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LESSON
15

Understanding Words in Context

PART 1

Introduction

THEME: >>> Past to Present

As you read, you will often come across new or unfamiliar words. There are several ways to figure out the meaning of a word you don't know. Sometimes, you can look up the word in a dictionary or glossary. Other times, you can figure out the word's meaning by using **context clues** in the text itself. Context clues are words and phrases in the text that help show the meaning of a particular word.

Read the paragraph.

Jane Goodall walked into the jungle and quietly took her place to observe the chimpanzees. One or two chimps hesitantly approached her, but their steps were slow and they seemed frightened. Jane urged them to come closer. A young chimp glanced at Jane with a quizzical look. The little chimp was clearly puzzled and not sure what to do next.

Look at the words hesitantly and quizzical. Then look for other words and phrases in the sentence and the other nearby sentences for clues that help you understand what these words mean. Circle words and phrases that show the meaning of hesitantly. Underline words and phrases that show the meaning of quizzical. Then answer the questions by filling in the boxes below.

Question	What the Text Says	Word Meaning
How does the text describe the way the chimps approach Jane?	"their steps were slow"	So <u>hesitantly</u> means
How does the text describe the way the young chimp looked when it glanced at Jane?		So <u>quizzical</u> means

Read the first part of the text. Then answer the questions.

Meet Sue Hendrickson, Explorer

1 It happened one day in August, 1990. That was the day that Sue Hendrickson became famous. Sue had joined a team of explorers on a dinosaur dig. They were hunting for fossils in the Black Hills of South Dakota. She found a reddish-brown rock. Then she found a string of small bones. These bones led her to huge dinosaur backbones. They led to an almost complete dinosaur skeleton.

2 Sue Hendrickson found the largest *Tyrannosaurus rex* skeleton ever. It was also the most complete set of *T. rex* bones. They were in very good condition. The dinosaur skeleton was named SUE after Sue Hendrickson. Now, everyone knew her name. She was famous.

3 Sue Hendrickson was born in Chicago, Illinois. She grew up near Munster, Indiana. Sue Hendrickson was the middle child in her family. She was a shy little girl who enjoyed reading. Even as a young girl, Sue loved to look for and find things. She joined the swim team when she was a teen. She loved swimming and spending time in the water. Sue became a woman who loved adventure. She became a diver and explored the sea floor. She collected insect fossils. Sue taught herself to become a fossil hunter.

Think About It

What unfamiliar words are related to the subject? Looking for clues in the sentence the word is used in will help you find the meaning.

What is the meaning of fossils in paragraph 1?

What sentence in the passage helps you know the meaning?

**A CLOSER LOOK**

In paragraph 4 underline context clues that help you understand the phrase marine archaeologists.

Continue reading the text. Then answer the question.

4 After finding the *T. rex*, Sue Hendrickson joined a team of underwater explorers. She has joined the marine archaeologists on many dives. They explore shipwrecks, sunken treasure, and very old, sunken cities.

5 Sue Hendrickson loves her work. She says it is her passion. She feels lucky that her work lets her do what she loves to do. Sue Hendrickson enjoys the excitement of searching for things. She thinks that it is worth the hard work. The thrill of finding things keeps her going. Sue says that she feels like a child who never grew up.

6 The Field Museum in Chicago bought the *T. rex* skeleton. *T. rex* SUE is on display for thousands to see. Sue hopes that more children grow up to be explorers. She knows that learning about the past is important. There are many more things to discover in our world.

How does Sue feel about her work?

Why does Sue say her work is her passion?

- A It is a good job.
- B She likes to explore.
- C She likes to be famous.
- D She loves what she does.

**DISCUSS IT**

What are some other context clues that help you understand Sue's feelings about her work? Discuss these clues with another student. Be sure to include specific examples of how these context clues help you understand the text.

Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

Lucy the Elephant

1 When you go to the beach, the last thing you expect to see is an elephant! Yet visitors to the town of Margate on the New Jersey shore have been coming to see a larger-than-life elephant for almost a 100 years. Lucy, as she is called, is not a real elephant. She is a very special building that tourists love to visit.

2 Lucy was built in 1881 by James Lafferty. Lafferty built and sold property. His elephant-shaped building was six stories tall and weighed 90 tons. She was made of one million pieces of timber and covered with 12,000 square feet of tin. Lucy's body was 38 feet long, her head was 16 feet long, and her legs were 22 feet high. Her huge glass eyes measured 18 inches in diameter.

3 People loved to visit Lucy, and the odd building brought Lafferty a lot of attention and a lot of business. After he died, another family owned Lucy. She was not just a tourist attraction.

She was a real building! Over the years, offices and other businesses were located inside Lucy.

4 After a while, Lucy was abandoned. By the late 1960s, she was falling apart and in danger of being torn down. Luckily for Lucy, a group of Margate residents wanted to save her. They raised money to restore Lucy and make her safe and attractive again. Today, people come from all over the world to visit Lucy in her home by the ocean.



A CLOSER LOOK

Underline words that help you know why Lucy is called "larger-than-life."

What phrase in the text describes what Lucy was like after she was restored?

- 1 What context clues from the text help you understand the meaning of the word restore in paragraph 4?
- A "she was falling apart"
 - B "residents wanted to save her"
 - C "make her safe and attractive again"
 - D "people come from all over the world to visit Lucy"

Why do people come to see Lucy?

- 2 **Part A**
What is the meaning of the term tourist attraction in paragraph 3?
- A an unusual building
 - B an oddly shaped building
 - C something near the beach
 - D something people travel to see

Part B

What context clue in the text best supports the answer to Part A?

- A "a lot of attention"
- B "people come from all over the world to visit"
- C "the last thing you expect to see"
- D "offices and other businesses were located inside"

What sentences in the text provide clues or definitions for unfamiliar words?

- 3 Choose a word in the text that you do not know. Then find a context clue that helps you understand the meaning of that word. Write the word, the clue, and the meaning on the lines below.

Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

adapted from Andrew Carnegie Grows Up Working

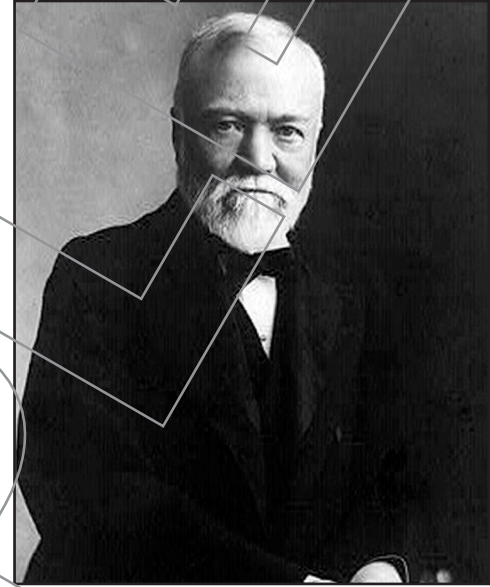
1 Although Andrew Carnegie became a millionaire, he did not start life as one. He was born in 1835 into a working-class family in Dunfermline, Scotland. In 1848, his family immigrated to the United States and settled in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. When Carnegie was 13, he got his first job in a cloth mill. He earned \$1.20 a week. Carnegie then took a job in a factory taking care of a steam engine. Can you guess how much he was paid for that job?

2 Carnegie earned \$2 a week. The next year, he worked as a messenger in a telegraph office for \$2.50 per week. Because of his quickness and hard work, he was promoted to telegraph operator. He was paid \$5 a week. Slowly but surely, Carnegie was working his way up.

3 In 1853, he went to work for the Pennsylvania Railroad for \$35 per month as the personal telegrapher and assistant to Thomas Scott, a superintendent. Carnegie learned all about the railroad business. Later, he became a superintendent.

4 Scott also taught Andrew about investing in the stock market. What do you know about the stock market?

5 Scott explained to Carnegie that when a company performed well, it paid something called dividends from its profits to people who owned its stock. When Carnegie received his first dividend check, he shouted, "Here's the goose that laid the golden eggs!" Do you know what he meant? This money was the first he had ever received without having worked for it himself. The golden eggs he was talking about meant that Carnegie had learned to let his money work for him.



1 Part A

What does the word immigrated mean in paragraph 1?

- A** to go to work
- B** to travel to a new place
- C** to become the head of a company
- D** to come to live in another country

Part B

What two context clues in the text best support the answer to Part A?

- A** "Andrew Carnegie became a millionaire"
- B** "settled in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania"
- C** "family in Dunfermline, Scotland"
- D** "he got his first job in a cloth mill"
- E** "he was born in 1835"
- F** "took a job in a factory"

2 What is the meaning of the word profit in paragraph 5?

- A** money a company makes when it does well
- B** all of the money a company pays to people who own stock
- C** golden eggs
- D** money people earn at their jobs

- 3 Which helps you know that a dividend is a payment of money?
- A Companies try to make profits.
 - B Carnegie received dividend checks.
 - C Some people owned stock in the company.
 - D Carnegie did not know what a dividend was.

4 **Part A**

What is a superintendent?

Part B

Why was Carnegie unable to become a superintendent right away?
