Search Term Sleuth

Choose search terms that match the question you need to answer.

8.W.8.a "Use search terms effectively."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the two searches that brought Nia unrelated results, then circle the more focused search she used after each one to find information about streets.

Searching After the Storm

1. After a hard rain, Nia sees water pooled beside the curb outside her school. She wants to learn why this spot floods, so she searches for *water*. The results cover drinking water, ocean currents, and plumbing repairs. She replaces that vague word with *street flooding storm drains*. Now the results discuss drains that carry rainwater off roads. A useful search names the place, problem, or cause you actually mean. Nia notes that autumn leaves can block a drain opening, even when the pipe beneath it is clear.

2. Next, Nia wonders why water rushes toward the curb rather than soaking into the road. She searches *impervious pavement stormwater runoff*. The word *impervious* helps her find explanations of surfaces, such as asphalt, that water cannot easily pass through. When she tries *drain cleaning*, results about kitchen sinks crowd out information about streets. She changes the search to *city storm drain leaf removal* and finds city maintenance pages. Using the name of the outdoor system steers her away from indoor plumbing.

3. Nia also asks whether a planted area could slow runoff near the school. She searches *rain garden reduce street runoff* and finds descriptions of shallow planted spaces that collect rainwater. To check what her own town plans, she adds her town's name and *public works* to a new search. A town public works page could describe local drain cleaning or rain garden projects, while a general article might explain how a rain garden works. Nia saves terms that match each new question instead of repeating one search.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. To investigate whether leaves can block a drain opening rather than the pipe beneath it, write a focused search using details from paragraph 1.

2. Nia wants to learn why asphalt sends rain toward the curb. Write a focused search using terms from paragraph 2.

3. A search for *drain cleaning* brings up kitchen sinks. What search would target city work on leaf-covered street drains instead?

4. Write a search for information about a rain garden project in Nia's town, not a general explanation of rain gardens. Use [town name] because the passage does not name her town.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose an everyday question you are curious about that is not about rain, roads, drains, or gardens. Write your question, a broad search, a more focused search, and one sentence explaining how the new terms could improve the results.

ANSWER KEY

Search Term Sleuth

GRADE 8 · 8.W.8.a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the two searches that brought Nia unrelated results, then circle the more focused search she used after each one to find information about streets. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	To investigate whether leaves can block a drain opening rather than the pipe beneath it, write a focused search using details from paragraph 1.	**street drain opening blocked autumn leaves**
2	Nia wants to learn why asphalt sends rain toward the curb. Write a focused search using terms from paragraph 2.	**impervious asphalt stormwater runoff**
3	A search for *drain cleaning* brings up kitchen sinks. What search would target city work on leaf-covered street drains instead?	**city storm drain leaf removal**
4	Write a search for information about a rain garden project in Nia's town, not a general explanation of rain gardens. Use [town name] because the passage does not name her town.	**[town name] public works rain garden project**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Question: Why does my phone battery drain quickly in cold weather?
Broad search: phone battery
Focused search: smartphone battery cold temperature capacity
The new terms target the effect of cold on battery capacity instead of general phone battery advice.

Accept other searches that use passage details to target the stated question. For Part 3, the focused search should add terms that clearly narrow the student's broad search.