POLE MOUNTAIN LEARNING · PRINTABLE · NO DEVICE NEEDED

Upstream Vocabulary: River trip 1 of 4

Shell Creek · Grade 7



Name or class code _____ Date _____

Your trip

1. Read the passage at each stop. The vocabulary word is in **bold**.
2. Use clues in the passage. Circle the letter of the best answer, then write it on the trip map.
3. Stop 5 is the challenge: answer Part A, then choose the detail that supports it in Part B.
4. Your teacher checks each stop. If you missed one, reread for the clue and try again. Keep your first answer; write the new letter beside it with a star (★).

① Gravel Bend	② Riffle Run	③ Pine Pool	④ Boulder Pocket	⑤ Headwaters Challenge
____	____	____	____	A ____ B ____
☐ fixed ★	☐ fixed ★	☐ fixed ★	☐ fixed ★	☐ fixed ★

① Gravel Bend *plausible*

The school greenhouse was locked overnight, yet several seed trays had been moved by morning. Repair work by the caretaker seemed **plausible** as an explanation.

One student suggested that a visitor had climbed through a window. Another preferred the caretaker explanation: he had shifted the trays to repair a shelf.

The caretaker's tools were beside the shelf, and a note on the door mentioned repairs scheduled for that evening. Nothing showed damage to the window or its screen. The class decided to ask the caretaker before publishing an account in the school newspaper. An explanation could fit the evidence without being the final answer.

As used in this passage, what does "plausible" most likely mean?

(A) reasonable enough to be believed
(B) certain because it has been proved
(C) interesting because it is unusual
(D) simple enough to require no effort

2 Riffle Run

unprecedented

The school archive contained a program from every annual arts festival since the event began. Students preparing this year's exhibition checked those programs before writing a description of their new student-curated gallery.

Earlier programs listed adult-selected exhibitions, but none showed students choosing and arranging the entire collection themselves. There was no previous example to which organizers could point.

The gallery was **unprecedented** in the festival's history. A vocabulary note identified un- as a prefix that can mean not. The display included copies of the earlier programs beside photographs of this year's gallery. The students kept their claim specific to this festival instead of suggesting that no other school had ever tried the idea.

Using the word parts and the passage, what does "unprecedented" most likely mean?

(A) arranged well in advance
(B) repeated according to a familiar pattern
(C) not known to have happened before
(D) unlikely to happen during the present year

3 Pine Pool

meticulous

The student archive team prepared labels for photographs donated to its exhibition. A mistaken name or date could confuse visitors and make it harder for families to recognize the people shown.

The editor praised Mira's **meticulous** approach. She checked every spelling against the donor's information, compared dates with the accompanying letters and corrected unclear wording before any label was printed. Her attention prevented errors that mattered to the exhibition.

Mira finished within the agreed schedule and shared her checking method with the group. The description suggested valuable care, not that she wasted time polishing details nobody needed or refused to let others contribute.

What does the writer's choice of "meticulous" suggest about the attitude or approach described?

(A) very careful when checking important details
(B) needlessly fussy about details that do not matter
(C) eager to finish before checking the details
(D) unwilling to trust anyone else with the work

4 Boulder Pocket

attribute

Students grew two sets of seedlings in identical containers for a classroom investigation. Both sets received the same kind of soil and the same amount of water, but one stood beside a brighter window.

The seedlings beside the brighter window grew taller. The students' explanation identified light as the factor most likely responsible, although they noted that further trials would strengthen their conclusion.

They described the containers and watering schedule in their report. Those details helped readers understand why the students focused on light instead of assuming that every possible cause had been tested. On that evidence, the students chose to **attribute** the difference mainly to the extra light.

As used in this passage, what does "attribute" most likely mean?

(A) to regard a factor as causing a result
(B) to give an object to someone as a gift
(C) to describe a quality someone possesses
(D) to identify the original creator of a work

5 Headwaters Challenge

Achilles' heel

The town theater company was proud of its new production. The actors knew their lines, the scenery fit the small stage, and the music had been carefully rehearsed. A stack of tickets waited beside the entrance.

Yet only one old van could carry the scenery, and if it failed there was no other way to reach the visiting performance. That single weakness could prevent an otherwise well-prepared show from taking place.

The director called their transport plan the production's **Achilles' heel**.

The director asked volunteers to look for another vehicle that could be available as a backup. The company gathered in the workshop that evening to measure the largest pieces and compare possible arrangements.

Part A. As used in this passage, what does "Achilles' heel" most likely mean?

(A) an injury caused by walking too far
(B) the feature that makes success certain
(C) a small detail unrelated to the final result
(D) one vulnerable part of a capable plan

Part B. Which detail from the passage best supports your answer to Part A?

(A) "That single weakness could prevent an otherwise well-prepared show from taking place."
(B) "The actors knew their lines, the scenery fit the small stage, and the music had been carefully rehearsed."
(C) "The company gathered in the workshop that evening to measure the largest pieces and compare possible arrangements."
(D) "The director asked volunteers to look for another vehicle that could be available as a backup."

River Talk (bonus, not scored): riffle

Trout often feed in a **riffle**, where shallow water ripples quickly over rocks.

What do you think a riffle is?

_____

_____

POLE MOUNTAIN LEARNING · PRINTABLE · NO DEVICE NEEDED

Upstream Vocabulary: River trip 2 of 4

Miracle Mile · Grade 7



Name or class code _____ Date _____

Your trip

1. Read the passage at each stop. The vocabulary word is in **bold**.
2. Use clues in the passage. Circle the letter of the best answer, then write it on the trip map.
3. Stop 5 is the challenge: answer Part A, then choose the detail that supports it in Part B.
4. Your teacher checks each stop. If you missed one, reread for the clue and try again. Keep your first answer; write the new letter beside it with a star (★).

1	2	3	4	5
Sagebrush Bank	**Long Glide**	**Deep Run**	**Gravel Seam**	**Far Bend**
____	____	____	____	A ____ B ____
□ fixed ★	□ fixed ★	□ fixed ★	□ fixed ★	□ fixed ★

River Talk (bonus, not scored · do this after stop 5): eddy

The main current swept downstream past the bend. Behind a rock near the bank, a leaf circled in a small **eddy** before drifting back into the river.

What is an eddy in this passage?

_____

_____

1 Sagebrush Bank

conspicuous

The student council tested two designs for signs directing visitors to the art exhibition. One design used pale gray letters on white paper. The other used dark lettering on a bright orange background.

During a practice walk, the orange signs were **conspicuous**. Even students entering from the far end of the corridor noticed them before they reached the first classroom. Several walked past the gray signs without seeing them.

The council chose the orange design, although it used the same paper and cost exactly as much. Their decision depended on visibility, not on which design looked more fashionable.

As used in this passage, what does "conspicuous" most likely mean?

(A) carefully hidden from attention
(B) easy to notice because it stands out
(C) important because it is expensive
(D) familiar because it has been seen before

2 Long Glide

retrospective

At the end of the community theater's tenth season, students prepared a **retrospective** exhibition. They gathered photographs, costume sketches and interviews about productions from previous years, then examined how the company had changed.

A vocabulary card noted that retro- can mean backward. Visitors compared sketches from the company's first season with work from its tenth season. An old sketch beside a recent costume showed how one designer's approach had developed.

The students organized the display around several questions about change. They wanted visitors to consider both achievements and mistakes instead of treating every old photograph as a separate curiosity.

Using the word parts and the passage, what does "retrospective" most likely mean?

(A) predicting what will happen in the future
(B) describing only what is happening now
(C) arranging events without considering their dates
(D) looking back at events from an earlier time

3 Deep Run

obstinate

A student committee tested two routes for moving exhibition materials through the school. Its first route looked shorter on a map, but a narrow doorway made the largest displays impossible to carry through it.

One member insisted on using the first route simply because it had been his suggestion, refusing to consider the wider corridor. His resistance was not supported by the test results.

The chair asked the group to focus on the displays rather than on who had proposed each route. Despite the test results, the member remained **obstinate**. When another member offered to repeat the carrying test, he pushed the map back toward the group and insisted that the doorway would somehow be wide enough.

What does the writer's choice of "obstinate" suggest about the attitude or approach described?

(A) firm because of carefully considered evidence
(B) unreasonably unwilling to change a position
(C) patient while listening to different opinions
(D) uncertain because the evidence is incomplete

4 Gravel Seam

compound

During preparations for the science exhibition, a delivery of display boards arrived a day late. The organizers had already lost valuable construction time and needed to decide what to do next. Discarding the completed designs and starting again would **compound** the problem.

Starting over would add several hours of drawing to a schedule that was already too crowded. The students instead adjusted their original plans to fit the boards they had received. Their finished displays looked different from the first sketches, but they communicated the same ideas. The organizers learned to distinguish a helpful adjustment from a response that creates additional difficulties.

As used in this passage, what does "compound" most likely mean?

(A) combine materials to make a useful mixture
(B) make an existing problem worse
(C) solve a problem by working with others
(D) separate a problem into smaller parts

5 Far Bend

a Trojan horse

The community drama group needed a rehearsal room, and a building owner offered one without asking for rent. June wondered whether the generous offer was **a Trojan horse**.

Everyone admired the high windows and the small courtyard outside. A piano stood beneath a cloth near the door. June, however, read the agreement before celebrating.

A clause near the end of the agreement required the group to perform unpaid advertisements for the owner's business at every public event. The tempting offer hid a condition that worked against the group's purpose.

June asked the others to read the agreement before moving their costumes into the building. They decided to discuss the condition openly instead of assuming that a free room could have no serious cost.

Part A. As used in this passage, what does "a Trojan horse" most likely mean?

(A) an appealing offer hiding harmful terms
(B) a wooden animal used as a decoration
(C) an honest warning about an obvious risk
(D) a useful solution with no disadvantages

Part B. Which detail from the passage best supports your answer to Part A?

(A) "instead of assuming that a free room could have no serious cost."
(B) "The tempting offer hid a condition that worked against the group's purpose."
(C) "Everyone admired the high windows and the small courtyard outside."
(D) "June asked the others to read the agreement before moving their costumes into the building."

POLE MOUNTAIN LEARNING · PRINTABLE · NO DEVICE NEEDED

Upstream Vocabulary: River trip 3 of 4

Encampment River · Grade 7



Name or class code _____ Date _____

Your trip

1. Read the passage at each stop. The vocabulary word is in **bold**.
2. Use clues in the passage. Circle the letter of the best answer, then write it on the trip map.
3. Stop 5 is the challenge: answer Part A, then choose the detail that supports it in Part B.
4. Your teacher checks each stop. If you missed one, reread for the clue and try again. Keep your first answer; write the new letter beside it with a star (★).

1	2	3	4	5
Canyon Pool	**Amber Shallows**	**Boulder Run**	**Pine Shade**	**Riffle Head**
____	____	____	____	A ____ B ____
☐ fixed ★	☐ fixed ★	☐ fixed ★	☐ fixed ★	☐ fixed ★

River Talk (bonus, not scored · do this after stop 5): seam

Fast water slid past a boulder while the water beside it moved slowly. A thin line of bubbles followed the **seam** where the two currents met.

What does seam mean here?

_____

_____

1 Canyon Pool

impartial

A school debate club invited an editor to judge its final competition. One team had won several previous contests, while the other was competing for the first time. Both hoped that their reputation would influence the result.

The editor used the same scoring guide for both teams and based each score on the arguments presented that afternoon. She did not award extra points for experience or popularity.

She remained **impartial**. After announcing the result, she explained which evidence had been convincing. The students could disagree with her decision, but they could see that both teams had faced the same expectations.

As used in this passage, what does "impartial" most likely mean?

(A) determined to make a quick decision
(B) unwilling to listen to any disagreement
(C) fair without favoring either side
(D) loyal to the group with more supporters

2 Amber Shallows

misinterpret

A school notice said that students could borrow equipment after completing a safety session. Several readers assumed that the equipment was available immediately, because they noticed the word borrow and skipped the condition that followed it.

That shortcut led them to **misinterpret** the notice. They understood it as permission to collect tools at once, although the writer required training first. A note beside the revised notice listed wrong or wrongly as meanings of the prefix mis-.

The librarian revised the notice to make the sequence easier to follow. Clearer wording would help, but readers would still need to consider the entire sentence rather than stop at the first familiar phrase.

Using the word parts and the passage, what does "misinterpret" most likely mean?

(A) understand something incorrectly
(B) explain something in a different language
(C) refuse to examine something at all
(D) repeat information without changing it

3 Boulder Run

resolute

After a storm damaged the community reading garden, several volunteers wondered whether it should be abandoned. The student organizers remained **resolute**.

Repairing the benches and clearing the paths would take more work than anyone had expected. Still, the organizers were determined to reopen a useful shared space, even though doing so required several weekends of effort. They adjusted their repair schedule after listening to advice, but did not give up their central goal. Their plan divided the work into manageable tasks and invited additional volunteers. The description praised steady commitment, rather than suggesting that they rejected every new idea or demanded that others work exactly as they did.

What does the writer's choice of "resolute" suggest about the attitude or approach described?

(A) aggressive toward anyone who asks a question
(B) unreasonably attached to a plan that cannot work
(C) firmly determined to pursue an important goal
(D) undecided about whether the goal matters

4 Pine Shade

inclination

Amaya repeatedly chose conversations with people over writing descriptions of events, even when both assignments required similar amounts of work. Her editor noticed that she carried a notebook of questions and often wondered aloud about other people's experiences.

When the student newspaper offered several assignments, Amaya showed an **inclination** toward interviews. No one required her to conduct interviews, and she had not yet developed every skill an interviewer needed.

The editor offered to help her prepare a longer feature. Amaya's preference provided a useful starting point, while practice and careful feedback would help her turn that interest into stronger reporting.

As used in this passage, what does "inclination" most likely mean?

(A) the steepness of a surface
(B) a requirement imposed by another person
(C) a tendency to prefer a particular choice
(D) a skill developed through repeated practice

5 **Riffle Head** *Pandora's box*

Owen offered to sort the old cupboard before his family moved to a smaller apartment. He expected to find unused dishes and a few boxes of decorations.

Dust floated in the light from the hallway. He felt as though he had opened **Pandora's box**.

A forgotten borrowed camera led to an argument about returning it, missing labels made several boxes impossible to identify, and damaged shelves raised questions about repairs. One small task had uncovered a chain of difficulties the family had not expected.

Owen sat on the floor with a notebook and began listing what needed attention. His father brought empty boxes from the kitchen, and together they chose which problem they could reasonably address first.

Part A. As used in this passage, what does "Pandora's box" most likely mean?

(A) a container holding valuable gifts
(B) a source of numerous problems once it is opened
(C) a secret that solves every disagreement
(D) a plan that keeps all problems safely contained

Part B. Which detail from the passage best supports your answer to Part A?

(A) "Owen offered to sort the old cupboard before his family moved to a smaller apartment."
(B) "He expected to find unused dishes and a few boxes of decorations."
(C) "One small task had uncovered a chain of difficulties the family had not expected."
(D) "Owen sat on the floor with a notebook and began listing what needed attention."

POLE MOUNTAIN LEARNING · PRINTABLE · NO DEVICE NEEDED

Upstream Vocabulary: River trip 4 of 4

North Tongue River · Grade 7



Name or class code _____ Date _____

Your trip

1. Read the passage at each stop. The vocabulary word is in **bold**.
2. Use clues in the passage. Circle the letter of the best answer, then write it on the trip map.
3. Stop 5 is the challenge: answer Part A, then choose the detail that supports it in Part B.
4. Your teacher checks each stop. If you missed one, reread for the clue and try again. Keep your first answer; write the new letter beside it with a star (★).

① Meadow Bend	② Willow Run	③ Grassy Cut	④ Shallow Riffle	⑤ Rapid Tail
____	____	____	____	A ____ B ____
□ fixed ★	□ fixed ★	□ fixed ★	□ fixed ★	□ fixed ★

River Talk (bonus, not scored · do this after stop 5): tailout

Below the deep bend, the pool grew shallow and the current sped up over gravel. The angler watched the **tailout** where the pool emptied into the next run.

Where is the tailout of the pool?

_____

_____

1 Meadow Bend

sustain

The library's repair club attracted a large crowd at its first meeting. To **sustain** the club, the organizers created a schedule of volunteers and set aside money for replacement materials.

At that first meeting, people had brought torn book covers, loose backpack straps and broken wooden boxes. The organizers were pleased, but they knew that one successful evening was only a beginning.

The schedule and the materials fund would allow meetings to continue each month after the initial excitement faded. They also asked participants which repairs they wanted to learn. The aim was a dependable community program, rather than an event that happened once and disappeared.

As used in this passage, what does "sustain" most likely mean?

(A) begin something without preparation
(B) replace something with a newer version
(C) make something grow as quickly as possible
(D) keep something continuing over time

2 Willow Run

counterargument

The student council proposed replacing every printed event notice with an online announcement. Supporters argued that the change would save paper and make corrections easier to distribute.

One student explained that some families could not regularly check the online system, so removing all printed notices might make important information harder for them to receive. Her reason directly challenged the claim that the change would improve communication for everyone.

Her **counterargument** gave the council a reason to pause; the prefix counter- means against or in opposition. After hearing her response, the council considered a mixed system that would reduce printing while keeping paper copies available to anyone who needed them.

Using the word parts and the passage, what does "counterargument" most likely mean?

(A) a repeated statement of the original position
(B) a reasoned response opposing another claim
(C) a question about an unrelated subject
(D) an agreement reached after both sides compromise

3 Grassy Cut

thrifty

The club needed materials for a new display, but its budget was small. Rather than buy matching boards immediately, the treasurer checked what remained from last year's exhibition.

She reused sound boards and bought new fasteners where worn ones would be unsafe. The group avoided unnecessary purchases while still paying for what the display genuinely required. Her **thrifty** approach saved money without weakening the project.

After construction, she listed both expenses and reused materials in the report. The word choice praised sensible economy, rather than suggesting that she refused every purchase or cared more about saving money than about completing the work properly.

What does the writer's choice of "thrifty" suggest about the attitude or approach described?

(A) unwilling to spend even when something is necessary
(B) eager to choose the most expensive option
(C) careless about how resources are used
(D) careful with money without neglecting genuine needs

4 Shallow Riffle

reserve

A student team was designing a small outdoor reading area with a fixed budget. Its first plan spent almost all the available money on benches, leaving little for materials or repairs.

An adviser suggested a less costly bench design so that some of the money could be held back. A portion of the budget would then remain unspent until the group knew whether it needed replacement boards, extra screws or another unexpected purchase. The group recorded the amount before discussing another purchase.

The students compared the cost of several bench designs and chose one they could build themselves. Their revised plan included both useful seating and a supply of money for needs they could not yet predict. They had followed their adviser's suggestion to **reserve** part of the budget.

As used in this passage, what does "reserve" most likely mean?

(A) book a place for a particular person
(B) use everything immediately to avoid waste
(C) replace something that no longer works
(D) set aside for use when needed later

5 Rapid Tail

a beacon

At the beginning of the school year, Lila felt uncertain about joining the debate club. She had ideas she wanted to express, but speaking before a group made her hands shake.

Watching an older student recover calmly from mistakes showed Lila a path she could follow and gave her hope that she could improve. She began practicing short arguments instead of imagining that confident speakers never felt nervous.

The club met in a room overlooking the courtyard. The older student's patient example became **a beacon** for her.

On the day of her first practice debate, she carried her notes in a blue folder. Before entering the room, she read them once more and reminded herself that improvement could begin with a single attempt.

Part A. As used in this passage, what does "a beacon" most likely mean?

(A) a lamp that sends a visible signal
(B) a barrier that keeps newcomers away
(C) something that offers direction and hope
(D) a rule that forces everyone to act alike

Part B. Which detail from the passage best supports your answer to Part A?

(A) "She had ideas she wanted to express, but speaking before a group made her hands shake."
(B) "Lila felt uncertain about joining the debate club"
(C) "On the day of her first practice debate, she carried her notes in a blue folder."
(D) "showed Lila a path she could follow and gave her hope that she could improve"