

# Essential Literacy

Lesson: April 8

## Learning Target(s)

Students will:

- Interpret word meaning in context using context clues.
- Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on context.
- Identify and use outside resources to determine unknown word meanings if context is not helpful.

# Warm Up:

Sometimes when talking or reading you might come across an unfamiliar word. It's tempting to just skip over it and continue reading. Watch this short video to see why this is not a good idea.

**AFTER** watching:

Have you ever felt lost when you don't know a word meaning?

Jot down a couple of words that confused you and how that may have led to a misunderstanding. Or maybe chat with a family member and share times that context was important.



# LEARN

Here are some common types of context clues:

**Root / affix:** People who study birds are experts in *ornithology*.

**Contrast:** Unlike mammals, birds *incubate* their eggs outside their bodies.

**Logic:** Birds are always on the lookout for *predators* that might harm them,

**Definition:** *Frugivorous* birds prefer eating fruit to any other kind of food.

**Example or illustration:** Some birds like to build their nests in *inconspicuous* spots--  
High up in the tops of trees, well hidden by leaves.

**Grammar:** Many birds *migrate* twice each year.

# How to Use Context Clues

## 1. Look for a definition!

It might be right after the word, but it could also be anywhere nearby.

The asteroid's orbit is **not a perfect circle**. That's why it is called an **eccentric** orbit.

It's an orbit that's not a perfect circle.

## 2. Look for an example.

Sometimes there is one, sometimes more than one.

Be sure to underline the **subordinating conjunction**, such as *although, before, or whereas*, in each of your sentences.

It's a combining word such as *although, before, or whereas*.

## 3. Look for the opposite.

If the author is showing a contrast, you can figure out the word's meaning from its opposite.

That building is in an **antebellum** style, not like the newer ones built after the **Civil War**.

It means before the Civil War.



## Learn (cont.)

Here are some more ways to help determine meaning through context.

Use these to help you when you don't know the meaning.

## Practice:

Title a piece of paper Context Clues and add today's date.

Write each underlined word from each sentence a dash and then the meaning.

1. U.S.A. is an acronym for united States of America.

Description   abbreviation   password   neighbor

2. She convinced us with her coherent argument.

Understandable   confusing   long   silly

3. The sweet fragrance from roses floated across the garden.

Pollen   thorns   smell   bees

4. The ratio of boys to girls in my class is 1.5 to 2.

Proportion   grade   desks   group

5. The speaker told an amusing anecdote about his dog.

Lie   cure   picture   story

## Practice continued:

6. My mother inherited her green eyes from her father.

Blinked      donated      received      stared with

7. We laughed during the play at the dialogue between the hero and his silly partner.

Spotlight      conversation      table      direction

8. The hotel had an elaborate entrance of marble columns, fresh flowers, and velvet sofas.

Wide      plain      grey      fancy

9. The criteria for getting an A was to turn in all assignments and have a 90% or better

Standards      lunchroom      students      rules

10. The pristine water came from a high mountain stream where there was no pollution

Dirty      well      unspoiled      ugly

# Practice Answer Key:

*(How did you do?)*

- Check your answers to make sure it meets the following criteria:
  1. Acronym - abbreviation
  2. Coherent - understandable
  3. Fragrance - smell
  4. Ratio - proportion
  5. Anecdote - story
  6. Inherited - received
  7. Dialogue - conversation
  8. Elaborate - fancy
  9. Criteria - standards
  10. Pristine - unspoiled

If you want to learn more...Additional Resource:

[K12Reader](#) offers more practice with context clues

