

TYPES OF CONTEXT CLUES

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There are four common types of context clues:

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Nocturnal creatures, such as **bats and owls**, have highly developed senses that enable them to function in the dark.

Nocturnal (nɒk-tûr'nəl) means

- A. feathery. B. living. C. active at night.

The *adverse* effects of this drug, including **dizziness, nausea, and headaches**, have caused it to be withdrawn from the market.

Adverse (ăd-vûrs') means

- A. deadly. B. harmful. C. expensive.

Instances of common *euphemisms* include “**final resting place**” (for *grave*), “**intoxicated**” (for *drunk*), and “**restroom**” (for *toilet*).

Euphemisms (yūō'fə-mīz'əmz) means

- A. unpleasant reactions. B. answers. C. substitutes for offensive terms.

Even presidents must perform such *mundane* activities as brushing their teeth and washing their hands and faces.

Mundane (mūn-dān') means

- A. pleasant. B. ordinary. C. expensive.

Hint: For this and all the exercises in this chapter, actually insert into the sentence the word you think is the answer. For example, substitute *pleasant* or *commonplace* or *expensive* in the sentence in place of *mundane* to see which one fits.

Today was a day of *turmoil* at work. The phones were constantly ringing, people were running back and forth, and several offices were being painted.

Turmoil (tūr'moil') means

- A. discussion. B. confusion. C. harmony.

Some animals have remarkable *longevity*. For example, the giant land tortoise can live several hundred years.

Longevity (lōn-jēv'ī-tē) means

- A. appearances. B. length of life. C. habits.

Before the invention of television, people spent more time on *diversions* such as going to town concerts and ball games, visiting neighborhood friends, and playing board games.

Diversions (dī-vūr'zhənz) means

- A. amusements. B. differences. C. chores.

Since my grandfather retired, he has developed several new *avocations*. For instance, he now enjoys gardening and long-distance bike riding.

Avocations (āv'ō-kā'shənz) means

- A. hobbies. B. vacations. C. jobs.

Children who move to a foreign country *adapt* much more easily than their parents, soon picking up the language and customs of their new home.

Adapt (ə-dāpt') means

- A. adjust. B. struggle. C. become bored.

The Chinese government provides *incentives* for married couples to have only one child. For example, couples with one child get financial help and free medical care.

Incentives (īn-sēn'tivz) means

- A. warnings. B. penalties. C. encouragements.

➤ Practice 2: Synonyms

Each item below includes a word that is a synonym of the italicized word. Write the synonym of the italicized word in the space provided. Note that the last five sentences have been taken from college textbooks.

- _____ 1. Speaking in front of a group *disconcerts* (dīs'kən-sûrtz') Alan. Even answering a question in class embarrasses him.
Hint: How does Alan react when he has to speak in public?
- _____ 2. Because my friends had advised me to *scrutinize* (skrōōt'n-īz') the lease, I took time to examine all the fine print.
- _____ 3. The presidential candidate vowed to discuss *pragmatic* (prāg-măt'īk) solutions. He said the American people want practical answers, not empty theory.
- _____ 4. I asked the instructor to explain a confusing passage in the textbook. She said, "I wish I could, but it's *obscure* (ōb-skyōōr') to me, too."

3 Antonyms

An **antonym**—a word that means the opposite of another word—is also a useful context clue. Antonyms are often signaled by words and phrases such as *however*, *but*, *yet*, *on the other hand*, and *in contrast*.

In each sentence below, underline the word that means the opposite of the italicized word. Then, on the answer line, write the letter of the meaning of the italicized word.

- _____ 1. Many people have pointed out the harmful effects that a working mother may have on the family, yet there are many *salutary* effects as well.
Salutary (sāl'yə-tēr'ē) means
A. well-known. B. beneficial. C. hurtful.
2. Trying to control everything your teens do can *impede* their growth. To advance their development, allow them to make some decisions on their own.
Impede (īm-pēd') means
A. block. B. predict. C. improve.
3. During their training, police officers must respond to *simulated* emergencies in preparation for dealing with real ones.
Simulated (sīm'yə-lā'tīd) means
A. made-up. B. mild. C. actual.