



Activity 1:

It's time to practice guessing the meaning of particular words in context! Look at the sentences below, and use the SPOT strategy to guess the meaning of the **bold** words. Check your guess in a dictionary afterward to see if it was correct. The first row is done for you as an example.

1. "Basted, scrambled, or poached?"

<i>Setting</i>		<i>People</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A restaurant at breakfast time 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A customer and a waiter; the waiter asked the question 	
<i>Outlook</i>		<i>Topic</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Polite and calm, the waiter is asking a question 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The waiter is asking the customer something after the customer ordered bacon and eggs 	

Your guess:

- Asking how the customer wants his/her eggs cooked – I know **scrambled** eggs, so I guess that the other two words are different ways of cooking eggs

Dictionary definition:

- basted eggs are fried in a pan
- poached eggs are cooked in hot water

2. "That's **nuts!**"

<i>Setting</i>		<i>People</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A living room 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two friends 	
<i>Outlook</i>		<i>Topic</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One friend has an excited expression, and the one who said "That's nuts!" is listening with his mouth open, and his eyes wide. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One friend is telling another friend about how expensive it is to keep children in daycare. 	

Your guess:

Dictionary definition:



Activity 1 (continued):

3. "I'm sorry to tell you that she **didn't make it through** the operation."

<i>Setting</i>		<i>People</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A hospital 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A doctor and the family of a patient 	
<i>Outlook</i>		<i>Topic</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The doctor is very solemn and keeps looking down at the ground. After the doctor says this, the family looks very upset and some of them start to cry. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The doctor is reporting the condition of a patient who had surgery. 	

Your guess:

Dictionary definition:

4. "**Lovely!**"

<i>Setting</i>		<i>People</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An office 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two colleagues 	
<i>Outlook</i>		<i>Topic</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The speaker said "Lovely!" with her eyes looking up and while raising her hands with her palms facing up. Her colleague looks guilty and a little bit shy. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The speaker says this after her colleague puts some papers on her desk, which already has a lot of paper on it. 	

Your guess:

Dictionary definition:



Activity 1 (continued):

5. "You have to be **meticulous**, because they can hide in the smallest places."

<i>Setting</i>		<i>People</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">A home		<ul style="list-style-type: none">An exterminator and a client	
<i>Outlook</i>		<i>Topic</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The exterminator is moving his hands a lot while he speaks. The client is looking directly at the exterminator and nodding his head.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">The exterminator is giving advice about how to look for bedbugs in furniture.	

Your guess:

Dictionary definition:



Activity 2:

This activity will help you focus on some target words and use the strategies you've learned to guess their meanings.

Visit this link to watch a video about how to dress for a job interview:

[Click here to view the video.](#)

Next, choose some vocabulary words from the list below, and view the video. Pause the video when you hear your target word, and write down the sentence in which you heard it. Then, take note of the context clues that might help you guess the meaning of the word.

Target Words:

Attire	A black tie event	Tasteful	Manicure
Dress code	Pointers	Aligned	Kick it up a notch
Go easy	Fashion statement	Pressed	End up

Break in a new pair of shoes

Now, use a dictionary to check if your guesses were correct! If you think it will help you, use a chart like the ones in the previous activity to help you stay organized.



Activity 3:

The following paragraph has some underlined words. Do you know all of them? If not, you can practice some of the guessing strategies featured in the video!

“Last night’s episode of CSI was certainly not a snore-fest! There were three suspects, and they all could have been the culprit. One was nervously guzzling his coffee during the interrogation. The next one got very snarky with the investigators when they found a hole in her alibi. The last suspect was fidgeting all skittishly during questioning. When I saw that, it was a no-brainer. His body language gave him away.”

First, sort the underlined words into columns according to their part(s) of speech (noun, verb, adjective, or adverb). Use context clues to help you. Use the Answer Key to check your answers.

Context Clues:

- Word order: Subject – Verb – Object.
- Determiners: a/an/some/any/the/this/these/those + noun
- Verb forms: VERB-ed, VERB-s, VERB-ing, to VERB
- Suffixes: ADJECTIVE-y, ADJECTIVE-ish, ADVERB-ly
- Other clues

Noun	Verb	Adjective	Adverb



Activity 4:

Now that you have sorted the words by part of speech, practice using the other strategies to guess the meanings of the words!

Use the chart below to practice guessing the meaning of words. Some of the spaces have already been filled in. After you have made a guess, check your answer by using a paper dictionary, or an online one. How well did you do?

Word	Clues in Surrounding Text	Root / Affix Clues	Possible Synonyms	Your Guess	Dictionary Definition
snore-fest		- Snore: We snore when we sleep - ___Fest: A celebration (festival, festive, etc.)	- a sleepover (a festival of snoring) - something boring (an event that makes you want to sleep)		
suspects	- people: he/her/drinking coffee - police are talking to them (criminals?) - direct clue: culprit	- looks like verb "to suspect"	- culprit		
culprit	- direct clue: suspects		- suspect - criminal		
interrogation	- makes people nervous - involves police asking questions		- questions		
alibi	- fabric: found a hole in it - police can see it		- outfit - uniform		
no-brainer	"It was a no-brainer" - it was easy to see?	- no brain = stupid, unintelligent	- stupid - easy		



Activity 4 (continued):

Word	Clues in Surrounding Text	Root / Affix Clues	Possible Synonyms	Your Guess	Dictionary Definition
guzzling (<i>present participle</i>)			- drink - stir - pour		
found a hole	- You can do it to an alibi				
fidgeting (<i>present participle</i>)	- You can do it "skittishly" - He was the guilty suspect = his body language made it clear = something guilty people do		- a guilty look - be nervous		
gave him away	"His body language gave him away" - he was the guilty one, and his body language announced that	- looks like "give away," meaning something is free	- announce - make clear - betray		
snarky	"...got very snarky with investigators" - nervous? - afraid?				
skittishly			- nervously		



Activity 3: ANSWER KEY

The following paragraph has some underlined words. Do you know all of them? If not, you can practice some of the guessing strategies featured in the video!

“Last night’s episode of CSI was certainly not a snore-fest! There were three suspects, and they all could have been the culprit. One was nervously guzzling his coffee during the interrogation. The next one got very snarky with the investigators when they found a hole in her alibi. The last suspect was fidgeting all skittishly during questioning. When I saw that, it was a no-brainer. His body language gave him away.”

First, sort the underlined words into columns according to whether it is a noun, verb, adjective, or adverb. Use context clues to help you. Use the Answer Key to check your answers.

Context Clues:

- Word order: Subject – Verb – Object.
- Determiners: a/an/some/any/the/this/these/those + noun
- Conjugations: VERB-ed, VERB-s, VERB-ing, to VERB
- Suffixes: ADJECTIVE-y, ADJECTIVE-ish, ADVERB-ly
- Other clues

Noun	Verb	Adjective	Adverb
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snore-fest (a/the) • Suspects ('three', plural marker -s) • Culprit (a/the) • Interrogation (a/the) • Alibi (possessive 'her') • No-brainer (a/the, -er suffix) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guzzling (present continuous ending -ing) • Found a hole (word order: They + verb) • Fidgeting (present participle ending -ing) • Gave him away (phrasal verb, word order: noun + verb) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snarky (common adjective suffix -y, word order: to get + adjective, very + adjective) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skittishly (common adverb ending -ly, word order: informal "all + adverb")