

B2R2d. Uses knowledge of vocabulary and context to give meaning to new language.

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Teachers' Notes

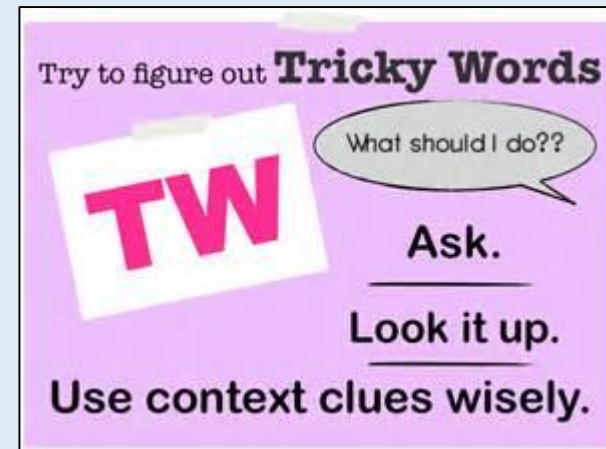
- This therapy is designed to provide children with some strategies to work out the meaning of unfamiliar words which they come across.
- The key strategies which are modelled are: using context clues; using antonyms and synonyms; using root words and antonyms/synonyms and finding links to words already known.
- Alongside the modelling, there are opportunities for the pupils to practise the strategies themselves.
- Once the therapy has been delivered, encourage and remind the children to make these strategies a regular part of their independent or guided reading.

Finding the meaning of words.

Sometimes, when we are reading, we might come across a word or phrase we don't understand and might not have seen before. We are going to learn about strategies which we can use to try to work out the meaning.

Strategies we will explore:

- Using the context of the word.
- Using antonyms and synonyms.
- Using roots words, prefixes and suffixes.
- Links to words already known.



Context clues are clues which come from the surrounding words in a sentence.

Discuss what could go in the space.

Jimmy home.

There are many possibilities because there is not much information in the sentence. However, if we provide more context, we could be more precise.

Now, discuss what could go in the space.

Jimmy home because he was so excited about the puppies.

With more context, we can be more precise about our word choice. The information about puppies directs us to a word like 'sprinted' because it is how Jimmy may get home if he is excited.

Using the **context** of a word to work out the meaning.

The letter was confidential, so he couldn't tell anyone.

If he couldn't tell anyone, it suggests it was a secret or something he had to keep to himself.

Using the information in the sentence, can we work out what the underlined word means?

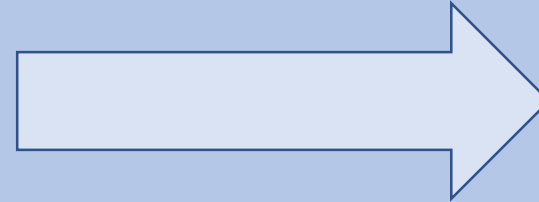
To test my guess, I could put my words in place of the underlined word. Does it still make sense?

Confidential: intended to be kept secret

The letter was secret, so he couldn't tell anyone.

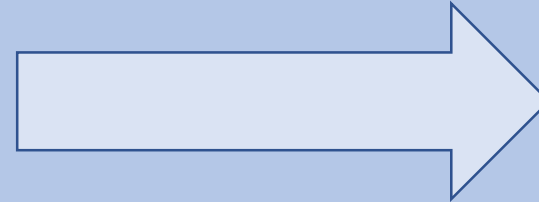
Your turn: use the context to work out the meaning of the **underlined** word. Remember to test it in the sentence to see if it makes sense.

She knew she was **innocent**, but she still felt as if she had done something wrong.



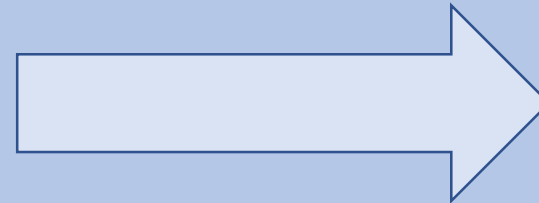
not guilty of an offence

Luckily, Kim was very **tolerant**, so the different opinions in her group didn't upset her.



willing to accept the opinions of others

It was a **solemn** occasion so they couldn't laugh.



formal or serious

His fear of spiders made him very **wary** of them.



showing caution about possible dangers

Your turn: finding the meaning of words.

Look at the sentences below. Use the context to decide which of the choices is the correct meaning of the **underlined** word.

If only he knew what he would do when he grew up. Perhaps he should visit a prophet?

- a) witch b) a teacher c) someone who tells the future

c

She burst into tears and put her head in her hands when she read the malicious text.

- a) nasty b) interesting c) exciting

a

Using **synonyms** to work out the meaning.

Synonyms are words which have a similar meaning. For example, some synonyms for *lovely* are: *adorable*, *exquisite*, *attractive* and *appealing*. If we can think of synonyms to replace the unfamiliar word, it can help with the meaning. Take care to choose an appropriate synonym. For example, '*the meal was lovely*' makes sense. However, '*the meal was attractive*' doesn't work as well.

Example:

I was **conscious** that I was boring him, as he was yawning.

Can you think of a synonym for 'conscious'? From the context, the person knows that he/she is boring the boy. A synonym could be '**aware**'. If I put the synonym into the sentence, does it make sense?

I was **aware** that I was boring him, as he was yawning.



Can you think of some synonyms for the underlined word (or use a thesaurus if necessary)?

He knew had eaten sufficient food as he was full up.

When they were climbing the mountain, Josh was a hindrance and slowed them down.

As an **amateur** athlete, she had to go out to work to earn a living.

In his **leisure** time, he liked to escape to the peace of the river and go fishing.

Using **antonyms** to work out the meaning.

Antonyms are words which have the opposite meaning. For example, the antonym of happy is sad. We can check our choices by replacing the tricky word with the antonym.

Example:

I knew the cup wasn't **fragile** when I felt the sturdy handle and thick sides.

*As we are told the reason she knows the cup **isn't fragile** is because it is sturdy, this must mean fragile means the **opposite** of sturdy. So it must mean something like '**delicate**'.*

I knew the cup wasn't **delicate** when I felt the sturdy handle and thick sides. (This makes sense.)



Can you use **antonyms** to work out what the **underlined** word might mean?

Jane knew the woman wasn't **reliable** when she was late for the third time running.

Leroy clearly wasn't **curious** to solve the puzzle; he peeped at the answers.

The information wasn't **relevant** to answering the question, so they ignored it.

When they visited the town, it wasn't **familiar** to them so they got lost.

Using root words, prefixes and suffixes

Sometimes we can work out what a word might mean by recognising root words and understanding prefixes and suffixes.

unobservant

un-

observe

-ant



prefix

root

suffix

- *I recognise the root 'observe'. I know this means to look at something.*
- *The prefix 'un-' makes the meaning opposite.*
- *The suffix 'ant' makes the verb into an adjective.*
- *So, unobservant means that someone is **not observant**.*

Your turn: try to work out the meaning of each word by identifying the root words and/or prefixes and suffixes

inelegant

not elegant or graceful

infrequently

not very often

transmittable

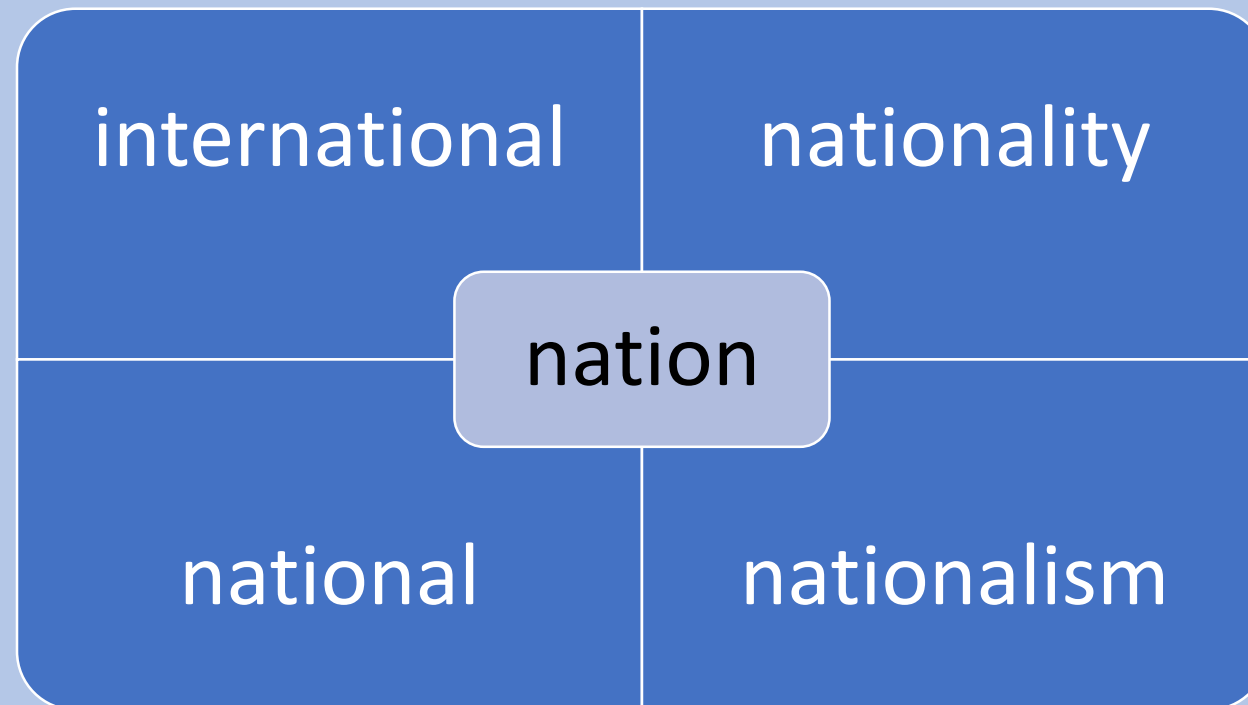
can be transmitted (sent)

inconsiderate

not considerate/don't
think about others

Links to words already known.

Sometimes, unfamiliar words may link to words we already know.
If we know that the word '**nation**' means country, then words within the same family are easier to understand.



Your turn: try to create word families by adding prefixes and suffixes. How does this help you to understand the tricky words?

legal

perfect

vision

So, when you come across unfamiliar words in your reading, try some of these strategies to work out the meaning. You can try:

- Using the context clues – look for clues in the text to help with the meaning.
- Replacing the word with a synonym or an antonym – does it make sense?
- Identifying root words, prefixes and suffixes.
- Check if there are words you already know which link to the unfamiliar word.