Unit 6: School Equity
Day 5: Using the words in context – contexting strategies in reading

Content Objective:
Students will practice using different contexting strategies in order to complete a cloze reading passage.

Language Objective:
Students will identify and underline the functional language used to signal context clues in the passage.

Teacher materials:
- overhead of objectives
- blank transparency
- video about school equity (Dr. Jason Irizarry)
- overhead of vocabulary summary sheet (from Day 3 or 4)
- overhead of cloze activity
- fine point overhead marker

Student materials:
- binders – pencils and vocabulary summary sheets from Day 3 or 4
- white boards and dry erase markers
- cloze worksheet
- list of target words from D3

Day at a Glance:
- (15 min.) **building background:** introductory discussion and video
- (25-30 min.) **contexting strategies: review** contexting strategies and functional language; complete cloze passage
- (5 min.) **wrap-up and review**

Activities:

*****5 MINUTES – INTRODUCE OBJECTIVES AND BUILD BACKGROUND****

- [Post the objectives on the overhead.]
- **Today we're going to put our words in context, and we're going to review the context clues we've learned in the other units that can help us figure out the meaning of new words.** [Walk over to the context clues poster.]
- **In Unit 2, we learned about the definition or synonym contexting strategy** [point to that strategy on the poster].
- **In Unit 3, we learned about the antonym contexting strategy,** [point to the antonym strategy on the poster].
- **In Unit 4, we learned about the example strategy** [point to the example strategy on the poster].
- **And in our last unit, we learned about the general strategy.** [Point to the general strategy on the poster. Walk back to the front of the class.]
- **Our content objective is to review all four of these contexting strategies by filling in the missing words in a reading passage. Our language objective is to identify and underline the functional language that signals these context clues in the passage we read.**

(building background through personal experiences)
- Post the overhead of the vocabulary summary sheet from Day 3 or 4 and review the words and their meanings with the students. Tell the students that for the next few days, you'll be using the words to read, write, and talk about school equity.
- Remind them that *equity* was one of their vocabulary words in a previous unit, and ask them what it means – ask them to look it up in their glossary if necessary [same treatment for everyone; fairness]. **Good, so if *equity* means being fair, or having the same treatment for everyone, what do you think school equity means?** [schools treating all students the same way].

- **I'd like to hear your *perspectives* on school equity.**
  - *"Do you think our school treats all students the same? Why or why not?"*
  - *"Do you think it's **critical** that schools treat all students the same? Why or why not?"*
  - *"Have you been **affected** by inequity in school? If so, how?"*
  - *"What do you think the **function** of school is?"*
  - *"What do you like about school?"*
  - *"What **constructive** advice would you offer to our principal to improve our school?"*

- Take notes on student responses on a blank transparency. These ideas may be useful to them tomorrow when they work to create poems or rap songs about school equity.
- **Great, you've come up with a lot of interesting ideas about the idea of school equity, and I've taken some notes to help us remember your ideas.**
- **Now we're going to watch a brief video about the topic, and I want you to listen for more ideas you might hear about school equity. I also want you to listen and watch for target words and write them on your whiteboards. This video features Dr. Jason Irizarry, a professor of multicultural education at the University of Connecticut.**

*****10 MINUTES – BUILDING BACKGROUND WITH VIDEO*****

- Watch the video about school equity and have students write down target words that they hear on their whiteboards.
- For one minute, ask students to talk with a partner about the words they heard and how they heard them used.
- Discuss the video with the whole class. Draw connections between the students' responses to the previous questions and the issues that are highlighted in the video. Point out Dr. Irizarry's use of the target words *critical* ("*critical* researchers in the process of school reform" –

so he uses it in a different way than we're teaching it – he uses the meaning of 'looking carefully at something, critiquing', whereas we are teaching the meaning, 'important.'); *representation* (examine the *representation* of Latino faculty and administrators); *perspective* (take a *critical perspective* on the quality of educational experiences and outcomes); *mandates* ("all of the state *mandates*, etc."); *prerequisite* ("I didn't know anything about *prerequisite* courses").

! Note: Dr. Irizarry uses a lot of academic language in his video, and many of the words and phrases he uses may be new or challenging for students. For example:

- "savage inequalities" – a reference to a book by Jonathan Kozol in 1991 that documented inequity in the American education system.
- plague – to cause worry
- "differential opportunity structure" – a situation where one group has access to different (and usually more) opportunities than another group. This is a great opportunity to build on students' new knowledge of the root –struct' and the word *structure*, which you discussed on D2 – that day you built physical *structures* with legos, and here, Dr. Irizarry uses the word in a more abstract way.
- predominantly - mainly
- pursue – to go after something or someone
- diligently – steadily, without giving up
- Eurocentric - a *perspective* that relates to Europe and people who came from there (i.e. descendents of immigrants from England, Ireland, Italy, etc.)
- European descent – people whose relatives came over from Europe.
- trajectory – path or progression

*****25-30 MINUTES – CONTEXTING STRATEGIES*****

- **So as we were saying earlier, today we're going to continue our discussion of context clues.**
- **In Unit 2, we talked about definition or synonym clues. Who remembers what a synonym is?** [another word that means the same thing].
- **Right, a synonym is a word that means the same thing as the target word, so it's very similar to a definition. For example, the sentence here on the poster** [point to synonym sentence on poster] **tell us that *sauté* means to cook quickly in oil.**
- **And what kind of language or symbol clues might help you recognize a synonym or definition clue when you're reading?** [Elicit responses from students – refer them to the poster if they're having difficulty remembering.]

- **In the Unit 3, we talked about antonym context clues. Who remembers what an antonym is?** [a word that means the opposite]
- **Right, an antonym is a word that means the opposite as the word you're working with. For example, 'shy and quiet' is the opposite of *boisterous* in this example sentence** [point to sentence on poster].
- **And what kind of language or symbol clues might help you recognize antonym clues when you're reading?** [Elicit responses from students – refer them to the poster if they're having difficulty remembering.]

- **In Unit 4, we talked about example context clues. Like the name says, an example clue provides examples of the word to help you figure it out, just like lobsters, crabs, and crayfish are all examples of *crustaceans*.** [point to sentence on poster].
- **And what kind of language or symbol clues might help you recognize example clues when you're reading?** [Elicit responses from students – refer them to the poster if they're having difficulty remembering.]

- **Finally, in Unit 5, we learned about the general context clue. Sometimes when you're reading, you see information in the passage other than a synonym, antonym, or example that can help you figure out the meaning of the word, like in this example here** [point to the sentence on the poster].
- **And what kind of language or symbol clues might help you recognize example clues when you're reading?** [Elicit responses from students – refer them to the poster if they're having difficulty remembering.]

(introduce cloze reading activity)
- **Today we're going to do a practice activity to help us review our target words and the context clues that we have studied.**
- **You're going to work in pairs (or small groups), and each pair (or group) is going to get this reading passage. The passage features Dr. Jason Irizarry, who you just saw in the video, and Ms. Madeline Negrón, the principal of Windham Middle School.** [Project the cloze reading passage on the overhead and pass out the worksheet to students. Also have them take out a pencil from their binders and their list of target words from D3.]
- **You'll notice that there are several words that are missing in this passage. The words that are missing are the target words that we are studying for this unit, which you have listed on your sheet from the other day. You're going to need to use context clues to help you figure out which word goes in each space.**

- **Let's read the whole passage through together.** [Read the passage out loud while the students follow along silently. When you get to a blank, say, 'blank' and keep going.]
- **Ok, let's go back to the top and do the first paragraph together.** [Read the first four sentences, from "Dr. Jason Irizarry" to "go to college."] **It says that Dr. Irizarry is concerned about the lack of something, so we know that the word that goes in the blank has to be a noun.** [Engage the students in conversation to identify the

context clue 'enough students of color' and the language signal, 'in other words,' which marks it as a definition/synonym clue. Since 'enough students of color' refers to the students' *representation*, that's the word that's missing here. You can also confirm that the word is a noun because of the –tion suffix.]

- Write *representation* in the blank and underline 'in other words,' and 'enough students of color,' and have students do the same on their worksheets.

- **Great, so the first context clue we found was a definition or synonym clue, and we know that because of the language signal, "in other words." Let's do another one together.** [Read the next sentence and engage the students in conversation to figure out that *prerequisite* is the missing word and the context clue is 'needed to get into college' since a *prerequisite* is a requirement that you have to complete before you do something else. So this is also a definition/synonym clue, and here there is no language signal. If students notice that they were taught the word *prerequisite* as a noun but here it's used as an adjective, praise them and let them know they're right! The word can be used both ways.]

- Write *prerequisite* in the blank and underline 'needed to get into college,' and have students do the same on their worksheets.

- Read the rest of the paragraph and engage the students in conversation to figure out that *mandated* means 'required' or 'something you must do.' The context clue is 'algebra and biology,' which are examples of *mandated* courses, introduced by the language signal 'such as.' So this is an example context clue.

- Write *mandated* in the blank and underline 'such as algebra or biology,' and have students do the same on their worksheets.

- Great work, everybody! I think you get the idea now, so I'm going to let you continue to work with a partner (or small group) to fill in the rest of the blanks with our target words for this unit. The form of the word that goes in the blank may be a little different from the form of the word on your list, so watch out for that. I also want you to underline the context clue that you find for each word, along with any language signals you may find. Be ready to tell me what kind of context clue you found for each word!

Ⓓ Differentiation: If this activity is too challenging for some of your class or all of your class, you can choose to do the whole activity as guided practice with either a subset of students or the whole class, as needed.

Timer: Set the powerpoint countdown clock (e.g. http://www.m62.net/powerpoint-slides/conference-slides/powerpoint-countdown-timer/) or other timer for 15 minutes, and remind students when they have 10, 5, and 1 minute remaining.

- Walk around the room and facilitate while students are working.
- When all groups have completed the activity, read through remainder of the passage, filling in the blanks with missing words and identifying and underlining the context clues and functional language that go with each word. (Your passage master will give you all of the answers.)

*****5 MINUTES – WRAP-UP*****

(review objectives)
- Quickly review the objectives and have students give you a thumbs up or thumbs down about whether or not you met them.
- Have students place their passages and word lists behind the unit 3 tab in their binders and their pencils in their pencil bags.
- Collect the binders and put them away.