Context Clues: Definition and Restatement

Directions: Read the following paragraph. Pay attention to the bold words and their context clues. Then answer the questions below.

(1) Paleobotany can be defined as the study of plants that existed long ago—in the age of the dinosaurs, for example. (2) To study these plants, paleobotanists (the scientists who study ancient plants) find and examine evidence of past life called fossils. (3) Plant fossils are typically preserved, or kept intact, when plants are buried under tons of sand and mud. (4) Under great pressure, the sand and mud become rock, the plants decompose, or rot, and the fossils carry an imprint of the plant. (5) Then minerals seep into the fossil, creating a precise replica—an exact copy—in stone.

1. What context clues in Sentence 1 help you determine the meaning of the word paleobotany?
   a. can be defined as
   b. comma
   c. comma and dash
   d. dash and age of the dinosaurs

2. What is the meaning of the word paleobotany?
   a. the study of minerals
   b. the study of the age of the dinosaurs
   c. the study of plants that existed long ago
   d. scientists who study ancient plants

3. What context clue in Sentence 2 helps define the word paleobotanist?
   a. comma
   b. parentheses
   c. ancient plants
   d. fossils

4. According to Sentence 4, decompose means to ___________________________

5. According to sentence 5, a replica is ___________________________

6. Based on the context clues in the passage, write a definition of fossil.

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