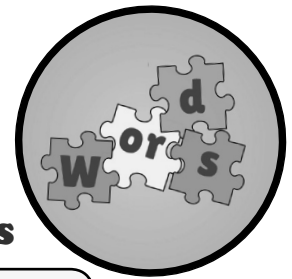


ONLINE READING COMPREHENSION LAB

<http://owl.excelsior.edu/orc>



How to Use Context Clues to Define Words

Context Clue:

A word or phrase in the same sentence or a nearby sentence that can help the reader decipher the meaning of an unfamiliar word.

Type	Explanation & Tips	Example
Definition Clue	<p>A definition clue is a word or phrase that defines the unfamiliar word.</p> <p>Look for words or phrases that introduce a definition for the unfamiliar word, such as <i>is defined as</i>, <i>means</i>, and <i>refers to</i>. Also, look for punctuation marks that set off a definition, such as quotation marks, parentheses, and brackets.</p>	<p>Telepathy is defined as the ability to communicate information to another person without the use of any known senses or communication devices.</p>
Synonym Clue	<p>A synonym clue is a word or phrase that has a <i>similar meaning</i> to the unfamiliar word.</p> <p>Look for words or phrases that introduce a synonym, such as <i>in other words</i>, <i>or</i>, <i>that is to say</i>, and <i>also known as</i>. Also, look for punctuation marks that set off a synonym, such as commas, parentheses, dashes, and brackets.</p>	<p>The cheerleader appeared vapid—<i>spiritless</i>—as he delivered his pitiful performance in front of the stands.</p>
Contrast Clue	<p>A contrast clue is a word or phrase that has the <i>opposite meaning</i> of the unfamiliar word. In other words, it's an <i>antonym</i>.</p> <p>Look for words or phrases that introduce a contrast, such as <i>however</i>, <i>but</i>, <i>instead of</i>, <i>on the other hand</i>, <i>on the contrary</i>, <i>whereas</i>, <i>in contrast</i>, <i>unlike</i>, <i>although</i>, and <i>even though</i>.</p>	<p>Lions are solitary creatures that prefer to hunt alone, <i>but</i> hyenas are gregarious creatures that hunt in packs.</p>
Example Clue	<p>An example clue is a word or phrase that provides an <i>example</i> to illustrate the unfamiliar word.</p> <p>Look for words or phrases that introduce examples, such as <i>for example</i>, <i>for instance</i>, <i>to illustrate</i>, <i>like</i>, and <i>such as</i>.</p>	<p>The manager disliked obsequious behavior, <i>such as</i> fawning and kowtowing.</p>
Experience Clue	<p>An experience clue draws upon <i>personal experience</i> or <i>background knowledge</i> to help you infer the meaning of the unfamiliar word.</p> <p>Look for a word, phrase, or sentence that includes a <i>familiar experience</i> or <i>information you already know</i>.</p>	<p>Television audiences are familiar with disingenuous ads that make <i>grand promises</i>.</p>
Adjacent Clue	<p>An adjacent clue is a word or phrase in a <i>nearby sentence</i> that explains the meaning of the unfamiliar word.</p>	<p>Nanotechnology is becoming more widespread in society. <i>As computer chips continue to shrink</i>, manufacturers are placing them in everything from clothing, to building materials, to even the human body.</p>