*English Instructional Plan – Context Clues: Grade 3*

**Primary Strand: Reading - Word Knowledge and Vocabulary 3.3, 3.4**

**Integrated Strand/s: Communication and Multimodal Literacies, Reading Nonfiction, Writing**

**Essential Understanding:**

* understand the need to apply word-analysis skills to decode words
* understand that roots, affixes, synonyms, and antonyms can be used to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words.
* understand that the content and structure of a sentence, paragraph, or reading selection can be used to help demonstrate the meaning of unfamiliar words
* understand the word reference resources can be used to learn word meanings.

**Essential Knowledge, Skills, and Processes:**

* use knowledge of synonyms
* use knowledge of antonyms
* use context clues to verify meaning of unfamiliar words and determine appropriate homophone usage
* use context clues, such as a restatement, a synonym, an example, or direct description or definition included in the sentence or paragraph, to clarify the meaning of unfamiliar words
* use clues in the context of a sentence, paragraph, or reading selection to predict and explain the meanings of words that have more than one definition
* use their knowledge of affixes to read and understand the meaning of words.
* use context as a clue to infer the correct meaning of unfamiliar words or phrases
* select and use - the word reference materials, such as a dictionary, glossary, or thesaurus, that is most likely to contain the information needed.

**Primary SOL:**

**3.3 The student will apply word-analysis skills when reading.**

1. Use knowledge of regular and irregular vowel patterns
2. Decode regular multisyllabic words

**3.4 The student will expand vocabulary when reading.**

b) Use knowledge of roots, affixes, synonyms, and antonyms to determine the meaning of new words.

c) Apply meaning clues, language structure, and phonetic strategies to determine the meaning of words

d) Use context to clarify meaning of unfamiliar words

**Reinforced (Related Standard) SOL:**

**3.2 The student will give oral presentation.**

1. Speak clearly using appropriate volume
2. Speak at an understandable rate
3. make eye contact with the audience
4. use multimodal tool to create presentation and enhance communication

**3.5 The student will read and demonstrate comprehension of fictional text, literacy nonfiction and poetry.**

1. set a purpose for reading

g) ask and answer questions about what is read

k) use reading strategies to monitor comprehension throughout the reading process

**3.6 The student will read and demonstrate comprehension of nonfiction texts.**

c) Preview and use text features including table of contents, headings, pictures, captions, maps, indices and charts

i) use reading strategies to monitor comprehension throughout the reading process

**3.9 The student will edit writing for capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and Standard English.**

**Academic Background/Language:** Readers often come across unfamiliar words within the text. Early readers sometimes skip over unknown words and continue reading without revisiting the word/sentence; however, skipping words can dramatically affect text comprehension. It is important for readers to understand the meaning and pronunciation of specific words in order to fully understand text. Quite simply, readers must learn to figure out unknown words rather than skip them. There are various strategies one can apply to help figure out unfamiliar words. It will be key for students to decode and comprehend unknown words to fully understand text. Students can be taught specific strategies for decoding and comprehension. These strategies all involve looking for and using clues within the text in order to infer word meaning. Common strategies include searching for repeated words or phrases, identifying synonyms/antonyms within the context, using parts of speech for clues, applying word analysis skills, and more.

**Sentence Starters:**

* As I was reading, I came across a word I do not know how to pronounce. Do I recognize any part of the word? Can I break the word into syllables?
* To help me understand \_\_\_ (unfamiliar word) I will reread the text
* I notice the following prefix or suffix that I already know in the unknown word.
* When rereading the text, I plugged in an antonym or synonym for the unknown word. Did it make sense?
* What part of speech is the unknown word?
* What clue words may help me determine the meaning of the unfamiliar word
* After rereading the text, I think \_\_\_\_\_ (unfamiliar word) means \_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_

## Materials

1. Anchor chart with strategies when decoding a word (example below)
2. Decoding graphic organizer (example below) or scissors, highlighter, highlighter tape/wax sticks for chunking words
3. List of words to help student learn how to decode (examples below)
4. Using context clues graphic organizer (example below)
5. Suggested texts or text of choice including fiction or nonfiction
   * Baloney (Henry B.) by Jon Sciezka and Lane Smith
   * Nelly May Has Her Say by Cynthia DeFelice and Henry Cole
   * [Important People](https://www.readworks.org/article/Important-People/fdf28989-5cc0-47b4-9462-51357bbe47de#!vocabularySection:leader/articleTab:content/) ([www.readworks.org](http://www.readworks.org))
     + paragraph 3: expectations
     + paragraph 4: responsibility
   * [Famous African Americans: Martin Luther King Jr](https://www.readworks.org/article/Famous-African-Americans---Martin-Luther-King-Jr/bf6d8a69-9435-4c7c-9054-4f91ad096b83#!articleTab:content/) ([www.readworks.org](http://www.readworks.org))
     + paragraph 2: incredible
     + paragraph 3: ironically
   * [A School Trip to the Aquarium](https://www.readworks.org/article/A-School-Trip-to-the-Aquarium/719598be-f244-4c28-85bd-96500e5b71be#!articleTab:content/) ([www.readworks.org](http://www.readworks.org))
     + paragraph 1: aquarium
     + paragraph 11: colonies
     + paragraph 23: protection
     + paragraph 28: survive
   * [Ancient Egypt: Making Mummies](https://www.readworks.org/article/Ancient-Egypt-Making-Mummies/5774a79a-7dbd-4781-87d9-820fabaee7bc#!articleTab:content/) ([www.readworks.org](http://www.readworks.org))
     + Paragraph 1: preserved
     + paragraph 1: burial
     + paragraph 1: mummification
     + paragraph 2: ancient
     + paragraph 3: embalmers

## Student/Teacher Actions: What should students be doing? What should teachers be doing?

1. Think-Pair-Share. Ask students, “Think about a time you came across a word you either did not know how to pronounce or you were unsure of the meaning as you were reading. What did you do? How did you figure out unfamiliar word(s)?” Take a moment to reflect and then share your experiences with a partner. Listen for similarities and differences. Optional introduction: Post a piece of text with a “tricky” (possibly unknown) word underlined. Use the same questions as above to discuss the text and strategies for figuring out the unknown word.
2. Direct instruction: Remind students that all readers come across words they cannot pronounce and/or understand. When this happens, good readers have to go into their “strategy tool bags” to figure out the unfamiliar word. Students must be taught specific strategies for both decoding and comprehending the unknown word. The first step is often figuring out how to pronounce an unknown word; therefore, the first strategies readers should use involve chunking and/or decoding strategies. Creating an anchor chart may help provide a visual for students about decoding/chunking strategies. It is important to note this instruction may require several days and an anchor chart should be created as concepts are presented. Furthermore, students will have greater understanding and ownership if they help to create the anchor chart. Teachers should pace the lesson based on their students’ needs, attention spans, and abilities.
3. There are multiple ways a student can decode an unknown word. See the anchor chart below for several decoding strategies. The teacher will want to model using a think-aloud each of the decoding strategies. For example:
   * + exercising
       - look for familiar chunks: **ex**ercis**ing**
       - look for vowel patterns -ex**er**c**i**s**ing**
       - flip the sounds -exerc**i**sing - Does the i make a long or short vowel sound? Does the c make a hard or soft sound?
       - look for common endings- exercis**ing**
       - prefix/suffix patterns within words- **ex**ercising (ex = “off”), **exercise** (root)
       - syllable chunking- **ex-er-cis-ing**
4. Further syllable instruction will support students’ decoding abilities. Background: The English language is based on syllable chunks focused around vowel units. Syllables provide a powerful means for readers to determine how to pronounce a word. A syllable is a word part including a vowel sound. A word could have one or multiple syllables. Breaking down words into syllable chunks often helps in pronunciation and sometimes meaning. There are different types of syllables:
   * Open syllable: End in a long vowel (ba-con, la-zy)
   * Closed syllable: Includes a short vowel followed by a consonant-typically cVc pattern (riv-er, cen-ter, lol-li-pop)
   * Vowel-consonant-e (VCe): The final e is silent and the vowel is long. (mine, blame, in-spire)
   * Vowel-r syllable: Syllable has an r after the vowel and the vowel makes an unexpected sound (tur-tle, per-form, fur-ther)
   * Vowel pair syllable: Syllable has two adjacent teaming vowels (com-plain, sea-son, feet)
   * Vowel-Consonant-Consonant-Vowel (VCCV) doublet syllable: The word has a VCCV pattern and the syllables divide between the double consonants. (din-ner, rab-bit)
   * Vowel-Consonant-Consonant-Vowel (VCCV) different syllable: The word has a VCCV pattern and the syllables divide between two different consonants (win-dow, sis-ter)
5. Model these decoding, chunking, and syllable strategies with many words. Consider using a graphic organizer or cut the chunks or syllables of the word apart to help with visualization. One could also use highlighters, highlighter tape, or wax sticks to chunk words. Students should be encouraged to be flexible in their chunking/decoding strategies. An over-reliance on one chunking strategy often leads to errors.
6. Have students work with a partner or independently to decode words using the graphic organizer below. (Optional: have students find their own words within their independent reading texts).
7. After students have decoded words, direct instruction must be focused on identifying the meaning of the word using context clues. Often when trying to figure out the unfamiliar word, readers use the text around the word to help them infer meaning. Text-dependent vocabulary can be inferred by reading it in context.
8. Direct instruction: “After we determine how to pronounce a word, sometimes we understand the meaning. Other times, we need additional strategies to figure out the unknown word’s meaning. The dictionary or glossary are great resources to help us determine meaning; however, they are not always available and/or could take a long time to use. Good readers typically use context clues, the text around the unknown word, to help determine the meaning.”
9. Use one of the suggested texts from the materials section. The teacher will want to identify specific words that the student may not know to practice context clue identification. Students will need access to the text to follow-along (shared reading). The teacher should read the text to students and stop when he/she comes across the predetermined unfamiliar word. Encourage the students, “Let’s be word detectives and use the context (which includes the words around the unfamiliar words) to help us determine the meaning of this word.” The teacher will want to model strategies for using context clues to determine meaning. These strategies can be added to an anchor chart for future reference (see example below). Teacher choice can be used to determine if two separate anchor charts should be made (decoding/chunking and comprehending) or if the ideas can be combined into a two-column chart as modeled below.
10. Key understanding: As word detectives, readers must look within text to determine the meaning of the word. Oftentimes, the author provides the reader with clues. It is the job of the reader to put together the clues to figure out the meaning. Direct instruction: “Let’s reread the text around the unknown word. This may include the sentence where the word is found and/or the entire paragraph that contains the word. As we reread, we are going to look for clues. We should be thinking about what is happening in the text and looking for words that might help explain the meaning. Sometimes the author provides the reader with the definition and uses commas or embedded phrases. Other times, we need to search for words that are repeated, examples, synonyms (words that have the same meaning) or antonyms (words that have the opposite meaning) which provide powerful clues.” The teacher will want to model different strategies for inferring the meaning and add those strategies to the anchor chart. Students will also want to double-check by “plugging in” the identified meaning/synonym of the word back into the original sentence to confirm the acceptability of their definition.
11. Further student practice can be scaffolded using a graphic organizer as a guide to help determine the meaning. This graphic organizer could provide hints for different strategies students should use to determine meaning.
12. After modeling several times, have students work independently or with a partner to determine the meaning of an unfamiliar word. This will be most powerful if it is embedded within their own small group and/or independent reading. Students need to practice using context clues to determine word meaning on independent, instructional, and grade-level text.
13. Constant reflection with students about the strategies used to decode unknown words and determine word meaning will be required. Teachers should continue to model these processes when reading aloud texts of various genres. Using think-aloud structures, teachers should share their own strategies and reflections to model decision-making about word meanings and the usage of context clues.

**Assessment (Diagnostic, Formative, Summative)**

* Think-Pair-Share: Have students independently think about how they decoded the word and determined the meaning. Next, they will pair with a partner and share their word, how they decoded it and its meaning.
* Give students a copy of the graphic organizer, give students an unfamiliar word in text or have them pick their own text example. Complete the graphic organizer to analyze decoding and comprehension.
* Walk around while students are completing the lesson and listen to their conversations. Keep anecdotal notes for assessment.
* Provide multiple opportunities for students to identify unknown words within instructional level and grade level texts. Students could be encouraged to keep their own “Word Journal” of unknown words they have found within text. They should reflect on how they used their strategies to pronounce and identify meaning.

**Writing Connections:**

* Using the unfamiliar word create your own sentence.
* Write about the strategy you used to determine the meaning of an unfamiliar word.
* Create your own paragraph for a friend and embed a few “tricky” words. Underline the words and make sure to provide clues within the text to help with meaning. See if your friend was able to figure out the unknown words.

**Extensions and Connections (for all students)**

* Create and illustrate a new sentence highlighting the unfamiliar word.
* Have students record themselves as the teacher, demonstrating the strategies used to determine the meaning of and/or how to pronounce the unfamiliar word.
* During independent reading, have students select unfamiliar words to decode and determine the meaning. Students can create their own graphic organizers to identify newly learned words in a reading journal.
* Copy sections/paragraphs of text (fiction or nonfiction). For each text example, identify at least one identified vocabulary word by highlighting/underlining. Post the text examples around the room and have students do a “walk about” to walk around to each example, decode, and determine the meaning of the vocabulary words. This could be complete individually, with a partner, or in small groups. Within the group, encourage conversation about the tools students used to identify the highlighted vocabulary word.
* Copy sections/paragraphs of text (fiction or nonfiction) and create a tic tac toe board. Have students partner off. If they are able to successfully read and identify meaning, they get to put a game piece on the board.

**Strategies for Differentiation**

* Instead of using a graphic organizer, have students cut the word apart or use wax sticks to underline familiar parts of a word. Students should be encouraged to color/identify vowels to help them identify syllable chunks. Students may need visuals to help them remember which letters are vowels and/or require visuals of common syllable patterns.
* Have students work in partners to collaborate on word meaning and strategies used.
* Use more modeling/examples for students before they complete independently.
* Use a variety of levels of text to support learners. Ideally, students should be given independent/instructional level texts.
* Use an audio text or a text reader to support students’ pronunciation so they can focus more on identifying meaning.
* Create additional anchor charts on context clues strategies as a visual reminder
* Use sentence frames, “To determine the meaning of an unfamiliar word, I \_”

*Note: The following pages are intended for classroom use for students as a visual aid to learning.*

**Anchor Chart for Figuring out Unknown Words**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Decoding**  **Strategies to help pronounce a new word** | **Context Clues**  **Strategies to help determine the meaning of unfamiliar word** |
| **1.Look for familiar chunks**  *hurtful uncontrollable*  **2. Look for vowel patterns**  *starve (ar) slave (vCe)*  *detail (ai) passage (vCCv)*  **3. Flip the sounds**  *garbage* **-** First try a hard g sound, if that does not sound correct switch to a soft g (j) sound  *cinnamon* - First try a hard c sound, if that does not sound correct switch to a soft c (s) sound  **4. Look for common endings**  *simplest modeling crazier*  **5. Look for prefix/suffix patterns within the word**  *refresher* *impossible*  **6. Look for compound words**  *houseguest brainstorming*  **7. Use syllables to chunk**  *pil-gram de-pend tram-ple* | 1. **Reread the sentence and underline the unknown word.** 2. **Think about what is happening in the text???** 3. **Look for picture clues** 4. **Look for sentence marks (commas, periods, question marks, exclamation marks) as clues from the author.** 5. **Find other words that may help explain the meaning of the unfamiliar word.**  * **synonyms** * **antonyms** * **definition** * **repeated words** * **examples**  1. **Try different words in place of the unfamiliar word to see if the sentence makes sense.** |

**Example words for decoding practice:**

inhale command impossible acrobat gymnastics

prevent obsessed celery celebrate general

**Graphic Organizer for Decoding**

|  |
| --- |
| unfamiliar word |
| Rewrite the word. Circle parts of the word you know (base words/prefixes/suffixes).  Underline vowels/vowel patterns |

Divide the word by syllables

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Now** put the parts together to pronounce the word

**Graphic Organizer for Using Context Clues to Determine Word Meaning**

|  |
| --- |
| **unfamiliar word** |
| **Sentence including the word:** |
| **Do you see any words repeated in the sentence/paragraph?** |
| **Identify/underline any prefixes, suffixes, or roots** |
| **Look for other clues? What is happening in the text? Look at the picture or text features.** |
| **Based on what I’ve read, I think the meaning is ……**  **Possible Synonym:** |
| **Plug it in! Include the synonym in the original sentence. Does it make sense?** |
| **Check yourself. According to the dictionary or glossary the meaning is** |