

**Topic:** The Homestead Act of 1862

**Tier:** 3

**Text Type:** Expository

**Word Count:** 359

**Lexile® Measure:** 790L

**Skills:** Using Context  
Completing Sentence Stems  
Applying Target Words  
Homographs

#### **Lesson 1**

**Time:** 30 minutes

**Skills:** Using Context

**Student Pages:** Land of the "Free"

**Materials:** students' vocabulary logs

#### **Lesson 2**

**Time:** 30 minutes

**Skills:** Completing Sentence Stems

**Student Pages:** Land of the "Free", Sentence Stems

**Materials:** students' vocabulary logs

#### **Lesson 3**

**Time:** 30 minutes

**Skills:** Applying Target Words

**Student Pages:** A New Experience

**Materials:** students' vocabulary logs, blank paper

#### **Lesson 4**

**Time:** 30 minutes

**Skills:** Homographs

**Student Pages:** Homographs

**Materials:** students' vocabulary logs, dictionaries

#### **Lesson 5**

**Time:** 30 minutes

**Skills:** Reviewing Target Words

**Note:** This activity is optional and may be used if you wish to review the words covered in a game format.

**Note: Words in bold are said aloud by the teacher.**

30  
minutes

## Teach

Distribute “Land of the ‘Free’” (Student Activity 1). **We will read a passage about a time in history when many Americans journeyed west for land. As we read, we will stop and clarify some of the words. We’ll ask these four questions to help us figure out the meaning of each one.** Write each of the four questions on the board as you discuss it. These questions should become part of your vocabulary routine, so you may want to instead write the questions on chart paper and post them in your classroom for easy reference.

**1. What do the words around the unknown word tell me about the word?**

**Are there examples or descriptions given for the word?**

**2. What is the part of speech for the word?**

**Knowing whether the word is a noun (Is the author referring to someone?), verb (Did someone do something?), adjective (Is the author describing something?), or adverb (Is the author telling how something is done?) can help me figure out what the author is trying to tell me.**

**3. Is there a word part that can help me with the meaning?**

**If the word has a prefix, suffix, or root which I know the meaning of, this can help me determine the meaning of the entire word.**

**4. What words would go together with this word?**

**Are there synonyms or antonyms in the text around the word that may give me a clue?**

Read the passage with the students. When you get to the first underlined word, stop and model how to use the four questions above to figure out the meaning of the word.

## Guided and Independent Practice

Continue reading the passage aloud. As you get to each underlined word, write the word on the board. Guide students in determining the meaning by using the questions from the Teach section. As students determine the meaning of the word, have them say their thoughts aloud. Write a definition of the word on the board. See “Words and Definitions” on the next page. Have students copy each word and definition into their vocabulary logs.

**Guided and Independent Practice (cont.)**Words and Definitions

obtain – to get

team – a group whose members work together

range – an open area of land

diverse – made up of different kinds

immigrant – a person who comes to a country to live

file – to place among official records

displayed – placed in a place to be seen

displaced – removed from the usual or proper place

**Note: Words in bold are said aloud by the teacher.**

30  
minutes

## Teach and Guided Practice

Redistribute or have students take out "Land of the 'Free'" (Student Activity 1). Have students reread the passage. Provide about three minutes for this activity.

Review the eight target words from the passage with the students. For each word, have students state the definition without using their vocabulary logs. Correct when necessary.

Distribute "Sentence Stems" (Student Activity 2). **In our last lesson, we read a passage and determined the meanings of certain words. Today we will look more closely at those words. We will use the words in sentences. On this worksheet, the first part of each sentence has been written. What we write at the end of the sentence should show that we know the meaning of the word. We will do these together.** Discuss with the students various possible completions for each stem, and as a group, agree on the best completion. Have each student write the same completion on his or her worksheet.

## Independent Practice

Have each student write a sentence for each target word in his or her vocabulary log. Each sentence must contain a clue to the meaning of the word.

**Note: Words in bold are said aloud by the teacher.**

30  
minutes

## Teach and Guided Practice

Distribute "A New Experience" (Student Activity 3). **Now we will use the words in a new passage.** Read the passage aloud or chorally with students, inserting the word *blank* for every underlined open space. **For each blank, determine which target word best belongs. You may take out your vocabulary log and refer to the definitions if necessary.**

Challenge students by giving them a time limit to finish. They may work alone or with a partner. When time is up, reread the passage, stopping at each blank and allowing students to talk about the word they chose and why. Correct when necessary.

## Independent Practice

Make sure each student has a blank sheet of paper. Have each student write a brief passage using all eight target words in the correct context.

**Note: Words in bold are said aloud by the teacher.**

## Teach

Write the following two sentences on the board:

- *First, he or she had to file papers and pay a small filing fee at a local land office.*
- *Marissa used the emery board to file her fingernails.*

Read the sentences aloud. Then underline *file* in each sentence. **What can you tell me about these two words in these sentences?** Allow time for responses. **These underlined words are homographs. Homographs are words that have the same spelling but different meanings. Sometimes, they are even pronounced differently.** Write *homograph* on the board. **The word *homograph* has two roots.** Underline *homo*. ***Homo* means “same.”** Underline *graph*. **And *graph* means “write.” Thus, *homographs* are words written the same way, but remember, they have *different* meanings and sometimes *different* pronunciations.**

**Look at the word *file* in the first sentence. What does *file* mean here?** Allow time for responses. If necessary, remind students that *file* means “to place among official records” in this sentence. **Look at the word *file* in the second sentence. What does *file* mean in this sentence?** Allow time for responses. If necessary, have students look up the word in a dictionary. Help students use context clues to determine the correct meaning. Affirm the correct response. ***File* in this sentence means “to rub or smooth away by using a tool with ridges.”** Point to each instance of *file* on the board. **What are these two words called? (*homographs*) Why? (*because they are spelled the same but have different meanings*)**

**There are many homographs in the English language. The reader must use context clues to determine which word and meaning is being used.**

## Guided Practice

**Now let’s look at other homographs.** Distribute “Homographs” (Student Activity 4), and project a copy on the board for students to see. Read each sentence with the students, and guide students in forming a correct definition for each underlined homograph. Record the definitions on the board, and have each student copy the definitions onto his or her activity sheet. Students may use dictionaries for assistance.

## Independent Practice

Have each student write a new sentence for each underlined homograph on Student Activity 4. The students' sentences should be written in their vocabulary logs. Each sentence must contain a clue to the meaning of the word. For example, here are sentences for the first two homographs:

My favorite teacher is kind to all his students.  
Berries are my favorite kind of fruit.

**Note: Words in bold are said aloud by the teacher.**

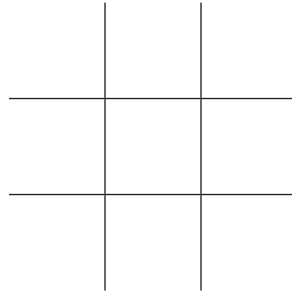
30  
minutes

**This activity is optional and may be used if you wish to review the words covered in a game format.**

## Review

To review the words studied in this set of lessons, play tic-tac-toe with the students.

Draw the tic-tac-toe squares on the board, as shown below:

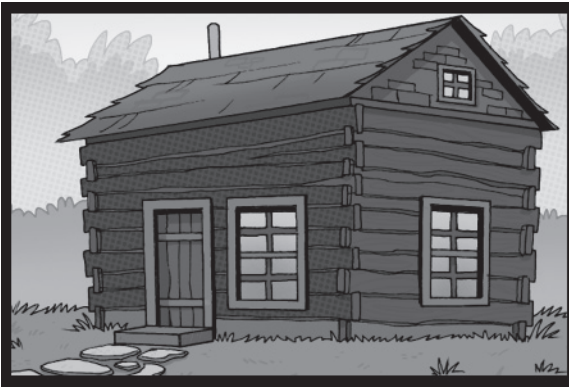


Divide the group into two teams. Decide which team goes first by having each team guess a number you've chosen between 1 and 20. The team who guesses closest to the number goes first. Call out one of the target words or homographs studied to the first player on the team: *obtain*, *team*, *range*, *diverse*, *immigrant*, *file*, *displayed*, *displaced*, *kind*, *date*, *last*, *rank*, *tap*, or *vault*. The player must then say the definition of the word and use the word correctly in a sentence. If the word is a homograph, the player may choose which definition to use. If the player correctly defines the word and uses the word in a sentence, his or her team gets to place an X or O in the empty square of its choice. Then it is the other team's turn. Teams take turns until a team gets three Xs or Os in a row or until there are no empty squares left. The team who gets three Xs or Os in a row or who has more Xs or Os in the squares wins. You may have students play again and again until each word has been correctly defined and used in a sentence.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Land of the “Free”



Imagine you've just won 160 acres of free land. An acre of land is about the size of a football field. So, you probably think getting 160 acres of free land is a good deal. But there's a catch. In order to obtain your "prize," you have to travel for weeks. You have to ride in a covered wagon pulled by a team of horses. You would plod along for hundreds of miles across a grassy range. Trees would be few and far between. The sun would beat harshly on your horses' backs. Claiming your land is not a job for the faint of heart.

The Homestead Act of 1862 sent millions of Americans westward in just this way. The act stated that any adult who had never fought against the United States could apply for 160 acres of free land. This created a diverse pool of settlers. There were immigrants who had just entered the country. Former slaves, farmers from the East, and single women also took part in the deal. They came from all walks of life. But they all shared the dream of a better life.

Making this dream come true was difficult. To fully own the land, a settler had to complete three steps. First, he or she had to file papers and pay a small filing fee at a local land office. Second, the settler had to farm the land for at least five years. After these things had been done, he or she could then file for full ownership.

If approved, the new owner was given a paper deed showing the signature of President Lincoln. Such a deed was a source of great pride. Many were framed and displayed on cabin walls. A deed was a badge of American honor.

Hard work was not the only price paid for these millions of acres of "free" land. The land also came at the expense of the Native American groups who had lived on it for centuries. These displaced people would probably urge us all to think carefully about any deal that seems too good to be true—like getting 160 land acres for free.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Sentence Stems**1. **obtain**To obtain his goal \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_2. **team**The sled was pulled by a team \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_3. **range**On the range were \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_4. **diverse**The diverse band had \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_5. **immigrant**The immigrant came to \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_6. **file**To file the papers you must \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_7. **displayed**The trophies were displayed \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_8. **displaced**I could see that the things in my room had been displaced because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## A New Experience

Read the passage below. For each blank, select the word from the box that best completes the sentence. Write the word in the blank. Each word may be used only once.

obtain	team	range	diverse
immigrant	file	displayed	displaced

Mandy's dad parked the car in front of the school. The huge building sat on a large open \_\_\_\_\_ . Mandy slowly exited the car. The words *Rising Star Middle School* were \_\_\_\_\_ above the building.

"Being a new student is like being a new \_\_\_\_\_," Mandy thought. Everything would be different. She didn't know what to expect. After being \_\_\_\_\_ by his company, Mandy's dad had moved his family to a new town. Here, he had found a better job.

"It is going to be okay," Mandy told herself as she walked to the front entrance with her parents. "Experiencing new things is good."

"Wait here, your mother and I have to \_\_\_\_\_ the paperwork with the office," said her dad.

Mandy hoped she would \_\_\_\_\_ the classes she wanted. There was a \_\_\_\_\_ selection to choose from. Along with the basic courses, she wanted to take a drama class and band. She also wanted to try out for the volleyball \_\_\_\_\_.

After a while of waiting, Mandy began to wonder what was taking so long. But at last her parents returned with her schedule. She carefully read over it and became quite excited. She had all the classes she wanted, including drama and band.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Homographs

Read each sentence carefully, and define each underlined homograph on the appropriate blank.

### Sentences:

- The kind mother allowed her children to choose  
(a)  
what kind of dessert they wanted to eat.  
(b)
- The woman was furious when her date forgot the  
(a)  
date of her birth.  
(b)
- The party would last until the last guest left.  
(a) (b)
- The rank of men smelled rank because they had just  
(a) (b)  
finished a ten-mile run.
- Each drop of water coming from the tap made the  
(a)  
sound of a tap once it hit the sink.  
(b)
- With jewels from his secret vault, the treasure  
(a)  
hunter bought a horse that could vault tall fences.  
(b)

### Definitions:

(a) \_\_\_\_\_

(b) \_\_\_\_\_

(a) \_\_\_\_\_

(b) \_\_\_\_\_

(a) \_\_\_\_\_

(b) \_\_\_\_\_

(a) \_\_\_\_\_

(b) \_\_\_\_\_

(a) \_\_\_\_\_

(b) \_\_\_\_\_

(a) \_\_\_\_\_

(b) \_\_\_\_\_

## Homographs (Answer Key)

Read each sentence carefully, and define each underlined homograph on the appropriate blank.

### Sentences:

- The kind mother allowed her children to choose  
(a)  
what kind of dessert they wanted to eat.  
(b)
- The woman was furious when her date forgot the  
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- The party would last until the last guest left.  
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- The rank of men smelled rank because they had just  
(a) (b)  
finished a ten-mile run.
- Each drop of water coming from the tap made the  
(a)  
sound of a tap once it hit the sink.  
(b)
- With jewels from his secret vault, the treasure  
(a)  
hunter bought a horse that could vault tall fences.  
(b)

### Definitions:

- good-hearted
- a type
- a person with whom one is romantic
- the time at which an event occurs
- to continue in time
- being the only remaining
- a row of people
- foul or gross
- a faucet
- a light blow that can be heard
- a room for keeping valuables safe
- to leap over