

Teaching Notes

Activities

1. Ask students to work with a partner. Assign each pair a list of sentences and a chart that shows a few unfamiliar words from those sentences and the following categories for each: clue type, context clues, and word meaning. Leave different categories blank for each word, and direct students to fill in the blanks using prior knowledge and clues from the text. Once they have finished, have the groups share their findings as part of a class discussion.
2. Assign students a grade-appropriate excerpt from a literary text. Then, direct their attention to several examples of words that are likely unfamiliar. Discuss how context clues might allow readers to infer the word's meaning, and point out several examples in the text. Ask students to make their own guesses about the meanings of a few words. Once they are finished, encourage them to look up the unknown words in a dictionary to determine whether or not the meanings they inferred were correct.

Writing Prompts

1. Assign students a list of sentences that contain underlined grade-appropriate words whose meanings they may not know. Direct them to read each sentence and determine the meaning of the underlined word using context clues. Then, ask them to write a sentence explaining which clues helped them determine the meaning of each word.
2. Review with students how context clues can come in many different forms. Then, assign them an excerpt from a literary text, and direct their attention to a specific unfamiliar word or phrase. Ask them to write a brief paragraph stating the meaning of the word or phrase as it is used in the text and explaining the context clues that helped them define it. For an added challenge, have students identify the type of context clues that are used in the text, choosing from the following options:
 - definition
 - restatement
 - example
 - contrast
 - inference from general context

Additional Resource

Consider this additional resource when teaching L.9-10.4.a:

- **Using Context Clues:** Students can gain additional practice using context clues with these worksheets, organized by grade level. Scroll to Level 3 for high school students.
<http://www.ereadingworksheets.com/free-reading-worksheets/reading-comprehension-worksheets/context-clues-worksheets/>