

# 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**)

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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.

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## 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

|             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1. B</b> | <b>Analyzed</b> means <i>broke down into parts to study</i> — exactly what Mia does when she looks at a trend on a chart. <i>A argued</i> suggests an opinion fight, not careful study. <i>C remembered</i> is recall, not analysis. <i>D decorated</i> is obviously wrong but matches the pattern of a student grabbing any -ed verb.                                        |
| <b>2. D</b> | <b>Evidence</b> 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.                                                                                             |
| <b>3. A</b> | <b>Emphasize</b> 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.                                                                                               |
| <b>4. C</b> | <b>Infer</b> 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. |
| <b>5. B</b> | <b>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).                                                                          |
| <b>6. A</b> | <b>Factor</b> 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.                                                         |
| <b>7. D</b> | <b>Indicate</b> 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.                        |
| <b>8. C</b> | A <b>theme</b> is a central idea or message a story explores. <b>C</b> 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.         |
| <b>9.</b>   | <b>Answer:</b> (a) <b>The</b> graph indicates that the temperature is on the increase. (Or: <b>The</b> graph indicates an increase in temperature.) (b) <b>I</b> conclude that this is true based on the evidence in the data. (c) <b>The</b> 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** &mdash; the system by which a country produces, distributes, and consumes goods and services. (Also acceptable: **drought** &mdash; a long period of unusually low rainfall.)



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