“Thunder Butte” by Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve

Build Vocabulary

Using Related Words: Forms of vary

The Word Bank word variegated is related to the familiar word vary, which means “to differ.” Like all words related to vary, variegated includes the idea of “difference” in its meaning. Something that is variegated is marked with different colors, just like the agates that Norman finds on the butte. Here are some other words related to vary.

variety: a collection of different things
varied: of different kinds; many-sided
various: of different kinds; many or several
variable: tending to change or become different

A. DIRECTIONS: Use the correct word to complete each sentence.

1. I don’t know what kind of tape to get for Mark because his taste in music is so (variegated, variable) ________________; one week all he listens to is classical music, and the next week he won’t listen to anything but jazz.

2. I think I’ll go to Music World to shop for something, because they have the greatest (variety, various) ________________ of tapes.

3. After looking in (various, variable) ________________ sections of the store, I decided to get something by the Beatles.

4. I thought that Mark would be sure to find something that he likes in their music, since their songs are so (variety, varied) ________________.

Using the Word Bank

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>meanderings</th>
<th>diminutive</th>
<th>variegated</th>
<th>heathen</th>
<th>adamant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

B. DIRECTIONS: Match each word in the left column with its definition in the right column. Write the letter of the definition on the line next to the word it defines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1. variegated</th>
<th>2. adamant</th>
<th>3. meanderings</th>
<th>4. heathen</th>
<th>5. diminutive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. not willing to give in</td>
<td>b. not civilized</td>
<td>c. wanderings</td>
<td>d. very small</td>
<td>e. marked with different colors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Build Spelling Skills: The ie/ei Rule

Spelling Strategy One of the earliest spelling rules we learn is this: “Put i before e except after c or when sounded like a as in neighbor and weigh.”

- i before e—believes, thief, relief
- except after c—receiving, conceited
- or when sounded like a—eight, neighborhood

A. DIRECTIONS: Think about the ie/ei rule as you study the following pairs of words. On the line next to each pair, write the word that is correctly spelled.

1. receipt, reciept
2. nieghed, neighed
3. apeice, apiece
4. grief, greif
5. retreiver, retriever
6. achieve, acheive
7. decietful, deceitful
8. slieghbells, sleighbells

B. DIRECTIONS: Complete each sentence by writing the letters—ie or ei—that will spell the incomplete word correctly.

1. You are not trying to dec___ ___ve me, Norman, are you?
2. I think that long p___ ___ce of wood really is an old coup stick.
3. Climbing the butte and retr___ ___ving that by yourself must have been hard.
4. I guess your wish to please your grandfather outw___ ___ghed your fear.
5. You must be quite proud of your ach___ ___vement.
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**Build Grammar Skills: Possessives as Adjectives**

**Adjectives** are words that modify nouns or pronouns. They can answer the questions *what kind?* and *how many?* They can also answer the question *whose?* Look at these sentences.

- The sun’s rays heated the rocky landscape.
- Norman’s mother told him to be careful.
- The boy found a Sioux warrior’s coup stick on the butte.

In these sentences, the words *sun’s*, *Norman’s*, and *warrior’s* are possessive nouns—nouns that show possession or ownership. These possessives function as adjectives because they answer the question *whose?* Now look at these sentences.

- Norman examines the stick and its markings. He showed the stick to his grandfather.
- In these sentences, the words *its* and *his* are possessive pronouns—pronouns that show possession or ownership. Other possessive pronouns function as adjectives and include *my*, *your*, *her*, *our*, *their*. All can answer the question *whose?*

**A. Practice:** Circle the possessives that function as adjectives in the each of the following sentences. Remember that these words answer the question *whose?*

1. Norman dressed in his oldest clothes and pulled on worn boots to protect his feet.
2. “Guess I’ll go,” Norman said to his mother, who was pouring hot water into her dish pan.
3. Norman whistled, trying to echo the meadowlarks’ happy song, as he left on his journey.
4. The boy’s heart pounded as he realized that the stick had once belonged to the old ones.
5. Norman’s grandfather explained the thunderbolt’s meaning.
6. Grandfather said, “The Thunders favored a certain few of the young men who sought their vision on the butte.”

**B. Writing Application:** Write a sentence about each topic provided below, using possessives as adjectives as suggested. When you are finished, reread your sentences and underline any additional possessives that you used as adjectives.

1. Write a sentence about a challenge that you have faced, using the possessive *my* as an adjective.

2. Write a sentence that tells something about a member of your family. Use the person’s name in a possessive form.

3. Write a sentence about your school. Use the possessive *school’s* as an adjective.

4. Write a question that you might ask someone whom you recently met. Use the possessive *your* as an adjective.
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Reading Strategy: Understanding Shades of Meaning

What’s the difference between looking and searching, between knew and understood, between instruction and command? In each pair, the words are similar in meaning but are not exactly the same. Each word has a slightly different sense. For example, searching seems more intense than looking, understood suggests deeper or more careful thought than knew, and command seems more forceful than instruction. These differences often are called “shades of meaning.”

Writers choose their words carefully. (For example, Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve used looking, understood, and command in the first few paragraphs of “Thunder Butte.”) When you read, therefore, try to understand shades of meaning in the words you meet. If you do, you will have a clearer picture of what the writer is sharing.

Directions: Think about the underlined word in each of these passages from “Thunder Butte.” Write a word that has a similar meaning. (Check a dictionary, if you wish.) Then, write a sentence or two explaining how the shade of meaning in that word helps you understand the story better.

1. Sarah grunted scornfully, “No one believes in dreams or any of those old superstitious ways anymore.”

2. Then Norman smiled as he remembered his grandfather’s command to climb the south trail that wound to the top.

3. His grandfather’s tent was a white shoe box in its clearing, and beside it stood a diminutive form waving a white flag.

4. “This,” he said, holding the coup stick upright, “is a relic of our people’s past glory when it was a good thing to be an Indian.”
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**Literary Analysis: Atmosphere**

**Atmosphere** is the feeling or mood of a work of literature. Through a careful choice of details, phrases, and images, a writer can create an atmosphere that is light-hearted or serious, cheerful or threatening, silly or mysterious.

**A. DIRECTIONS:** Read the following passage, and circle the images, phrases, or details that help to create a certain atmosphere. One the lines below, write a sentence describing the atmosphere that the details convey.

1. He was afraid that the cane may have plunged into a rattlesnake den. Carefully he pulled at the stout branch, wiggling it this way and that with one hand while he dug with the other. It came loose, sending a shower of rocks down the hill, and Norman saw that something else was sticking up in the hole he had uncovered.

2. “Sarah,” he said as he put the tools away, “think of the stick as an object that could be in a museum, a part of history. It’s not like we were going to fall down on our knees and pray to it.” His voice was light and teasing as he tried to make peace.
   But Sarah stood stiffly at the stove preparing supper and would not answer. Norman felt sick. His appetite was gone. When his mother set a plate of food before him he excused himself saying, “I guess I’m too tired to eat,” and went to his room.

**B. DIRECTIONS:** Use the organizer below to record other details in the story that help to create atmosphere. Use the space in the center to name the mood or feeling you sense. Jot down the details that contribute to this atmosphere.