

Unit 2: Overcoming adversity

Day 5: Using the words in context – contexting strategies in reading

Content Objective:

Students will practice using the definition/synonym contexting strategy in order to match sentences containing target words.

Language Objective:

Students will identify functional language and symbols used to signal definition/synonym context clues, such as the following: *is; that means; which is; or; in other words; that is; in fact; i.e; double hyphen symbol --; parentheses ()*

Teacher materials:

- overhead of objectives
- video – Jayci Wittmier Story - available on youtube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QGOZ9uq2BUQ>
- overhead of target words (from Day 3)
- magnets

Student materials:

- video viewing guide
- binders and pencils
- sentence strips
- marker

Day at a Glance:

- (15 min.) **building background:** introductory discussion and video
- (25-30 min.) **contexting strategies: introduce, model, and practice** definition/synonym contexting strategy
- (5 min.) **wrap-up and review**

Activities:

(5 min) Building background – introductory conversation: Post the list of target words for the unit. Tell the students that you'll be using the words to read, write, and talk about overcoming adversity for the next few days, and ask them to relate some of their own experiences facing challenges. Ask questions such as the following:

- *“Have you ever faced adversity in your life? Have you had challenges that you've had to overcome?”*
- *What did you do to overcome your challenges? What factors helped you, and what factors made it more difficult?*
- *What advice would you give to someone else who is experiencing adversity? What would you say to motivate them to keep trying?*

(10 min) Building background - video: Hand out the viewing questions about Jayci, a young girl who is paralyzed in a car accident. Read the questions together with the students, and tell them that they can use the paper to take notes as they watch the video – just notes, not complete sentences.

- *What **attributes** does Jayci have that help her overcome the **adversity** that she faces?*
- *What helps Jayci **maintain** hope for the future? What does she **aspire** to do? What **motivates** her to continue working toward her goal?*
- *Is Jayci's injury an **intractable** problem for her? Why or why not?*

Play the video. Afterwards, give the students a minute to finish up their notes in response to the guiding questions, and then two minutes to talk with a partner about their answers. Briefly process the answers in the whole group, prompting the students to use the target words in their statements.

Have students place their viewing guides behind the unit 2 tab in their binders and their pencils in their pencil bags.

(25-30 min): Contexting strategies:

The other day when we were learning our new words, we talked about different strategies that we can use when we come across a word we don't know. Who remembers what some of those strategies are? [word parts, seeing or hearing them before, context, glossary]. **Right, very good,**

these are all strategies that we can use to help us figure out the meaning of a new word. Today we're going to talk about the contexting strategy in particular. We're going to talk more about it for two reasons:

- **First**, it's a very powerful and useful strategy because it gives you a way to learn a lot of new words when you hear them or read them in new contexts.
- **Second**, it's a little complicated, and there are a lot of different kinds of context clues that you might find to help you out. Today we're going to focus on one kind of context clue called a **synonym or a definition**.

Who knows what a synonym is? [a word that means the same thing] **Right**, a synonym is a word that means the same thing as the word you're working with, so it's very similar to a definition, which tells you what the word means.

Sometimes you can find the definition or a synonym in the text while you're reading. Let's look at an example together. [Write this sentence on the board: "When you make soup, first you need to *sauté* the onions, or cook them quickly in a little bit of oil."]

So in this sentence, we have an unusual word, *sauté*. Can anyone find a definition for *sauté* in the sentence that can help us figure out what it means?

Who would like to come up and underline the definition for us? [Have a student come up and do this – hopefully he/she will underline 'cook them quickly in a little bit of oil.'] Great – *sauté* means to cook something quickly in a little bit of oil, just as it says right here.

Now I want to draw your attention to this word *or* [circle it], right before the definition that your classmate just underlined. This *or* is very important, because it's providing a signal to you that a definition or a synonym is coming.

There are other signal words that writers use to let us know that a definition or synonym clue is coming, and we're going to be on the lookout for some of them in our activity today. [Project objectives and read them to the class now.]

Today I'm going to give each one of you (or each pair or small group, depending on class size and student ability level) **two sentence strips.**

The green strips have the first half of a sentence, or the first sentence in a pair of two sentences. The yellow strips have the second half of a sentence or the second sentence in a pair of two sentences.

The two sentence parts that I give you won't match. You are going to leave the second half of the sentence on your desk (the yellow strip). You will take the sentence strip with the first half of the sentence (the green one) and walk around the room until you find the sentence strip that completes yours.

Here's a big clue – focus on the target word that is in the first half of the sentence, and look for the sentence that has a definition or synonym for that word in it. You can use your vocabulary summary sheets from Day 3 to help you do this. [Project your completed vocabulary summary sheet from Day 3 on the overhead.]

Once you've found your match, I want you to post the full sentence (or two sentences) on the board using these magnets. [hold up magnets] **Then I want you to underline the definition or synonym clue.**

Finally, if you find some signal words that helped you realize that a definition or synonym was coming up, I want you to circle them.

Model the process by asking two volunteers to come up, and giving them each a sentence strip, one one color and one the other, each with half of the *sauté* sentence on it. Show how their two sentence strips match, and have them post their sentence on the board, underline the definition/synonym clue, and circle the signal word *or*. When you are sure that everyone understands the task, pass out sentence strips to all students (or pairs or small groups).

While students are working on the sentence strip activity, collect the binders and put them away.

When everyone has found their matching sentence strip and all sentences are on the board, read through them together and confirm that all of the matches are accurate. Also check to see if everyone agrees with the clues that have

been underlined. Finally, check the language that is used to signal the definition/synonym clues, and make sure that students circled the right words/phrases - 'in other words,' 'meaning that,' 'or,' and 'that is.' Tell the students that all of these words/expressions can be used to signal definition or synonym clues when they're reading.

(5 min) Wrap-up – review strategy and objectives

Walk over to the context strategies poster hanging in the room, and review all of the language clues included there for definition/synonym clues.

Quickly review the objectives and have students give you a thumbs up or thumbs down about whether or not you met them.