

**Lesson Title:**

Context Clues

**Grade Level:**

4

**Lesson Objectives:**

- Students will use context clues to determine the meaning of a word.

**Learning Modalities Targeted:** Visual Auditory Kinesthetic/Tactile**Warm-Up:**

- As the lesson begins, have “bettle” written on the board. Ask students to write the definition, then allow them to share out. Because the definition will be unknown, ask students how they might find the meaning. Allow them to look in a dictionary. The word does not exist. Explain there must be another way to learn the meaning. Then write, “After we loaded up the bettle with our suitcases and gas, we were finally able to drive away and start the long road trip to the Grand Canyon.” Ask students if they can now determine the meaning. Have them share the clues that lead them to think a bettle is an automobile. Tell students these are called context clues.

**Materials Needed:** Guided Practice exercise, Independent Practice, pencils, student journals/notebooks, chart paper, books, sticky notes, notecards, dictionaries

**Procedure:**

1. Project the Guided Practice exercise, and explain that students are going to learn five ways context clues are used to indicate meaning. As you proceed through each slide, document each of the five ways on chart paper, and have students take notes in their journals.

2. Write the nonsense word “joring” on the board, and have students work in their groups to create a definition and a sentence with context that indicates the meaning of the word. Remind students to use one of the five types of context discussed in the Warm-Up. When they are finished, have one group at a time share their sentence with the class. Allow other groups to determine meaning using the context provided.
3. Repeat the process for additional nonsense words like frume, leetna, quatle, and mirsh, or assign groups challenge words that they likely do not already know. Have groups find the definitions in the dictionary, then write sentences with context to reveal the meaning.

**Independent Practice:**

- Distribute the Independent Practice. Have students determine the meaning of each underlined word using the context of the sentences. Then, annotate the sentences to indicate which type of context clues were used.

**Closing Activity:**

- Write a sentence on the board that includes a challenge word and enough context to define the term. As an exit ticket, have students write the meaning of the word on a notecard and an explanation of how they determined meaning. Data from this exercise can be used to pull small groups.

### Advanced Learner Option

**Procedure:**

1. Have students work independently or with a partner to write a paragraph including at least 5 challenge words. Allow them to use reference materials to look up the definitions. Remind them to use context clues in their writing to help share the meaning of the challenge words. When students or pairs have finished, have them exchange with another student or pair. After exchanging, have students write the definition of the five challenge words using only the context of the paragraph to determine meaning.

### Struggling Learner Option

**Procedure:**

1. Pull a small group. Create a short conversation on the image of a phone and explain to students that they are going to use con-TEXT clues to explain what the conversation is about. Employ a read-aloud strategy to read the conversation. Then, have students lead the small group discussion on which words they're unsure of. Guide the conversation to model how to locate context clues. Have the group discuss the clues and what meaning they give to the unfamiliar words. Upon completion, have students take note of the new words and meanings.

### Extension Activities

- Create an anchor chart with three columns labeled “unknown word,” “context clue,” and “predicted meaning.” Distribute a short story that contains challenging words. Employ a read-aloud strategy. Allow students to read the passage again independently. Have them write each word they do not know on a sticky note. On another sticky note, have them write context clues that help them to understand the meaning, and on a third sticky note, have them write their predicted meaning. Allow students to post these to the anchor chart and discuss in a small group.
- Allow students to self-select a book. Have them go on a reading scavenger hunt to find instances where authors use context to define words in their writing. Encourage them to locate 5-10 words. Then, allow volunteers to share a word they found and the context provided to reveal its meaning.

### ELL Teaching Tips

- **Key Lesson Language:** **general** – suitcase, gas; **academic** – context clues, dictionary
- **Partner work** – Allow students to do individual work with a partner. Let students work on the Independent Practice with a partner for added support.
- **Pictures** - Show pictures, illustrations, or diagrams to support new vocabulary and concepts. Determine which students seem especially challenged by the learning objective. During the Closing Activity, pull these students into a small group, and display pictures and illustrations of the challenge word.

# Context Clues

## Guided Practice

Context clues can come in many different forms in a sentence or paragraph to help you figure out what unknown words mean.

1. A sentence might provide a DEFINITION of an unknown word in a sentence or paragraph.

An egret, a large white bird, flew down from the sky and scooped up a fish in its beak.

2. A sentence might provide a SYNONYM of an unknown word in a sentence or paragraph.

The stupendous restaurant was always busy because it was known for being so good.

3. A sentence might provide an ANTONYM of an unknown word in a sentence or paragraph.

The dingy curtains looked bright and clean after Molly washed them.



4. A sentence might provide an EXAMPLE of an unknown word in a sentence or paragraph.

The Boy Scouts organized a rally to clean up debris like paper, cans, and bottles from the dirty beach.

5. A sentence might provide an EXPLANATION of an unknown word in a sentence or paragraph.

My best friend is very candid, always honestly sharing her opinions with me.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Context Clues Independent Practice

**Directions:** Read the sentences below. Use the context clues to figure out the meaning of each underlined word. Write the letter of the definition found at the bottom of the page to the left of each sentence.

- \_\_\_ 1. The surface of the dining table was marred after the movers scraped it against the wall.
- \_\_\_ 2. Mom had to settle a dispute between my brother and me. The quarrel started when we couldn't decide what show to watch on television.
- \_\_\_ 3. I expected the model of the airplane to be colossal, but instead it was really quite small.
- \_\_\_ 4. After slipping on some rocks, I looked down to see a laceration on my leg.
- \_\_\_ 5. I told my friend Troy that I would barter with him and give him my toy cars for his baseball cards, but he didn't want to trade.
- \_\_\_ 6. I saw many different species of animals when I went to the zoo—gorillas, zebras, lions, giraffes, ostriches, and kangaroos.
- \_\_\_ 7. The swim instructor, or teacher, was wearing a whistle and waiting for us to jump in the water.
- \_\_\_ 8. I couldn't climb the fence all by myself, so I asked my dad for assistance.
- \_\_\_ 9. Josie's friends were playing tag at recess, but she was finishing her art project. Even though she loved art, she felt a little excluded. Luckily, they were eager for her to join.
- \_\_\_ 10. The rocking boat made me feel nauseated. I thought I might get sick.
- \_\_\_ 11. The merchants on the street were calling out, trying to get people to buy their items for sale.
- \_\_\_ 12. The shrill sound of the ambulance siren woke me up this morning.

### Definitions

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|-------------------|-----------------|
| A. Trade          | G. Teacher      |
| B. Kinds or types | H. Damaged      |
| C. Left out       | I. Quarrel      |
| D. Help           | J. A deep cut   |
| E. Sick           | K. Sales people |
| F. Loud           | L. Huge         |