Words That Work

Choose vocabulary that fits the audience and situation.

8.VL.32 "Utilize appropriate vocabulary in various classroom, digital, and real-world situations to facilitate effective communication."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three places where Nia chooses words to help someone understand or act. Number them 1 for the classroom, 2 for online, and 3 for in person.

A Plan in Three Places

1. On Monday, Ms. Vega's class planned a rain garden beside the school walkway. During the discussion, Nia said, "The soil can absorb some runoff, which is rainwater that flows across pavement." She chose runoff because her classmates needed a precise word for the problem they were studying. When a partner suggested planting anywhere, Nia replied, "Let's measure the area first so we can estimate how many plants fit." Her words helped the group turn a loose idea into a plan they could test.

2. That afternoon, Nia wrote a message for the class website: "Help plant our rain garden on Saturday at 10 a.m. Meet by the east doors. Click the sign-up link by Thursday so we know how many tools to bring." She avoided terms such as runoff, which might slow down readers who had not studied the project. Online, readers might skim quickly or have never studied the project. The short directions and familiar words made the invitation useful to families and students who wanted to join.

3. On Saturday, a volunteer asked where to place a flat of seedlings. Nia said, "Set it beside the blue bucket, not on the walkway. Please leave room for people to pass." Later, she told a younger student, "Spread the mulch around each plant, but keep it off the stems." In person, Nia could point to the bucket and the plants as she spoke. Her specific words helped volunteers act safely without waiting for a long explanation.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why is runoff more useful than water in Nia's classroom discussion?

2. How does Nia's request to measure and estimate help her classmates plan?

3. Which words in Nia's website message tell readers what to do online, and why do they fit that setting?

4. Why is “beside the blue bucket, not on the walkway” more useful to the volunteer than “over there”?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Prepare three one-sentence messages about a used-book exchange: one for classmates planning it, one for a public online voice announcement, and one for a visitor at the exchange. Deliver all three aloud to a partner acting as each audience; role-play the online message live without recording equipment. Choose useful words and details. Your listener states what to do; clarify any confusing wording.

ANSWER KEY

Words That Work

GRADE 8 · 8.VL.32

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline three places where Nia chooses words to help someone understand or act. Number them 1 for the classroom, 2 for online, and 3 for in person. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why is runoff more useful than water in Nia's classroom discussion?	**Runoff names the rainwater flowing across pavement, the specific problem the class is studying.**
2	How does Nia's request to measure and estimate help her classmates plan?	**It tells them to measure the area and use that information to work out how many plants will fit.**
3	Which words in Nia's website message tell readers what to do online, and why do they fit that setting?	**"Click the sign-up link by Thursday" gives website readers an action they can take online and a deadline.**
4	Why is "beside the blue bucket, not on the walkway" more useful to the volunteer than "over there"?	**It identifies where to put the seedlings and keeps the walkway clear.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Classmates: Let's sort donations by genre so readers can find books quickly.
Online: Bring a book to the school library on Friday at 4 p.m. to trade at our book exchange.
Visitor: Please leave your book on the Donations table beside the entrance before choosing one.

Accept other well-supported explanations of how a word or phrase fits its setting. For Part 3, observe three distinct one-sentence messages delivered aloud for classroom planning, online listeners, and an in-person visitor. A live role-play of the online voice announcement is sufficient. Check useful details and vocabulary suited to each audience; the listener should understand what to do, and the speaker should clarify confusing wording. Written sentences alone do not demonstrate speaking; the samples are preparation models.