

Academic and Domain-Specific Vocabulary

Name: _____

Date: _____

Score: _____ / 10



Quick Review

Grade 6 readers and writers should command both kinds of high-utility vocabulary. **Academic (Tier 2)** words show up across every subject and every assignment: *analyze, conclude, contribute, demonstrate, distinguish, emphasize, evaluate, evidence, factor, indicate, infer, justify, perspective, sequence, summarize, transition*. **Domain-specific (Tier 3)** words have precise meanings inside ONE subject: science (*hypothesis, ecosystem, friction*), social studies (*constitution, democracy, migration*), literature (*theme, narrator, allusion*). Strong writers PICK academic words on purpose — not to sound fancy, but to say exactly what they mean.

PRACTICE

Choose the **BEST** academic or domain-specific word to complete each sentence, or replace an informal word with an academic equivalent.

1. Before answering, Mia carefully _____ the chart, looking at the trend from 1990 to 2020. Which academic verb BEST fits the blank?

- A. argued
- B. analyzed
- C. remembered
- D. decorated

2. Which sentence uses the word **evidence** in an ACADEMICALLY appropriate way?

- A. The lawyer brought the evidence with sad music.
- B. Evidence is when you guess at the end of a story.
- C. Evidence is a feeling you get about a person.
- D. The student used three quotations from the article as evidence to support her claim.

3. The author uses vivid description in chapter one to _____ the danger of the wilderness. Which academic verb BEST fits the blank?

- A. emphasize
- B. decorate
- C. memorize
- D. translate



4. From the dog's tail wagging and quick breathing, you can _____ that it is excited.

Which academic verb BEST fits the blank?

- A. memorize
- B. translate
- C. infer
- D. interrupt

5. Which sentence uses a **domain-specific science** word correctly?

- A. An ecosystem is a small group of plants in one corner of the yard.
- B. An ecosystem is a community of living things together with the non-living parts they interact with.
- C. An ecosystem is the same thing as a single organism.
- D. An ecosystem is a piece of land owned by a farmer.

6. The graph shows that students who read for thirty minutes a day score higher on tests. This is one _____ that explains higher scores.

Which academic noun BEST fits the blank?

- A. factor
- B. feeling
- C. trick
- D. habit

7. Replace the underlined informal word with the BEST academic alternative.

Original: The two graphs show different population trends.

- A. tell
- B. talk about
- C. give
- D. indicate

8. Which sentence uses the **literature** domain word *theme* correctly?

- A. The theme of the novel is that the cover is bright red.
- B. The theme of the novel is the page numbers at the top.
- C. The theme of the novel is that real courage comes from caring for others.
- D. The theme of the novel is the name of the main character.

9. Rewrite each informal sentence using the academic vocabulary indicated in parentheses.

(a) The graph shows the temperature is going up. (use **indicates** and **increase**)

(b) I'm pretty sure this is true because of the data. (use **conclude** and **evidence**)

(c) The author keeps coming back to one big idea. (use **emphasizes** and **theme**)



10. Read this sentence from a social studies article: *After decades of drought, large groups of farmers undertook a **migration** from the countryside to coastal cities, transforming the country's economy.*
(a) In your own words, define **migration** as the article uses it. (b) Use the academic verb **contributed** in a sentence that explains how the drought relates to the migration. (c) Identify ONE other domain-specific social studies word in the sentence and define it briefly.



Answer Keys

- 1 A B C D
- 2 A B C D
- 3 A B C D
- 4 A B C D
- 5 A B C D

- 6 A B C D
- 7 A B C D
- 8 A B C D
- 9
- 10

Explanations

1. B	Analyzed means <i>broke down into parts to study</i> — exactly what Mia does when she looks at a trend on a chart. A <i>argued</i> suggests an opinion fight, not careful study. C <i>remembered</i> is recall, not analysis. D <i>decorated</i> is obviously wrong but matches the pattern of a student grabbing any -ed verb.
2. D	Evidence means <i>specific facts or details that support a claim</i> . D uses the word that way. A treats evidence as a physical prop with music. B confuses evidence with prediction. C confuses evidence with a hunch. Each wrong choice reflects a real student misuse.
3. A	Emphasize means <i>give special importance to</i> — exactly what vivid description does. B <i>decorate</i> describes adding pretty details for their own sake. C <i>memorize</i> is what a reader does, not a writer. D <i>translate</i> means change between languages.
4. C	Infer means <i>draw a conclusion from evidence</i> — using the wagging tail and quick breathing to conclude excitement is a textbook inference. A <i>memorize</i> describes storing information, not reasoning from it. B <i>translate</i> applies to changing languages. D <i>interrupt</i> means to break in on someone speaking — unrelated to drawing conclusions.
5. B	B is the precise scientific meaning of <i>ecosystem</i> — living things plus non-living surroundings (soil, water, air). A drops the non-living parts, a common error. C confuses ecosystem with organism. D confuses an ecosystem with farmland (ownership has nothing to do with the term).
6. A	Factor means <i>one thing that contributes to a result</i> — exactly the academic word for what produces a measured effect. B <i>feeling</i> is too vague and imprecise. C <i>trick</i> is informal and implies deception. D <i>habit</i> describes the action (reading), not its contribution to the outcome.
7. D	Indicate is the formal academic verb for <i>show</i> in this context — graphs <i>indicate</i> a trend. A <i>tell</i> is informal and treats graphs like speakers. B <i>talk about</i> is conversational and even more informal. C <i>give</i> is vague (graphs <i>give</i> what? data? trends?). Only D matches the precise, academic register.
8. C	A theme is a central idea or message a story explores. C states a real theme (<i>real courage comes from caring for others</i>). A confuses theme with cover design. B confuses theme with formatting. D confuses theme with a character name. Each wrong choice reflects a common Grade 6 mix-up between <i>theme</i> and another feature of a book.
9.	Answer: (a) The graph indicates that the temperature is on the increase. (Or: The graph indicates an increase in temperature.) (b) I conclude that this is true based on the evidence in the data. (c) The author emphasizes one central theme throughout the text.



10. **Answer:** (a) **Migration** here means a large-scale movement of people from one region to another (countryside to coastal cities). (b) Sample sentence: *The long drought contributed to the migration by making farming impossible in the countryside, which pushed families toward coastal cities for new work.* (c) **Economy** — the system by which a country produces, distributes, and consumes goods and services. (Also acceptable: **drought** — a long period of unusually low rainfall.)



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