TEACHER COPY · READ FIRST

Upstream Vocabulary on paper · Grade 7

4 printable trips that match the 4 levels of the online game. No device or account needed.

What is inside

Pages	For	What
This page	Teacher	How to run, score and choose a next step
Trips 1–4	Students	Each trip: the level's picture and stop names, 4 word stops, a two-part challenge (stop 5) and an unscored Talk bonus
Answer key	Teacher	Answer, why it fits, and what each wrong letter usually means
Record sheet	Teacher	First answers and fixes, one row per student per trip

Run one trip (15–25 minutes)

1. Copy one trip for each student. Keep the answer key back.
2. Students read each passage and circle an answer. On the online game a miss gives a clue and a second try; on paper, check the stop, say *"Reread for the clue,"* and let the student try once more. They keep the first answer and write the new letter with a star (★).
3. If the second try misses too, read the key's "why" line together. That is what the game does after a second miss.
4. When all five stops are done, students may read and answer the Talk bonus. It is not scored.

Count and choose a next step

Count **first answers** on stops 1–4, and record stop 5 Part A and Part B separately. Fixes with a star go in their own column. There is no cut score: use the pattern to decide what to talk about next.

What you see	A next step
Missed, then fixed after rereading (★)	Ask "Which detail helped?" The clue strategy is working; give another trip.
Missed twice	Read the key's "why" line together; replace the word in the sentence and check it makes sense. Revisit that skill.
Part A right, Part B wrong	The meaning is there; practice pointing to the exact words that prove it.
Part A wrong, Part B right	The student found the clue but did not use it; ask them to say the meaning in their own words.
The same skill missed on several trips	Small-group practice on that skill (the key names the skill for each stop).

Levels in this packet

- **River trip 1: Shell Creek** — Gravel Bend, Riffle Run, Pine Pool, Boulder Pocket, Headwaters Challenge
- **River trip 2: Miracle Mile** — Sagebrush Bank, Long Glide, Deep Run, Gravel Seam, Far Bend
- **River trip 3: Encampment River** — Canyon Pool, Amber Shallows, Boulder Run, Pine Shade, Riffle Head
- **River trip 4: North Tongue River** — Meadow Bend, Willow Run, Grassy Cut, Shallow Riffle, Rapid Tail

Same words as the online game. These are the game's approved passages and questions, so a student who played online may have seen some. Every word also has a second passage that is **not** used in this packet; it is kept back for an unseen recheck. Original practice from Pole Mountain Learning, informed by published ELA expectations. It is not an official Pearson, NAVVY or WY-TOPP assessment and does not use their test questions. Results are practice notes, not grades, and do not predict test scores or establish mastery. Built and reviewed with AI tools; no human classroom trial of this revision yet. Free for classroom use. November 2026 edition.

TEACHER ANSWER KEY · KEEP SEPARATE FROM STUDENT COPIES

Answer key · Grade 7

River trip 1: Shell Creek

Stop	Word · skill	Key	Why it fits	If they chose…
1	plausible context clues · RL.7.4, L.7.4a	**A**	The detail “The caretaker’s tools were beside the shelf, and a note on the door mentioned repairs scheduled for that evening.” supports “reasonable enough to be believed”.	**B:** A reasonable explanation can still require checking; certainty goes further than the passage supports. **C:** An explanation can be unusual without fitting the evidence. **D:** Ease of understanding does not establish whether an explanation fits the facts.
2	unprecedented word parts · RI.7.4, L.7.4a, L.7.4b	**C**	The detail “There was no previous example to which organizers could point.” supports “not known to have happened before”.	**A:** The prefix pre- relates to before, but the whole word denies an earlier precedent. **B:** A precedent is an earlier example; unprecedented describes the absence of one. **D:** The word concerns past examples, not a forecast about the current year.
3	meticulous shades of meaning · RI.7.4, L.7.4a, L.7.5c	**A**	The detail “Her attention prevented errors that mattered to the exhibition.” supports “very careful when checking important details”.	**B:** The care improves the work; the passage does not portray pointless fussiness. **C:** Rushing past checks conflicts with the careful approach described. **D:** Attention to accuracy does not by itself show distrust of others.
4	attribute multiple meanings · RI.7.4, L.7.4a	**A**	The detail “The students’ explanation identified light as the factor most likely responsible, although they noted that further trials would strengthen their conclusion.” supports “to regard a factor as causing a result”.	**B:** Giving something away is different from explaining why a result occurred. **C:** A quality can be an attribute, but the passage uses the word as an action explaining a cause. **D:** Identifying a work’s creator is another use of attribute, but this passage explains why a result occurred.
5A	Achilles’ heel figurative language · RL.7.4, L.7.4a, L.7.5a, RL.7.1	**D**	The detail “That single weakness could prevent an otherwise well-prepared show from taking place.” supports “one vulnerable part of a capable plan”.	**A:** The phrase describes a weakness in the project, not a bodily injury. **B:** A vulnerable point threatens success rather than guaranteeing it. **C:** The weakness matters because it could affect the whole project.
5B	evidence	**A**	“That single weakness could prevent an otherwise well-prepared show from taking place.” is the detail that shows “Achilles’ heel” means “one vulnerable part of a capable plan.”	**B:** The detail “The actors knew their lines, the scenery fit the small stage, and the music had been carefully rehearsed.” **C:** The detail “The company gathered in the workshop that evening to measure the largest pieces and compare possible arrangements.” **D:** The detail “The director asked volunteers to look for another vehicle that could be available as a backup.”

Talk bonus (riffle): A riffle is a shallow stretch of a stream where the water runs fast and ripples over rocks.

River trip 2: Miracle Mile

Stop	Word · skill	Key	Why it fits	If they chose…
1	conspicuous context clues · RI.7.4, L.7.4a	**B**	The detail “Even students entering from the far end of the corridor noticed them before they reached the first classroom.” supports “easy to notice because it stands out”.	**A:** The passage describes something noticeable, not something concealed. **C:** Cost does not explain why something attracts the eye. **D:** Recognizing something is different from noticing how strongly it stands out.
2	retrospective word parts · RI.7.4, L.7.4a, L.7.4b	**D**	The detail “They gathered photographs, costume sketches and interviews about productions from previous years, then examined how the company had changed.” supports “looking back at events from an earlier time”.	**A:** The word part retro- points backward, not forward into future events. **B:** Looking backward reaches beyond the present moment. **C:** A backward-looking account still concerns when events occurred.
3	obstinate shades of meaning · RI.7.4, L.7.4a, L.7.5c	**B**	The detail “One member insisted on using the first route simply because it had been his suggestion, refusing to consider the wider corridor.” supports “unreasonably unwilling to change a position”.	**A:** The passage stresses refusal despite good reasons, rather than principled judgment. **C:** The person resists reconsideration instead of weighing the competing views. **D:** The person acts inflexibly, not uncertainly.
4	compound multiple meanings · RI.7.4, L.7.4a	**B**	The detail “Starting over would add several hours of drawing to a schedule that was already too crowded.” supports “make an existing problem worse”.	**A:** Although compound can concern combining materials, here the result is a worsening problem. **C:** The action increases the difficulty rather than resolving it. **D:** The passage describes adding difficulty, not dividing an issue for study.
5A	a Trojan horse figurative language · RL.7.4, L.7.4a, L.7.5a, RL.7.1	**A**	The detail “The tempting offer hid a condition that worked against the group’s purpose.” supports “an appealing offer hiding harmful terms”.	**B:** The expression describes a hidden disadvantage, not an actual wooden animal. **C:** The risk is concealed behind an attractive offer rather than openly explained. **D:** The apparent benefit carries a hidden condition that makes this meaning unsuitable.
5B	evidence	**B**	“The tempting offer hid a condition that worked against the group’s purpose.” is the detail that shows “a Trojan horse” means “an appealing offer hiding harmful terms.”	**A:** The detail “instead of assuming that a free room could have no serious cost.” **C:** The detail “Everyone admired the high windows and the small courtyard outside.” **D:** The detail “June asked the others to read the agreement before moving their costumes into the building.”

Talk bonus (eddy): An eddy is a pocket of water that circles off to the side of the main current.

River trip 3: Encampment River

Stop	Word · skill	Key	Why it fits	If they chose…
1	impartial context clues · RI.7.4, L.7.4a	**C**	The detail “The editor used the same scoring guide for both teams and based each score on the arguments presented that afternoon.” supports “fair without favoring either side”.	**A:** Speed does not establish fairness between competing sides. **B:** Refusing to hear disagreement would prevent a fair comparison. **D:** Favoring a larger group is still taking a side.

Stop	Word · skill	Key	Why it fits	If they chose…
2	misinterpret word parts · RI.7.4, L.7.4a	**A**	The detail “They understood it as permission to collect tools at once, although the writer required training first.” supports “understand something incorrectly”.	**B:** Interpreting can involve languages, but mis- signals an incorrect understanding here. **C:** The person does examine the message; the problem is the mistaken meaning assigned to it. **D:** The misunderstanding changes what the message seems to mean.
3	resolute shades of meaning · RI.7.4, L.7.4a, L.7.5c	**C**	The detail “They adjusted their repair schedule after listening to advice, but did not give up their central goal.” supports “firmly determined to pursue an important goal”.	**A:** Determination does not imply attacking people who raise reasonable concerns. **B:** The goal remains worthwhile and achievable; the passage does not describe blind refusal to adapt. **D:** The person remains committed rather than uncertain about the purpose.
4	inclination multiple meanings · RI.7.4, L.7.4a	**C**	The detail “Amaya repeatedly chose conversations with people over writing descriptions of events, even when both assignments required similar amounts of work.” supports “a tendency to prefer a particular choice”.	**A:** An angle or slope is another meaning, but this passage concerns a preference. **B:** A personal preference is different from an obligation set by someone else. **D:** Being drawn toward a choice does not necessarily mean being skilled at it.
5A	Pandora’s box figurative language · RL.7.4, L.7.4a, L.7.5a, RL.7.1	**B**	The detail “One small task had uncovered a chain of difficulties the family had not expected.” supports “a source of numerous problems once it is opened”.	**A:** The expression refers to emerging difficulties rather than literal presents. **C:** The decision creates further problems instead of resolving them all. **D:** The point of the expression is that complications begin to spread.
5B	evidence	**C**	“One small task had uncovered a chain of difficulties the family had not expected.” is the detail that shows “Pandora’s box” means “a source of numerous problems once it is opened.”	**A:** The detail “Owen offered to sort the old cupboard before his family moved to a smaller apartment.” **B:** The detail “He expected to find unused dishes and a few boxes of decorations.” **D:** The detail “Owen sat on the floor with a notebook and began listing what needed attention.”

Talk bonus (seam): A seam is the line where two currents meet, often where faster water runs beside slower water.

River trip 4: North Tongue River

Stop	Word · skill	Key	Why it fits	If they chose…
1	sustain context clues · RI.7.4, L.7.4a	**D**	The detail “The schedule and the materials fund would allow meetings to continue each month after the initial excitement faded.” supports “keep something continuing over time”.	**A:** Starting an activity does not mean keeping it going. **B:** Maintaining an activity does not require replacing it. **C:** Continuing at a workable level is different from seeking the fastest growth.
2	counterargument word parts · RI.7.4, L.7.4a	**B**	The detail “Her reason directly challenged the claim that the change would improve communication for everyone.” supports “a reasoned response opposing another claim”.	**A:** The counter- part signals opposition, not simple repetition. **C:** An opposing argument addresses the original claim rather than changing subjects. **D:** A counterargument challenges a position; it does not itself settle the disagreement.

Stop	Word · skill	Key	Why it fits	If they chose…
3	thrifty shades of meaning · RI.7.4, L.7.4a, L.7.5c	**D**	The detail “The group avoided unnecessary purchases while still paying for what the display genuinely required.” supports “careful with money without neglecting genuine needs”.	**A:** The passage shows sensible spending on real needs, rather than denying them. **B:** The careful use of resources conflicts with buying something merely because it costs more. **C:** The person deliberately avoids waste instead of ignoring it.
4	reserve multiple meanings · RI.7.4, L.7.4a	**D**	The detail “A portion of the budget would then remain unspent until the group knew whether it needed replacement boards, extra screws or another unexpected purchase.” supports “set aside for use when needed later”.	**A:** Booking a place is another meaning of reserve; here a resource is being held back for a later need. **B:** The resource is being kept for later, not used all at once. **C:** Keeping a supply available is different from replacing broken equipment.
5A	a beacon figurative language · RL.7.4, L.7.4a, L.7.5a, RL.7.1	**C**	The detail “Watching an older student recover calmly from mistakes showed Lila a path she could follow and gave her hope that she could improve.” supports “something that offers direction and hope”.	**A:** A literal signal light is not what guides the people in this passage. **B:** The described example encourages people rather than excluding them. **D:** Guidance and encouragement do not require identical behavior.
5B	evidence	**D**	“showed Lila a path she could follow and gave her hope that she could improve” is the detail that shows “a beacon” means “something that offers direction and hope.”	**A:** The detail “She had ideas she wanted to express, but speaking before a group made her hands shake.” **B:** The detail “Lila felt uncertain about joining the debate club” belongs to the situation, but does not establish the meaning of “a beacon”. **C:** The detail “On the day of her first practice debate, she carried her notes in a blue folder.”

Talk bonus (tailout): It is the shallow downstream end of the pool, where water flows into the next run.

TEACHER COPY · CLASS RECORD SHEET

Upstream Vocabulary on paper · Grade 7

Use initials or class codes only. One row per student per trip. Copy this page for more students.

Student (initials or code)	River trip #	Stop 1	Stop 2	Stop 3	Stop 4	Stop 5 · Part A	Stop 5 · Part B	Next step / notes

In each stop cell write ✓ if the FIRST answer was right, or ★ if the student fixed it after rereading. Leave it blank if it was still missed. Count only ✓ as first answers, as the online game does; ★ fixes are shown but counted separately. Part A and Part B of stop 5 are recorded separately.