

ENGLISH · GRADES 3–4

# Context Clues

Cracking new words without a dictionary

## Four types of context clue

1

### Definition clue

The sentence **DEFINES** the word, often using 'is', 'means', 'or'.

*Example: 'The huge mammal — that is, an animal that gives milk — was friendly.'*

2

### Example clue

The sentence **GIVES EXAMPLES** of what the word means.

*Example: 'Vegetables, such as carrots, peppers and broccoli, are healthy.'*

3

### Synonym clue

A nearby word means almost the **SAME** thing.

*Example: 'She was furious — really, really angry.'*

4

### Antonym clue

A nearby word means the **OPPOSITE**.

*Example: 'He's usually generous, but today he was being stingy.'*

## What does each underlined word mean?

1. 'The cottage was DILAPIDATED — falling apart, with broken windows and a leaky roof.'

Meaning of dilapidated?

2. 'The journey was ARDUOUS — long, tiring and difficult.' What does arduous mean?



3. 'She was usually shy, but today she was **QUITE GREGARIOUS** — chatty and outgoing.' What does gregarious mean?
4. 'Predators, like **LIONS, EAGLES** and **SHARKS**, hunt for their food.' What does predator mean?
5. 'He was **ECSTATIC** about his birthday — he couldn't stop smiling.' What does ecstatic mean?
6. 'Most plants need sunlight, but some are **NOCTURNAL** — they only thrive at night.' What does nocturnal mean?

