Using the Context as a Clue

- **Definition / Explanation Clues:**
  - The most direct clues an author uses
  - Usually defined for the reader, generally in the same sentence
    - **Examples:**
      - A symbol is something that stands for something else.
      - Sedentary individuals, people who are not very active, often have diminished health.

- **Restatement / Synonym Clues:**
  - Explain unfamiliar words in text by restating them in simpler terms or by using synonyms
  - Often used in content area textbooks
  - May or may not appear in the same sentence
    - **Examples:**
      - Cowboys often wore chaps, leather trousers without a seat, over their pants to protect their legs from thorns.
      - The food was bland. In fact, everyone called it tasteless.

- **Contrast / Antonym Clues:**
  - Offer an opposite meaning of a word
  - Requires the student to catch and understand the signal word
  - May or may not appear in the same sentence
    - **Examples:**
      - Chad is calm and quiet, but his brother is boisterous.
      - Sandy thought that her mother’s recovery was futile, but her brother remained faithful to the course of his mother’s restored health.

- **Gist / Inference / General Knowledge Clues:**
  - Most subtle type of clue an author uses
  - Meaning must be inferred from the general context, or the gist, of the passage.
  - Readers may sometimes have to read an entire passage before they can understand the word
    - **Examples:**
      - John burst out of the woods and found himself at the edge of a precipice. Clinging to a boulder, he gazed down dizzily at the blue ribbon of river below.

** Since the word precipice isn’t defined, restated, or put in contrast with other words, readers must figure out what the word means by reading the passage and thinking about the other information in the text. “If he’s gazing down, he’s high up. And, if the river looks like a blue ribbon, he must be very high. Boulders are very big rocks, usually on mountains. A precipice must be someplace up high, on a mountain, at the edge of something where you can see over to what/s below.”

*** Adapted from When Kids Can’t Read What Teachers Can Do, by Kylene Beers.
## Context as a Clue

### Name:

### Title:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I was able to determine the meaning of this word from the text. Write the page # and word.</th>
<th>Proof from text:</th>
<th>I was not able to determine the meaning of this word from the text. Write the page # and word.</th>
<th>Write the sentence the word was found in and the definition based on your discussion or the dictionary.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>p. 23 pitchblende</td>
<td>Pitchblende is a dark mineral.</td>
<td>p. 47 antithesis</td>
<td>The antithesis of love is hate. the exact opposite</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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