Answer Key

Lesson 1.3: Simplifying Expressions with Like Terms

Part A

1. Yes (both are x-terms)
2. No (3y has y; 3 is a constant)
3. No (a and a^2 are different powers)

Part B

4. 8x
5. 7n
6. 6p + 5
7. 11m − 1
8. 8x (note: 9x − x = 9x − 1x)
9. 5a + 4b
10. 3y + 6
11. 6c + 2
12. 7x − 1

Part C

13. 3a + 8b − 2
14. Sample: 5x has the variable x, while 5 is only a number (a constant), so they are different kinds of terms.

Common mistakes to watch for

- Treating x and x^2 as like terms
- Dropping the constant when combining (for example writing 6p instead of 6p + 5 on #6)
- Forgetting that a lone x means 1x (#8)
- Combining unlike terms across variables (#9)

Grading suggestion

- Parts A+B (12 items): about 8 to 10 correct shows ready to move on
- Misses on #6, #8, #11: reteach negatives and the "invisible 1"
- Challenge items optional; do not withhold progress for skipping them