Words That Work

Use context to understand and choose precise words

6.L.6.a "Gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle porous, divert, saturated, and retain. Underline a nearby detail that helps you work out the meaning of each word.

A Garden After the Storm

1 On Monday, our class found a muddy stream crossing the school path after a storm. Rain had rushed off the roof and carried soil toward the sidewalk. Ms. Ortiz suggested a rain garden, a shallow planted area that would catch some of the runoff. Before we began digging, we tested the ground. Water vanished quickly through one patch of porous soil, but it sat in puddles on the packed dirt nearby. We chose the first patch because rain could move down through its tiny gaps.

2 Next, we had to divert water from the downspout toward our new garden. We placed a curved row of stones beside the path. When we poured a bucket of water near the downspout, the stream changed course and followed the stones instead of cutting across the sidewalk. After two rainy days, the soil in the garden was saturated. My boot sank into the wet ground, and a squeeze of the soil left drops on my glove. We waited for it to dry before planting.

3 When the ground was firm again, we planted grasses with long roots. Their roots would help the soil retain some rain rather than letting every drop race into the street. We left an open edge so extra water could still escape during heavy storms. At the next meeting, I wrote a short sign for visitors. I almost wrote, 'The garden stops rain,' but that sounded wrong. Instead, I wrote, 'The garden slows runoff and holds some water for plants.' The second sentence described what we had actually observed.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What does porous mean in paragraph 1? Give one detail that helps you know.

2. What does divert mean in paragraph 2? Which action shows it?

3. Use two details from paragraph 2 to explain what saturated means.

4. Why does retain some rain describe the garden better than stop rain? Use a detail from paragraph 3.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose one of the four circled words. Write two sentences about a situation outside the rain garden: use the word with a clue to its meaning, then explain why it is more exact than a simpler word you could have used.

ANSWER KEY # Words That Work

GRADE 6 · 6.L.6.a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle porous, divert, saturated, and retain. Underline a nearby detail that helps you work out the meaning of each word. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does porous mean in paragraph 1? Give one detail that helps you know.	**Porous means having tiny openings that let water through. Water moved quickly through that soil instead of forming puddles.**
2	What does divert mean in paragraph 2? Which action shows it?	**Divert means change the direction of something. The stones made the water flow toward the garden instead of across the sidewalk.**
3	Use two details from paragraph 2 to explain what saturated means.	**Saturated means soaked with water. A boot sank into the ground, and squeezing the soil left drops on a glove.**
4	Why does retain some rain describe the garden better than stop rain? Use a detail from paragraph 3.	**Retain some rain means hold part of it. The garden has an open edge that lets extra water escape, so it does not stop all rain.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At the museum, a guard diverted visitors away from a closed hallway by guiding them toward another door. Diverted is more exact than moved because it shows that their path changed.

Accept equivalent meanings supported by details from the passage. For Part 3, the new situation should make the chosen word's meaning clear and explain a useful difference from the simpler word.