# TYPES OF CONTEXT CLUES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>CLUES &quot;SIGNAL WORDS&quot;</th>
<th>EXAMPLE</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| 1. Definition         | The author provides a direct (explicit) definition of an unknown word in the sentence. | *Is, are*  
*Is /are called*  
*Is / are known as*  
*Is defined as*  
*Means, Refers to* | - Martha is a **curator**, a person who is responsible for looking after a museum’s collection.  
- **Entomology** is the study of insects.  
- **Archeology** is the scientific study of prehistoric cultures by excavation of their remains. |
| 2. Synonym or Restatement | The author uses a word having the same or nearly the same meaning as another word or other words in a sentence. | *Commas, Semicolon; Dashes - Parenthesis ( ) Sometimes signal words or, that is, or in other words are used.* | - **Carnivores**, that is, meat eaters, are the top of the food chain.  
- My best friend **squandered** all his money; his drinking and gambling wasted all his earnings.  
- After seeing the picture of the starving children, we all felt **compassion** or pity for their suffering.  
- After a time, **glaciers**, or slowly moving rivers of ice, formed over many parts of the Earth. |
| 3. Antonym or Contrast | The author uses another word or phrase that means the opposite of an unfamiliar word | *But, however, although, otherwise, unless, instead of, on the contrary, on the other hand, while, unlike.* | - Mike’s parrot was **loquacious**, but Maria’s said very little.  
- The gentleman was **portly**, but his wife was thin.  
- While Luis is hardworking, his **indolent** brother spends most of the time watching TV or sitting around with friends. |
| 4. Comparison         | In comparison clues, the author uses words and phrases that have the same or similar meaning as an unfamiliar word. | *like, as, similar to, in the same way, likewise, resembling, too, also* | - My brother is **enthralled** by birds similar to the way that I am fascinated by insects.  
- The **stench** of the old shoes was like the smell of garbage. |
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| 5. Example/Explanation | The author provides examples or additional explanations or summaries to help you understand an unfamiliar word. The word is cleared up by giving an example. | For example, For instance, Including, Such as, Specifically, To illustrate.          | - The archeologist found different amulets, such as a rabbit’s foot and bags of herb.  
- Paula was suspended from school because of several infractions of the rules, including smoking in the bathroom and dressing improperly.  
- Celestial bodies, such as the sun, moon, and stars, are governed by predictable laws. |
| 6. Cause and Effect   | The meaning of an unknown word depends on the cause/effect relationship with other words in the text. | As a result, Accordingly, Because, Since, Consequently, For this reason, Hence, if ... then | - Since no one came to the first meeting, attendance for the second one is mandatory for all staff.  
- Because the conflagration was aided by wind, it was so destructive that every building in the area was completely burned to the ground. |
| 7. List or Series     | The unfamiliar word is included in a series of related words that give an idea of the word’s meaning. | Look for a list of words.                                                             | - North American predators include grizzly bears, pumas, wolves, and foxes.  
- The debris in the stadium stands included numerous paper cups, ticket stubs, sandwich wrappings, and cigarette butts.         |
| 8. Inference or General Context | The meaning of an unfamiliar word can be inferred (guessed) from the description of a situation. The author provides non-specific clues, often spread over the sentence or number of sentences. | Look for clues over several words or sentences.                                      | - The monkey’s vociferous chatter made me wish I had earplugs.  
- Katie’s belligerence surprised everyone. She threw her book across the room, glared at Chris, and then pushed him to the floor. |