Using context clues

Nature Club Clue Hunt

Name _____ Date _____

Quick review Read nearby words and the whole sentence. Try a possible meaning in place of the unfamiliar word; check whether it preserves the idea.

Example The fragile model needed gentle handling because its thin pieces could snap. Fragile means easily broken; the nearby details explain why.

Use details from the nature club account to explain meanings, test replacements, and challenge a mistaken interpretation. For the sentence-writing task, other clear sentences with accurate clues are valid.

The Dry Garden

[1] After weeks without rain, the garden was arid. Its soil crumbled into dry powder. Water was scarce; just two small puddles remained, and birds crowded around them. Under an oak, the ground was dappled with bright patches of sunlight between patches of shade.

[2] A shaded hollow became a refuge for a lizard escaping the fierce heat. Near the fence, a drooping seedling looked almost dead. After the club watered it, the plant revived: its stem straightened and its leaves lifted.

1. What does arid mean here? Give one exact detail that supports your meaning.

2. Does scarce mean plentiful or hard to find in this account? Explain using the number of puddles.

3. Replace dappled with a short phrase that keeps the sentence's meaning.

4. A reader says refuge means a trap. Explain why that meaning does not fit and give a better meaning.

5. Write a new sentence using revived to mean became lively or strong again. Include a clue that shows the change.

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Responses and feedback: Nature Club Clue Hunt

These are sample responses and reasoning. Accept other answers that fit the task and are supported by the text or language rule.

1. Arid means very dry. The soil crumbled into dry powder.

Reasoning: First, notice the weeks without rain. Next, connect the powdery soil to a lack of moisture. These details support very dry, not simply warm.

2. Scarce means hard to find. Only two small puddles remained, so little water was available.

Reasoning: First, count the remaining water sources: just two small puddles. Then connect the birds crowding around them to a limited supply. Plentiful would mean there was a lot, which conflicts with these clues.

3. Marked with patches of light and shade.

Reasoning: First, find the description after dappled: bright sunlight lies between shaded patches. Then use a phrase that preserves this patchy pattern rather than making the entire ground bright.

4. A refuge is a safe shelter here. The lizard uses the shaded hollow to escape the heat, not to become trapped.

Reasoning: First, identify the danger: fierce heat. Next, notice that the shaded hollow helps the lizard escape it. A protective place fits the action, while a trap would prevent escape.

5. The tired puppy revived after a nap and began bouncing after its toy again.

Reasoning: First, show an earlier tired or weak condition. Next, show energy returning. In this sample, tired contrasts with bouncing again, making the meaning clear; other sentences showing renewed energy also work.