

# Word Recognition

## Section 1.4

### Context Clues in Sentences



#### Key Terms

- **Context clues** – words or phrases in a sentence that help a reader to understand an unknown word
- **Synonym** – a word that has similar meaning to another word; example: *happy* and *joyful* are synonyms
- **Antonym** – a word that has the opposite meaning to another word; example: *happy* and *sad* are antonyms
- **Inference** – a reasonable guess based on clues

What happens if you are unsure about the meaning of a word, and the affixes and/or root doesn't help you? Sentences often contain **context clues**, which are hints that define or illustrate the meaning of a difficult word. There are six types of context clues: *definitions/descriptions*, *examples*, *synonyms/antonyms*, *causes and effects*, *inferences*, and *comparisons/contrasts*. Each type is described below.

#### Definition/Description

A definition is a clear statement that gives the meaning of a word or word group using only the most important information about that word. Signal words that will help you recognize a definition are the *to be* verbs, *is* and *are*, and the word *or*. Also look for a definition in an **appositive**, a noun or noun phrase that follows another noun and renames it.

**Example 1:** A scoundrel is a mean, worthless person.

In this example, the word *scoundrel* is defined in the sentence. “Is” connects the unfamiliar word with its definition: *scoundrel* is a noun that means *a mean, worthless person*.

**Example 2:** They rolled the body to the morgue, a place where bodies are kept to be examined or identified before burial.

This example is similar to Example 1, but in this case, the definition comes as an appositive right after the word *morgue*. The appositive, *a place where bodies are kept to be examined or identified before burial*, renames *morgue* and tells the reader what the word means.

A sentence can also describe a word so that the reader better understands what the word means. The description may not be as clear and complete as a definition, but it can still be very helpful to the reader. A description is often a mental or visual image. Signal words may be sensory words that tell color, shape, smell, sound, and so on.

**Example 3:** Designed to be amphibious, the vehicle can be used on the water as well.

This sentence describes a vehicle as being *amphibious*, but what does that word mean? The rest of the sentence that describes the vehicle's ability gives the reader a clue to the meaning. An amphibious vehicle is one that can travel on water as well as on land. The descriptive context clues in this sentence do not specifically tell the reader what *amphibious* means, but they give the reader enough clues to figure out the meaning.

**Section 1.4, continued**  
**Context Clues in Sentences**

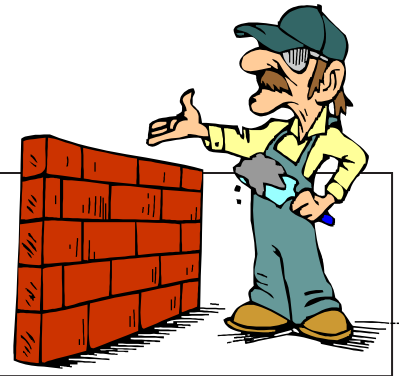
**Practice**

Use context clues to determine the best definition of the underlined word in each sentence. Darken the circle that corresponds to your answer choice.

- Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ 1. Andie was so immersed in her music that she was totally unaware of the raging storm outside.  
A. disinterested C. in the country  
B. completely focused D. easily distracted
- Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ 2. That replica of the White House, like every other copy, is missing many vital details.  
A. original C. small reproduction  
B. computerized image D. previous
- Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ 3. Our cat is normally quiet and tame, but she reverts to her wild self when she goes outdoors.  
A. gets hungry C. sleeps soundly  
B. stays the same D. changes back
- Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ 4. She loved to read stories, such as the ones about Ulysses, from mythology.  
A. history C. the study of American legends  
B. movies D. the study of made-up stories of heroes
- Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ 5. The incompetent lab technician recorded the wrong data.  
A. skillful C. incapable  
B. hurried D. stressed
- Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ 6. It was decided to make the road concrete, rather than layers of macadam mixed with asphalt.  
A. tar C. boulders  
B. small broken stones D. decorative shells
- Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ 7. The soldiers' morale, or spirits, were high because of the latest victory.  
A. mental and emotional attitude C. techniques  
B. rules of right and wrong D. maneuvers
- Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ 8. The spy was able to decipher the code to read the message.  
A. translate C. write  
B. hide D. type

# Vocabulary Practice

## Section 3.1 List 1



### Vocabulary List 1

acreage	drab	foyer	inlaid	rustic
adjacent	eaves	gaudy	intricate	scaffold
dimension	fluorescent	gilt	mason	veranda

### Vocabulary in Context, Part A

As you read the following paragraph, pay close attention to the underlined vocabulary words. Use the context clues to help you understand any of the words that are unfamiliar.

I had heard about how gaudy the house being built next door was, so I was not shocked when I walked inside. As I walked through the front door into the foyer, I needed sunglasses because of the bright fluorescent yellow, green, and pink colors in the wallpaper. The mirror and table were completely covered in gilt. To me, a little gold goes a long way, but the owner of this house must disagree. I had to duck under the scaffold where a mason was adding stone to the walls. The next room, the den, was far from drab also. A huge fireplace covered one wall and was inlaid with stones of sparkling greens, reds, and blues. The rugs covering the floors also had multi-colored intricate designs.

### Meet the Words, Part A

Now that you have seen some of these vocabulary words used in context, read the description of each word below. Notice that the part of speech for each word is given in parentheses. Knowing its part of speech is useful in understanding the word. Is it a noun, the name of a person, place, or thing? Is it an adjective, a word that describes a noun? Is it a verb that shows action or state of being? Each of the vocabulary words will be one of these three parts of speech.

1. **Gaudy** (adjective) means bright, showy, or flashy but also lacking in good taste. A room with so many bright colors would be flashy, and to many, it would be beyond the limits of good taste.
2. Many homes and buildings have a room at the front door that is used only as an entryway, or a **foyer** (noun). A foyer in an office building or theater may also be called a lobby or an entrance hallway.
3. **Fluorescent** (adjective) colors (usually green, yellow, and pink) are so bright they seem to give off light as a fluorescent bulb does.
4. **Gilt** (noun) is a substance resembling gold that is laid on the surface of an object. In the past, kings had actual gold put onto the surfaces of furniture, statues, etc., but the gilt of today only mimics that. Too much of it can seem showy.
5. A **scaffold** (noun) is a raised platform for workers to sit or stand on while they work on high surfaces of ceilings or walls.
6. A **mason** (noun) is a skilled workman who builds with stone, brick, or concrete.