POLE MOUNTAIN LEARNING · PRINTABLE · NO DEVICE NEEDED

Wyoming Climbing Challenge: Climb 1 of 6

Ten Sleep: Pocket Ledges · Grade 9



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

reconcile

Two accounts of a neighborhood campaign seemed to disagree about its beginning. An adviser asked the student editors to **reconcile** the accounts before rejecting either. One writer described a public meeting in March. Another recalled residents collecting signatures during January. One student editor had already treated the difference as proof that one source was unreliable.

The January campaign could have preceded its first public meeting. Once the students distinguished informal preparation from an organized gathering, both dates fit the sequence without requiring either writer to be mistaken.

Their display used two captions rather than one simplified date. Beneath the photograph of the meeting, a copy of the earlier petition showed signatures crowded into the margins. Visitors could follow the campaign before it acquired a public platform.

Which phrase best replaces “reconcile” without changing the meaning?

(A) remove every detail that makes an account uncertain
(B) fit conflicting accounts into a consistent explanation
(C) choose the more appealing account without checking
(D) repeat both accounts without explaining their conflict

2 Low Shelf

tentative

A student group proposed using a vacant classroom as a quiet lunchtime studio. Their plan included worktables, a sign-up sheet and storage for unfinished projects. They also needed confirmation that another program would not require the room.

The principal read the plan. She welcomed the proposal but would confirm the arrangement only after reviewing the building schedule. Her response did not reject the students’ work or promise that every detail had been settled. It kept the possibility available while an important condition remained unresolved.

The principal gave **tentative** approval. Until the building check was complete, the students tested layouts with movable classroom tables. They measured walkways and carried large projects through the arrangement. Any layout they chose would still have to work in another room if the proposed space became unavailable.

What effect does the word “tentative” have on the description?

(A) suggests that the proposal has already been rejected
(B) implies that every practical difficulty has been settled
(C) presents uncertainty as a complete lack of preparation
(D) signals caution while leaving the plan open to change

3 Pale Wall — *undermine*

The student research group claimed that a new seating arrangement improved concentration. Its report compared a quiet morning lesson with a noisy afternoon activity. The room arrangement changed, but so did the task, time and number of interruptions.

Those differences matter. They weaken the link between the proposed cause and the evidence. The group might still have a useful idea, but this comparison cannot carry the weight of its strongest claim.

Taken together, these differences **undermine** the conclusion that seating alone caused the result. For another trial, the group repeated the task at the same time of day. A student logged interruptions as well as participation. When an announcement broke into the lesson, they recorded it instead of leaving that inconvenient difference outside their comparison.

Which phrase best replaces “undermine” without changing the meaning?

(A) replace a proposal with a more detailed version
(B) challenge a decision without affecting its support
(C) weaken the support on which something depends
(D) make an argument easier for readers to follow

4 High Shelf — *qualify*

The courtyard thermometer showed lower temperatures beneath the new shade cloth. Students preparing a report announced that their design would cool any outdoor space. The adviser asked them to **qualify** the claim. Their equipment, after all, had been used in only one enclosed courtyard during three afternoons.

The result applied to the conditions actually tested. An open playground with different wind patterns might respond differently, even if the same cloth were used. The students kept the result but added its limits.

For the next trial, the group moved its equipment to the open playground. One student recorded wind while another checked the shade cloth. They would compare those readings with the courtyard results before recommending the design for that space.

Which meaning of “qualify” best fits this passage?

(A) limit how broadly a claim should apply
(B) show that a person meets an entry requirement
(C) make a statement sound more certain than before
(D) replace a claim with the opposite conclusion

5 Rim Anchor *autonomous*

The club's budget sheet lay beneath my mug, its corner turning soft. I expected the head office to choose which event our small group would organize.

"You decide the project," the coordinator told us. She would check the final accounts, but she would not select our speakers, arrange our meetings or decide what our community needed most.

We made our own decisions without waiting for central instructions. That authority came with the task of explaining our choices to the people who had supplied the money.

Our team was **autonomous** within the agreed budget. I lifted the mug and dried the corner with my sleeve. Around the table, members began sketching different possibilities, and I left the first line of the planning sheet blank until everyone had spoken.

Part A. How do the word parts and the passage help explain "autonomous"?

(A) required to wait for permission on every decision
(B) self-directing rather than controlled by another group
(C) free from every responsibility to other people
(D) organized to make every group follow one shared preference

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

(A) "We made our own decisions without waiting for central instructions."
(B) "I lifted the mug and dried the corner with my sleeve."
(C) "I expected the head office to choose which event…"
(D) "The club's budget sheet lay beneath my mug, its corner turning soft."

POLE MOUNTAIN LEARNING · PRINTABLE · NO DEVICE NEEDED

Wyoming Climbing Challenge: Climb 2 of 6

Ten Sleep: Pillar Crack · Grade 9



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

concede

The editorial board wanted all school announcements distributed electronically. The board had to **concede** that a digital-only system would exclude some readers. Members had argued that a single online location would reduce duplicate work and make changes easier to find. During consultation, several families had explained that they could not reliably check that location each evening.

Accepting that objection did not require abandoning electronic announcements. It did require changing the original claim that one method would reach everyone equally well.

During the first week, one volunteer updated the online announcements while another kept printed copies current. A parent collected the changes on the way home from a late shift. The board asked both groups of readers where the system still failed to reach them.

Which phrase best replaces “concede” without changing the meaning?

(A) agree to every demand made by the other side
(B) prove that an opponent has misunderstood the evidence
(C) acknowledge a point despite initial resistance
(D) avoid answering a challenge by changing the topic

2 Pillar Corner

impartial

The neighborhood arts fund received requests from an established choir and a recently formed photography group. Several committee members had friends in the choir. The written process required them to compare costs, access and likely public use.

Both groups received the same questions, the same opportunity to clarify costs and the same published explanation of the final decision. Members connected to either proposal did not score that request.

An **impartial** review treated those written criteria as more important than personal loyalty. At the next funding session, a new applicant asked why one expense counted and another did not. Committee members explained the published criteria and applied them to both examples. The applicant then revised the request without needing an introduction to anyone on the committee.

What effect does the word “impartial” have on the description?

(A) implies a decision made without concern for its effects
(B) emphasizes fairness rather than personal allegiance
(C) portrays a judge who avoids learning about either side
(D) suggests loyalty to the group with the strongest reputation

3 Shaded Notch

catalyst

Residents had discussed the lack of evening study space for several years. A room existed, and volunteers had offered help, but no group had taken responsibility for arranging access. The idea remained in meeting notes without becoming a service.

A photograph of students working beneath a bus-stop lamp became the **catalyst** for action. It brought the separate concerns together at a moment when a practical response was possible. Within a week, residents formed a committee and asked the building owner for a regular evening booking.

At the first evening session, two residents unlocked the room while another tested the lamps. People who had supported the idea only in conversation now took actual shifts. The photograph remained in the entrance, but the program no longer depended on someone simply noticing it.

Which meaning of "catalyst" best fits this passage?

(A) a requirement that makes all disagreement disappear
(B) a distraction that prevents an existing concern from being discussed
(C) a final result produced after every decision is complete
(D) an event that sets a larger change in motion

4 Upper Seam

articulate

The youth planning group opposed removing the shelter beside the bus stop. Its first letter said only that the shelter mattered. Council members asked what would be lost and who depended on it.

A student who used the stop spoke at the meeting. She explained how the roof protected waiting passengers and why the next covered stop was not a practical substitute. Her account turned a general feeling into reasons that someone unfamiliar with the route could understand.

Her explanation had begun to **articulate** the concern. At the following meeting, the student led two council members from the shelter to the alternative stop. They timed the walk and checked where passengers could wait out of the rain. The members returned with questions about the route instead of asking only why the shelter mattered.

As used in this passage, what does "articulate" most nearly mean?

(A) arrange separate objects so that they move together
(B) express an idea clearly enough to be understood
(C) persuade an audience to accept a personal opinion
(D) repeat a position without explaining its reasons

5 Crack Anchor

disproportionate

My sister's crossed-out paragraph lay beside my clean notebook page. We had both missed the same rehearsal, but only she had been removed from the final performance.

"That difference needs an explanation," our adviser said. I had been ready to defend the director until I saw that the consequences were **disproportionate**. Neither of us had missed an earlier practice, and both had supplied the same amount of notice.

Her penalty was far greater without a corresponding difference. The adviser did not promise to reverse it immediately. She asked the director to identify a relevant distinction rather than treat unequal consequences as automatically reasonable.

My sister folded the page once and put it in her bag. I closed my notebook and waited with her beside the rehearsal-room door for the meeting to begin.

Part A. How do the word parts and the passage help explain "disproportionate"?

(A) out of reasonable proportion to the stated difference
(B) different only because the measurements use new labels
(C) distributed so that every group receives the same share
(D) exactly matched to the size of the original change

Part B. Which quotation most strongly supports that interpretation?

(A) "My sister's crossed-out paragraph lay beside my clean notebook page."
(B) "My sister folded the page once and put it in her bag."
(C) "Her penalty was far greater without a corresponding difference."
(D) "The adviser did not promise to reverse it immediately."

POLE MOUNTAIN LEARNING · PRINTABLE · NO DEVICE NEEDED

Wyoming Climbing Challenge: Climb 3 of 6

Vedauwoo: Granite Tower · Grade 9



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

sustain

The first neighborhood repair evening filled every workbench. Its organizers had enough donated materials for one event and several volunteers eager to help. A crowded opening, however, did not settle whether the workshop could remain useful throughout the year.

The organizers arranged replacement supplies and a rotating schedule of trained helpers. Those supports would keep later sessions running when the original donations were gone and the first organizers needed a break. They also kept the range of repairs within the volunteers' abilities.

By the third session, another volunteer could open the room when the founder was unavailable. The evening still ran on schedule. The arrangements helped **sustain** the program. Two new helpers practiced the closing checks before agreeing to take responsibility for a later shift on their own.

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

(A) replace a working system whenever interest declines
(B) launch a project before its purpose has been decided
(C) expand a program faster than its resources allow
(D) keep an activity operating over an extended period

2 Slab Edge

conventional

The student exhibition offered two ways to display its interviews. One proposal used a familiar wall of photographs and short printed extracts. Another placed audio recordings inside small listening stations that visitors could choose in any order.

The first design was more **conventional**. Many local exhibitions already used photographs beside explanatory labels, so visitors would recognize how to approach it. Calling it conventional did not decide whether it was dull or ineffective. It identified the proposal's relationship to established practice.

The committee tried both arrangements with the same three interviews. Volunteers followed visitors through the display and asked where they became confused. They used those responses to revise the entrance labels, then tested the listening stations again before deciding which arrangement suited the available room.

What effect does the word "conventional" have on the description?

(A) presents a method as familiar and widely established
(B) suggests an approach that has not previously been tried
(C) describes a rule that permits no reasonable exceptions
(D) presents a method as useless merely because it is old

3 Lichen Ledge

thread

The exhibition collected accounts from a baker, a nurse and a bicycle mechanic. Their workplaces differed, as did their reasons for remaining in the neighborhood. A visitor might initially treat the interviews as three unrelated stories.

Each speaker described learning practical skills from someone who had refused payment. That concern appeared in different situations and gave the exhibition more coherence than a list of occupations would have provided. The curators arranged the extracts so visitors could notice the connection themselves.

That shared experience was a **thread** connecting the accounts. At the final listening station, a blank card asked whose knowledge had helped the visitor. Several responses named people whose jobs were never mentioned in the exhibition, extending the connection beyond the three accounts on display.

Which phrase best replaces “thread” without changing the meaning?

(A) an idea that connects otherwise separate parts
(B) a single detail that replaces the rest of an account
(C) a material used to fasten the pages of a collection
(D) a piece of information accidentally repeated without purpose

4 Tower Crack

reservation

The contract arrived in a thick envelope with a photograph of the proposed rehearsal room. I traced its high windows while my partner read the smaller print.

“Why do they keep the recordings?” she asked. That condition was her main **reservation** about an offer I had nearly accepted. The room would help us, but the agreement gave someone else continuing control over work we hoped to share freely.

Her concern prevented her from agreeing without further discussion. She was not rejecting every possible arrangement; she wanted that condition explained or changed before we signed.

I placed the photograph beside the page she had marked. The empty room still looked inviting, but I left the pen capped while we wrote a question beneath the highlighted clause.

Which phrase best replaces “reservation” without changing the meaning?

(A) a final refusal to discuss any possible change
(B) a promise to approve whatever someone else proposes
(C) an arrangement that secures a place for later use
(D) a doubt that prevents complete acceptance

(5) Upper Blocks

misinterpret

The short message lit my phone while I waited outside the studio. I kept rereading the words, certain that the director wanted me to leave the project. “Read the whole exchange,” my friend said. I had begun to **misinterpret** a request for a later arrival as a rejection of my work. The earlier message, which I had overlooked, explained that the rehearsal room would be occupied until six.

I had mistaken a later start for being told not to come. Moving the arrival time concerned the room’s availability, not my place in the production.

My friend held the studio door while I put the phone away. I followed her inside, set my bag beneath the bench and opened the script to the scene we were due to rehearse.

Part A. How do the word parts and the passage help explain “misinterpret”?

(A) translate an unfamiliar passage for a new audience
(B) withhold a conclusion while checking the full context
(C) explain a message using slightly different wording
(D) give a message a meaning its context cannot support

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

(A) “My friend held the studio door while I put the phone away.”
(B) “I had mistaken a later start for being told not to come.”
(C) “I kept rereading the words, certain that the director…”
(D) “The short message lit my phone while I waited outside the studio.”

POLE MOUNTAIN LEARNING · PRINTABLE · NO DEVICE NEEDED

Wyoming Climbing Challenge: Climb 4 of 6

Vedauwoo: Chimney Line · Grade 9



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

perspective

A proposal to extend the town market arrived with a map and a list of expected benefits. A stallholder saw more selling time. A nearby resident saw longer periods of noise outside her window. A delivery driver noticed that the new closing time overlapped with another route.

Each **perspective** emphasized a different consequence because each person occupied a different place in the system. Their accounts could disagree without any speaker inventing what mattered to them. The planning group needed to examine both the evidence and the positions from which it was offered.

Before the next meeting, planners walked from the loading entrance to a stall, then watched deliveries from the resident's upstairs window. They checked the driver's route afterward. Their questions now concerned specific people and places, not only the market's proposed hours.

Which meaning of "perspective" best fits this passage?

(A) a conclusion accepted identically by every observer
(B) a complete inventory of every available detail
(C) a prediction that removes uncertainty about the future
(D) a viewpoint shaped by experience or social position

2 Aspen View

scrutiny

The youth research journal received an article claiming that a new classroom arrangement improved discussion. Its photographs were attractive and its opening was confident. The editor asked reviewers to examine the evidence before considering those presentation choices.

Reviewers checked which classes had been compared, how participation had been counted and whether quieter students were represented. Their attention did not assume that the article was wrong; it required the claim to withstand careful examination.

The authors contacted the people who had collected the participation figures and asked about an unexplained blank column. They revised the account after checking the answer. After that **scrutiny**, the article returned to the reviewers with a stated method for handling entries that were still missing.

What effect does the word "scrutiny" have on the description?

(A) implies that the work has already been condemned
(B) emphasizes close examination rather than quick acceptance
(C) presents a brief glance as enough to settle every question
(D) suggests interest based only on the work's appearance

3 Granite Notch

friction

Two student groups shared a workshop, and the arrangement soon created **friction**. The scenery team needed long periods with large pieces spread across the floor. The repair club needed clear access to benches and tools. Both followed the posted booking times, but their work extended into the minutes before and after each session.

Requests to move equipment became personal complaints, and members began treating ordinary questions as criticism. The problem concerned the pressure between their expectations, not the texture of the floor or the quality of the tools.

During the first shared week, the clubs timed how long clearing and setting up actually took. When one changeover ran late, members adjusted the next booking together instead of treating the delay as a personal slight. They agreed to review the arrangement after several more sessions.

Which meaning of "friction" best fits this passage?

(A) lively discussion that improves cooperation without difficulty
(B) physical resistance where two rough surfaces touch
(C) strain caused by people's conflicting expectations
(D) a settled agreement that removes competing interests

4 High Corner

margin

The last bus time was circled on the map my cousin had brought. I kept checking the line while we calculated how long the return walk would take.

"That leaves no **margin**," she said when my plan used every remaining minute. A slow crossing or a misplaced turn could make us miss the only ride home. The estimate might be right, but the plan would work only if it was exactly right.

We needed time left over for something we had not predicted. I shortened the route rather than assume that every part of the afternoon would match the times written on the page.

My cousin drew a new line around the nearer viewpoint. I folded the map so the bus stop stayed visible, then put it into the outside pocket where neither of us would have to search for it.

As used in this passage, what does "margin" most nearly mean?

(A) a border left empty around a printed page
(B) extra capacity available if circumstances change
(C) a guarantee that no unexpected problem can occur
(D) the entire amount required for the planned activity

5 Chimney Anchor

indispensable

The small recording device clicked off halfway through the interview. I stared at its dark screen while my aunt continued describing the shop where she had worked.

“Keep writing,” my partner whispered. Her pencil kept moving across the notes. We had permission to use the account, but no second chance to collect the details before my aunt left for a long journey.

Without the notes, we could not complete an accurate account. They did not replace everything a recording might have preserved, yet they held the names and sequence we needed to check before publication.

Her handwritten notes had become **indispensable** to our project. I pushed the useless device aside and opened a fresh page. My partner asked about the doorway in the old photograph while I wrote the answer beneath the line she had just finished.

Part A. How do the word parts and the passage help explain “indispensable”?

(A) helpful but easy to remove without changing the work
(B) impossible for anyone to replace at any future time
(C) useful mainly because it makes the result look impressive
(D) essential rather than merely convenient to have

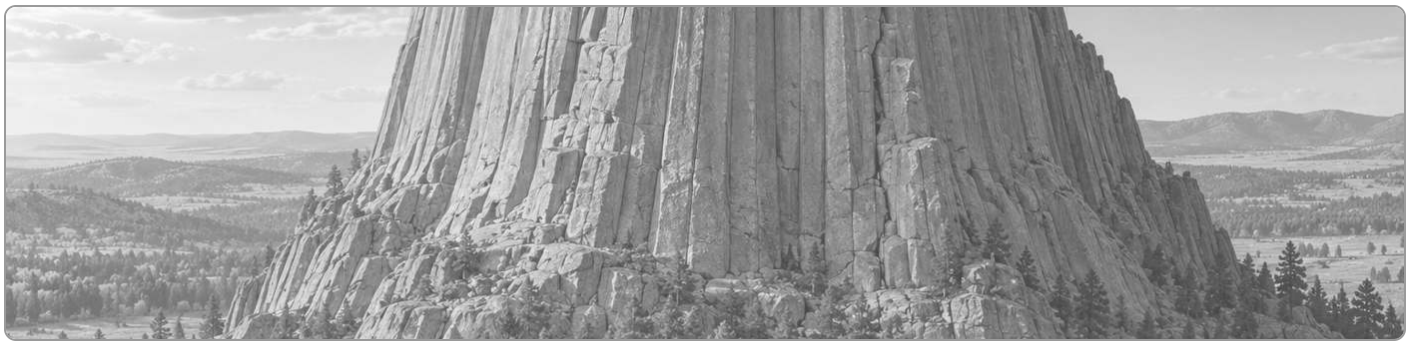
Part B. Which quotation most strongly supports that interpretation?

(A) “I stared at its dark screen while my aunt continued…”
(B) “I pushed the useless device aside and opened a fresh page.”
(C) “Without the notes, we could not complete an accurate account.”
(D) “The small recording device clicked off halfway through the interview.”

POLE MOUNTAIN LEARNING · PRINTABLE · NO DEVICE NEEDED

Wyoming Climbing Challenge: Climb 5 of 6

Devils Tower: Column Steps · Grade 9



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 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

viable

Three proposals competed for a disused classroom: a recording studio, a materials exchange and a public rehearsal space. Students admired all three. The building manager asked a different question: which one could operate with the room's existing facilities and the money actually available? Only the materials exchange was immediately **viable**. It required shelving and supervision that the group could provide.

The studio needed sound insulation beyond the budget, while evening rehearsals required access the school could not yet arrange. Attractive ideas were not automatically workable under the same conditions.

The exchange group began sorting donated materials and arranging the shelving it could actually obtain. The studio group requested sound-insulation estimates for the next budget round. Neither group needed to pretend that choosing one workable project had settled the unanswered questions about the others.

Which meaning of "viable" best fits this passage?

(A) capable of working under the existing conditions
(B) familiar because similar ideas have been discussed
(C) likely to attract attention without producing results
(D) certain to succeed without later adjustment

2 Block Step

measured

When the community rehearsal space lost an evening booking, the student coordinator received several angry messages. Some demanded an immediate public accusation. The booking office had not yet explained whether the cancellation was a mistake or a planned change.

Her reply was **measured**. She acknowledged the disruption, asked the office for the relevant information and gave members a time when she would report back. The response was controlled without pretending that the loss did not matter. Its restraint left room to act on facts that were still missing.

A printed copy remained beside the rehearsal calendar. Before the promised update, students could see both the unanswered questions and the practical step already taken, rather than mistake a lack of accusation for a lack of effort.

What effect does the word "measured" have on the description?

(A) implies that a person is unable to decide what matters
(B) portrays calmness as proof that nothing important is at stake
(C) portrays a response as controlled and carefully judged
(D) suggests anger released without considering its likely effects

3 Sunlit Edge

a double-edged sword

A student newspaper began publishing reports immediately after events rather than waiting for its monthly edition. Readers appreciated receiving information while it was still useful. Corrections, however, could arrive after an inaccurate account had already been widely shared.

The same feature that helped the newspaper reach readers quickly also reduced the time available for checking. The benefit and the risk were connected, rather than two unrelated accidents. Faster publication required a process that protected the value of being timely without treating speed as the only goal.

Speed had become **a double-edged sword**, so the editor placed a short verification checklist beside the publishing screen. Before an urgent report went live, another student would check names, dates and the source of its central claim.

Which phrase best replaces “a double-edged sword” without changing the meaning?

(A) something offering a benefit along with a linked risk
(B) a choice that is harmful and has no possible benefit
(C) a solution that permanently removes the need for caution
(D) a tool whose two parts solve unrelated problems

4 Broken Blocks

temper

The award letter lay open beside the model we had nearly abandoned. I kept reading the amount aloud, imagining equipment that had never fit our club’s budget.

“Read the conditions too,” my partner said. The requirement to raise matching funds began to **temper** my excitement. Winning the award was still good news, but the number on the page was not money we could spend immediately.

The condition reduced my enthusiasm without removing it. We needed a plan for the remaining funds and a realistic date for buying materials, rather than an announcement built around the largest figure in the letter.

I placed a fresh sheet beside the award and wrote the confirmed amount at the top. My partner picked up the model while I began the second column.

Which meaning of “temper” best fits this passage?

(A) adjust metal’s hardness through heat treatment
(B) reduce the force of a reaction without removing it
(C) replace every positive feeling with complete opposition
(D) hide an opinion so that nobody can discover it

5 Column Anchor *circumspect*

The offer arrived while I was scraping dried paint from a brush. A local shop would provide our theater's materials if we placed its name on every poster.

"Look beyond the first sentence," my sister said. The longer pages described who could approve our designs and what would happen if the performance moved. She marked three clauses to question before either of us signed. Her caution did not settle the decision; it gave us questions to ask while changes to the agreement were still possible.

I wrapped the brush in a damp cloth and sat beside her. She was **circumspect** about an arrangement I wanted to accept at once. We laid the pages in order on the floor, leaving the signature sheet at the far end where neither of us could reach it easily.

Part A. How do the word parts and the passage help explain "circumspect"?

(A) certain that every possible outcome can be controlled
(B) unwilling to examine information that challenges a preference
(C) cautious after looking at several sides of a situation
(D) eager to agree before the practical risks are considered

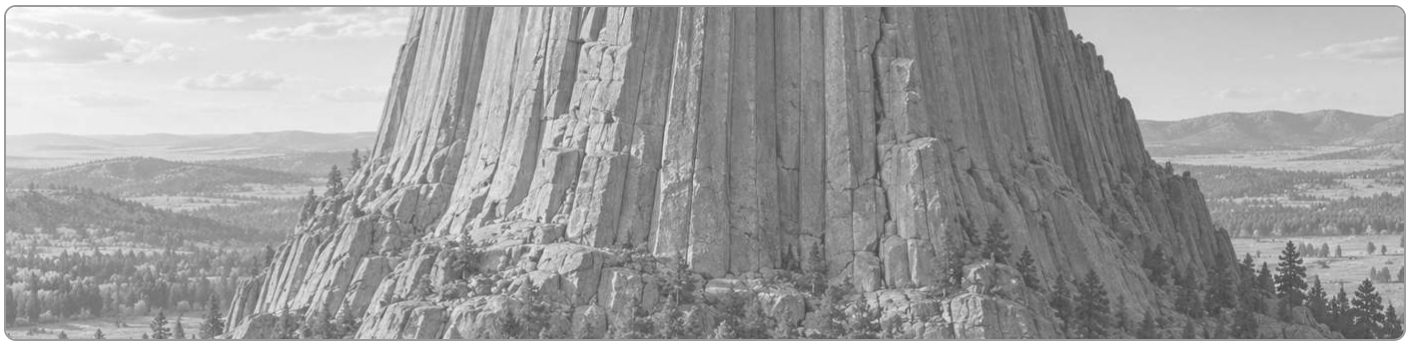
Part B. Which detail best supports your answer to Part A?

(A) "I wrapped the brush in a damp cloth and sat beside her."
(B) "She marked three clauses to question before either of us signed."
(C) "The offer arrived while I was scraping dried paint from a brush."
(D) "A local shop would provide our theater's materials…"

POLE MOUNTAIN LEARNING · PRINTABLE · NO DEVICE NEEDED

Wyoming Climbing Challenge: Climb 6 of 6

Devils Tower: Split Pillar · Grade 9



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
Split Start	**Lower Seam**	**Parallel Crack**	**High Pillar**	**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

implicit

The workshop's welcome sheet described where to collect tools and how to book a bench. Returning those tools was an **implicit** expectation. The sheet did not contain a sentence telling volunteers to return shared materials before leaving. Nevertheless, every bench had labeled spaces for the tools used there.

The arrangement and the volunteers' repeated actions communicated that expectation without a direct written instruction. A newcomer could infer the practice, although the organizers later decided that important responsibilities should not depend entirely on inference.

Before the next shift, a helper found that another volunteer could not begin a repair without the missing wrench. They checked the benches and returned it. The coordinator then directly explained who was responsible for returning each shared tool before leaving.

As used in this passage, what does "implicit" most nearly mean?

(A) stated as a detailed instruction everyone must repeat
(B) uncertain because it changes without any clear reason
(C) intentionally hidden so that nobody can discover it
(D) understood without being directly stated

2 Lower Seam

pragmatic

The display frames arrived too late for us to use the gallery wall. I stood beside the unopened boxes, running a thumb along the neat drawing I had made weeks before.

"Tables still hold pictures," my sister said. I was irritated because I wanted the exhibition to resemble my plan. Yet people were due in an hour, and the tables were already available.

She chose a workable arrangement under the actual limits. We could protect the photographs, keep the captions beside them and open on time without pretending that more wall space would appear.

I turned the drawing over and sketched the tables instead. Her **pragmatic** response had given us a plan we could actually carry out. My sister carried the first one toward the window, leaving a clear route where visitors would enter from the hall.

What effect does the word "pragmatic" have on the description?

(A) portrays the cheapest option as automatically the best choice
(B) suggests indifference to whether the result serves anyone
(C) emphasizes workable results over an ideal arrangement
(D) praises a refusal to change the original ideal design

3 Parallel Crack

in the shadow of

The community festival was known for its evening concert. Its publicity featured the headline performers, and most newspaper photographs came from the main stage. A smaller program of student films ran in a room behind the library.

Their quality was not necessarily lower, but the better-known event dominated public attention. Many visitors left without knowing that the screenings had taken place. The problem was public recognition, not the location of the room.

For the next festival, a student placed the screening times on the same entrance board as the concert schedule. Until then, the films had remained **in the shadow of** the concert. A visitor arriving for music could now see another choice before following the crowd toward the stage.

As used in this passage, what does "in the shadow of" most nearly mean?

(A) physically hidden from light by a nearby structure
(B) made impossible by the absence of any useful support
(C) receiving less attention because of something better known
(D) protected from criticism by sharing another person's success

4 High Pillar

cumulative

No single interruption seemed important during the workshop trial. A missing tool cost two minutes, a moved box cost another minute, and a late delivery briefly stopped construction. Each delay looked small when entered separately in the notebook.

Added across the afternoon, the interruptions consumed enough time to prevent the final test. The failure did not arise from one dramatic breakdown. It developed as small losses combined, which meant the organizers needed to examine the pattern rather than blame only the last delay.

At the next session, the notebook included a running total beside each entry. That running total made the **cumulative** effect visible. By the time the delivery arrived, students could see how much working time remained instead of treating every interruption as if it began from zero.

Which meaning of "cumulative" best fits this passage?

(A) visible immediately before any contributing action occurs
(B) building as the effects of successive additions combine
(C) produced entirely by one isolated and unusual event
(D) repeated without changing the amount or overall effect

5 **Pillar Anchor** *nuanced*

The exhibition compared two proposals for reusing a vacant school room. One offered quiet study, while the other offered a workshop for shared projects. Visitors initially asked which proposal was simply better.

The students considered the different needs served by each proposal and the conditions under which either could succeed. Their analysis did not erase the choice; it made the reasons for choosing more specific.

The account separated differences that a simple verdict concealed. Quiet study required dependable access during examination periods, while a workshop required storage and supervision that could not be assumed from the presence of empty tables alone.

Rather than a simple verdict, the students presented a **nuanced** comparison. Beside each plan stood a card naming its unresolved conditions. Visitors could move a token toward a preferred option and leave a note explaining which need or practical limitation had shaped that preference.

Part A. What does the writer's description "nuanced" suggest about the attitude or approach shown?

(A) suggests a refusal to reach any conclusion at all
(B) presents every position as equally correct without examination
(C) shows careful attention to meaningful differences
(D) praises a complicated style that hides a lack of evidence

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

(A) "Visitors initially asked which proposal was simply better."
(B) "The account separated differences that a simple verdict concealed."
(C) "Beside each plan stood a card naming its unresolved conditions."
(D) "The exhibition compared two proposals for reusing a vacant school room."