

Getting Meaning From Context

Elements of the Lecture

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1. Definition

A definition gives the meaning of words. The writer may use words, phrases, or statements to define something. The writer will use key words, or signal words to identify a definition so you need to look for them. See examples of key words below.

Key words	is/are	means/mean
	is/are called	what this means is
	is/are known as	consist of
	is/are defined as	refer to
	is/are described as	may be seen as

e.g.

Someone who explores and studies caves is known as a spelunker.

an unfamiliar word = *spelunker*

signal words = *is known as*

definition = *someone who explores and studies caves*

Exercise 1

Use signal words as your clues to find the meaning of the underlined words. Circle signal words and write their meaning in the space provided.

1. The encyclopedia defines astrology as “the ancient art or science of divining the fate and future of human beings from indications given by the positions of stars and other heavenly bodies.”

astrology means _____

2. Sales literature means printed matters that contain information on the goods.

Sales literature means _____

3. The part at the back of the car used for holding luggage is called the car boot in United Kingdom, whereas Americans would refer to this as the car’s trunk.

car boot means _____

2. Restatement

The writer uses one or more phrases, or sentences to restate what he or she has just said. This restatement can either describe it again or in different words. Here are the keywords below.

1. 1st

The surface of Africa consists mainly of plateaus and highlands, although there are some lowlands.

in other words

an unfamiliar word: plateaus

signal word =

meaning = large flat areas

2. 2nd

• The signal words help us to find the meaning of the underlined words. Below are signal words and what they mean. The meaning is provided.

According to custom, a great dowry of money and objects is given to the bridegroom's friends, relatives, and neighbors.

There are several types of aerosol cans. Simple ones contain a liquefied gas, called propellant, which is dissolved, i.e., melt.

signal word =

Our show days should not engage in indicating their usefulness. In other words, that is to say, they should not insist on them.

signal word =

Punctuation marks

Punctuation is used to describe the meaning of a sentence. When we use punctuation marks, we are using them to make a sentence clearer. Punctuation is in the "how" word, not the "what" word.

e.g. Full-color pictures are printed using a combination of yellow, cyan, magenta, and magenta (light blue).

For example, the color magenta is a combination of red and blue.

signal word = ()

For example, the color blue and magenta = a light purple

, commas

, , appositive

() parentheses

\ \ dashes

; semicolon

- The use of computers to handle text, or word processing, was foreseen in the 1950s.
- an unfamiliar word = *handle text*
signal punctuation = , ,
meaning : handle text = *word processing*
- **Exercise 4**
- Use signal words as your clues to find the meaning of the underlined words. Circle signal words and write the meaning in the space provided.
- 1. Both facsimile (known as fax) and electronic mail (email) are ways of sending documents.
Facsimile = _____
- Electronic mail = _____
- 2. An FM radio DJ (disk jockey) broadcasts over the airwaves.
DJ = _____
- 3. Infection ? becoming ill through contact with bacteria ? of the respiratory system such as the nose, the throat, and the chest is among the most common of all diseases.
Infection = _____

4. Examples

help us to understand the meaning of new words. See key words or signal words used for

showing examples in the “Key words box

such as
like
for example, ...
for instance
is / are

e.g. Use navigation buttons, such as, the “Next” button, the “Previous” button, the “Menu” button, and the “Exit” button, to go back and forth or jump to other topics while you are using your English software.

unfamiliar words = *navigation buttons*

signal word = *such as*

meaning = *buttons on computer program that are used for turn on pages*

Exercise 5 Use signal words as your clues to find the meaning of the underlined words by choosing the best answer for each question. Circle signal words.

1. Some people in the North of Thailand do wickerwork, for example, they make elephants, turtles, plates, beds, and chairs, from teak trees for earning money.

- a) silver handicraft
- b) bronze handicraft
- c) niello handicraft
- d) wood handicraft

2. The Savanna grasslands are the home of grazing animals such as elephants, giraffes, antelopes and zebras. Lions, leopards and hyenas also live there.

- a) non-backbone animals
- b) meat-eating animals
- c) invertebrate animals
- d) grass-eating animals

3. A tourist guide advised them to see the elephant round up. There was racing, colorful war procession, marching, kicking a ball and tug-of-war between men and elephants.

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| a) show | b) breed |
| c) sleep | d) born |

5. Contrast

You can guess the meaning of new words by using signal words of contrast. They will show the opposite meaning of the new words. See key words or signal words of contrast in the “Key words box”.

Key words
but instead of even though in contrast to
yet in spite of although as opposed to
unlike despite however on the other hand
whereas fond of still provided that

e.g.

Although Dara and Vipra are very close friends but they are very different. Suda spends a lot of money to buy things while Vipra loves to economize.

a) spend more money	b) save money
c) buy things more than before	d) keep things in a safe place

Exercise 6 Use signal words as your clues to find the meaning of the underlined words by choosing the best answer for each question. Circle signal words.

~Queen~

the most successful people are those who are good at plan **B**

1. Ladda was promoted to be the chief secretary of the manager of the company, whereas her colleague, Some chai, was penalized.

- a) promoted
- b) punished
- c) exiled
- d) Rewarded

2. Although small pox has almost been eradicated. Malaria is prevalent in Kanchanaburee, Thailand. A policeman just died from the PF (Plasmodium Falsiparum) malaria last month.

- a) destroyed completely
- b) common found
- c) fear of disease
- d) Furbish

3. The plane is scheduled to leave for Phuket at 7:00 am but the plane departure has been postponed for two hours. That is to say, it will leave at 9:00 am instead.

- a) retard
- b) stop
- c) extend
- d) went back

6. Similarity

You can guess the meaning of new words by using signal words of similarity. They will display the same meaning of the new words. See key words or signal words of similarity in the “Key words box”.

Key words
like similarly in the same way
as the same as just as

e.g.

Indonesia is producing Ford cars and trucks. Soon, Thailand and Vietnam will be producing the same products with, no doubt, the same quality.

What does the words “the same products” mean? _____

What is your clue? _____

Exercise 7 Use signal words as your clue to find the meaning of the underlined words. Circle signal words and write the meaning in the space provided.

1. Learning should not be limited to the classroom or with teachers. We can learn by ourselves about things that are not taught by teachers. Similarly, “self-learning” is encouraged for our education system.

What does the words “self-learning” mean? -----

2. Thailand and South Korea have made a break-through in developing a new technology that enables high-speed Internet connections, just as phone service links are made efficiently through electric power lines. Both countries have joined hands to do business.

What do the words “high-speed Internet connections” mean?

~Queen~

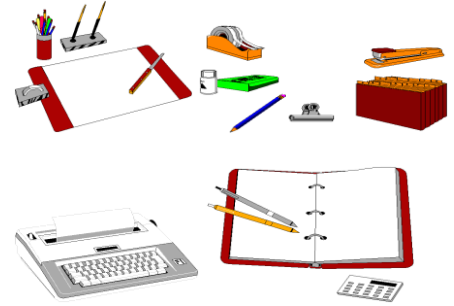
the most successful people are those who are good at plan **B**

7. Pictures

"A picture is worth more than a thousand words" (an old Chinese saying) so a picture can help you to guess the meaning of a new word. Look at the pictures below and choose the best answer to explain the pictures.

Which is the best description for the above picture?

- a) For Sale
- b) Equipment used in an office
- c) Instruments for you



Which is the best description for the above picture?

- a) Holiday on beach
- b) Beautiful beach
- c) Activity of people

