



Words in Context

"By words the mind is winged"
- Aristophanes



Blue Book Entry

1. What do you generally do when you come to an unknown word while reading?
2. How do you figure out the meaning of a new word when you are reading?



Context Clues

- Context - *words surrounding an unfamiliar vocabulary term*
- Clues – *hints in the text to find the meaning of the unfamiliar word*



Types of Context Clues

- Definition Clues
- Synonym Clues
- Antonym Clues
- Example/Illustration Clues
- Description Clues

Definition Clues

- Author provides a formal definition *immediately* after the new word is introduced
- New word is emphasized – *italic* or **boldfaced** letters
- Often used in college textbooks, newspaper and magazine articles

Definition Clues...

Example: Many children of normal intelligence have great difficulty learning how to read, write, or work with numbers. Often thought of as "underachievers," such children are said to have a **learning disability**, a disorder that interferes in some way with school achievement.

Definition Clues...

Common Signals	Example Definitions
<i>refers to</i>	Xenophobia <i>refers to</i> the fear of ...
<i>or</i>	... because he was the proprietor <i>or</i> owner.
<i>can be defined as</i>	Schizophrenia <i>can be defined as</i> ...
<i>means</i>	... involves metacognition which <i>means</i> to ...
<i>is / are</i>	A plutocracy <i>is</i> a government controlled by the wealthy...
- (dash)	Agoraphobia – the fear of crowded ...
, (comma)	Hydrocortisone , a steroid hormone,...

Synonym Clues

syn'o'nym [sin-uh-nim]
Noun- a word having the same or nearly the same meaning as another in the language, as *joyful, elated, glad*.

- *syn* – "together", "similar", "the same"
- *onym* – "word", "name"
- *synonym clues* – similar words in the sentence (or sentences) surrounding the unknown word

Synonym Clues...

Example: By wearing a bit of make-up every day, Carrie was able to **enhance** her appearance. Her attitude also **improved**.

Synonym Clues...

Common Signals	Example Synonyms
<i>or</i>	Darien saw the apparition <i>or</i> <u>ghost</u> of a young girl.
<i>also called</i>	The <u>share</u> , which is <i>also called</i> the dividend ...
<i>in other words</i>	John's compelling arguments convinced everyone in the room. <i>In other words</i> , his arguments were very <u>forceful</u> .

Antonym Clues

an·to·nym [*an-tuh-nim*]
noun- a word opposite in meaning to another.

- *ant(i)* – “opposite”, “against”
- *onym* – “word”, “name”
- *antonym clues* – words in the sentence (or sentences) that provide the opposite meaning of the unknown word

Antonym Clues...

Example: Marcus tried to be **polite** and **courteous** to the police officer, but James continued to be **impudent**.

Antonym Clues...

Common Signals	Example Antonyms
<i>but or yet</i>	Gary is an atheist . <i>Yet</i> , he talks to people who <u>believe in God</u> . (An atheist is ...)
<i>while, whereas, or although</i>	<i>While</i> Jim's ideas were <u>easily understood</u> , Kim's ideas were quite obscure . (Obscure ideas are...)
<i>however</i>	Amber is outgoing . Jason, <i>however</i> , is an introvert . (An introvert is ...)
<i>on the other hand</i>	Kathy was ravenous because she had not eaten all day. Amy, <i>on the other hand</i> , was <u>not very hungry</u> and left the table. (Ravenous means...)

Example/Illustration Clues

- *example clues* work by providing an example (or list of examples) that has something *in common* with the new vocabulary term

Example/Illustration Clues

Example: **Nocturnal** creatures, *such as bats and owls*, have highly developed senses that enable them to function in the dark.

Example/Illustration Clues...

Common Signals	Examples/Illustrations
<i>such as</i>	Lin gathered empirical evidence <i>such as</i> <u>statistics</u> and <u>historical records</u> to support her theory. (statistics/historical records can be proven)
<i>for example/for instance</i>	Arlen tried to impugn Audrey's reputation at work. <i>For example</i> , he sent an <u>unfavorable</u> letter to Audrey's boss and he <u>complained to other managers</u> about her "lousy" performance. (based on the examples, to impugn means to attack or destroy)
<i>include/including</i>	The use of amphetamines , which <i>include</i> <u>caffeine</u> and <u>cocaine</u> , became widespread among the overworked night crew.

Description Clues

- *description clues* provide a clear picture of a new vocabulary term that its meaning is clear **without** any signal words

Description Clues

Example: The **indolent** employee **did absolutely nothing** and was eventually fired.

(It is clear that the employee was fired because he was lazy.)

Blue Book - Quick Review

1. Often, a reader can figure out the meaning of a new word — without using the dictionary — by paying attention to the _____ the author provides.
2. In the sentences below, which type of context clue is used for the italicized word?
 - a. You can't take certain classes unless you've taken a *prerequisite*; for instance, you can't take Spanish Literature I unless you've taken Spanish III.
 - b. There are thick pine forests at the foot of the mountain, but higher up, the trees become *sparse*.
 - c. Talent may take years to surface. When Beethoven was a young child, his great *aptitude* to music was not at all apparent to his teachers.

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2. In the sentences below, which type of context clue is used for the italicized word?
 - a. You can't take certain classes unless you've taken a *prerequisite*; **for instance**, you can't take Spanish Literature I unless you've taken Spanish III. (**Example/Illustration**)
 - b. There are thick pine forests at the foot of the mountain, **but** higher up, the trees become *sparse*. (**Antonym**)
 - c. Talent may take years to surface. When Beethoven was a young child, his great *aptitude* to music was not at all apparent to his teachers. (**Description – no signal word**)



Let's Practice

- pgs. 7 - 10; Activities 1.1 – 1.4
- HW pgs. 19 – 22
 - *Chapter Review Questions (1-4)*
 - *Application Questions*
- Study for Quiz on Ch. 1