

DISCOVERING CONTEXT CLUES

Next time you come across an unfamiliar word--whether it's contained in a set of test directions, in a test question itself, or in a paragraph you are reading in school or out--don't panic! Instead, calmly and carefully try to figure out the word's meaning by analyzing "context clues"--how is the word used in the sentence (i.e. is it a noun? a verb? adjective? adverb?)? What hints regarding its meaning do you get from the word around it?

Practice your ability to interpret context clues by determining the meaning of the underlined word in each sentence below. Write your definition of each word on the blank following the sentence. Then check with the dictionary to see how accurate your definitions are.

1. Because Lani is perpetually late, we told her the surprise party was to start at seven o'clock instead of at eight. perpetually probably means _____.
2. The body was interred in the Midvale Cemetery. interred probably means _____.
3. Donald's pugnacious manner gave him the reputation of a bully. pugnacious probably means _____.
4. Kate's scholarship included a stipend of fifty dollars a week for living expenses. stipend probably means _____--_____.
5. The youngster's pallid complexion was a result of an illness that kept her indoors. pallid probably means _____-_____.
6. The old man's face was so wizened that it was easy to believe he was almost 100 years old. wizened probably means _____.
7. To enter the "Snappy Cereal Sweepstakes" you must enclose one boxtop or a reasonable facsimile. facsimile probably means _____.
8. The witness stated dogmatically that the robber had blond hair and wore glasses. dogmatically probably means _____.
9. When the first two coats of paint were dry, she added still a tertiary coat for extra protection. tertiary probably means _____.
10. If my allowance is cut off I will be destitute for the rest of the year. destitute probably means _____.