Falcons Above Cities

Use repeated readings to monitor accuracy, pacing, and meaning.

8.DSR.A "Read a variety of grade-level complex text with accuracy, automaticity, appropriate rate, and meaningful expression in successive readings to support comprehension..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Read the passage twice. During your second reading, circle up to three words that slowed you down, underline nearby words that confirm each word's meaning, and draw a slash at two places where punctuation tells your voice to pause.

Peregrines in the City

1 On a spring morning, a peregrine falcon may appear as a small dark mark above a city street. Then it folds its wings and drops in a hunting dive called a stoop. Peregrines once declined in much of North America because the pesticide DDT thinned their eggshells. After restrictions on DDT and careful recovery work, many populations returned. Some falcons now nest on bridges and tall buildings, whose narrow ledges resemble the cliff faces they used before cities rose around them.

2 City life offers both shelter and danger. A building may provide an elevated nesting site, but glass and traffic can harm birds. To follow a falcon's movements, researchers attach a lightweight transmitter, a device that sends signals to a satellite or receiver. The data can show where the bird travels, how long it remains in one place, and whether it survives a migration. Because a transmitter must not interfere with flight, scientists choose one that weighs only a small fraction of the falcon's body mass.

3 Each spring, volunteers and biologists watch known nest sites from a respectful distance. They record the number of eggs, chicks, and fledglings, young birds that have left the nest. Their observations help wildlife agencies notice problems early, such as repeated nest failures or a shortage of prey. Still, a successful nest does not prove that every threat has vanished. A single pair can raise young in one season while facing different conditions the next year. Long-term records, rather than one dramatic sighting, reveal whether a population is truly stable.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. While reading the first paragraph, what words help you confirm that a stoop is a fast hunting dive?

2. Suppose you pause at the word transmitter. What does the rest of its sentence tell you that a transmitter does?

3. Read the sentence beginning with "Still." What word signals that your voice should shift to a caution or contrast?

4. In the final sentence, what idea should receive the strongest emphasis to preserve the meaning?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write one original 20-to-30-word sentence about an animal that includes a challenging word and a context clue. Mark / where you would pause and underline one word to emphasize, then write exactly two sentences explaining how the clue, pauses, and emphasis help a listener understand.

ANSWER KEY # Falcons Above Cities

GRADE 8 · 8.DSR.A

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Read the passage twice. During your second reading, circle up to three words that slowed you down, underline nearby words that confirm each word's meaning, and draw a slash at two places where punctuation tells your voice to pause. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	While reading the first paragraph, what words help you confirm that a stoop is a fast hunting dive?	**"folds its wings and drops in a hunting dive"**
2	Suppose you pause at the word transmitter. What does the rest of its sentence tell you that a transmitter does?	**It is a device that sends signals to a satellite or receiver.**
3	Read the sentence beginning with "Still." What word signals that your voice should shift to a caution or contrast?	**Still**
4	In the final sentence, what idea should receive the strongest emphasis to preserve the meaning?	**Long-term records, rather than one dramatic sighting, reveal whether a population is truly stable.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At dusk, the _nocturnal_ owl / left its daytime shelter and glided silently above the field, hunting while most other birds rested. The phrases "At dusk" and "daytime shelter" show that nocturnal means active at night. The slash creates a pause after the opening action, and emphasizing nocturnal highlights the owl's unusual schedule.

Accept equivalent wording that identifies the relevant context clues and reading choices. For Part 3, accept an original 20-to-30-word animal sentence with a clear clue, a marked pause, one emphasized word, and exactly two explanatory sentences.