Water Word Detectives

Decode multisyllabic words with syllables and word parts.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.4.3a "Use combined knowledge of all letter-sound correspondences, syllabication patterns, and morphology (e.g., roots and affixes) to read accurately unfamiliar multisyllabic words in context and out of context."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline six multisyllabic words in the passage. In three underlined words, draw slash marks between syllables and circle a prefix, suffix, or joined word part that helps you read the word.

How Water Becomes Clean

1. Before water reaches homes, it may travel through an underground treatment plant. Workers guide river water into large basins, where heavy particles sink. Next, the water moves through filters made of sand, gravel, and charcoal. This filtration process removes many tiny pieces of dirt. It also makes the water clearer before the next important step.

2. At another station, machines add a small amount of disinfectant. This substance helps destroy harmful microorganisms, such as bacteria. Some viruses can also be in water. The water is tested carefully because too little disinfectant may not work, while too much can change its taste. After testing, workers send the cleaned water into pipes. Pumps then move it uphill or across long distances.

3. Finally, a community laboratory checks samples from different neighborhoods. Scientists examine the water for unusual changes and record their observations. Public reports explain how the treatment system protects people and the environment. Although the process uses several complicated steps, each step has a purpose. Clean water is not accidental. It results from careful planning, regular inspection, and responsible work.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Write filtration with slash marks between its syllables. What suffix do you see at the end?

2. In underground, what two smaller words are joined? Use those parts and the sentence to explain what underground means.

3. Write microorganisms with slash marks between its syllables. What example named in the sentence helps you understand the word?

4. Write complicated with slash marks between its syllables. Then use the last paragraph to tell what complicated means.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write two sentences about a process you know. Use one multisyllabic word with a prefix, suffix, or joined word part, show its syllable breaks with slash marks, and circle the word part. Include a context clue that explains the word's meaning.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 4 · RF.4.3a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline six multisyllabic words in the passage. In three underlined words, draw slash marks between syllables and circle a prefix, suffix, or joined word part that helps you read the word. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Write filtration with slash marks between its syllables. What suffix do you see at the end?	**fil/tra/tion; -tion**
2	In underground, what two smaller words are joined? Use those parts and the sentence to explain what underground means.	**under and ground; below the ground**
3	Write microorganisms with slash marks between its syllables. What example named in the sentence helps you understand the word?	**mi/cro/or/gan/is/ms; six spoken syllables (MY-kroh-OR-guh-niz-umz); bacteria**
4	Write complicated with slash marks between its syllables. Then use the last paragraph to tell what complicated means.	**com/pli/cat/ed; having several parts or steps, not simple**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The (re)/cy/cla/ble bottles could be used again instead of thrown away. Our class placed them in a bin so they could become new items.

Accept accurate spoken-syllable divisions shown with slashes. For meaning questions, accept equivalent answers supported by the word parts and passage context. For microorganisms, model six spoken beats: MY-kroh-OR-guh-niz-umz. Its isms ending has two spoken syllables; the final written ms represents the last beat. Distinguish syllable counts from root/affix chunks and accept accurate pronunciation-supported boundaries.