POLE MOUNTAIN LEARNING · PRINTABLE · NO DEVICE NEEDED

Wyoming Climbing Challenge: Climb 1 of 6

Ten Sleep: Pocket Ledges · Grade 10



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 Pocket Start	② Low Shelf	③ Pale Wall	④ High Shelf	⑤ Rim Anchor
____	____	____	____	A ____ B ____
□ fixed ★	□ fixed ★	□ fixed ★	□ fixed ★	□ fixed ★

Rock Talk (bonus, not scored · do this after stop 5): ledge

A pale **ledge** interrupted the otherwise steep wall.

What does ledge mean in this rock description?

_____

_____

1 Pocket Start

equivocal

The council clerk read the proposed workshop agreement aloud. At the end, the chair gave an **equivocal** response: the plan was promising, she said, and the council would certainly consider whether support might be appropriate. Representatives reached for their notebooks.

One organizer heard a cautious commitment, while another heard a polite refusal to commit. Both could point to words in the response. The chair had received the complete budget, so the problem was not a missing figure.

A reporter asked whether the council had approved the agreement. No one could answer from the statement alone. The distinction mattered because the organizers were preparing invitations that depended on access to the building.

Before the meeting ended, the clerk requested a recorded vote. The organizers left their envelopes unopened on the table while members read the terms again.

Which meaning of "equivocal" fits the writer's account?

(A) expressing uncertainty about one fact
(B) open to more than one interpretation
(C) clearly approving the proposed change
(D) rejecting the proposal without conditions

2 Low Shelf

ambivalent

The youth exchange application lay open beside the school counselor's appointment book. One applicant's reflection was **ambivalent**, despite its clear description of the opportunity. She wanted to work with an unfamiliar newspaper staff and experience life in another town.

She also wanted to remain with the local group whose exhibition she had helped plan for two years. Excitement about the exchange did not erase disappointment at missing the exhibition. Neither commitment was a pretext invented to avoid making a decision.

The counselor asked which practical questions remained unanswered. Housing dates and publication deadlines might affect the choice, but a better timetable would not automatically remove the student's mixed feelings.

During their next meeting, the applicant brought both schedules in a folder. She placed them side by side rather than sliding either one beneath the other.

What judgment does the word "ambivalent" convey in this context?

(A) drawn toward and away from the same choice
(B) unable to understand the words in the offer
(C) certain that only one alternative is acceptable
(D) unconcerned about either possible outcome of the choice

3 Pale Wall

a house of cards

I had built the entire exhibition argument around one unsigned letter. Each photograph seemed to confirm its story once I arranged the captions in the right order. The archivist asked me how I could establish the letter's date.

Every conclusion depended on a source whose authenticity we had not established. The photographs showed the building, but none independently supported the event I claimed had happened there. I had treated agreement with my captions as though it were agreement among separate witnesses.

"Let's read the letter without your headings," the archivist said, gently sliding the display sheet away. For the first time, I noticed how little the writer actually identified.

I removed the title card from the frame and placed it in my working folder. I could see how **a house of cards** had grown around that unverified letter. The wall looked unfinished, but the space beneath the photograph no longer carried a claim I could not defend.

What does "a house of cards" most nearly mean in this passage?

(A) a complicated plan that has already been thoroughly tested
(B) a modest activity designed mainly to entertain people
(C) a complex plan with several moving parts
(D) a fragile plan resting on unreliable supports

4 High Shelf

immutable

In the story I was writing, travelers could return to an earlier day but could not change its events. I kept that rule **immutable**, even when my favorite character reached a moment I desperately wanted to repair. My pencil hovered above the page where her train pulled away.

No later invention in the story would allow her to alter what had already happened. If I changed the rule to rescue her, every earlier choice in the narrative would lose the consequence I had asked readers to accept.

"Then what can she do?" my brother asked from the floor, where he was sorting photographs. The question forced me to look beyond the easy revision I wanted for myself.

I moved the pencil to the next page and wrote her arrival instead of another departure. The train remained in the past, while she stepped onto a platform I had not yet described.

Considering the negative prefix im- and the base mutable and the context, what does "immutable" mean here?

(A) expected to change when the next stage begins
(B) not yet understood by the group
(C) not open to change in the situation described
(D) changing only when outside pressure is applied

5 Rim Anchor

sanction

The youth exhibition committee reviewed a request to hold a public recording session in its room. A large calendar on the wall showed the events that had already received permission. The printed notice could not go out until the room booking had been settled.

The request included dates, supervision and a plan for storing equipment after visitors left. A music group had booked the following hour, so the committee asked how quickly visitors and equipment could leave. Their recorded approval gave the organizers permission to use the room for the proposed purpose.

Under the committee's own procedure, its members had to **sanction** the session before organizers could advertise it. The secretary sent the signed notice with a copy of the room arrangements to the organizers. Before leaving, she added the session to the calendar and placed the completed request behind the other approved events in the cabinet.

Part A. Which meaning of "sanction" fits the writer's account?

(A) punish an action after a rule is broken
(B) recommend a plan while withholding any authority
(C) quietly tolerate something without a stated decision
(D) give formal permission for something to proceed

Part B. Which detail best supports your interpretation in Part A?

(A) "The secretary sent the signed notice with a copy of the room arrangements to the organizers."
(B) "The request included dates, supervision and a plan for storing equipment after visitors left."
(C) "The youth exhibition committee reviewed a request to hold a public recording session in its room."
(D) "Their recorded approval gave the organizers permission to use the room for the proposed purpose."

POLE MOUNTAIN LEARNING · PRINTABLE · NO DEVICE NEEDED

Wyoming Climbing Challenge: Climb 2 of 6

Ten Sleep: Pillar Crack · Grade 10



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 Lower Crack	② Pillar Corner	③ Shaded Notch	④ Upper Seam	⑤ Crack Anchor
____	____	____	____	A ____ B ____
□ fixed ★	□ fixed ★	□ fixed ★	□ fixed ★	□ fixed ★

Rock Talk (bonus, not scored · do this after stop 5): fissure

A dark **fissure** divided the pale rock face.

What does fissure mean in this rock description?

_____

_____

1 Lower Crack

mitigate

At the temporary entrance, visitors paused beside a row of muddy footprints. Construction had removed the covered walkway.

Closing the workshop for a month would cancel every scheduled class, so the building committee needed to **mitigate** the effect of wet weather while work continued. Long mats kept much of the mud from reaching the stairs, although rain still entered the exposed doorway. Volunteers checked the mats between sessions and moved the sign when visitors approached from the wrong direction.

The committee recorded what the arrangement accomplished and what remained unresolved. Calling it a complete solution would have hidden the need for a permanent cover. Calling it useless would have ignored the cleaner, less slippery stairs.

At closing time, two volunteers carried the soaked mats to a drying rack. The next morning's inspection sheet waited on a clipboard beside the door.

As used here, "mitigate" suggests which meaning?

(A) reduce the harm caused by a problem
(B) accept the harm as unavoidable
(C) remove all sources of a problem at once
(D) conceal the problem from the public

2 Pillar Corner

substantive

I brought a new cover for our proposal because the old one had a coffee stain. We had changed the colors but left the unanswered funding problem exactly where it was. The new cover might attract attention, yet it did not explain how the program would continue after the first month.

My partner traced its bright border with one finger, then asked whether we had made any **substantive** revisions. I could hear the difference between her question and a complaint about the design.

"We need an actual operating plan," she said, opening the budget page. I wanted to defend the hours I had spent drawing, but her finger rested beside an empty column I had noticed and avoided.

We kept the new cover and began revising the proposal behind it. When we left, the colored pencils stayed in their box while the calculator lay open between our chairs.

What does the partner's choice of "substantive" suggest about the revisions she wants?

(A) stating the same view more forcefully
(B) concerned with the real issues at stake
(C) adding detail without affecting the central issue
(D) mainly altering the outward appearance

3 Shaded Notch

the tip of the iceberg

A student field team found several damaged labels beside the first storage cabinet. The project lead called them **the tip of the iceberg** after opening the inventory notebook. The missing labels were the problem visitors could see; the entries behind them suggested a much wider breakdown.

Several boxes had no reliable account of where their contents came from or who had permission to use them. Replacing the visible labels would improve the shelves' appearance without resolving the uncertain ownership of the material inside.

The lead asked the team to document what it could establish and mark unresolved entries separately. The notebook had to become a map of the questions, not a tidy surface that concealed them.

At the back of the cabinet, a student found an unmarked envelope tucked beneath a recording case. She set it in the questions tray before reaching for the next box.

Which meaning of "the tip of the iceberg" fits the writer's account?

(A) the final detail needed to complete an explanation
(B) the main cause from which every other problem follows
(C) a small visible sign of a much larger problem
(D) a rare event with no wider significance

4 Upper Seam

retrospective

The museum workshop placed its earliest route sketches beside photographs of the finished climbing exhibit. An essay accompanied the display. Its author could now compare the planners' expectations with the way people had actually moved through the room.

The essay reconsidered earlier decisions in light of outcomes the original plans could not yet show. It was **retrospective**, written after visitors had used the installation for an entire season. A display once expected to attract long attention had confused visitors, while a small model had become the point where many conversations began.

Old notes remained valuable, but the essay did not treat them as the final account of what the project meant. Their uncertainty was part of the history the later writer was examining.

Near the final photograph, the author left a question about the next redesign. A visitor had penciled a route around the room that none of the original sketches anticipated.

Considering the prefix retro- and the root spect and the context, what does "retrospective" mean here?

(A) predicting what is likely to happen in the future
(B) copying an old account without reconsidering it
(C) examining earlier events from a later viewpoint
(D) describing an event as it is unfolding

5 Crack Anchor

currency

When I joined the workshop, everyone said the back room was too small for a public exhibition. I repeated the claim before I had ever measured the doorway or counted the available tables. I had been assigned to explain the decision to the younger members after the meeting.

My friend laid a floor plan across the bench beside a jar of brushes. She asked why the idea had gained such **currency** when nobody could show where the original judgment came from.

It had become a commonly repeated belief even among people who had never inspected the room. Each new person heard it from an experienced member and passed it on with the confidence of something already tested.

"Let's bring a tape measure instead," she said, handing me one end of the roll. I held it against the doorframe while she cleared enough space to open the door fully.

Part A. As used here, "currency" suggests which meaning?

(A) the exact wording of a statement
(B) an idea's current circulation and acceptance
(C) the authority granted by an earlier agreement
(D) funds an organization can spend on its work

Part B. Which quotation most clearly supports the meaning you chose?

(A) "I repeated the claim before I had ever measured the doorway or counted the available tables."
(B) "My friend laid a floor plan across the bench beside a jar of brushes."
(C) "I held it against the doorframe while she cleared enough space to open the door fully."
(D) "It had become a commonly repeated belief even among people who had never inspected the room."

POLE MOUNTAIN LEARNING · PRINTABLE · NO DEVICE NEEDED

Wyoming Climbing Challenge: Climb 3 of 6

Vedauwoo: Granite Tower · Grade 10



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 Granite Step	② Slab Edge	③ Lichen Ledge	④ Tower Crack	⑤ Upper Blocks
____	____	____	____	A ____ B ____
☐ fixed ★	☐ fixed ★	☐ fixed ★	☐ fixed ★	☐ fixed ★

Rock Talk (bonus, not scored · do this after stop 5): granite

Light caught the small crystals in the **granite**.

What does granite mean in this rock description?

_____

_____

1 Granite Step

anomalous

I had drawn the last graph in blue because the black pen had dried out. Every line on the page followed the same curve except one, which rose sharply near the edge. “That one looks **anomalous**,” my lab partner said, tapping the table rather than touching my still-wet drawing.

The fifth trial broke a pattern that the other nine trials shared. We had not planned to ignore inconvenient results, and the outlying line could reveal either an important difference or a mistake in our procedure.

I found the original notes while my partner inspected the model. Neither of us wanted to erase the line merely because it spoiled the appearance of the graph. We needed to know what had happened.

When the bell rang, we left a question mark beside that trial. I capped the blue pen and tucked the notes inside the graph folder.

What does “anomalous” most nearly mean in this passage?

(A) representative of the entire set
(B) already confirmed by repeated tests
(C) expected from the usual conditions of the test
(D) departing from an established pattern

2 Slab Edge

perfunctory

At the equipment desk, a volunteer drew a check beside each returned item. The procedure was intended to establish that every part had been returned in usable condition. An observer described the checking as **perfunctory**, despite the complete row of marks on the form.

The volunteer glanced at the boxes without opening them or comparing their contents with the list. A missing cable therefore passed through the routine unnoticed. The completed paperwork created the appearance of an inspection without doing the work the inspection required.

The coordinator reviewed the procedure with the volunteer and moved the list beside the open storage trays. The revised arrangement made it possible to check actual parts before signing the form.

That evening, an unchecked box waited beneath the desk lamp while the volunteer counted its contents. The final mark would be made after the tray had been emptied and refilled.

How does “perfunctory” characterize the response described in the passage?

(A) completed slowly because every detail matters
(B) abandoned because the task is too demanding
(C) performed with confidence after careful practice
(D) done as a routine with little genuine attention

3 Lichen Ledge

in the balance

The committee had reached the final item on its agenda. Students had collected the interviews for a recording project, but the archive had not agreed to provide the room needed for editing. The table held both the proposed schedule and a competing booking request.

Approval would let the project continue through the summer, while refusal would leave its unfinished material without a working space. Neither result had been established when the meeting began. Members were still comparing the demands on the room.

The student representatives answered questions about supervision and the time needed to finish each recording. They could explain the project's value, but they could not treat a favorable hearing as permission already granted.

The recording project's future was still **in the balance**. As the chair prepared the vote, one representative slid the unopened summer calendar closer to the edge of the table. The spaces for the editing sessions were still blank.

As used here, "in the balance" suggests which meaning?

(A) delayed only because no one has raised the issue
(B) still undecided, with important consequences
(C) settled by weighing two objects of equal size
(D) fairly shared among everyone involved

4 Tower Crack

antithesis

At the laboratory discussion, a student compared two responses to a failed model. One group treated disagreement as useful evidence; another insisted that its original explanation could not be questioned.

One approach welcomed tests that might overturn a claim, while the other protected the claim from every possible test. The difference was not a matter of preferred equipment or the neatness of the notes. It concerned what the group would allow evidence to do.

The teacher asked students to examine their procedures before describing the quality of their own work. A group could speak approvingly about investigation while rejecting the first result that challenged its favorite explanation. An observer called that kind of refusal the **antithesis** of the investigation the class had been asked to conduct.

On the demonstration bench, the failed model remained assembled beside its test notes. A blank page invited the next group to propose a result that would make it change its mind.

Considering the prefix anti- and the base thesis and the context, what does "antithesis" mean here?

(A) the direct opposite of an idea or practice
(B) a compromise combining two different positions
(C) a slight change to the same idea
(D) the main reason offered to support a position

5 Upper Blocks

gravity

My cousin asked me to read the statement she planned to make at the community meeting. I expected a short complaint about the workshop schedule and brought my tea to the table. She had underlined a passage near the middle of the statement in red.

Halfway through the pages, I began to understand the **gravity** of what she was describing. The room arrangement she challenged had prevented several people from attending a program they had helped establish. The decision could shut those residents out of the program for an entire season. My cousin had gathered their accounts and checked the dates because she did not want the committee to dismiss the problem as an isolated complaint.

“Read that part again,” she said when I reached the proposed change. I set the tea aside and moved the chair closer to the lamp so I could see her notes.

Part A. What does “gravity” most nearly mean in this passage?

(A) the difficulty of making a decision quickly
(B) the force drawing objects toward Earth
(C) the level of anger expressed by a speaker
(D) the weight of a situation’s consequences

Part B. Which passage detail gives the strongest support for Part A?

(A) “The decision could shut those residents out of the program for an entire season.”
(B) “I expected a short complaint about the workshop schedule and brought my tea to the table.”
(C) “I set the tea aside and moved the chair closer to the lamp so I could see her notes.”
(D) “She had underlined a passage near the middle of the statement in red.”

POLE MOUNTAIN LEARNING · PRINTABLE · NO DEVICE NEEDED

Wyoming Climbing Challenge: Climb 4 of 6

Vedauwoo: Chimney Line · Grade 10



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 Chimney Entry	② Aspen View	③ Granite Notch	④ High Corner	⑤ Chimney Anchor
____	____	____	____	A ____ B ____
□ fixed ★	□ fixed ★	□ fixed ★	□ fixed ★	□ fixed ★

Rock Talk (bonus, not scored · do this after stop 5): chimney

The narrow **chimney** lay between two rounded granite towers.

What does chimney mean in this rock description?

_____

_____

1 Chimney Entry

paradox

The student newsroom removed half the items from its first emergency notice. On the table, the discarded slips lay beside the much shorter bulletin.

The removed items were unconfirmed rumors that contradicted one another. Keeping them would have increased the number of statements while making it harder to identify the few facts that had actually been checked. The newsroom's editor described the result as a **paradox**: publishing less information had left readers better informed.

The editor did not claim that shorter reports were always better. The apparent conflict depended on the quality of the information, not merely its quantity. A longer account containing additional verified facts could have served readers just as well.

For the next notice, students used separate trays for confirmed information and unresolved questions. The empty space beneath the final paragraph remained available for an update that had not yet arrived.

Which meaning of "paradox" fits the writer's account?

(A) a deliberate trick with no consistent meaning
(B) a comparison of unrelated events or ideas
(C) an apparent contradiction that may be true
(D) an error that makes every conclusion false

2 Aspen View

audacious

The student curator placed an empty display frame in the center of the exhibition plan. Instead of beginning with the archive's most celebrated photograph, she proposed inviting visitors to identify whose experiences were missing.

It challenged the expectation that an exhibition should begin by presenting the institution as complete and authoritative. The curator had prepared interview evidence showing gaps in the collection. Her proposal was risky because it exposed a weakness, not because she had failed to consider the institution's responsibilities.

Staff members debated how visitors might respond and what support the invitation required. An empty frame without a way to contribute would make a promise the archive could not fulfill. Listening to the discussion, the supervisor called the opening **audacious**.

By closing time, the frame had a place on the wall plan and a recording desk beside it. The curator began testing the microphone that visitors would use.

What judgment does the word "audacious" convey in this context?

(A) reckless because no possible benefit has been considered
(B) bold enough to challenge conventional expectations
(C) carefully limited to avoid any chance of criticism
(D) content to repeat a familiar approach

3 Granite Notch

at a crossroads

The workshop's planning chart showed two possible futures on the same sheet. One would turn the room into a permanent exhibition, while the other would preserve it for changing student projects. After a successful first year, the organizers were **at a crossroads** rather than merely adding another event to the calendar.

They had to choose between uses that could not both occupy the space throughout the next term. Each option served a real purpose, and neither could be defended simply by repeating how well the first exhibition had gone.

Members invited comments from visitors and current project groups before making the decision. The question concerned what the workshop should become, not whether its earlier work had been worthwhile.

On the wall, the two proposed layouts shared one doorway and then spread toward different arrangements. The chair placed a stack of blank comment cards beneath them before opening the room.

As used here, "at a crossroads" suggests which meaning?

(A) continuing along the agreed path
(B) finishing a task whose outcome has long been settled
(C) waiting where two literal routes cross each other
(D) at a point requiring a consequential choice

4 High Corner

preclude

The student exchange schedule arrived on the same afternoon as the theater rehearsal agreement. Both programs required attendance during the entire final week of the term.

The same student could not be present in two different towns during the required hours. The conflict was therefore more than an inconvenient timetable that could be solved by leaving early or attending selected sessions.

The counselor asked the applicant to confirm the requirements before making a choice. If either program offered a different arrangement, the situation could change; the present documents did not provide that alternative.

Accepting one would **preclude** participation in the other under the conditions printed on those two pages. At the end of the meeting, the student placed both schedules inside a clear folder. A note attached to the outside listed the two offices she would call before signing either acceptance form.

Considering the prefix pre- and the root clud and the context, what does "preclude" mean here?

(A) make an action or outcome impossible
(B) delay an event without ruling it out
(C) require a decision to be explained in more detail
(D) make an option less convenient but still possible

5 Chimney Anchor

contingent

I sharpened three pencils before opening the offer letter because I wanted the desk to look orderly. The internship would begin in June, after the final examinations. I had never received a formal offer before, and the folded paper felt unexpectedly heavy. My aunt sat beside the window while I read the letter aloud.

I could take the position only if I first completed the required training session. The training would take place in May, before the June start. The invitation recognized my application, but it did not remove that condition or guarantee another training date if I missed the one provided.

"Put both dates in the calendar," my aunt suggested, pointing with her folded glasses. The offer was **contingent** on that earlier session. I marked the training day first, then copied the contact number onto a card I could keep in my bag.

Part A. As used here, "contingent" suggests which meaning?

(A) already completed under the original arrangements
(B) certain to occur regardless of later events
(C) subject to a requirement that may not be met
(D) delayed because no one has considered it

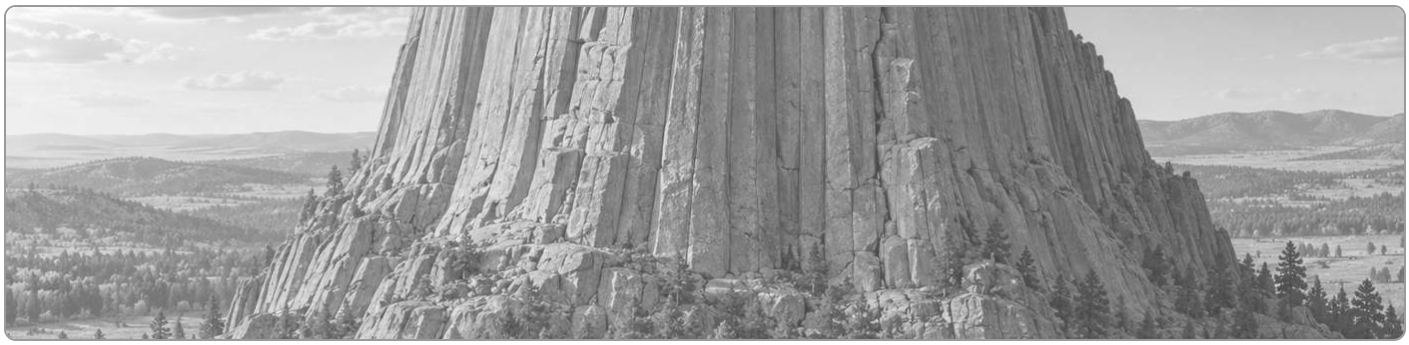
Part B. Which quotation most clearly supports the meaning you chose?

(A) "My aunt sat beside the window while I read the letter aloud."
(B) "I could take the position only if I first completed the required training session."
(C) "The internship would begin in June, after the final examinations."
(D) "I marked the training day first, then copied the contact number onto a card I could keep…"

POLE MOUNTAIN LEARNING · PRINTABLE · NO DEVICE NEEDED

Wyoming Climbing Challenge: Climb 5 of 6

Devils Tower: Column Steps · Grade 10



Name or class code _____ Date _____

Your trip

1. Read the passage at each stop. The vocabulary word is in **bold**.
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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 Lower Column	② Block Step	③ Sunlit Edge	④ Broken Blocks	⑤ Column Anchor
____	____	____	____	A ____ B ____
□ fixed ★	□ fixed ★	□ fixed ★	□ fixed ★	□ fixed ★

Rock Talk (bonus, not scored · do this after stop 5): column

Long cracks separated one **column** from the next.

What does column mean in this rock description?

_____

_____

1 Lower Column

understate

The event report called the equipment delay a minor inconvenience. Beside that description, the cancellation list showed that three of the four planned demonstrations had not taken place.

The wording suggested a small disruption even though most of the advertised program had been lost. A student editor argued that the phrase would **understate** the problem for readers deciding whether to attend the next event. She did not need to make the account angry or accuse anyone of bad intentions. An accurate description could state the extent of the cancellation without adding blame.

The writers replaced the phrase with the number of affected sessions and explained which arrangements were being changed. Their revised account was less reassuring, but visitors could understand what had actually happened.

At the bottom of the next program, a space remained for updates. The editor left a pencil beside it rather than printing a promise that the group had not yet checked.

As used here, what does "understate" mean?

(A) express a complaint more strongly than the facts justify
(B) describe an event without taking sides
(C) state a conclusion before all the facts are collected
(D) describe something as less serious than it is

2 Block Step

a thin veneer

Everyone smiled for the exhibition photograph, and I stood between the two partners who had barely spoken all week. I kept one hand on the display stand because its loose wheel made it drift.

The public smiles covered a disagreement that neither partner had agreed to resolve. Their divided plans still lay in separate folders, and each had given me different instructions for the next morning's visitors.

"After the photograph, we need ten minutes together," I said while the photographer adjusted the light. One partner looked toward the exit, then at the stand I was holding in place. Their public agreement was **a thin veneer** over an argument that the camera could not record.

When the camera clicked, everyone stayed where they were for a moment. I rolled three chairs behind the display and placed the two folders on the seat between them.

What does "a thin veneer" most nearly mean in this passage?

(A) a surface appearance hiding a different reality
(B) a layer of material needing repair
(C) a change that has deeply altered the underlying situation
(D) an open acknowledgment of the disagreement underneath

3 Sunlit Edge

recast

I had written the report as a list of mistakes made by the earlier exhibition team. My adviser read the report and asked about the choices the team had faced. I initially thought she wanted me to soften every criticism.

She wanted the same evidence organized around decisions and constraints rather than a sequence of accusations. She asked me to **recast** the report as an investigation of those choices. The missed dates would remain, but readers would also see the room restrictions and conflicting requests that shaped the team's options.

"You can question a choice after showing what it was a choice between," she said, turning my first page sideways to make room for notes. I drew arrows between details I had previously kept apart.

By evening, the report still described serious mistakes. Its opening now placed the old calendar beside the requests it had been unable to accommodate, and I left both documents on my desk.

Considering the prefix re- and the base cast and the context, what does "recast" mean here?

(A) present something in a different form or frame
(B) make a finished product harder to revise later
(C) discard an idea rather than revise it
(D) repeat the same account without changing its emphasis

4 Broken Blocks

extrapolate

Beside a collection bin, students counted the containers arriving during three short intervals. Their chart showed a fairly steady rate.

They planned to **extrapolate** that rate across the entire afternoon. The volunteer coordinator asked them to explain the assumption behind that estimate. They would extend the rate from their brief observations into hours they had not observed. If attendance increased after the school day ended, the estimate could be too low. A neat calculation would not protect it from a changing pattern.

The students labeled the result as a projection and proposed another count later in the day. They also kept the original observations separate from the estimated total, allowing readers to see which figures had been measured.

When the next group arrived, one student checked the clock and another lifted the clipboard. The unfinished afternoon still had information their first chart could not supply.

As used here, "extrapolate" suggests which meaning?

(A) describe observations without extending them
(B) replace results with a preferred explanation
(C) compare two sources to confirm the same exact fact
(D) extend a pattern beyond the information observed

5 Column Anchor *formidable*

The final opposing team arrived carrying no display boards and only a thin folder of notes. I had expected a **formidable** opponent to look better equipped than we did. Our whole team had spent the previous weekend preparing answers we expected to use without hesitation.

During the opening practice exchange, I kept straightening the corner of my notes while listening. Their questions were courteous, but each one exposed a weakness our rehearsed answers had avoided. They could uncover gaps in our reasoning faster than we could explain them away. I began to see the preparation hidden behind that thin folder, and the possibility of winning stopped feeling like something our impressive boards could guarantee.

"Let's work on the questions we can't answer," my partner whispered during the break. I turned the first board toward the wall and placed a blank sheet between us.

Part A. What does the writer's choice of "formidable" suggest about the opponent described?

A unfamiliar but easy once briefly explained
B impressively difficult to overcome or match
C dangerous because its purpose is malicious
D impossible to approach with any chance of success

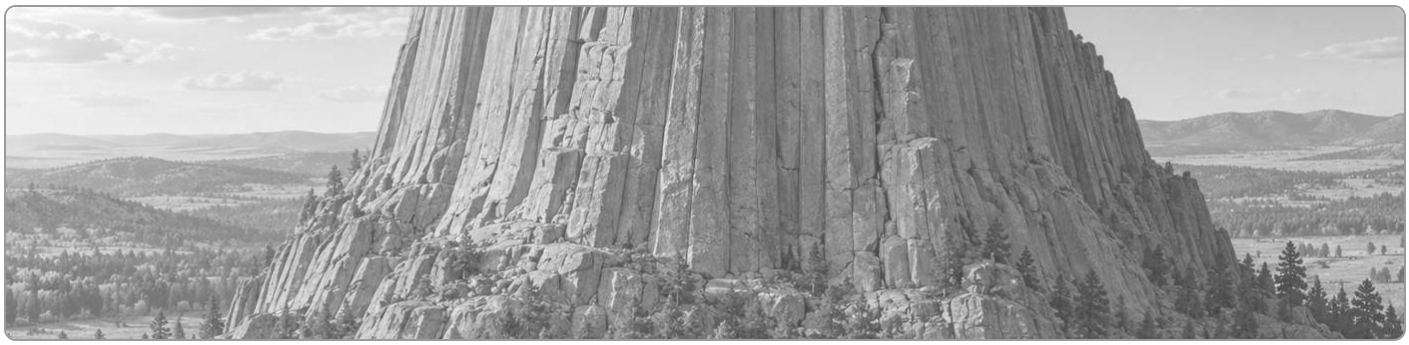
Part B. Which passage detail gives the strongest support for Part A?

A "I turned the first board toward the wall and placed a blank sheet between us."
B "The final opposing team arrived carrying no display boards and only a thin folder of notes."
C "They could uncover gaps in our reasoning faster than we could explain them away."
D "During the opening practice exchange, I kept straightening the corner of my notes while listening."

POLE MOUNTAIN LEARNING · PRINTABLE · NO DEVICE NEEDED

Wyoming Climbing Challenge: Climb 6 of 6

Devils Tower: Split Pillar · Grade 10



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 Split Start	② Lower Seam	③ Parallel Crack	④ High Pillar	⑤ Pillar Anchor
____	____	____	____	A ____ B ____
□ fixed ★	□ fixed ★	□ fixed ★	□ fixed ★	□ fixed ★

Rock Talk (bonus, not scored · do this after stop 5): joint

A straight **joint** continued upward through the rock face.

What does joint mean in this rock description?

_____

_____

1 Split Start

prescient

I nearly threw away the note with the old rehearsal lists. Our former director had written that portable sets would eventually matter more than painted backdrops. When she wrote it, we performed only in the school hall.

Months before the hall closed, she had warned that a traveling production would need scenery that fit through unfamiliar doors. Now we were preparing to perform in three borrowed rooms, and every heavy backdrop remained rolled behind the locked stage.

“Read the next line,” my partner said, brushing dust from the page. The director had also sketched a folding frame we could build from materials already in storage.

Reading it after the hall closed, I found the comment unexpectedly **prescient**. I placed the note beside our new floor plan instead of returning it to the wastebasket. The old pencil marks suddenly belonged to the problem spread across our table.

What does “prescient” most nearly mean in this passage?

(A) recalling earlier events accurately
(B) judging decisions only after their results are known
(C) guessing an outcome without considering evidence
(D) showing insight into what later occurred

2 Lower Seam

incisive

We had spent forty minutes debating the color of the visitor badges. My partner kept folding the edge of the sample until it began to tear. Then the quietest committee member put a question to us.

She asked who the badges were meant to help and what information that person actually needed. It was an **incisive** question that made us put every sample down. We had been treating color as a matter of preference without agreeing on the job the badge would perform.

“A visitor needs to find someone who can answer a question,” she said. That requirement immediately changed the discussion. Large role labels mattered more than matching the curtains, and the two kinds of volunteer no longer needed identical designs.

After the meeting, I collected the rejected samples in a single envelope. The new sketch had fewer decorations and enough space for a visitor to read it from several steps away.

What does the writer’s choice of “incisive” suggest about the attitude described?

(A) brief because it leaves important questions untouched
(B) detailed without distinguishing the main concern
(C) clear and sharp in exposing the central issue
(D) cuttingly hostile toward the people involved

3 Parallel Crack

dissonance

The exhibition entrance displayed a large promise: every resident's experience would count. Inside, the project's own history described meetings scheduled only during working hours and interviews conducted through a single neighborhood club. A student reviewer noted the **dissonance** between the public statement and the process behind it.

The claim of broad inclusion conflicted with arrangements that had prevented many residents from participating. The reviewer did not need to prove that every missing account would change the exhibition. The stated principle and the recorded practice already pulled in different directions.

Organizers responded by explaining how the first collection had developed and inviting additional contributions. They left the early planning documents visible rather than replacing them with a smoother account.

Near the exit, a blank listening station waited for new recordings. A printed schedule listed evening sessions in the same type size as the older daytime appointments.

Which meaning of "dissonance" fits the writer's account?

(A) a difference in volume between nearby sounds
(B) a lack of harmony between conflicting elements
(C) a comfortable agreement between stated values
(D) a deliberate pause before a final decision is made

4 High Pillar

oblique

The committee minutes recorded a disagreement about missed deadlines without naming the member responsible. Instead, the chair spoke of promises that disappeared when the work became difficult. Several people glanced toward the unfilled delivery column on the schedule.

Her comment suggested criticism of the missed task without stating directly who had failed to complete it. The surrounding discussion made the reference understandable, but a reader unfamiliar with the meeting would struggle to identify its subject.

A student observer asked whether the minutes should preserve that wording or explain the practical issue plainly. The chair's **oblique** approach had left readers to supply information the minutes did not state. The committee needed an accurate account, not a document that required private knowledge to interpret.

The secretary drew a line beneath the delivery entry and requested a clear assignment for the following week. The finished minutes named the task and the person who accepted it.

What judgment does the word "oblique" convey in this context?

(A) unrelated to the matter discussed
(B) openly critical without attempting restraint
(C) indirect rather than openly stated
(D) unclear because the facts are unavailable

5 **Pillar Anchor** *equivocate*

I knew exactly why the ticket money was missing from the envelope. I had used it to pay a delivery fee, assuming I could replace it before anyone asked for the totals. I had promised the group a complete account of the expenses before anyone submitted the report.

The treasurer held the empty envelope while I rearranged the receipts on the table. She asked what had happened.

I talked about complicated arrangements without admitting that I had spent the money. Each sentence was connected to the event, but I chose words that might make the missing amount sound like somebody else's unfinished task. I had chosen to **equivocate** instead of answering a question I understood.

"Please tell me what you did," she said, keeping her voice level. I stopped moving the receipts, took back the envelope and named the payment while the others waited for me to finish.

Part A. What does "equivocate" most nearly mean in this passage?

(A) change a position openly after considering evidence
(B) speak vaguely to avoid making a definite commitment
(C) refuse to speak until missing information arrives
(D) express a complex idea with careful but clear detail

Part B. Which passage detail gives the strongest support for Part A?

(A) "The treasurer held the empty envelope while I rearranged the receipts on the table."
(B) "I stopped moving the receipts, took back the envelope and named the payment…"
(C) "I had promised the group a complete account of the expenses before anyone submitted the report."
(D) "I talked about complicated arrangements without admitting that I had spent the money."