

INTRODUCTION TO CONTEXT CLUES

When reading, you will sometimes find a word that you do not know. One quick, effective method of finding the meaning of a new word is by using the context. The context means the other words around your new word.

For example, do you know the word *knob*? Read this sentence and then write the meaning:

Turn the *knob* on the radio until you find an FM station that plays good music. _____.

Important words in this example include *turn*, *radio*, *FM*, and *music*. The ***knob*** is the part of the radio that you turn to find a station. In general, a knob is anything similar that you can turn. The part of the door that you put your hand on in order to open the door is the door knob.

Here is another example:

We learn quickly in this school because there are only twelve *pupils* in each class.

Important words here include *school*, *twelve*, and *class*. So, pupil: _____

Sometimes the context can change the meaning of a word:

They *watch* television every day. // I was late because I forgot to wear my *watch*.

The English alphabet has twenty-six *letters*. // I often write *letters* to my friends.

Quite often, there will be an rather obvious pattern of meaning to help you guess what must be coming. The following exercise lets you practice that skill.

CONTEXT CLUES: OPPOSITES

Read each of the following sentences and write a word that completes the meaning of the sentence. Each time, be ready to explain how you have discovered the pattern of meaning.

1. George is not single. He is _____.
2. Your answer is not correct. It is _____.
3. This box is not small. It is _____.
4. John is very tall, but his brother is _____.
5. ($24a^2 + 6ab + 8b^3 = ?$) is complicated, but ($2 + 2 = ?$) is _____.
6. Turkey is expensive, but chicken is _____.

7. The weather in February is usually cold. However, the weather in August is almost always _____.
8. The reading test was very easy. However, the vocabulary test was _____.
9. A rabbit runs fast, but a turtle walks _____.
10. The salad tasted bad. In contrast, the meat was _____.

CONTEXT CLUES: MULTIPLE CHOICE

Using the context to help you guess correctly, circle the correct meaning for each *italicized* word.

1. Larry lives by himself. Last night he cooked two pounds of fish for dinner. After he had finished eating, he gave the *remaining* fish to his cat.
- extra
 - fresh
 - delicious
2. I forgot to put the bread back in the bag, and now it is *stale*.
- white
 - hard
 - delicious
3. She usually wears a lot of expensive *jewelry* when she goes to elegant parties.
- rings, watches, earrings
 - cars, houses, trips
 - steaks, fish, vegetables
4. A mouse is small, but an elephant is *huge*.
- very big
 - round
 - the same colour
5. I can't understand John's English because he speaks so *quickly* that I can't keep up!.
- correctly
 - fast
 - well
6. The *supply* of food in that country is very low. Many people may die soon as a result.
- price
 - need
 - amount

7. Oh, there you are! When did you *get* here?
- a. receive
 - b. become
 - c. arrive
8. After he took the medicine, he wasn't *ill* anymore.
- a. sick
 - b. careful
 - c. handsome
9. Ann is very *intelligent*. She knows the answers to all the teacher's questions.
- a. rich
 - b. smart
 - c. dictionary
10. After Mrs. Brown put the letter in the envelope, she *sealed* it and put a stamp on it.
- a. closed
 - b. sent
 - c. put