Word Learning Routine

Use the following steps to figure out unfamiliar words. If you figure out what the word means, continue reading. If not, then try the next step.

1. **Say the Word or Phrase Aloud.**

   Circle the word or phrase that you find confusing. Read the sentence aloud.

2. **Look Inside the Word or Phrase.**

   Look for familiar word parts, such as prefixes, suffixes, and root words. Try breaking the word into smaller parts. Can you figure out a meaning from the word parts you know?

3. **Look Around the Word or Phrase.**

   Look for clues in the words or sentences around the word you don't know and the context of the paragraph or selection.

4. **Look Beyond the Word or Phrase.**

   Look for the meaning of the word or phrase in a dictionary, glossary, or thesaurus.

5. **Check the Meaning.**

   Ask yourself, "Does this meaning make sense in the sentence?"

Using Context Clues

👥 Introduction Sometimes when you're reading a story or an article, you'll come across a word you don't know. When you don't know the meaning of a word, often you can figure it out by looking at the words and sentences around it. When you do this, you are using **context clues**.

Kinds of Context Clues	Examples
Look for a **definition** in the text.	In high school, Jim Lovell built his first <u>rocket</u>, a jet engine that could fly to great heights.
Find an **example** that will give you clues about the word's meaning.	Lovell's first attempt was a <u>failure</u>. His rocket flew into the air but then exploded and crashed.
Look for a **restatement**. A restatement happens when the word is discussed in a way that makes its meaning clear.	A rocket is pushed upward by materials that are <u>combustible</u>. These materials burn and release gases.

👥 Guided Practice **Read the paragraph below with a partner. Circle the context clues that help you understand the meaning of the underlined word. Write the meanings of the underlined words on the space provided.**

HINT Sometimes context clues can be found in a sentence before or after the word you're trying to figure out.

  Jim Lovell had always been <u>fascinated</u> by rockets. He was interested in learning everything about them and even built his own rocket. Lovell applied to the United States Naval Academy but was <u>rejected</u>. After failing to get into the Academy, Lovell did not give up. He <u>persisted</u>, or kept trying, and finally succeeded. After the Academy, he joined the NASA space program.

fascinated: _____

rejected: _____

persisted: _____

For numbers 1–4, use context clues to figure out the meaning of each underlined word.

> NASA chose Lovell to <u>command</u> the *Apollo 13* space mission. Lovell was in charge of two men and of making all final decisions. After they were in space for a little more than two days, Lovell and his crew ran into trouble. One of the oxygen tanks blew up. The <u>explosion</u> caused a leak in another tank, and now there wouldn't be enough oxygen for a moon landing. Lovell and his crew had to return to Earth. Their safe return was due to Lovell's <u>capable</u> leadership.

1 What does the word <u>command</u> mean?

   A   to study

   B   to fly with others on

   C   to be at the head of

   D   to be part of

2 What words help you understand the meaning of <u>command</u>?

   A   "in charge of"

   B   "two men"

   C   "space mission"

   D   "chose Lovell"

3 What does the word <u>explosion</u> mean?

   A   a leak

   B   a bursting of something

   C   a lack of oxygen

   D   leaving outer space

4 What does the word <u>capable</u> suggest about Lovell as a leader?

   A   He is a gentle and patient leader.

   B   He is skillful at leading others.

   C   He is harsh to those he leads.

   D   He is weak when leading others.

Lesson 13
Unfamiliar Words

Learning Target ➔ **Using context clues to figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases will deepen your understanding of the texts you read.**

▶ **Read** Informational texts often have words people don't use in everyday life.

- Some words usually appear only in texts in one **subject area**. For example, you'll see the word *fossil* in science texts and the word *geography* in social studies texts.

- Other words, called **academic words**, are useful in many subject areas. For example, the academic word *process* often appears in both science and social studies texts.

As you read, you can use **context clues** to figure out the meanings of unfamiliar words and phrases. Clues might be synonyms, antonyms, examples, or definitions.

Read the passage below. Circle the phrase <u>conceived of</u>, and underline context clues that help you learn its meaning.

INVENTING THE CRANE

Ancient Greek engineers thought of ways to make new machines from older ones. For example, they conceived of and built a compound machine called the crane. Their idea combined the lever, pulley, and wheel-and-axle into one machine.

Wheel

Axle

Lever

Pulley
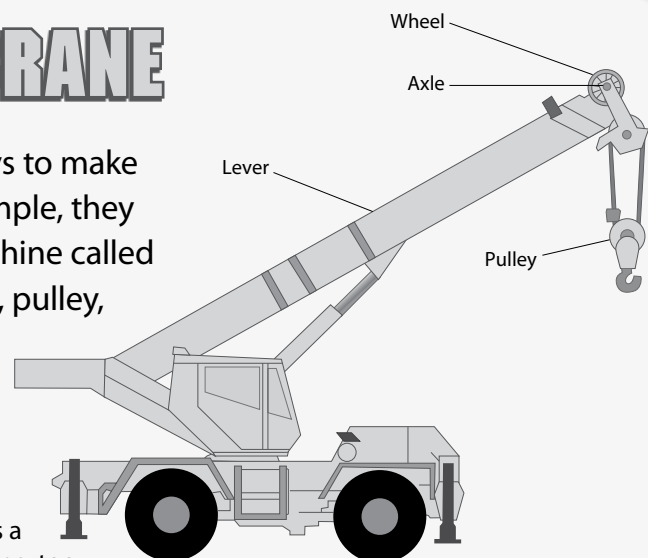
A modern crane is a compound machine, too.

▶ **Think** What have you learned about figuring out the meaning of unfamiliar words? Complete the chart below to figure out the meaning of the phrase <u>conceived of</u> as it is used in the passage. Then explain what the phrase most likely means.

Helpful Context		Clues		Possible Meaning
	→		→	

The meaning of the phrase: _____

_____

▶ **Talk** Share your chart and meaning with a partner.

- Did you agree about the helpful context?
- Did you agree about the meaning of the phrase?

◎ **Academic Talk**
Use these phases to talk about the text.
- **subject area**   • **academic words**
- **context clues**

Fire and Air

by Johanna Joyner

1   Starting a fire is a bit like following a recipe. Getting anything to combust takes three ingredients: fuel, heat, and oxygen. All three are needed for burning to begin, but where do these ingredients come from? Fuel is anything that burns easily, including wood, paper, or grass. Heat can come from many places, but most people use matches. And oxygen, of course, is a gas in the air around us.

2   If a fire doesn't have enough of any one of the three ingredients, it will be weak. To strengthen the fire, just add one or more of the ingredients. It is simple to add more fuel or heat, but how do you add more oxygen? From a safe distance, blow on the fire. You will see it strengthen because blowing adds oxygen to the fire, making it burn vigorously. Your fire will grow bigger, brighter, and stronger.

3   To understand the role oxygen plays in keeping a fire burning, try this experiment:

An Experiment with Fire

4   **Materials You Will Need**

- **Most important:** A Teacher Helping You
- three small candles (tealights)
- three saucers
- two glass jars, one larger than the other

5   **Procedure to Follow**

Put each candle on a saucer, and have your teacher light each one. Place a jar over two of the candles. Pay attention to the candles to monitor what happens over time. You will observe that the candle with the least air available—the one covered by the smaller jar—is the first one extinguished. Keep watching to see which candle goes out next. Blow out the last candle.

Close Reader Habits

As you read, **circle** unfamiliar words or phrases. Then **underline** words or phrases that give you clues about their meanings.

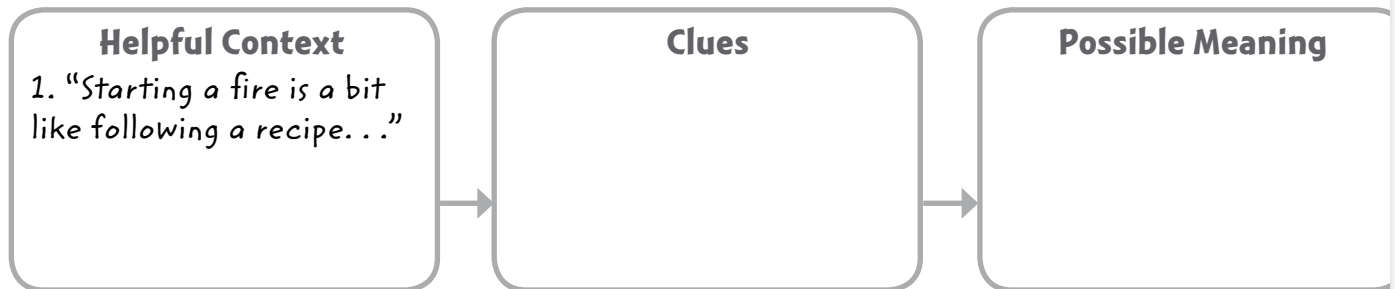**How did context clues help you figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words in the science text?**

A chart will help you identify the parts of the text that provide context clues.
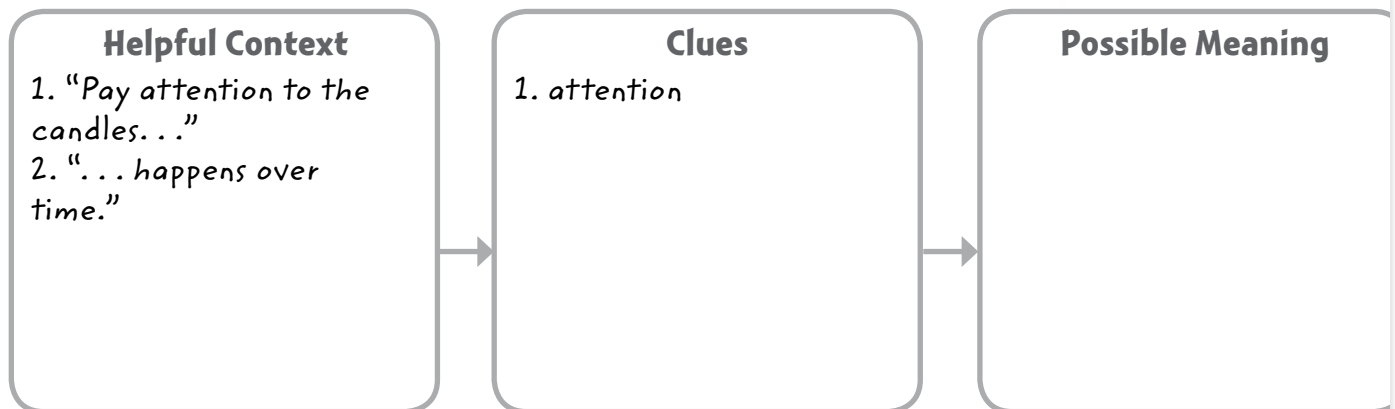
Think

1 Complete the chart below. Write the helpful context and clues you used to figure out the meaning of each unfamiliar word.

Combust **means:**

Helpful Context	Clues	Possible Meaning
1. "Starting a fire is a bit like following a recipe. . ."		

Monitor **means:**

Helpful Context	Clues	Possible Meaning
1. "Pay attention to the candles. . ." 2. ". . . happens over time."	1. attention	

Talk

2 Explain how figuring out the meaning of unfamiliar words helped you understand the text. Which context clues were the most helpful? Why?

Write

HINT Replace an unfamiliar word with its possible meaning to see if it makes sense.

3 **Short Response** Briefly explain how you figured out the meaning of <u>combust</u> and <u>monitor</u>. Use text details to support your answer. Use the space on page 208 to write your answer.

Greek and Latin Word Parts

Introduction
English words come from many languages, including Greek and Latin.

- A **root** is a word part that usually can't stand alone as a word. Sometimes one root is added to another root to make a word, as in the word *photograph*.

Root	Meaning	Root	Meaning
graph	"write"	*act*	"do"
vis, vid	"see"	*photo*	"light"
phon, phono	"sound, voice"	*port*	"carry"

- **Affixes** are word parts, such as prefixes and suffixes, that are added to word roots to make words. You can add the root *vis* to *-ible* to make *visible*.

Prefix	Meaning	Suffix	Meaning
auto-	"self"	*-ist, -er, -or*	"someone who"
tele-	"distance"	*-able, -ible*	"able or capable"

- As you learn Greek and Latin roots and affixes, your vocabulary will grow.

Guided Practice

Circle the roots in the underlined words. Write the meaning of each root. Then tell a partner the meaning of each underlined word.

HINT Remember, words may have two roots or a root and an affix.

1 My favorite actor is Jesse B.

_____

2 I have five photographs of Jesse B. on my wall.

_____

3 One even has an autograph on it.

_____

4 I've asked my mom if I could telephone Jesse B.

_____

5 She said I could just watch Jesse B. on television.

_____

For numbers 1–4, read each sentence. Then answer the question.

1 I decided to compose a letter to Jesse B.

The prefix *com-* means "with," and the root *poser* means "to put or set down." What is the meaning of compose as used in the sentence?

A to think

B to write

C to talk

D to mail

2 Dear Jesse B., I just read a biography about you.

The prefix *bio-* means "life," and the root *graph* means "write." What is the meaning of biography as used in the sentence?

A writing about the life of an actor

B writing about someone else's life

C writing about the beauty of life

D writing about how to live your life

3 Your life story inspires me and many other fans.

The prefix *in-* can mean "within," and the root *spir* means "breathe." What is the meaning of inspires as used in the sentence?

A causes people to become alive

B causes a heavy wind to blow

C causes people to faint

D causes strong lungs

4 I hear you are a very benevolent person, giving to many charities.

The prefix *bene-* means "well," and the root *velle* means "wish." What is the meaning of benevolent as used in the sentence?

A surrounded by good people

B showing good will to others

C liked by many good people

D hoping others are good

Over Bridge, Under Tunnel

by Lloyd Frank

1   Mountains, lakes, and rivers can get in the way of people traveling from one place to another. There are structures that help people pass such obstacles. Bridges and tunnels help people overcome such barriers.

2   Bridges and tunnels are different in design and placement. A bridge is built over a body of water, a highway, or a railroad track. A tunnel, in contrast, is a passageway under the ground, under a body of water, or through a mountain. Bridges vary in shape and are often placed above ground or water. Some are even famous. The Golden Gate Bridge is one of the most renowned bridges in the world. This celebrated structure crosses over the entrance to San Francisco Bay and connects San Francisco to northern California. The Golden Gate is known for its length and height. But it is best known for its beauty. People come from all over the world not just to cross the Golden Gate but simply to look at it.

3   Of course, not even the world's most famous tunnel gets many visitors who just want to look. It's hard to get a good view of a subterranean passage. But since the Channel Tunnel opened in 1994, it has transported millions of people. The Channel Tunnel, or "Chunnel," runs beneath the English Channel and connects France and England. The Chunnel is a rail tunnel. The only automobiles that cross it are carried on special railway cars. The Chunnel is not the longest tunnel in the world, but it is one of the few tunnels that connects two countries.

Close Reader Habits

How can context clues help you? **Circle** words that are unfamiliar. Reread the article. **Underline** clues that help you figure out the meaning of the words.

▶ **Think** Use what you learned from reading the science article to respond to the following questions.

1 What is the meaning of <u>obstacles</u> as it is used in paragraph 1 of the text?

    A things made below or above ground

    B things that slow or stop movement

    C things that help people travel

    D things built through mountains or over water

> Synonyms are context clues with meanings that are almost like the unfamiliar words. Antonyms are context clues with meanings that are opposite to the unfamiliar words.

2 Underline **four** context clues in paragraph 2 that **best** help you understand the meaning of the word <u>renowned</u>.

> A bridge is built over a body of water, a highway, or a railroad track. . . . Bridges vary in shape and are often placed above ground or water. Some are even famous. The Golden Gate Bridge is one of the most renowned bridges in the world. This celebrated structure crosses over the entrance to San Francisco Bay and connects San Francisco to northern California. The Golden Gate is known for its length and height. But it is best known for its beauty.

▶ **Talk**

3 Discuss the meaning of the word <u>subterranean</u> as it is used in this sentence from paragraph 3:

> It is hard to get a good view of a <u>subterranean</u> passage.

HINT Use a chart to organize your thoughts about context clues.

▶ 📝 **Write**

4 **Short Response** Write a definition of the word <u>subterranean</u>. Identify the context clues you found. Describe the strategy you used to figure out the meaning of the word. Use details from the text to support your response. Use the space provided on page 209 to write your answer.

over Bridge, Under Tunnel

3 **Use the chart below to organize your ideas.**

Helpful Context		Clues		Possible Meaning
	→		→	
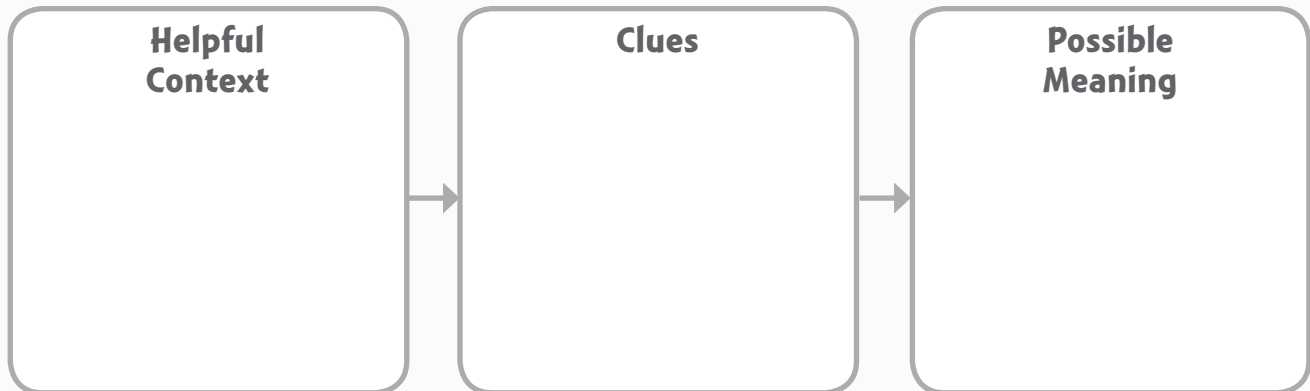
Write **Use the space below to write your answer to the question on page 207.**

4 **Short Response** Write a definition of the word <u>subterranean</u>. Identify the context clues you found. Describe the strategy you used to figure out the meaning of the word. Use details from the text to support your response.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

WORDS TO KNOW
As you read, look inside, around, and beyond these words to figure out what they mean.

- **series**
- **hinged**
- **foreign**

Seashells

by Bela Moté

1   If you walk along the seashore, you will probably see many kinds of shells. Seashells were once the homes of live animals. The animals that live inside shells have soft bodies, so they need their shells to protect them from harm. Their shells save them from storms or predators such as starfish, birds, and otters. Shells also give the animals a shape. In that way, shells are like skeletons on the outside of the body. When the animals die, the shells remain.

2   Creatures with shells belong to a group of animals called **mollusks**. Not all mollusks have shells. Of the mollusks that do have shells, there are two main groups.

worm shell

slipper shell

helmet shell

Univalves

3   More than three-quarters of all mollusks are **univalves**, a word that means "having a shell that is all one piece." The shell is coiled, and inside the coil is the soft body of the mollusk. Many univalves are named for their appearance. Look at the examples above. Does the helmet shell remind you of a helmet? How about the worm and slipper shells?
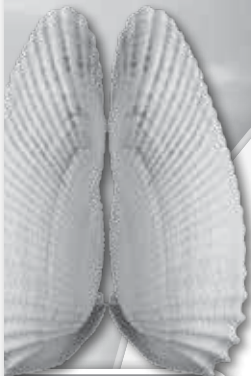
4   Some univalves have small holes in their shells. Abalone shells have a series of holes. Water and wastes are expelled, or pushed out, through the holes. The inside of an abalone shell gleams with different rainbow colors. This iridescent substance is called mother-of-pearl.
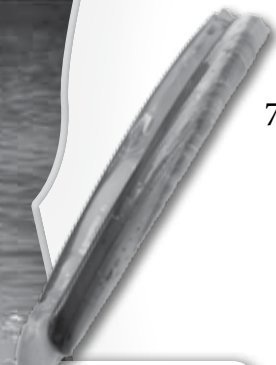
abalone shell

Bivalves

angel wing shell

kitten's paw shell

jackknife shell

5   After univalves, **bivalves** are the next largest group of mollusks. When a bivalve is alive, the two parts of its shell are hinged. After the animal dies, you may find just one part of the shell lying on the beach.

6   Many bivalves have names that reflect their appearance. A jackknife is a knife that folds into its own case. The jackknife clam has an appropriate name because it has about the same shape as a closed jackknife. Are angel wing and kitten's paw fitting names for the shells shown here?

7   There are many different kinds of clams, from very small to very large. The giant clam is the largest bivalve. Some are four feet long and weigh 500 pounds. The giant clam even grows its own food. Tiny plants get caught in the clam. The plants get what they need from the clam, but eventually the clam eats the plants.

giant oyster shell

8   Another common bivalve is the oyster. All oysters can make pearls, but the pearl oyster makes the most beautiful ones. A pearl is an accident. A grain of sand or something else gets inside the oyster shell. An oyster is creating new shell material all the time. To protect itself from the foreign body, the oyster covers it with the same material that the oyster's shell is made of. The result is a pearl.
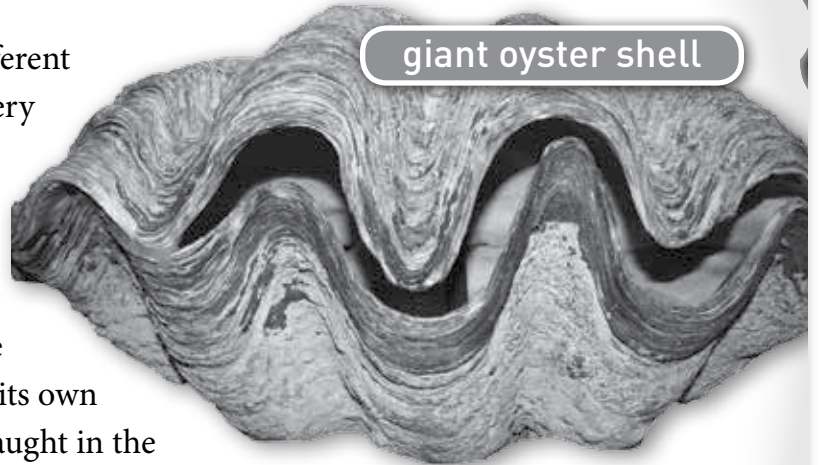
pearl oyster shell

Think Use what you learned from reading the science text to respond to the following questions.

1 Read the sentence from paragraph 1 in the passage.

> Their shells save them from storms or <u>predators</u> such as starfish, birds, and otters.

What does the author suggest to the reader by using the word <u>predators</u>? Pick **two** choices.

    A Predators can harm some animals.

    B Predators need to find shelter from storms.

    C An animal's shell helps protect it.

    D All predators have skeletons.

    E When the animal dies, the shell remains.

2 This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then answer Part B.

Part A
What is the meaning of the word <u>iridescent</u> as it is used in paragraph 4?

    A not letting light through

    B easy to notice or understand

    C shining with many varying colors

    D a small amount of something

Part B
Which phrase from the passage helps the reader understand the meaning of <u>iridescent</u>?

    A "next largest group of mollusks"

    B "have small holes in their shells"

    C "the inside of an abalone shell"

    D "gleams with different rainbow colors"

3 This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then answer Part B.

Part A

What is the meaning of the word <u>bivalve</u> as it is used in paragraph 5?

    A   having a hard outer shell

    B   having a shell with two pieces

    C   having a soft outer shell

    D   having a shell that is all one piece

Part B

Underline the **two** phrases in paragraph 5 that **best** support your answer in Part A.

After univalves, **bivalves** are the next largest group of mollusks. When a bivalve is alive, the two parts of its shell are hinged. After the animal dies, you may find just one part of the shell lying on the beach.

4 Read the sentence from the passage.

The jackknife clam has an <u>appropriate</u> name because it has about the same shape as a closed jackknife.

What does the author tell the reader by using the word <u>appropriate</u>? Pick **two** choices.

    A   Bivalves are the largest group of mollusks.

    B   Jackknife describes the shape of the clam.

    C   An angel wing is a good name for the clam.

    D   Jackknife is a good name for the clam.

    E   The clam looks like an open jackknife.

    F   A jackknife folds into its own case.

📝 **Write**

5 **Short Response** What does the author tell the reader by using the underlined word in the sentence below from paragraph 8? How do the details in the paragraph further develop this idea? Include **one** or more context clues from the text to support your response.

A pearl is an <u>accident</u>.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

⊚ Learning Target

In this lesson, you learned to use context clues to figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words or phrases. Explain how using context clues deepened your understanding of the text.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Tools for Instruction

Use Context to Find Word Meaning

Using context to determine a word's intended meaning is an essential reading strategy. Although students are often told to "use the context" to figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word, they may need more specific guidance. To help students use context effectively, introduce specific types of context clues that they can look for in sentences and paragraphs.

Three Ways to Teach

Identify Sentence-Based Context Clues   20–30 minutes

Connect to Writing Explicitly teach students about the different types of context clues that can be used to determine meanings for unknown words. Then have students develop their own sentences with clues that help classmates guess above-level missing words.

- Display the following chart. Name the first type of clue, and read aloud the example sentence. Help students figure out a meaning for the italicized word and identify the (highlighted) context clues in the sentence, which give a definition for the word. Then guide students to tell how they can recognize definition clues in other sentences. Record a simple explanation in the "What It Does" column.
- Repeat the process to introduce the remaining types of clues. Each time, note signal words that emphasize the clue, including *is, or, and other,* and *but*.

Type of Clue	Example Sentence	What It Does
Definition	An *asteroid* is a rocky body that orbits the Sun.	Tells the meaning of the unfamiliar word explicitly
Appositive	An animal that is a *carnivore*, or meat eater, may hunt for its food.	Tells the meaning of the unfamiliar word beside it, marked off by commas or dashes
Examples	The streets were filled with buses, taxis, and other *vehicles*.	Describes the unfamiliar word by naming types of it
Contrast	Lush, green forests receive steady rains, but deserts are bare and *arid*.	Tells the meaning of an unfamiliar word by describing its opposite

- For independent practice, give each student two words likely to have known meanings, such as *skyscraper, meal, author,* and *study*.
- Tell students to write a sentence with their word, leaving a blank in its place. Challenge them to write a sentence with such strong context that listeners will easily guess the word.
- As students read aloud their sentences (saying "blank" for the word), talk about the context clues that helped listeners figure out the missing word. Repeat the activity, challenging students to write a sentence that uses a different type of context clue for their second word.

Identify Paragraph or Text-Based Context Clues 10–15 minutes

Explain that sometimes readers have to read the sentences before and after an unfamiliar word to determine its meaning. Choose a passage with a challenging, above-level word that is not defined in the same sentence but can be understood by rereading the paragraph. Display the paragraph with the word underlined, and model asking and answering questions such as these to determine the word's meaning:

- *What is this paragraph about?*
- *Do the sentences around the unfamiliar word describe it in a different way, by giving a synonym or example or by showing a contrast?*
- *Can I make an educated guess about what the word could mean?*
- *If I replace the word with what I think it might mean, does the sentence make sense with the topic or purpose of the paragraph?*

For independent practice, have partners choose another paragraph that includes one or two unfamiliar words. Have them use the questions above to search for context clues that will help them figure out the meaning of the unfamiliar words.

Use Multiple-Meaning Words to Highlight Context 10–15 minutes

- Explain to students that context clues can help readers clarify the intended meaning of a multiple-meaning word. Say, *Although looking up a word in a dictionary can be helpful, it can sometimes be hard to know which meaning was used in the text when a word has several definitions.*
- Display a list of multiple-meaning words. Then provide sentences using varied meanings for the words.

fan	The <u>fan</u> cheered for her team.	There was only a <u>fan</u> to keep us cool.
fry	The <u>fry</u> swim downstream right after hatching.	My dad will <u>fry</u> potatoes for dinner.
lap	I held the plate in my <u>lap</u>.	We ran one <u>lap</u> around the track.
strike	Watch the hammer <u>strike</u> the nail.	That pitch looks like a <u>strike</u>.

- Discuss how the context clues in each sentence clarify the intended meaning of the word. Provide independent practice by suggesting other multiple-meaning words and asking students to give oral sentences that make each of the word meanings clear. Then ask students to choose one word and draw each of its meanings.

Check for Understanding

If you observe...	Then try...
difficulty using context to define an unfamiliar word	confirming that students have sufficient background knowledge to understand the context. Ask students to briefly summarize the paragraph in their own words. Correct any misunderstandings, and proceed to model using the context to define the unfamiliar word.
errors in determining word meanings based on context	substituting students' definitions for the unfamiliar word, and verifying whether the inserted meaning makes sense.