

Context Clue Decoder

Mission: Five mystery words have shown up in library books. Crack each case by finding the context clues, naming the type of clue, and testing the meaning in the sentence.

Big question: How can context clues help us figure out unknown words?

★ Warm-up: Guess the word

Use the clue to guess the meaning.

The puppy was so exhausted, so tired, that it fell asleep in its bowl. ✓ **Very tired (synonym clue).**

Unlike the noisy cafeteria, the library was serene. ✓ **Calm and quiet (antonym clue).**

Key vocabulary

Context clue	Hints in the nearby words that help you figure out a word.
Synonym	A word with the same meaning.
Antonym	A word with the opposite meaning.
Substitute	Put one word in place of another to test it.

1 Box 1

Crack all five cases

In the simulator: Solve all 5 cases.

Record each case.

Word	Clue type
botanist	definition
timid	antonym
produce	example

2 Box 2

Signal words

Which clue type does each signal word or phrase suggest?

Sort: which means · unlike · such as · but · for example · , a (noun) that...,

Definition	Antonym	Example
which means , a (noun) that...,	unlike but	such as for example

3 Box 3

Use the words

Write one sentence using "famished" and one using "arid." Include a context clue in each!

Look for: Uses famished; Uses arid; Includes context clues; at least 16 words

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Box 4

Legend: write a clue Legend only

Write a sentence for the word "gregarious" (friendly, likes being with others) that uses an ANTONYM clue.

Look for: Uses the word; Uses an antonym signal; at least 12 words



Exit ticket: answer the big question in your own words

How can context clues help us figure out unknown words?

Look for: Context clues are the words around an unknown word. They can give a definition, a synonym (same meaning), an antonym (opposite, with words like "unlike"), examples ("such as"), or a general sense of the situation. Test a meaning by substituting it into the sentence.



Completion codes

Students see a code like **ABC-13** when they finish. The first part must match below. The letter is the level (E = Explorer, I = Investigator, L = Legend), and the number at the end is how many stars they earned.

Level	Code starts with
 Explorer	1AR-E
 Investigator	1EI-I
 Legend	1PQ-L



Watch for these misconceptions

- "Any comparison is a simile." It is a simile only if it uses like or as.
- "Context clues are always in the same sentence." Sometimes they are in the next sentence.
- "Idioms mean what they say." Their meaning is not literal.