

Chapter One:

Vocabulary in Context

Do you know the meaning of the word *ubiquitous*?

Look at the sentence below and see if the **context**—the words surrounding the unfamiliar word—helps you figure out the meaning of the word.

Cell phones have become *ubiquitous*; you can see—and hear—they everywhere.

What does *ubiquitous* mean?

A. unaffordable

B. complicated

C. widespread

VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT

If the phones are “everywhere,” they must be *widespread*.

The **context** helps you figure out that *ubiquitous* means “widespread.”

Cell phones have become *ubiquitous*; you can see—and hear—they *everywhere*.

What does *ubiquitous* mean?

A. unaffordable

B. complicated

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VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT

Using context clues will help you by

- **saving you time** when reading
- **adding to your vocabulary**

VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT

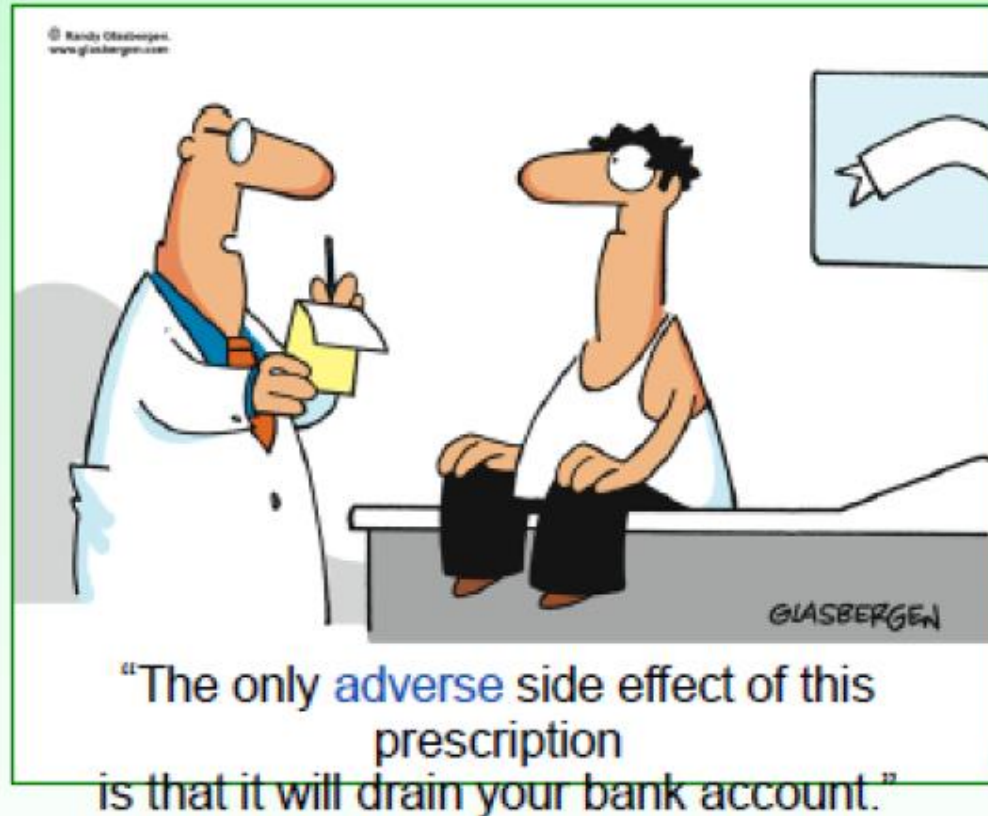
There are four common types of context clues:

- 1** Examples
- 2** Synonyms
- 3** Antonyms
- 4** General Sense of the Sentence or Passage

TYPES OF CONTEXT CLUES

Examples

Look at the cartoon below. What do you think the word *adverse* means?



Adverse means

- A.** known.
- B.** pleasant.
- C.** harmful.

TYPES OF CONTEXT CLUES

Examples

Look at the sentences below and see if the examples help you understand the meaning of the word *tribulations*.

As they moved westward, early pioneers faced many *tribulations*, such as scarce food, extreme weather, and loneliness.

Tribulations means

- A.** criminals. **B.** hard decisions. **C.** great difficulties.

TYPES OF CONTEXT CLUES

Examples

Look at the sentences below and see if the examples help you understand the meaning of the word *idiosyncrasy*.

Each of my coworkers has a strange *idiosyncrasy*. For instance, our receptionist wears only pink. The mail clerk always speaks in a whisper. And my office mate lives on peanuts and apples.

Idiosyncrasy means

A. hidden thought. **B.** unusual goal. **C.** unusual personal trait.

TYPES OF CONTEXT CLUES

Examples

Examples are often introduced with **signal words and phrases** like *for example, for instance, including, and such as*.

Examples

As they moved westward, early pioneers faced many *tribulations*, **such as** scarce food, extreme weather, and loneliness.

Each of my coworkers has a strange *idiosyncrasy*. **For instance**, our receptionist wears only pink. The mail clerk always speaks in a whisper. And my office mate lives on peanuts and apples.

TYPES OF CONTEXT CLUES

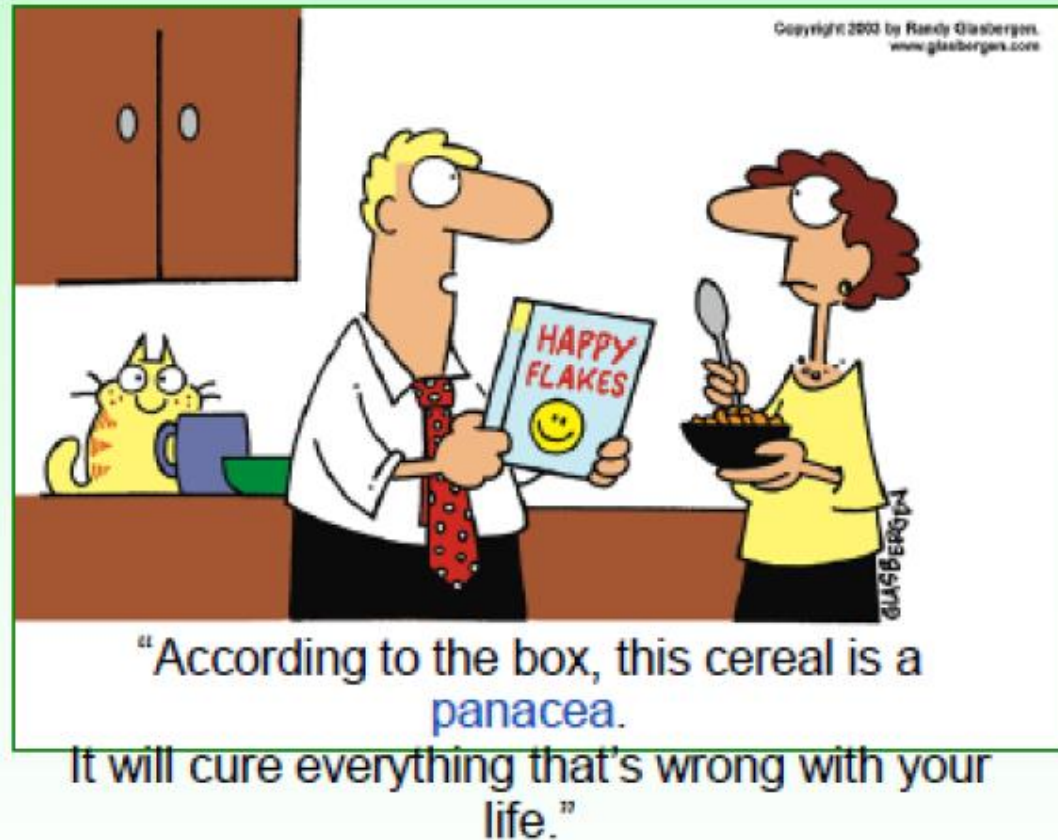
Synonyms

Context clues are often found in the form of **synonyms**: one or more words that mean **the same** or **almost the same** as the unknown word.

TYPES OF CONTEXT CLUES

Synonyms

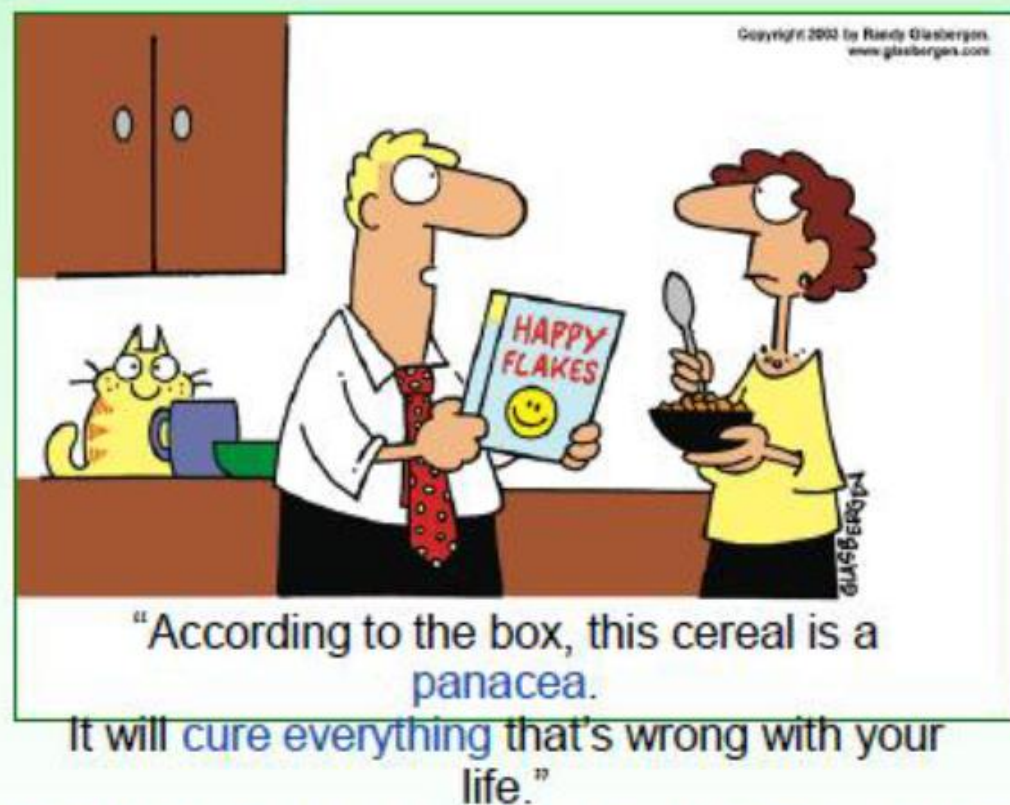
Look at the cartoon below. What words help you understand what *panacea* means?



TYPES OF CONTEXT CLUES

Synonyms

Look at the cartoon below. What words help you understand what *panacea* means?



The **synonym** that helps you understand the word *panacea* is "cure everything."

TYPES OF CONTEXT CLUES

Synonyms

In the sentences below, what is the **synonym** that tells you the meaning of the word *innate*?

That five-year-old girl must have *innate* musical talent; playing the piano so well at her age requires an inborn gift.

TYPES OF CONTEXT CLUES

Synonyms

In the sentences below, what is the **synonym** that tells you the meaning of the word *mentor*?

Gaining a *mentor* is helpful when you are beginning a new job. A wise and trusted advisor can greatly assist your career.

TYPES OF CONTEXT CLUES

Antonyms

Antonyms are words or phrases that mean the **opposite** of a word.

Antonyms are also useful as context clues.

TYPES OF CONTEXT CLUES

Antonyms

Look at the cartoon below. What words help you understand what *indolent* means?



TYPES OF CONTEXT CLUES

Antonyms

Look at the cartoon below. What words help you understand what *indolent* means?



The **antonym** *hard work* helps you figure out that the word *indolent* means "lazy."

TYPES OF CONTEXT CLUES

Antonyms

In the sentence below,

1. What is the **antonym** that helps you figure out the meaning of the word *verbose*?
2. What is the meaning of *verbose*?

A memo that is brief and to the point is more likely to be read than one that is *verbose* and rambling.

Verbose means

A. argumentative.

B. wordy.

C. short.

TYPES OF CONTEXT CLUES

Antonyms

In the sentence below,

1. What is the **antonym** that helps you figure out the meaning of the word *bizarre*?
2. What is the meaning of *bizarre*?

Most of my friends' mothers seemed ordinary; mine, however, did such *bizarre* things as spraying green paint on a dead tree in front of our house.

Bizarre means

A. odd.

B. easy.

C. dangerous.

TYPES OF CONTEXT CLUES

Antonyms

Antonyms are sometimes signaled by words such as *however, but, yet, on the other hand,* and *in contrast*.

Example

Most of my friends' mothers seemed ordinary; mine, **however**, did such *bizarre* things as spraying green paint on a dead tree in front of our house.

TYPES OF CONTEXT CLUES

General Sense of the Sentence or Passage

- Sometimes, to figure out an unfamiliar word, you must **draw conclusions** based on the information given.
- **Asking yourself questions** can help you make an accurate guess about the meaning of the unfamiliar word.

TYPES OF CONTEXT CLUES

General Sense of the Sentence or Passage

Look at the cartoon below. To understand the meaning of *opportune*, ask yourself: Is this a good time for the boss to tell the injured worker that he's been fired?



TYPES OF CONTEXT CLUES

General Sense of the Sentence or Passage

Read the sentence below. Then think about the question that follows to figure out the meaning of *rectified*.

One argument against capital punishment is that if an innocent person is executed, the mistake cannot be *rectified*.

(What cannot be done about a mistake as final as an execution?)

Rectified means

A. remembered.

B. predicted.

C. corrected.

TYPES OF CONTEXT CLUES

General Sense of the Sentence or Passage

Read the sentence below. Then think about the question that follows to figure out the meaning of *extricate*.

It took two days for volunteers to *extricate* the little girl from the bottom of the well.

(How would volunteers try to help the trapped girl?)

Extricate means

A. free.

B. delay.

C. remember.

TEXTBOOK DEFINITIONS

- Textbook authors often provide definitions of important terms, followed by examples.
- They usually set off the terms they are defining in *italic* or **boldface** type.

Example

In all societies there is some **vertical mobility**—moving up or down the status ladder. The upward movement is called *upward mobility* and the downward movement, *downward mobility*. The promotion of a teacher to the position of principal is an example of upward mobility, and demotion from principal to teacher is downward mobility.

CHAPTER REVIEW

In this chapter, you learned the following:

- To save time when reading, you should try to figure out the meanings of unfamiliar words. You can do so by looking at their *context*—the words surrounding them.
- There are four kinds of context clues: **examples** (marked by words like *for example*, *for instance*, *including*, and *such as*); **synonyms** (words that mean the same as unknown words); **antonyms** (words that mean the opposite of unknown words); and **general sense of the sentence** (clues in the sentence or surrounding sentences about what words might mean).
- Textbook authors typically set off important words in *italic* or **boldface** and define those words for you, often providing examples as well.