

SMART™ Lesson

Context Clues

Reading can be lots of fun, but sometimes we encounter words we don't know. But don't worry! We can use context clues to figure out what a word means. Context clues are pieces of information that help a reader understand the meaning of an unfamiliar word. Words can have more than one meaning, but the context in which a word is used can help us determine which meaning is correct.

Types of Context Clues

- **Definition Clues:** The meaning of the word is given in the sentence
- **Synonym Clues:** The meaning of the word is given through a similar word that is already known by the reader
- **Antonym Clues:** The meaning of the word is given through an opposite word that is already known by the reader
- **Example Clues:** The meaning of the word is given through an example in the sentence

Example

Here is an example of using context clues:

Mom purchased a *durable* suitcase for our vacation to Europe.

In this sentence the word *durable* means long-lasting or strong because it is used to describe a suitcase that is meant to endure a long trip.

Practice Questions

Use context clues to determine the meaning of the bolded words in each sentence:

1. I devour my favorite book in one sitting.
2. We must conserve water during a drought.
3. The elderly woman was frail and needed assistance.
4. She hopped on the tram and paid the fare.
5. The pungent smell of onions made my eyes water.

Answers:

1. Devour means to eat quickly and hungrily.
2. Conserve means to save or not waste something.
3. Frail means weak and fragile.

4. Fare means the amount of money paid for transportation.

5. Pungent means a strong and unpleasant smell.

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