



Objective

The student will use strategies to identify the meaning of words in context.

Materials

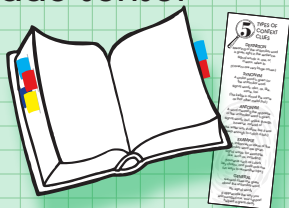
- ▶ Text
Choose text within students' instructional-independent reading level range.
- ▶ Context clues bookmark (Activity Master V.041.AM1)
- ▶ Sticky notes
Small slips of paper can also be used.
- ▶ References (e.g., dictionary or glossary)
- ▶ Pencils

Activity

Students determine the meaning of unfamiliar words by using context clues.

1. Provide each student with a copy of the text, student sheet, sticky notes, context clues bookmark, and references.
2. The students read the first paragraph or page of the text silently and think about the meaning.
3. Identify unfamiliar words. Attempt to determine meaning by using context clues. Use the bookmark as a reference for the types of context clues and signal words. Write the word on a sticky note and place it on the page where the word appears. Wait for partner to finish the page or paragraph.
4. Discuss the meaning of the text, any unfamiliar words, and the context clues that are used to determine meaning with partner.
5. If unable to determine the meaning of the word(s) ask partner for assistance. If still unable to determine the meaning of the word, look it up in the dictionary and discuss meaning.
6. Continue until the text is read and discussed with partner.
7. Peer evaluation

"I read the word 'extinct' which was unfamiliar. The sentence read, 'The dinosaurs lived long ago, but now they are extinct.' I noticed the word 'but' which is a signal word for an antonym -- so I knew that extinct might mean the opposite of lived. When I used it in the sentence, it made sense."



Extensions and Adaptations

- ▶ Complete the student sheet (Activity Master V.041.SS).
- ▶ Write an explanation of how a context clue was used to determine the meaning of the unfamiliar words on the back of the student sheet.
- ▶ Use copy of the text and circle unfamiliar words and underline the context clues and signal words.



TYPES OF CONTEXT CLUES

DEFINITION

Meaning of the unfamiliar word is given right in the sentence.

Signal words: is, are, or, means, refers to

(Caverns are very large caves.)

SYNONYM

A similar word is given for the unfamiliar word.

Signal words: also, as, like, same, too

(She is cautious crossing the street and also careful riding her bike.)

ANTONYM

A word meaning the opposite of the unfamiliar word is given.

Signal words: but, unlike, though however, instead of

(The water was shallow, but it was deep enough to catch a fish.)

EXAMPLE

Samples, instances, or ideas of the unfamiliar word are given.

Signal words: for example, like, such as, including

(Souvenirs such as T-shirts, key chains, and postcards are fun ways to remember trips.)

GENERAL

General clues are given about the unfamiliar word.

No signal words

(I appreciate the way you encouraged me. I won first prize.)

HOW I CAN USE CONTEXT CLUES TO FIGURE OUT THE MEANING OF UNFAMILIAR WORDS.

1. Think about the five types of context clues.
2. Look for words, phrases, and signal words that may help to figure out the meaning of the unfamiliar word.
3. If necessary, reread or read ahead to find other clues about the word.
4. Use the clues to help figure out the meaning of the word.
5. Try the learned meaning in the sentence.
6. If it makes sense, continue reading.
7. If no clues are available, or if unable to figure out the meaning, look the word up in the dictionary.



Name _____

V.041.SS

Get A Clue!

Unfamiliar Word	Clue Used? YES NO	If yes, context clue type	Meaning				