

GO-TOGETHERS AS CONTEXT CLUES

Often you can understand a new word in a sentence because you understand the words it goes together with. You understand its context, and the context helps you infer the meaning of the word.

★Example

Cassy was irate as she slammed the door, shook her fist, and ran down the steps shouting at the sky.

★Explanation

Visualize this scene. What can irate mean? It must go together with slamming doors and shouting at the sky. You can infer that someone who does these things is angry.

Inference: Irate must mean angry.

You can understand a new word in a sentence if you understand the words it goes together with. Sometimes it helps to try out different words in place of the new word.

★Example

You cannot subsist in the desert without plenty of water and some shade.

a. read signs b. eat apples c. wear clothes d. stay alive

★Explanation

1. Visualize a desert scene. What can subsist mean? It must be something that you need water and shade for.
2. *Ask yourself:* Could subsist mean to read signs? No, because reading signs does not go together with water and shade. You do not need water and shade to read signs.

Could subsist mean to eat apples? No, because eating apples does not go together with water and shade. You do not need water and shade to eat apples.

Could subsist mean to wear clothes? (You answer.) _____, because wearing clothes _____ go together with water and shade. You do _____ need water and shade to wear clothes.

3. *Inference:* Subsist must mean to stay alive. You do need water and shade to stay alive in a desert.