

Name _____



Shaped By Words

Directions: Read the passage carefully. Pay attention to word choices and surrounding clues. For each bolded word, use the context to determine its meaning. Explain whether the word carries a **positive, neutral, or negative connotation**. Then, answer the final synthesis question about how word choice affects tone.

Excerpt from a Modern Novel

The train lurched forward with a **cacophony** of screeches, drowning out the muttered complaints of passengers pressed shoulder to shoulder. Alina clutched her notebook, her face **obscured** by strands of hair that fell loose in the rush. She glanced up and caught the **meticulous** gaze of the man across from her, who arranged his coat and gloves with almost obsessive care.

Outside, the city's skyline appeared **interminable**, its towers stretching into a gray horizon that seemed to have no end. Alina exhaled, her thoughts tangled between ambition and doubt, her resolve shaken yet **tenacious**, clinging stubbornly to the dream that had carried her this far.

Activity - Vocabulary in Context Questions

1. What does **cacophony** most likely mean in this passage? What connotation does it carry?
2. What does **obscured** mean here? How does its connotation affect the image of Alina?
3. What does **meticulous** mean when describing the man? What does this imply about his personality?
4. What does **interminable** suggest about the skyline? What feeling does this choice of word create?
5. What does **tenacious** mean as used in the passage? Is it positive, negative, or neutral?
6. Overall, how do the author's word choices (like cacophony, meticulous, interminable, tenacious) shape the tone of the excerpt?