

Clue or Check

Decide when context gives the meaning and when a dictionary is needed.

7L4 "Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies."

NAME _____

DATE _____

CONTEXT GIVES IT

Use context when nearby words define, describe, or contrast with the unfamiliar word. The sentence gives enough information to infer the meaning.

The puppy was **famished**, or extremely hungry after its long walk.

DICTIONARY NEEDED

Use a dictionary when the sentence does not give enough information to determine the unfamiliar word's exact meaning. Context may tell the topic, but not the definition.

The scientist used a **centrifuge**.

1 SORT

8 items

Circle CONTEXT or DICTIONARY for each sentence; then, in Part 2, choose two items and explain which words helped you decide or why you would use a dictionary.

- | | | | |
|----|--|---------|------------|
| 1. | 1. The snow was pristine , or perfectly clean and untouched. | CONTEXT | DICTIONARY |
| 2. | 2. The nocturnal animal slept all day and searched for food at night. | CONTEXT | DICTIONARY |
| 3. | 3. The mayor spoke from the podium . | CONTEXT | DICTIONARY |
| 4. | 4. The hikers crossed a treacherous path, full of loose rocks and hidden ice. | CONTEXT | DICTIONARY |
| 5. | 5. The crew repaired the viaduct . | CONTEXT | DICTIONARY |
| 6. | 6. The lawyer reviewed the affidavit . | CONTEXT | DICTIONARY |
| 7. | 7. Unlike her timid brother, Zara eagerly volunteered to lead the group. | CONTEXT | DICTIONARY |
| 8. | 8. The treaty was ratified after the vote. | CONTEXT | DICTIONARY |

2

PROVE IT

Explain your thinking

Pick two items from Part 1. For each one, tell how you knew where it belonged.

ITEM # _____ HOW I KNEW _____

ITEM # _____ HOW I KNEW _____

3

MAKE YOUR OWN

One of each

Write one new sentence with an unfamiliar word and a clear context clue. Then write one new sentence with an unfamiliar word whose meaning you would need to check in a dictionary.

CONTEXT _____

DICTIONARY _____

CHALLENGE

Choose one DICTIONARY item and rewrite its sentence so a reader can infer the word's meaning from context. Underline the clue you added.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	1. The snow was pristine , or perfectly clean and untouched.	CONTEXT	The phrase “perfectly clean and untouched” defines pristine.
2	2. The nocturnal animal slept all day and searched for food at night.	CONTEXT	Sleeping in the day and being active at night provides the meaning.
3	3. The mayor spoke from the podium .	DICTIONARY	The sentence does not define what a podium is.
4	4. The hikers crossed a treacherous path, full of loose rocks and hidden ice.	CONTEXT	The dangerous conditions describe treacherous.
5	5. The crew repaired the viaduct .	DICTIONARY	The sentence gives no definition or description of viaduct.
6	6. The lawyer reviewed the affidavit .	DICTIONARY	The sentence gives only a setting, not the word’s meaning.
7	7. Unlike her timid brother, Zara eagerly volunteered to lead the group.	CONTEXT	The contrast with eagerly volunteering suggests timid means shy or hesitant.
8	8. The treaty was ratified after the vote.	DICTIONARY	The sentence does not give the exact meaning of ratified.

PART 2 • PROVE IT

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item.

PART 3 • MAKE YOUR OWN (SAMPLE ANSWERS)

- **CONTEXT:** The abandoned house was **derelict**, with broken windows and a roof that had fallen in.
- **DICTIONARY:** The mechanic replaced the **solenoid**.

Challenge: The mayor stood on the **podium**, a raised platform for speaking, before the ceremony.

Accept reasonable explanations that point to a definition, description, or contrast in the CONTEXT items. For DICTIONARY items, students should explain that the sentence lacks enough detail for an exact definition.