

Context clues are the words and phrases in a sentence which give you a clue to the meaning of an unfamiliar word. You can often figure out the meanings of new or unfamiliar vocabulary by paying attention to the surrounding language. The table below gives the types of clues, signals and examples of each clue.

Type of Context Clue	Definition	Signals	Examples
Antonym or Contrast Clue	Phrases or words that indicate opposite	but, in contrast, however, instead of, unlike, yet	Unlike his quiet and low key family, Brad is <u><i>garrulous</i></u> .
Definition or Example Clue	Phrases or words that define or explain	is defined as, means, the term, [a term in boldface or italics or set off with commas]	<u><i>Sedentary</i></u> individuals, people who are not very active, often have diminished health.
General Knowledge or General Sense/Logic of the Sentence or Passage	The meaning is derived from the experience and background knowledge of the reader or conclusions drawn from the information given ; "common sense" and logic.	<i>The information may be something basically familiar to you or you must draw conclusions based on the information given with the word</i>	Lourdes is always sucking up to the boss, even in front of others. That <u><i>sycophant</i></u> just doesn't care what others think of her behavior.
Restatement or Synonym Clue	Another word or phrase with the same or a similar meaning is used.	in other words, that is, also known as, sometimes called, or, for instance	The <u><i>dromedary</i></u> , commonly called a camel, stores fat in its hump.

Further explanation and activities for Recognizing Context Clues can be found in the following texts:

Flemming, Loraine. *Reading for Results*, 12th ed. Boston: Wadsworth, 2014. (See pages 63-88)

Flemming, Loraine. *Reading Keys*, 3rd ed. Boston: Wadsworth, 2011. (See pages 47-61)

Langan, John. *Ten Steps to Improving College Reading Skills*, 5th ed. West Berlin: Townsend Press, 2008. (See pages 22-30)

McWhorter, Kathleen T. *Reading Across the Disciplines: College Reading and Beyond*, 5th ed. San Francisco: Pearson Education, 2009. (See pages 48-58)

Spears, Deanne. *Improving Reading Skills: Contemporary Readings for College Students*, 6th ed. New York: McGraw- Hill, 2010. (See pages 7-10)