### Lesson 15

## **Using Context Clues**

L.5.4a: Use context (e.g., cause/effect relationships and comparisons in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

Introduction You can use context clues to figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word. The chart below gives examples of different types of context clues.

Type of Clue	Example	
Definition	Superfoods, or natural foods that may prevent disease, have become popular	
Cause/Effect	Some superfoods, such as blueberries and red beans, contain <u>antioxidants</u> . These can help remove harmful substances from the human body.	
Comparison	Some experts look <u>dubiously</u> on claims about superfoods, but other experbelieve strongly that these foods can improve health.	

Context clues can also help you figure out words with more than one meaning. For example, the table below has two sentences with the word *source*. What does *source* mean in each sentence? You can use the underlined context clues to figure out which meaning of *source* is being used.

Sentence	Context Clues	Definition
Choosing high-sugar drinks can be a source of health <u>problems</u> .	A <u>problem</u> has a cause. Therefore, the source of a problem is its cause.	the cause of something
The <u>website</u> MyPlate.gov is a source for <u>facts</u> about food choices.	A <u>website</u> can have information such as <u>facts</u> . Therefore, a source is something that gives information.	something that gives information

The sentences before and after the sentence with an unfamiliar word can also hold context clues.

### **Guided Practice**

Determine the meanings of *fleeting*, *empirical*, and *panacea*. Then underline the words or phrases that helped you determine their meaning.

A result of, because of, and thanks to all signal cause-and-effect relationships. Words such as but, too, also, and as well as all indicate comparisons.

Some fads are **fleeting**, but more than a few people feel that superfoods are here to stay. The idea of superfoods isn't new, but the amount of **empirical** information we have about them is. Scientific observations and tests offer some evidence that certain foods can help people stay healthy. Nobody claims that these foods are a **panacea**—nothing can guarantee perfect health or cure every disease—but they can be part of a sensible diet.

#### Independent Practice

# For numbers 1 and 2, read the paragraph. Then answer the questions.

For centuries, people in coastal areas of China and Japan have harvested a superfood found in <u>marine</u> environments. Recent studies show that eating seaweed protects against infection. It also might reduce the risk of serious diseases and extend peoples' life spans. If true, these would be important benefits.

- What does the word <u>marine</u> mean in this paragraph?
  - A very nutritious
  - **B** dark blue in color
  - **C** having to do with the ocean
  - **D** member of the armed forces
- Which two words from the paragraph help you understand the meaning of marine?
  - **A** "China" and "Japan"
  - **B** "coastal" and "seaweed"
  - **C** "centuries" and "people"
  - **D** "superfood" and "studies"

## For numbers 3 and 4, read the paragraph. Then answer the questions.

Closer to home, you can find superfoods right in your garden or local store. Think "crisp and crunchy." Cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, and kale <u>detoxify</u> harmful substances. As a result, they may help to prevent some forms of cancer. These veggies also are low in calories and have lots of vitamins A, C, and K.

- What does the word <u>detoxify</u> mean in this paragraph?
  - **A** to move in a wide circle
  - **B** to chew food slowly
  - **C** to make a difficult decision
  - **D** to remove bad effects
- 4 Which two words from the paragraph help you understand the meaning of detoxify?
  - **A** "crisp" and "crunchy"
  - **B** "prevent" and "cancer"
  - **C** "veggies" and "substances"
  - **D** "calories" and "vitamins"