

USE PRIOR KNOWLEDGE AND CONTEXT CLUES

UNDERSTAND	Definition	As readers, we use clues and information to determine the meaning of the words. These clues are the words, phrases, and sentences surrounding an unfamiliar word that hint about its meaning.
	When to teach this strategy	<p>If you see readers who . . .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read on and don't stop to ask themselves whether they understood it. • look at pictures for clues but don't reread or look at the surrounding words. • are not aware that other words can offer clues about the meaning of unknown words.
PREPARE	Why we teach it	When they encounter an unknown word, readers often piece together its meaning, using hints from the text, and information they already have, to infer the meaning of the word.
	Secret to success	When you come to a word you don't understand, stop and look around it for hints that will help you infer its meaning.
TEACH	How we teach it	<p>We introduce this strategy by explaining the steps for using context clues that support readers in understanding more complex words.</p> <p>When you come to a word you don't know, try the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Check for context clues that are right before and after the word. 2. If you find a context clue, use it to think about, predict, and infer what the word would be. 3. Reread the sentence with the new term or clue in mind. 4. Think to yourself, <i>Does my inference make sense?</i> 5. If it makes sense, continue reading. <p>Types of context clues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synonym: A word is explained in a simple way. In other words, it may signal a context clue. • Definition: A word is explained immediately after its use. Words and phrases like <i>means</i> and <i>also known as</i> may signal a context clue, which is often set off by punctuation. • Example: An example may be found close by that helps explain the meaning. Hints like <i>such as</i> and <i>for example</i> may signal a context clue. • Antonym: Sometimes, the opposite of a word helps us infer its meaning. Words like <i>although</i>, <i>but</i>, and <i>however</i> may signal this type of context clue.
		<p>Suggested Language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Look at the words before and after the unknown word, and check for a context clue.</i> • <i>Reread the entire paragraph and see if there are clues to help you figure out what that word means.</i> • <i>Reread the sentence with the word you predicted to see if the sentence makes sense.</i>
SUPPORT	Instructional Pivots	<p>Possible ways to differentiate instruction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the student doesn't find a clue, suggest a different strategy to figure out the word, such as asking someone the meaning or using a dictionary. • Knowing some of the clue words, such as <i>but</i>, <i>however</i>, <i>unlike</i>, <i>means</i>, <i>in other words</i>, and <i>also known as</i>, students figure out the meaning of the word. • Sometimes using context clues at the sentence level isn't effective. In those cases, help students broaden their search to the whole paragraph or selection. <p>Reconsider materials, setting, instruction, and cognitive processes.</p>
	Partner Strategies	<p>These strategies may provide support before, during, and after teaching this strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cross -Check: Do the Words Look Right? Sound Right? Make Sense?</i> • <i>Check for Understanding; Monitor and Self-Correct</i> • <i>Infer and Support with Evidence</i>