

LESSON OVERVIEW

OBJECTIVES

Vocabulary Objective

- Use context to understand the meaning of unfamiliar words.

ESL MODIFICATIONS



Listening • Students will respond verbally or nonverbally to identify context clues during the whole group reading activity.



Reading • Students will use context to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words.



Speaking • Students will repeat new words and respond to questions about visuals.



Writing • Students will write about an illustration of a personal experience using a model.

MATERIALS

TEACH

- “Find the Clues,” Student Page 1

GUIDED PRACTICE

- “Mickey’s Monster,” Student Page 2

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

- “Using Context Clues,” Student Page 5

ESL MODIFICATIONS

TEACH

- LEVELS 1–3** • “Find the Clues,” Student Page 1

GUIDED PRACTICE

- LEVELS 1–3** • “Mickey’s Monster,” Student Page 2

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

- LEVEL 1** • “Using Context Clues,” Student Page 3

- LEVEL 2** • “Using Context Clues,” Student Page 4

- LEVEL 3** • “Using Context Clues,” Student Page 5

Performance definitions for levels of English language proficiency available as a downloadable Teacher Resource document at www.istation.com

TEACH



USING VOCABULARY STRATEGIES

- **You have learned that you can use clues to figure out what an unfamiliar word means.** Write this sentence on the board and read it to students: *After a thorough search, I still have not found my money.* Underline *thorough*.
- **If you watch what I do, you will find clues to help you figure out the meaning of the word *thorough*.** Act out a thorough search: Pull a wallet out of a purse, look inside, and frown. Carefully and deliberately, check every compartment of the wallet. Then turn it over and shake it. Look through the purse in the same way, then look around on the floor.
- Read the sentence aloud again. **Think about the way I searched for the money. What kind of search is a thorough search?** As students respond, write *thorough = careful or complete* on the board. **What clues in my actions helped you figure out the meaning of *thorough*?** (*the way you looked carefully in every compartment, turned over the wallet and purse and shook them, and checked the floor*)
- **In this example, you found meaning clues by watching my actions. We can also find clues about the meaning of unfamiliar words when we read. We call the clues we find in text *context clues*. Context clues are words and phrases that help you figure out the meaning of a word that is new to you.**
- **To find context clues when we read, we do a thorough search of the text that comes before and after an unfamiliar word. Sometimes there is a synonym for the word in a nearby sentence. Other times the word is followed by a phrase that explains or defines it. Often the way the word is used helps us see how it is related to a topic or situation in the text.**
- **If you find an unfamiliar word as you read, where should you look for clues to its meaning?** (*in the text just before and after the word*) Affirm or provide corrective feedback.
- **I will show you how to use context clues to figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word.** Distribute “Find the Clues,” Student Page 1. **Watch and listen as I read the first sentence. “Older people are more likely to have fractures, or cracks in their bones.” The unfamiliar word in this sentence is *fractures*.**

ESL MODIFICATIONS

Use these examples to give students scaffolded practice in using context to figure out word meaning.

Level 1

1. Write *scowl* on the board and tell students that it is something you do with your face. Then give students clues about when a person might scowl. Continue giving clues until students guess the meaning and can show you a scowl. Have students suggest ways to express a definition: ***Scowl means* ____.** (*an angry look*)
2. Repeat the same steps for the words *fret* and *drowsy*.

Level 2

1. Write *scowl* on the board and tell students that it is something you do with your face. Then give students three clues about when a person might scowl. Have students use the clues to complete the definition: ***Scowl means* ____.** (*an angry look*) Discuss students’ responses and which do or do not match the clues.
2. Repeat the same steps for the words *fret* and *drowsy*.

Level 3

1. Write *scowl* on the board. **This is something a person can do to show one kind of feeling. What other clues do you need to figure out the word’s meaning?** Allow students to ask several questions until they have enough clues to guess the word’s meaning. Have students complete the definition: ***Scowl means* ____.** (*an angry look*) Ask them to say sentences using the word.
2. Repeat the same steps for the words *fret* and *drowsy*.

TEACH

- **There are two clues about the meaning of *fractures*.**
Underline *older people are more likely to have* and *cracks in their bones* and have students do the same on their Student Page.
- **The way the word is used in the beginning of the sentence tells me that the word *fractures* names something older people are more likely to have than other people. Often, authors will write the definition after a word. Clues to look for are a comma after the word and then the word *or*. After the word *fractures*, I see a comma, and then the text reads, “or cracks in their bones.” The phrase “cracks in their bones” defines the word. Based on these context clues, I can figure out that *fractures* means *cracks in bones*.** Write on the board: *fractures = cracks in bones*.
- **I want you to help me with the next sentence.** Model the same steps as you use the context clues for *consume* in Example B, and allow students to help you find the clues.
(Answer: *consume = eat*)

GUIDED PRACTICE



Let's practice using context to figure out the meaning of some other unfamiliar words.

- Distribute “Mickey’s Monster,” Student Page 2.
- Have volunteers read aloud the text next to each picture. Guide them in identifying the clues that can help them figure out the meaning of each underlined word.
- Finally, have students complete the box at the bottom of the page to tell about a time something or someone scared them. Have them draw a picture to illustrate their story.

ANSWERS**Student Page 2**

- 2. Clues:** *Mickey’s sudden scream,*
It scared him
Startled means scared or surprised.
- 3. Clues:** *lips, in fear, shaking so badly,*
I see that you’re scared
Quivered means shook or trembled.

- 4. Clues:** *peeked out, screamed*
Timid means scared or shy.

Answers will vary. Students’ responses should address the prompt and include words from the story.

ESL MODIFICATIONS

Use these strategies to build vocabulary for the discussion and to help students use context clues. For all levels, distribute Student Page 2.

Level 1

1. Point to and name things in each picture. Have students point to the same thing and repeat *This is* _____. Review by pointing to the items in random order and having students name them.
2. Use the same nouns to ask questions about the pictures. (Examples: **Is this a hat? Is there a store in this picture?**) Have students respond by saying yes or no.
3. Read the story to students. Then ask them to think about the meaning of the underlined words as you read it again. Have students point out and record words and phrases that give clues to the meaning of the underlined word. Help students use the clues to figure out the words’ meanings. Finally, have students draw a picture to respond to the last item. Help them briefly describe the event in the box next to their drawing.

Level 2

1. Name and describe things in the pictures. Pause and have students point to each thing you discuss. Then have partners take turns using the sentence stem *This is* _____ to name the items for each other.
2. Read the passage to students and ask them to think about the meaning of each underlined word. Then reread the story, pausing after each section to have students identify and record words and phrases that give clues to the meaning of the underlined word. Help students use the clues to figure out the word’s meaning. After the passage has been reread, have students respond to the last item and draw a picture to illustrate their answer.

Level 3

1. Ask students to name and describe things they see in the pictures.
2. Read the passage aloud. Then have volunteers each reread one section of the text. After each section, have students identify words and phrases that give clues to the meaning of the underlined word. Have partners use the clues to figure out what they think the word means. Then discuss their ideas and help them record the correct definition. Once the passage has been reread, ask students to respond to the last item. Then have partners share and compare their drawings and answers.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

**Now practice using context clues on your own.**

1. Give each student a copy of “Using Context Clues,” Student Page 5.
2. Explain that students should read each passage and underline the context clues that help them figure out the meaning of the underlined word. Tell them that after thinking about the clues, they should write what they think the word means.
3. Review students’ responses, providing corrective feedback as needed.
4. Observe and chart the progress of each student’s ability to understand and use context clues.

ANSWERS

Students’ wording may vary.

Level 1, Student Page 3

1. *Upset* means “unhappy.”
2. *Fortunate* means “lucky.”
3. *Outsmart* means “to trick.”
4. *Hardships* means “problems.”

Level 2, Student Page 4

1. *Frantic* means “upset.”
2. *Fortunate* means “lucky.”
3. *Outsmart* means “to trick.”
4. *Hardships* means “problems.”

Level 3, Student Page 5

1. *Frantic* means “panicky and upset.”
2. *Fortunate* means “lucky.”
3. *Outsmart* means “to trick.”
4. *Hardships* means “problems and dangers.”

ESL MODIFICATIONS

Have students work independently using the following modified activity pages.

Level 1 • Distribute a copy of “Using Context Clues”**Level 1, Student Page 3.**

Read the instructions and item 1 to students and ask questions to help them understand the context. **When does the cat get upset? What does she do when she is upset? When she is upset, do you think she feels good or bad?** Have students look at the answer choices and discuss which names a bad feeling. Have them circle the word and write it on the line. Read each item and let students work with a partner to underline clues and decide each answer.

Level 2 • Distribute a copy of “Using Context Clues”**Level 2, Student Page 4.**

Read the instructions and item 1 to students. Have them point out and underline clues for the meaning of *frantic*. Invite students to discuss why each answer choice does or does not match the clues. Have students choose and write the correct answer on the line. Ask students to complete items 2–4 on their own or with a partner. Provide support as needed to help students read the items.

Level 3 • Distribute a copy of “Using Context Clues”**Level 3, Student Page 5.**

Read the instructions and item 1. Direct students to decide the meaning of *frantic* and have them underline the clues that support their answer. Discuss students’ clues and answers. Have students complete items 2–4 on their own. If needed, help students with the pronunciation or meaning of words in the stories.

RETEACH SUGGESTIONS

If students still have difficulty with the vocabulary skill “Context,” provide additional opportunities for them to practice this skill. Repeat these activities as many times as necessary, varying the sources and adding new affixes for students who are ready to build on the skill.

1. Using context to understand instructions

- Make copies of a set of instructions for an interesting project or experiment you would like students to do. Choose one or more “mystery” words in the instructions that are likely to be unfamiliar to students. Check to be sure that there are enough context clues in the instructions to help students figure out the words’ meanings.
- Give each pair of students a copy of the instructions. List the mystery words on the board and have students listen for them as you read the instructions. Stop after each section that contains one of the mystery words and have students underline clues in the words and diagrams that help them understand the meaning of the word. Have partners write what they think the word means. Continue reading and pausing to let students write meanings for the mystery words.
- Check students’ understanding by rereading a sentence that contains a mystery word. Have students read the definition they wrote for the word and then pantomime how they would do that step of the project or experiment. Then invite students to share their definitions. Affirm or provide corrective feedback. Repeat the steps with other mystery word sentences.
- Set a time for students to do the project or experiment. Have them write three sentences about the experience using at least one mystery word in each sentence.

2. Creating context puzzles

- Give each small group of students a mystery word to research. Provide dictionaries and thesauruses and have them work together to figure out the meaning of their word.
- Then have students make up a story in which they can use the word. Depending on students’ skills, have them write or dictate their story. Remind them to underline their mystery word and to include plenty of context clues so that readers can guess the meaning of the word. Review the story and help students add more context clues if needed.
- Let groups exchange and read each other’s stories. Ask students to work with their group to find context clues and decide the meaning of the mystery word in the story they read. Then have groups come together to share and check their answers.

Find the Clues

A. Older people are more likely to have **fractures**, or cracks in their bones.

Clue 1: a phrase that tells who is more likely to have fractures

Clue 2: a phrase that tells what fractures are

fractures = _____

B. Pat's big dog can **consume** a whole bowl of food and still beg for more to eat.

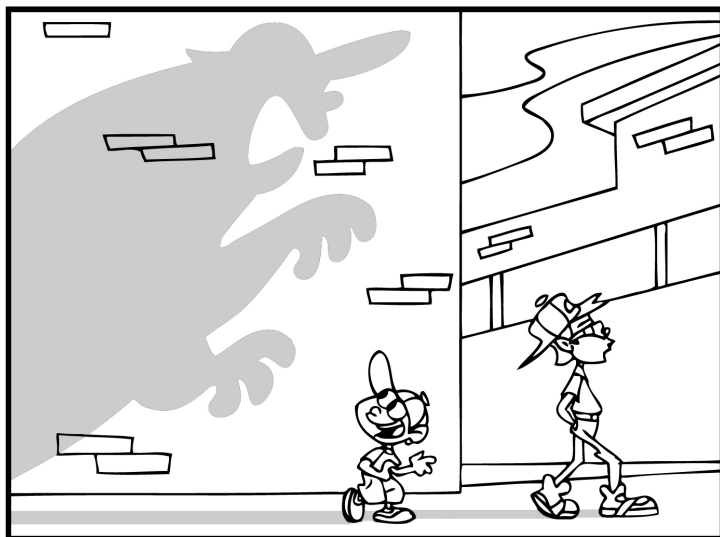
Clue 1: a phrase that tells what the dog consumes

Clue 2: a word that is a synonym for *consume*

consume = _____

Mickey's Monster

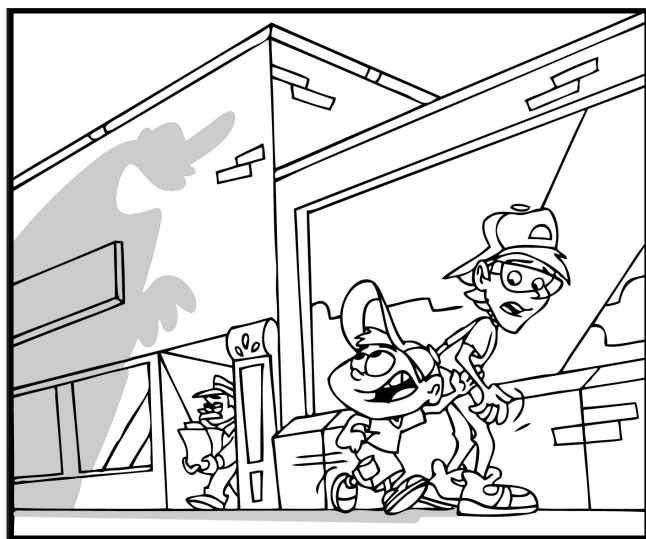
Read the story. Think about the underlined word in each part. Look for clues. Write the clues. Then write the meaning of the word.



Mickey and his brother Tim were walking to the store. Mickey got a bad feeling. He looked back and saw a huge monster stalking them. It followed them and did not make a sound. "It's going to get us!" thought Mickey.

1. Clues: followed them and did not make a sound, going to get us

Stalking means following someone to sneak up and get them.



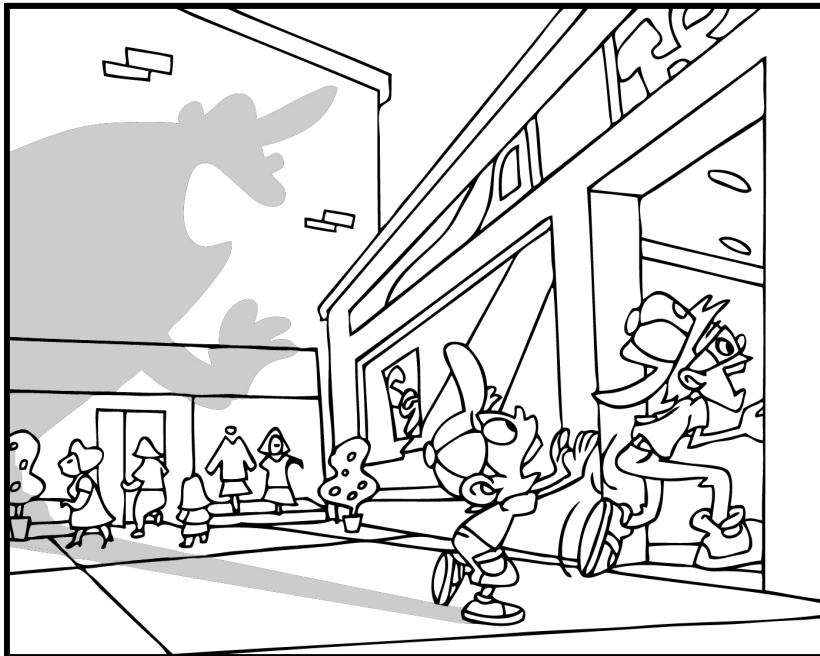
"It's coming! Run for your life!" cried Mickey.

Mickey's sudden scream startled Tim. It scared him so much that he ran and never looked back.

2. Clues: _____

Startled means _____

_____.



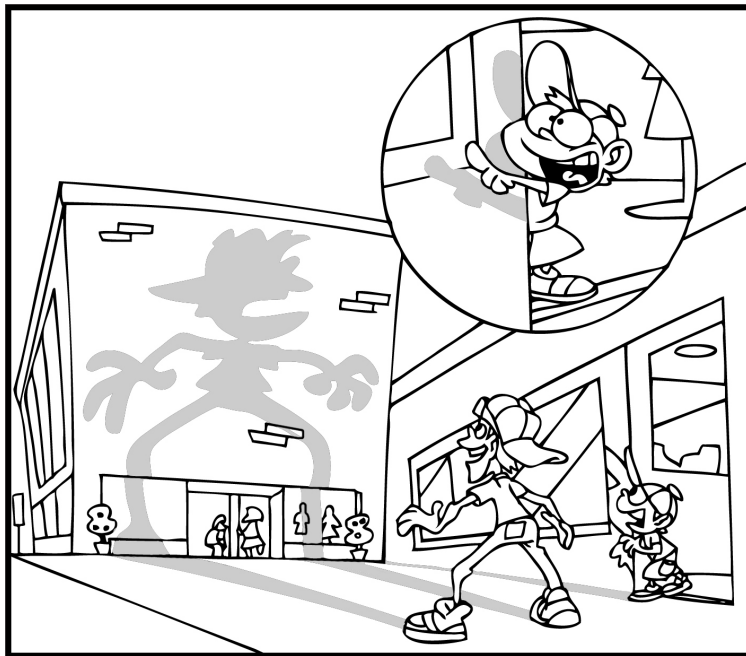
The boys ran into a store to hide. "I'm afraid the monster will find us," said Mickey. His lips quivered in fear. He was shaking so badly that it was hard to talk.

"I see that you're scared," said Tim, "but monsters aren't real."

3. Clues: _____

Quivered means _____

_____.



Tim went outside. "Where is this monster?" he asked.

Mickey was too timid to go outside. He peeked out the door and screamed. He pointed up at a shape on the wall.

Tim laughed. "That's no monster. It's my shadow!"

4. Clues: _____

Timid means _____

_____.

Use words from the story to tell about a time when that you were startled. Then draw a picture of what startled you.

I was startled when _____.

It made me feel _____.

Using Context Clues

Read each passage. Think about the underlined word. Draw a line under each clue. Choose the right meaning and write it on the line.

1. My cat does not like to go to the vet.
When she sees the doctor, she gets upset.
She meows and meows. She hisses. She
wiggles and tries to get away.

Upset means _____.

unhappy quiet



2. Each student picks a number. One student
will get the number 10. That fortunate
student will lead the parade. Pete looks at
his number. It is the number 10. He shouts
hooray. He is the lucky one today!

Fortunate means _____.

loud lucky



3. Fox and Turtle have a race. The winner will
stay in the woods. The loser must go away.
Fox is fast. Turtle is slow. How can Turtle
win? He must trick Fox. Turtle thinks and
thinks. He makes a secret plan. The plan
helps him outsmart Fox. Turtle wins!

Outsmart means to _____.

trick help



4. Long ago, people went west in wagons.
They had many hardships. They went
through rain. They went through snow.
Some people got sick. They had little food.
All these problems made going west very
hard.

Hardships means _____.

problems jobs



Using Context Clues

Read each passage. Think about the underlined word. Look for clues and underline them. Choose the correct meaning of the word and write it on the line.

1. My cat does not like to go to the vet. When she sees the doctor, she gets frantic. She meows loudly and hisses. She squirms and tries to get away.

Frantic means

_____.

upset friendly quiet

2. The students waited in line to draw a number. They all wanted to draw the number 10. The student who was fortunate enough to draw that number would get to lead the class in the school parade.

Fortunate means

_____.

highest lucky best

3. Fox and Turtle had a contest. The one who found the most rocks in one day would stay and live in the woods. The loser would have to leave. Turtle was not strong or quick like Fox. To win, he had to trick Fox. Turtle thought of a plan. He was going to outsmart Fox and win.

Outsmart means to

_____.

help pass trick

4. The pioneers went west in wagons. They had many hardships. They had problems with wild animals, bad storms, and sickness. Sometimes they did not have much food or water.

Hardships means

_____.

jobs problems dreams

Using Context Clues

Read each passage. Think about the underlined word. Look for clues and underline them. Then write the meaning of the word.

1. My cat gets very upset about going to the vet. As soon as she sees the doctor, she becomes frantic. She thrashes around wildly, trying to get free and run away.

Frantic means _____

_____.

2. As the students waited for their turn to draw a number, they all hoped to draw the number 10. The student who was fortunate enough to draw that number would get to lead the class in the school parade.

Fortunate means _____

_____.

3. Fox challenged Turtle to a contest. Whoever gathered the most stones by sundown would get to stay and live in the woods. The loser would have to leave. Turtle was not strong or quick like Fox. To win the contest, he needed to think of a way to trick Fox. Turtle felt sure that he could outsmart Fox and win.

Outsmart means to _____

_____.

4. The pioneers who traveled west in covered wagons faced many hardships. The problems and dangers they had to deal with included wild animals, terrible storms, illness, and a lack of food and water.

Hardships means _____

_____.