

Context Clues

VOCABULARY 21

You can sometimes understand the meaning of an unfamiliar word by looking closely at **context clues**—the words, sentences, and paragraphs around the word. For example, read the following sentence from “Names/Nombres.”

I was too afraid we wouldn’t be let in if I corrected the man’s pronunciation, but I said our name to myself, opening my mouth wide for the organ blast of the *a*, trilling my tongue for the drumroll of the *r*, *All-vah-rrr-es!*

The sentence describes the correct way to say the name *Alvarez*. By reading the whole sentence, you can tell that *pronunciation* means “the way in which one says—or pronounces—a word.”

Use Context to Infer Meanings In the following sentences, use context clues to determine the meaning of each underlined word from “Names/Nombres.” Write the meanings you infer on the lines provided. Use a dictionary to check your definitions.

1. Aunt Helena was thrilled at the commencement ceremony because she had always hoped that Albert would graduate from college.

2. Grandma’s affectionate feelings for her dog were clear to anyone who saw her gently patting him as he licked his dinner bowl clean.

3. We looked through all the exotic items for sale at the village bazaar but finally stopped at a food stall to buy dried apricots and spices.

4. Her literary interests include the poetry of Langston Hughes and fiction by Jack London.

5. Dad forbade us to go to Jamie’s party because no adults would be there, and no amount of pleading would change his mind.
