

Lesson 9

Unfamiliar Words



Learning Target

Context clues in the text can help you figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words.

- ▶ **Read** When you are reading about new **topics**, it is important that you read like a word detective by asking questions about words you don't understand. Word detectives look around an unknown word for clues that the author may have included to help them figure out the meaning and understand new topics. These clues are called **context clues**.

Read the paragraph below about cats in ancient Egypt. Circle any words you don't know.

Cats played an essential role in ancient Egypt. They were prized pets. But they were also useful. For example, cats killed dangerous snakes. They caught mice and rats to protect stores of grain. Some cats even helped gather food. Egyptian hunters trained them to bring back birds and fish from the marshes.



- **Think** Circle the word *essential* in the cat passage. Reread the passage and underline context clues in the text that helped you figure out the meaning of the word. Then complete the chart by adding the text evidence that you found in the passage. Ask yourself, does this meaning make sense?

Unknown Word: <i>Essential</i>	
Context Clues	What the Word Means

- **Talk** Take turns with your partner talking about the context clues you used to figure out the meaning of the word *essential*.

**Academic Talk**

Use this phrase and word to talk about the text.

- context clues
- topic



Read Me a Story

by Kara Williams

- 1 Dogs cannot read. But they can help children who may not like to read, or who find reading difficult. Reading therapy dogs and their owners visit schools and libraries. The child sits on the floor with the dog. Then he or she reads the dog a story. The dog helps its new friend relax. It offers the child support.
- 2 Only some dogs can be reading therapy dogs. First, dogs are tested to make sure they are calm and friendly. They have to be able to handle different situations. Then the dogs are trained to be good listeners. Some even learn how to turn the pages of a book with their noses or paws.
- 3 Studies show that reading therapy dogs can enhance reading skills. The children can practice reading to the dogs without being afraid of making mistakes. Shy readers gain confidence. They begin to feel better about their reading. As a result, they enjoy reading more. The more that children read, the more their reading skills improve.

Close Reader Habits

As you read, **circle** words you don't know. When you reread, **underline** clues that help you figure out what the words mean.

Explore

How can you figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words in the passage about reading therapy dogs?



Sometimes the clue to the meaning of a word is another word with the *opposite* meaning.

Think

- 1 Complete the chart to help you figure out the meaning of the word *therapy*. Fill in context clues in the first column. Then write your definition.

Unknown Word: <i>Therapy</i>	
Context Clues	What the Word Means

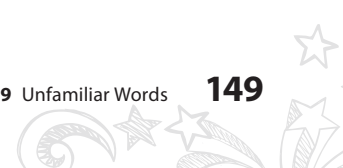
Talk

- 2 Reread the third paragraph. Work with your partner to figure out the meaning of the word *enhance*. Look for clues in the text. How do therapy dogs enhance children’s reading skills?

Write

- 3 **Short Response** Use details from the article to explain how therapy dogs help children gain confidence. Reread paragraph 3 and use context clues to make sure you understand what *confidence* means. Use the space provided on page 152 to write your answer.

HINT What are the children like before they begin working with the dogs?



The **BUZZ** on Sniffer Bees



by Heather Roberson

- 1 Did you know that bees have a great sense of smell? You've seen the antennae, or feelers, on their heads. Those feelers have more than three thousand tiny smell organs. The organs help the bees identify more than 170 different odors. This is how they find food, water, and pollen.
- 2 Many animals have a better sense of smell than humans do. That's why people train dogs to sniff out scents. Bees have an even stronger sense of smell than dogs. So, scientists are looking for ways that trained bees can help people.
- 3 Scientists can teach bees to follow specific smells. First, the bees are given a smell to learn. Then they are sent toward the same smell in another area. When they find where the smell is coming from, they are rewarded with sugar water. Scientists repeat this process over and over. Finally, the bees connect the smell with a treat. Bees can be trained in about ten minutes.
- 4 Sniffer bees have been trained to find harmful materials. They can also sniff out health problems. They can smell a disease in someone's breath. They can uncover some kinds of cancer. They can spot a lung disease called tuberculosis (too ber kyoo LOW sis). They can also smell dangerous chemicals. In addition, they can find plant diseases or pests such as bedbugs. Sniffer bees make few mistakes.
- 5 One day, these tiny helpers may work in airports, farms, hospitals, and war zones. They will alert people to possible danger.

Close Reader Habits

How can rereading a passage help you understand unfamiliar words? **Underline** context clues that help you understand them.



Remember that what you already know about a topic can help you figure out new words.

Think

1 Explain the meaning of *antennae* as it is used in this passage. Use clues from the passage in your response.

2 Read these sentences from the passage.

Scientists repeat this *process* over and over. Finally, the bees connect the smell with a treat.

What is the meaning of *process* as it is used above?

- A a series of actions taken for a certain purpose
- B a reward for having done something correctly
- C something that can happen only once
- D a secret way of training animals

Talk

3 Find the word *alert* in the last paragraph. Talk to your partner about what it means. What kinds of danger could bees alert humans to in airports?

Write

4 **Short Response** Describe the different ways sniffer bees can help humans. In your description, use some of the science words you learned from the passage. Use the space provided on page 153 to write your answer.

HINT Reread paragraph 4. Look for three things sniffer bees can detect.





Write Use the space below to write your answer to the question on page 149.

Woof! Woof!

Read Me a Story

3 Short Response Use details from the article to explain how therapy dogs help children gain confidence. Reread paragraph 3 and use context clues to make sure you understand what *confidence* means.

HINT What are the children like before they begin working with the dogs?



Don't forget to check your writing.



Write Use the space below to write your answer to the question on page 151.

The **BUZZ** on Sniffer Bees



4 Short Response Describe the different ways sniffer bees can help humans. In your description, use some of the science words you learned from the passage.

HINT Reread paragraph 4. Look for three things sniffer bees can detect.

Check Your Writing

- Did you read the prompt carefully?
- Did you put the prompt in your own words?
- Did you use the best evidence from the text to support your ideas?
- Are your ideas clearly organized?
- Did you write in clear and complete sentences?
- Did you check your spelling and punctuation?



from

WORDS TO KNOW

As you read, look inside, around, and beyond these words to figure out what they mean.

- halter
- interactive

Horses Helping Others

by Natasha Yim, *Appleseeds*



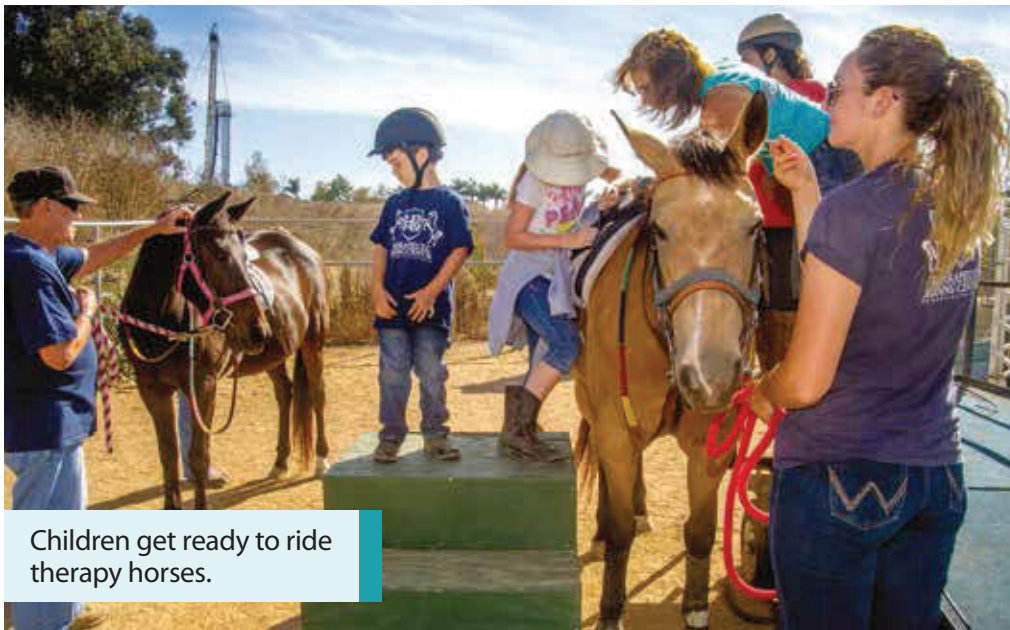
- 1 In 1993, when Erin Livingston was just 11, she had an idea. She wanted to use horses to help kids with special needs. Along with two friends, she researched different programs. With the support of the Mendocino County 4-H, Ridgewood T.R.A.I.L.¹ was born.
- 2 Freya, Kiss, Easy, Ginger, and Robin are horses with a very important job. They help kids with special needs. Some of these kids are in wheelchairs and walkers. Some can't talk. Some are very high energy and need to learn how to focus.
- 3 Erin uses games to help kids learn to communicate with horses. For example, a rope is attached to the halter of a horse. The student holds the other end and wiggles it to make the horse back up. Then the student wiggles it again to invite the horse back into his or her space.

¹ T.R.A.I.L.: Teaching Riding as an Access to Independence and Learning

A young girl rides a therapy horse being led by a helper.



- 4 Through interactive games, the horses help the kids learn about trust, keeping themselves safe, and being sensitive to a horse's feelings and body language. If kids are loud and too full of energy, the horse may not want to come over to them.
- 5 "The kids learn to protect their space, and also to invite the horse into their space," says Erin Livingston, the founder of Ridgewood T.R.A.I.L.
- 6 For a child who can't walk, riding works her leg muscles. A horse's walking motion is very similar to our own hip movements. Children who have a hard time staying on task learn to pay attention. If they turn to the left when they want to go right, the horse may not do what they want it to do. For a kid who has a hard time talking, Erin has her use words to command the horse. One boy uttered his first sentence, "Walk on, Woody," while riding a horse! Another student is now a helper in the program. "She has so much confidence and pride in what she does," says her mother.
- 7 "We focus on the kids' abilities, not their disabilities," Erin says.
- 8 Good program horses are calm, patient, and understanding. They have to be used to people (there could be up to two or three helpers walking alongside a rider), loud noises, and sudden movements. It's exhausting work. But the next day, they're back at it, patient as ever—just another day at the office for these amazing horses!



Children get ready to ride therapy horses.

Think Use what you learned from reading the selection to respond to these questions.

1 This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then answer Part B.

Part A

Reread paragraphs 3 and 4. What is the meaning of *interactive* in paragraph 4?

- A** acting apart from each other
- B** acting like each other
- C** acting in response to each other
- D** acting politely with each other

Part B

Write one sentence from paragraph 3 or 4 that helped you understand what *interactive* means.

2 Read this sentence from the article.

Erin uses games to help kids learn to communicate with horses.

Which words from paragraph 2 provide a clue to the meaning of *communicate*?

- A** “can’t talk”
- B** “need to learn”
- C** “with special needs”
- D** “very high energy”

3 This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then answer Part B.

Part A

What is the meaning of the word *sensitive* in paragraph 4?

- A unfeeling
- B understanding
- C fearful
- D amazed

Part B

Underline the sentence in paragraph 4 that supports your answer in Part A.

Through interactive games, the horses help the kids learn about trust, keeping themselves safe, and being sensitive to a horse’s feelings and body language. If kids are loud and too full of energy, the horse may not want to come over to them.

4 Read these sentences from paragraph 6 of the passage.

For a kid who has a hard time talking, Erin has her use words to command the horse. One boy uttered his first sentence, “Walk on, Woody,” while riding a horse!

What does the word *uttered* mean as used in this passage?

- A spoke
- B wrote
- C understood
- D heard

5 In paragraph 7, Erin states, “We focus on the kids’ abilities, not their disabilities.” Explain what *disabilities* means. Tell what clue you used.

**Write**

- 6 Short Response** Using evidence from the text, describe how working with horses helps build confidence in children with special needs. Use some of the new words you learned in your response.

**Learning Target**

You've learned how to figure out the meaning of words you don't know. Describe some strategies that you could use to figure out the meaning of *migration* in the following paragraph.

Every year, millions of monarch butterflies journey to California and Mexico to avoid the harsh winters in other parts of the country. This huge migration begins in fall, ahead of the cold weather. The journey can cover up to 3,000 miles.
