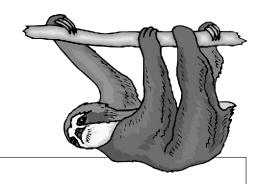
Words and Their Meanings

Section 1.1 Understanding Words by Knowing Roots and Affixes



Key Terms 1.1

- Affix a word part added to either the beginning or the end of a root word or base word; a general term for either a prefix or a suffix
- **Part of speech** the role that a word plays in a sentence; the eight general parts of speech are noun, pronoun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, conjunction, and interjection
- Root word the main part of a word

Have you ever thought about how much you read every day? Reading is a skill necessary for functioning in daily life, whether in school or at home. Reading requires that you recognize and understand words and their meanings, but it also requires you to process and use the information given as a whole. *That* is why you are holding this particular book. As you work through this book, you will sharpen your reading skills and your ability to understand and use what you read.

Regardless of what you are reading, comprehending the information depends on understanding most of the words being used. When you read a word that is unfamiliar or unknown, there are several skills that you can use to help you to understand what the word means even if you don't know its definition. One of those skills is looking for clues in the word itself by breaking the word into parts.

Roots, Prefixes, and Suffixes

The main part of a word is its **root**. An **affix** is a part of a word that is added either to the beginning of a root word or to its end. The root and the affix(es) make up a complete word. If a word is unfamiliar to you, knowing meanings of root words and affixes may help you to determine the meaning of the word. They may at least give you a hint towards understanding the word's meaning.

Example 1: Consider the word <u>slothful</u>. What is the root word? What affix(es) can you identify? Using these clues, what do you think the word means?

Sloth is the root word, and *-ful* is a suffix. A sloth is an animal that is known for being very slow, but the word *sloth* can also mean "laziness." The suffix *-ful* means "full of." Taking these clues, you can determine that *slothful* means to be "full of laziness" or simply "lazy." For example, a <u>slothful</u> bank teller may seem in no hurry to help the next customer despite the long line.

Example 2: Consider the word <u>hydrotherapy</u>. Based on the root word and prefix, what do you think it means?

If you know hydro means "water," you can see that hydrotherapy must mean "therapy using water."

Context of Words

Section 2.2 Understanding a Word in a Paragraph



Key Term 2.2

• Annotation – a note that comments on or offers an explanation for a portion of text

You've already seen that *context clues* are clues found in the text around a word, but those clues are not limited to the sentence in which the word appears. Often, the sentences before and/or after a difficult word will give you clues to what the word means. These clues may appear in the same paragraph or even in a surrounding paragraph.

Review the types of context clues:

Types of Context Clues

- Definitions/Descriptions
- Examples
- Synonyms/Antonyms
- Inferences
- Cause/Effect Relationships
- Comparisons/Contrasts
- Alternative Definitions or Meanings

Here are some steps that might help you determine the meaning of an unfamiliar word.

- 1. Determine the main message of the passage. Recap into your own words.
- 2. Reread the sentence that contains the difficult word. If you don't see enough context clues in that sentence, reread the sentences before it and after it. Reread the entire paragraph and the paragraph before and after. These sentences may give you context for the unfamiliar word. Look for specific types of context clues by asking the following questions:
 - Is the word defined in another sentence, or do other sentences describe the word?
 - Does the author give examples that give context to the word?
 - Are synonyms or antonyms used that might apply to the word?
 - From the content given in other sentences, what can you infer about the meaning of the word?
 - Is the word used in a cause and effect relationship? What do other sentences reveal about this relationship?
 - Does the author make comparisons or contrasts that give context to the word?
 - Does the word have an alternative meaning that may be explained or used in the paragraph?
- 3. Based on context clues, decide what you think the word meaning may be and then imagine your meaning replacing the word in the passage. Does it fit in the passage?

As you read a passage of text, making notes of unfamiliar words and the possible clues to their meanings can be a useful exercise. Any note that comments on or gives an explanation to the text you are reading is called an **annotation**. Making your own notes, or *annotating*, can help you to analyze what you are reading.

Section 2.2, continued Understanding a Word in a Paragraph

To help yourself understand unfamiliar words and phrases, practice the following simple steps by using annotation.

Basic Steps of Annotation

- 1. Circle any unknown words.
- 2. Underline or highlight key phrases, or clues, that may be links to your understanding.
- 3. Make notes in the margin regarding anything you have discovered.
 - Note your observations.
 - Ask questions.
 - Look for answers to your questions.

Annotation can help you to find context clues to determine the meaning of an unfamiliar word, but finding context clues takes practice. Once you think you know the meaning, explain how you came up with a reasonable definition. What kinds of context did the author give that pointed you to the meaning of the word?

Read the following passage and consider how you might use annotation to understand the meaning of an unfamiliar word.

excerpt from *Jane Eyre*, Chapter 5 by Charlotte Brontë, 1847

The only marked event of the afternoon was, that I saw the girl with whom I had conversed in the verandah dismissed in disgrace by Miss Scatcherd from a history class, and sent to stand in the middle of the large schoolroom. The punishment seemed to me in a high degree ignominious, especially for so great a girl — she looked thirteen or upwards. I expected she would show signs of great distress and shame; but to my surprise she neither wept nor blushed: composed, though grave, she stood, the central mark of all eyes.

What does the word ignominious mean in the above excerpt?

- 1. First, find the word and circle it.
- 2. Read the passage several times and underline any clues to the meaning of the word.
- 3. In the space to the right, make notes and ask questions.

Can you guess what *ignominious* means? Consider what annotating this passage might look like on the next page.

Section 2.2, continued Understanding a Word in a Paragraph

excerpt from *Jane Eyre*, Chapter 5 by Charlotte Brontë, 1847

The only marked event of the afternoon was, that I saw the girl with whom I had conversed in the verandah <u>dismissed in disgrace</u> by Miss Scatcherd from a history class, and <u>sent to stand in the middle of the large schoolroom</u>. The <u>punishment</u> seemed to me in a high degree (ignominious) especially for so great a girl — she looked thirteen or upwards. <u>I expected she would show signs of great distress and shame</u>; but to my surprise she neither wept nor blushed: <u>composed</u>, though grave, she stood, the central mark of all eyes. . .

Ignominious describes punishment.
The punishment was to stand in the middle of the large schoolroom.
If that happened to me, I'd be embarrassed. Could ignominious mean embarrassing?
The narrator thinks the ignominious punishment would result in distress and shame, weeping or blushing.
Narrator is surprised that she remained composed even with all eyes on her.

Did you make similar notes and observations? Now consider this question being asked on a multiple-choice test. Does the annotation help in answering the following question?

Example 1: What does the word <u>ignominious</u> mean in the above excerpt?

- A. humorous
- B. appropriate
- C. humiliating
- D. isolating

In this example, the meaning of *ignominious* can be found by understanding the context clues that are given in other sentences in the paragraph. Consider what this paragraph is saying by rewriting the main points in your own words. Use notes from your annotation to help:

The girl was dismissed in disgrace. She was sent to stand in the middle of the large school room. The narrator expected her to show signs of distress and shame. Surprisingly, she did not, but she did look grave as everyone looked at her.

Her punishment is described as *ignominious*. From these context clues, you should be able to see that *ignominious* means *humiliating*, so **C** is the correct answer. Nothing in the paragraph indicates that the punishment was humorous or appropriate. And since the punishment was public, it could not be considered isolating. Replace the word *ignominious* with *humiliating*. Notice that it fits the context perfectly.

The annotation note that questioned if the word may be related to embarrassment was right on track since *humiliating* and *embarrassing* are synonyms.

Figurative Language

Section 4.1 Common Figures of Speech



Key Terms 4.1

- Analogy an extended simile or metaphor that shows how two things are similar in several ways
- Euphemism words or phrases that are inoffensive or kinder to replace offensive, harsh, or hurtful ones
- **Figurative language** a broad category that includes figures of speech as well as sound devices and imagery
- **Figure of speech** a word or phrase used in a non-literal sense for a specific effect; most commonly includes idioms, euphemisms, similes, metaphors, analogies, personification, hyperbole, oxymoron
- **Hyperbole** an exaggeration
- **Idiom** an expression that means something different from the literal definition of the words in the expression, such as "I'm all ears." or "Let's call it a day."
- Metaphor a direct comparison between two things without using *like* or as
- Oxymoron an expression that combines contradictory words, such as cold fire or organized chaos
- **Personification** an expression that gives human characteristics to non-human or inanimate objects
- Simile a comparison of two things that uses the words *like* or as

Let's build upon what has already been discussed. An author will choose specific words or phrases in order to express a certain message. **Figurative language** is a collection of literary devices, or writing techniques, that includes figures of speech as well as sound devices, imagery, and juxtaposition. Other terms often used interchangeably with *figurative language* are *stylistic devices* or *rhetorical devices*. By using different types of figurative language, an author greatly expands his or her ability to communicate effectively. Using our ongoing example of building a wall, figurative language offers additional building materials. Figurative language is a broad category, so let's focus first on the most commonly used figures of speech.

A **figure of speech** is a word or phrase used non-literally to create an effect. Multiple figures of speech are used by authors to create a greater impact with their words. Why might an author use a figure of speech instead of writing literally — word for word — what he or she means? Figures of speech are better for creating a visual image or an emotional response for the reader. They can also clarify for the reader the exact message the author is trying to communicate. In order to better understand the power of figures of speech, consider each of the common ones that follow.

Idioms

Idioms are expressions that mean something different from the literal definition of the words used in the expression. You've already seen idioms in Section 3.3 as examples of informal language. They are very common in both written and spoken language. Look at the following chart of a few examples and think about the last time you may have used one of these phrases in conversation.

Examples of Idioms and Their Meanings

A piece of cake — something is easy to do	Hit the books — study, especially for a test
Crack someone up — make someone laugh	On pins and needles — anxious in anticipation
Food for thought — something to think about	<i>Under the weather</i> — feeling sick

Analyzing Paragraphs Section 5.3 Summarizing

Key Terms 5.3

- **Bias** an opinion that shows a partiality for or prejudice against someone, something, or some idea
- **Opinion** a view, judgement, or appraisal formed in the mind about a particular matter
- Summary a paraphrased shorter version of the text that includes only the main points

Now that you have mastered identifying the main idea and its supporting details as evidence, the next step is to condense a paragraph that you are reading into fewer words. A **summary** is a shorter version of the text that paraphrases only the main idea and the main supporting details. In other words, a summary of a paragraph uses your own words to communicate only the most important points.

Pitfalls in Writing a Summary

Before looking at the steps to use in summarizing, first consider the things you should be careful NOT to do.

- An opinion is a view, judgement, or appraisal formed in the mind about a particular matter. In other words, opinions are personal beliefs based on attitudes, thoughts, judgements, or feelings. If you wrote an article about the best aspects of your home town, that article would be based on your opinions. When writing a summary, be careful that you do not include your own personal opinion regarding the text nor your interpretation of the author's message.
- When you read about a topic that interests you, be aware that you may have a bias concerning that topic. A bias is an opinion that causes you to show partiality for or prejudice against someone, something, or some idea. A bias will make it more difficult for you to be impartial. Think about reading an article about a rival football team that praises all the strengths of the team. If you greatly dislike this rival team, you could easily allow your bias to peek through when analyzing this article. When writing a summary, be sure you do not allow your own personal bias to influence what you write. Avoid using overly positive, overly negative, or emotionally charged language. These types of words convey bias.
- Do not add information or evidence that is not in the text. Remember that the summary's purpose is to highlight the main points and the most important supporting details. Have you ever heard the expression, "Just tell me what time it is, not how to build a clock!"? That expression is the essence of your summary.
- Do not use the author's words unless necessary for clarity. As explained in paraphrasing, occasionally you will need to use specific words from the text in order to adequately create the summary, especially if there simply is no other word that accurately communicates the message. If you choose to use the same word, be intentional in your mind that it is to communicate the message in the summary and that you are not trying to take the easy way out. Sometimes it may be best to quote a phrase or sentence from the original paragraph, but if you do so, you must enclose those words in quotation marks to indicate that it is a direct quote.

Purpose of a Summary

The main purpose of a summary is to give a brief overview of a longer text. Summaries can save a reader time when looking for specific information since the reader can more quickly see the main points. The reader can then decide whether or not to read the longer work for additional details. Summaries are used in many fields. For example, they are used in business proposals, book reviews, and medical journals. Therefore, writing effective summaries is a skill that may be important to your future career.

Learning how to write a good summary and practicing this skill also has important benefits. Just as with paraphrasing a paragraph or with communicating a main idea and details in your own words, creating a summary helps you to understand information more clearly and to retain that information longer. You actually will remember something better when you have taken the time to process it and put it in your own words.

Steps For Writing a Good Summary

- 1. Learn to read actively. Read the paragraph for the first time without highlighting anything. This first reading will give you a general sense of the content of the text. Then re-read with annotation. Highlight or underline the words or phrases that seem to be connected. Ignore unnecessary details or descriptions remembering that your purpose is to write a summary, not a paraphrase.
- 2. As you learned with main ideas, the author's core message will be either stated or implied. Look for those key phrases that point you in a specific direction. What is the author trying to tell you? That message or main idea needs to be the core of your summary, which will then be supported with the important details you have identified. Extraneous details are not important in a summary. Look only for the details that are key evidence for the main idea, and make note of them for inclusion in your summary. It may be helpful to write a short list of the most important points made in the paragraph.
- 3. Write the first sentence of your summary as the retelling of the main idea in your own words. Then write as few sentences as are needed to condense the key details. Your summary should be no longer than about 25% of the original text. A long paragraph that is full of description but not necessarily supporting evidence will not require a long summary and may be quite short.
- 4. Remember to avoid common pitfalls. Use neutral, unbiased language. Write objectively without personal opinions or emotions.
- 5. Read what you have written. Ask yourself whether your sentences adequately express the thought of the original text. If someone reads your summary instead of the original text, will he or she have the same understanding that you do?

Re-read the following excerpt from the short story "The Fair Courier: A Story of the American Revolution" by T. S. Arthur that you first saw in Section 5.1. Consider how this excerpt is annotated for the purpose of summarizing it.

excerpt from "The Fair Courier: A Story of the American Revolution" by T. S. Arthur

In the mean time, <u>General Greene</u>, who had <u>heard</u> through messengers from Colonel Lee of the <u>proposed abandonment of [post] Ninety-six</u>, and the <u>division of the British and Tory forces</u>, was <u>making preparations</u> to retrace his steps, and <u>strike</u>, if possible, <u>a decisive blow against Lord Rawdon</u>. In order to make certain of victory, it was <u>necessary to inform Sumter</u> of his designs, and effect a junction with him before attacking the enemy. But, thus far, <u>no one offered to perform the dangerous service</u>.

General Green heard Post Ninety-six to be abandoned. British and Tory forces to be divided. Greene made plans to attack and defeat Lord Rawdon. He needed to inform Sumter. He wants to join with Sumter before attacking enemy forces. No one had volunteered to take the message to Sumter.

Dangerous mission.

In the annotation of this paragraph, notice that only key ideas are underlined in the text. Those key ideas are then reworded to the side. This paragraph contains three key ideas:

- 1. When General Greene learned of plans to abandon post Ninety-six and to divide British and Tory forces, he made plans to attack and defeat Lord Rawdon. This statement could act as the implied main idea of the paragraph.
- 2. Before attacking, General Greene needed to inform Sumter of his plans. This statement gives a key detail for General Greene's plans to work.
- 3. *Taking this message to Sumter is dangerous and no one has volunteered for the job.* This statement also gives a key detail that is preventing Greene from implementing his plan.

Example 1: Based on the annotations and the list of key ideas, read the following summary of this paragraph.

When General Greene learned of possible plans to abandon army post Ninety-six and to divide British and Tory personnel, he began making plans to attack and defeat Lord Rawdon. Before attacking, Greene needed to inform Sumter of his plans. However, the mission to take the message to Sumter was dangerous, and no one had yet volunteered.

Notice that specific details are left out of the summary. It includes the implied main idea with two key follow-up details.

Now read the excerpt on the following page taken from *Inside the Lines* by Earl Derr Biggers and Robert Welles Ritchie published in 1915. Read the paragraph first without making any annotations. Then re-read it with annotation. Remember to look for the core message or main idea as well as key details or ideas that support that main idea. Underline these key ideas. Rewrite the ideas in your own words in your annotation to the side.

excerpt from *Inside the Lines*, Chapter 1 by Earl Derr Biggers and Robert Welles Ritchie, 1915 Captain Woodhouse, in his turn, had made a satisfying, though covert, appraisal of his traveling companion by means of a narrow mirror inset above the baggage rack over the opposite seat. Trim and petite of figure, which was just a shade under the average for height and plumpness; a small head set sturdily on a round smooth neck; face the very embodiment of independence and self-confidence, with its brown eyes wide apart, its high brow under the parting waves of golden chestnut, broad humorous mouth, and tiny nose slightly nibbed upward: Miss Up-to-the-Minute New York, indeed! From the cocked red feather in her hat to the dainty spatted boots Jane Gerson appeared in Woodhouse's eyes a perfect, virile, vividly alive American girl. He'd met her kind before; had seen them browbeating bazaar merchants in Cairo and riding desert donkeys like strong young queens. The type appealed to him. Write a one sentence summary of the main idea in this paragraph. Now consider what supporting details or key ideas should be included to provide a complete summary of the paragraph. List these key ideas below. Then write one or more sentences that communicate these key ideas. Remember that these sentences should be in your own words.

Example 2: What is the main idea of the paragraph above by Biggers and Ritchie?

- A. Two people from New York are traveling on a train together and have dressed for the occasion.
- B. Captain Woodhouse has made a thorough evaluation of the woman seated next to him and is intrigued.
- C. Jane Gershon appears to be an egotistical American oblivious to the rest of the world.
- D. Captain Woodhouse is an expert in New York fashion and critiques it.

Which of these choices comes closest to your paraphrased main idea? Which do you think is the best choice for the main idea of this paragraph?

Practice

Read each excerpt and use the space provided to annotate. Then choose the best answer choices for the question that follows. Darken the circles that correspond to your answer choices.

excerpt from *A Tale of Two Cities*, Book II, Chapter I by Charles Dickens

But indeed, at that time, putting to death was a recipe much in vogue with all trades and professions, and not least of all with Tellson's [Bank]. Death is Nature's remedy for all things, and why not Legislation's? Accordingly, the forger was put to Death; the utterer of a bad note was put to Death; the unlawful opener of a letter was put to Death; the purloiner of forty shillings and sixpence was put to Death; the holder of a horse at Tellson's door, who made off with it, was put to Death; the coiner of a bad shilling was put to Death; the sounders of three-fourths of the notes in the whole gamut of Crime, were put to Death. Not that it did the least good in the way of prevention—it might almost have been worth remarking that the fact was exactly the reverse—but, it cleared off (as to this world) the trouble of each particular case, and left nothing else connected with it to be looked after. Thus, Tellson's, in its day, like greater places of business, its contemporaries, had taken so many lives, that, if the heads laid low before it had been ranged on Temple Bar instead of being privately disposed of, they would probably have excluded what little light the ground floor had, in a rather significant manner.

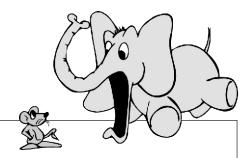
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- 1. Which three of the following sentences belong in a summary of the paragraph?
 - (A) The evil Tellson's Bank was known for illegally killing anyone it suspected of committing a crime.
 - (B) Tellson's Bank, as well as many businesses during this time period, punished criminals with death.
 - © The death penalty seemed to promote crime rather than prevent it.
 - (D) The person caught forging a signature was executed.
 - (E) The number of criminals executed by removing their heads was substantial.
 - F) The heads of executed criminals littered the floor of Temple Bar.



Analyzing Central Ideas

Section 6.2
Developing Central and
Secondary Ideas



Key Term 6.2

Secondary idea – a complementary idea that provides additional depth to the central idea; additional ideas
presented throughout a given work

Developing the Central Idea

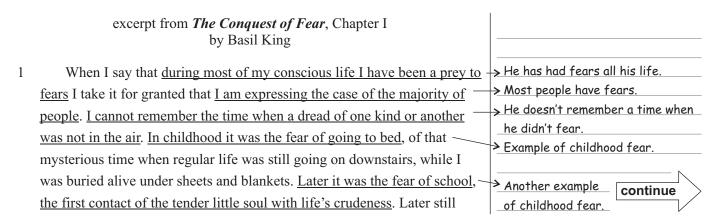
In the previous subsection, you practiced identifying a central idea. Now explore in more detail how that central idea develops. In other words, how does the author develop the various points that he or she is trying to communicate? Learn to think in terms of the author's message when you think about central idea. Imagine that the author is talking to you when you are reading a passage. What do you think he or she is trying to tell you?

Authors have many tools available to them for developing ideas within a text. Some of those tools are more complex than others. An author can utilize illustrations, specific examples, statistics, and quotes to name a few. The author's purpose in using these tools is to clearly communicate his or her message to the reader. Once again think about that wall you are building. If the only thing the builder uses is plain red brick with no change in the pattern or design as the wall grows higher, it would be a pretty boring wall, wouldn't it? Now imagine a variation in pattern and in color of bricks. Visualize a window or a doorway inserted. Visualize some of the bricks inset deeper and others pulled out somewhat. The builder is *developing* a wall that portrays his or her design. An author does the same thing.

An author has a central idea in mind when he or she begins writing. In order to communicate that idea to the reader, an author uses supporting details to *develop* that message. If you can recognize how an author uses those supporting details, you will better understand the author's message.

The most efficient method for you to use to trace the development of a central idea is to once again utilize annotation. Hopefully by now you are growing more comfortable with the process of annotating text. If annotating can become second nature to you, you will fly through your test questions. Well, maybe not fly, but at least you won't crawl!

In the previous subsection, you read an excerpt from *The Conquest of Fear* by Basil King. You may remember that the central idea of the passage is *fear is present in all stages of life and is shared by most people*. Reread the first paragraph of this passage and consider how it is annotated to trace the development of this central idea. How do the details support the author's message regarding fear?



Section 6.2, continued Developing Central and Secondary Ideas

there was the experience which all of us know of waking in the morning	> More examples of things he feared
with a feeling of dismay at what we have to do on getting up; the obvious	as he grew up.
duties in which perhaps we have grown stale; the things we have	
neglected; those in which we have made mistakes; those as to which we	
have willfully done wrong; those which weary or bore or annoy or	
discourage us. Sometimes there are more serious things still:	> Example of more serious things
bereavements, or frightfully adverse conditions, or hardships we never	that can cause fear.
expected brought on us by someone else.	

This first paragraph of the passage focuses on examples of fears that the author has experienced throughout his own life. Flip back to your own annotation of the rest of this passage in Section 5.2. Do you notice that the remaining paragraphs give additional examples of people and their fears?

Example 1: Considering the entire passage given in Section 6.1, how does Basil King develop the central idea that all people have fears throughout their lives?

- A. by quoting statistics of how many people have certain fears
- B. by giving examples of the types of fears people experience
- C. by explaining how fear can be overcome
- D. by illustrating fear and its effects in descriptive details

The obvious correct answer choice is **B**. The author uses examples to develop and support his central idea that all people experience fear throughout their lives.

Now look at another partial passage that you've already seen and annotated. This one comes from the practice in Section 6.1. From this first paragraph, make annotations on how the author develops the central idea that a person's clothing affects how he or she is treated by others.

excerpt from *The People of the Abyss*, Chapter 1 by Jack London

No sooner was I out on the streets than I was impressed by the difference in status effected by my clothes. All servility vanished from the demeanour of the common people with whom I came in contact. Presto! in the twinkling of an eye, so to say, I had become one of them. My frayed and out-at-elbows jacket was the badge and advertisement of my class, which was their class. It made me of like kind, and in place of the fawning and too respectful attention I had hitherto received, I now shared with them a comradeship. The man in corduroy and dirty neckerchief no longer addressed me as "sir" or "governor." It was "mate" now—and a

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