKE YOUR OWN

One of each

Write one sentence with two EQUAL adjectives and one sentence with two LAYERED adjectives, using a comma only between the EQUAL adjectives.

EQUAL _____

LAYERED _____

CHALLENGE

Rewrite your LAYERED sentence by replacing its two adjectives with EQUAL adjectives, then explain how the description changed.

ANSWER KEY

Adjective Detectives

GRADE 7 · 7.5.R.2

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	A **round glass** vase sat on the shelf.	**LAYERED**	Glass identifies the kind of vase; round describes that glass vase.
2	The **calm, gentle** nurse spoke softly.	**EQUAL**	Calm and gentle each describe the nurse, and and fits between them.
3	A **cold, windy** morning greeted us.	**EQUAL**	Cold and windy each describe the morning, and and fits between them.
4	We followed the **long dirt** trail.	**LAYERED**	Dirt identifies the kind of trail; long describes that dirt trail.
5	He carried a **small leather** pouch.	**LAYERED**	Leather identifies the kind of pouch; small describes that leather pouch.
6	They admired an **old stone** tower.	**LAYERED**	Stone identifies the kind of tower; old describes that stone tower.
7	The **clever, curious** fox sniffed the grass.	**EQUAL**	Clever and curious each describe the fox, and and fits between them.
8	The **soft, warm** blanket covered the bed.	**EQUAL**	Soft and warm each describe the blanket, and and fits between them.

PART 2 · PROVE IT

Task: Choose one item from each category and explain how the and test helped you decide.
Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item.

PART 3 · MAKE YOUR OWN (SAMPLE ANSWERS)

- **EQUAL**: A noisy, playful puppy chased a ball.
- **LAYERED**: A narrow wooden bridge crossed the stream.

Challenge: A sturdy, weathered bridge crossed the stream. The new sentence gives two separate qualities of the bridge instead of describing its size and material.

For Part 2, accept explanations that correctly use the and test for one item in each category. A comma alone is not enough evidence.