Falcon Word Flight

Use context clues to grow your vocabulary while you read.

4.RV.1.F "Develop breadth of vocabulary knowledge by listening to and reading high quality, complex text."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle four words that are vivid or unfamiliar, and underline the nearby words that help you figure out each meaning. These context clues build your vocabulary as you read.

City Sky Hunters

1 High above a city street, a peregrine falcon rests on a narrow ledge. The ledge acts like an aerie, or a high nesting place, where the bird can watch the ground below. Although peregrines once became scarce in many places, they have adapted well to tall buildings. From this perch, the falcon can spot pigeons, its usual prey.

2 When a peregrine hunts, it may climb high into the sky and then fold its wings. Next, it dives in a steep, speedy drop called a stoop. During this plunge, the bird shapes its body to reduce air resistance, the force of air pushing against something moving. A peregrine can reach remarkable speeds, but it must pull up carefully before it reaches the ground.

3 People helped peregrines recover by protecting nesting sites and limiting harmful chemicals. Now, some scientists place small bands on young falcons. These bands identify individual birds and help researchers trace their travels. A researcher may observe a banded falcon for years, gathering evidence about its survival and habits. This careful work shows how people and wildlife can share busy urban spaces.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What does aerie mean? Which nearby words help you know?

2. What does adapted mean in the first paragraph? Use the sentence about tall buildings to explain.

3. What does reduce air resistance mean?

4. What does trace mean in the phrase “trace their travels”? Which words support your answer?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write three sentences about an animal that lives near people. Use two vocabulary words from the passage correctly, and add a context clue after one word by using “or,” “because,” or a short explanation.

ANSWER KEY

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle four words that are vivid or unfamiliar, and underline the nearby words that help you figure out each meaning. These context clues build your vocabulary as you read. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does aerie mean? Which nearby words help you know?	**An aerie is a high nesting place. The words "or a high nesting place" explain it.**
2	What does adapted mean in the first paragraph? Use the sentence about tall buildings to explain.	**Adapted means changed or adjusted to live successfully. Peregrines adjusted well to tall buildings.**
3	What does reduce air resistance mean?	**It means make the force of air pushing against the moving bird smaller.**
4	What does trace mean in the phrase "trace their travels"? Which words support your answer?	**Trace means follow or track where the birds travel. The bands "identify individual birds," which helps researchers follow them.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A raccoon may perch on a fence beside a backyard. It searches for prey, or animals it can eat, near a pond at night. Its habits help it survive in an urban neighborhood.

Accept reasonable meanings that match the passage and point to nearby context clues. For Part 3, check for three sentences, two correctly used passage vocabulary words, and one clear context clue.