

Extraordinary Things You Can Find Around the World

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Dragon's Blood Tree

The Dragon's Blood Tree is a special tree found on Socotra Island in Yemen. It is easy to recognize because it has a big, umbrella-shaped top and twisted branches. When the tree is cut, it produces a red sap called "dragon's blood," which people have used for medicine, dye, and incense. This tree grows in hot, dry places and its shape helps it catch moisture and protect itself from the sun. It also makes small flowers and bright red berries that birds help spread. Today, the Dragon's Blood Tree is in danger because its habitat is changing and fewer young trees are growing. Even so, it is still one of the most unique and important trees on the island.



Lake Abraham's frozen air bubbles

Lake Abraham in Alberta, Canada, is famous for its beautiful frozen bubbles that appear under the ice in winter. These bubbles form when plants at the bottom of the lake break down and release methane gas, which normally rises to the surface. But when the lake freezes quickly, the gas gets trapped in layers of ice, creating white, round shapes that look like stacks of floating circles. People visit the lake to take photos of this unique winter sight because it looks almost magical. Even though the bubbles are harmless to look at, they contain methane, so experts handle them carefully.

Sea of stars Maldives

The Sea of Stars in the Maldives is a beautiful natural sight where the shoreline glows bright blue at night. This glowing effect comes from tiny marine organisms called bioluminescent plankton. When the water is moved by waves or footsteps, these plankton light up, making the beach look like it's covered in shining stars. It is most seen on Vaadhoo Island, where the conditions are perfect for this glow to appear. The Sea of Stars is completely natural and safe, and many people visit the Maldives just to see this magical, sparkling beach. It's one of the most famous examples of bioluminescence in the world and shows how amazing nature can be.



The Devil's Tooth

The Devil's Tooth is a strange fungus that stands out because it looks like it is covered in red drops of blood. These red drops are just liquid that the fungus releases when it is young. It has a white, bumpy surface that makes it look sharp, like a tooth. You can usually find it growing on the forest floor in North America and Europe, especially near pine trees. People think it looks scary. It is not poisonous, it just tastes very bitter, so people don't eat it. The Devil's Tooth also helps the forest by sharing nutrients with tree roots. Its unusual appearance makes it one of the most memorable fungi in the woods.



Context Clues: Hints to Overcome not Knowing Vocabulary

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Imagine you are stuck in the middle of a forest, trying to understand the words that are engraved in a tree. These words seem mostly unfamiliar with you, what do you do? There's no phone, no WIFI nor a dictionary to check up these words. So, you try to read them again and again. This time, carefully focusing on the words around the mystery term and it becomes clear. You probably don't even realize that you've just used context clues! Your brain's secret weapon when help is out of reach. Whether just going a tough advanced textbook or any situation. Context clues can save the day! So what are the context clues?

Context clues are hints or extra information that helps you identify a word that you're not sure of. They are very essential to master when learning a new language. They basically help you understand a word without any dictionary or an assistance separately. By practicing

more context clue sentences, anyone can enhance their vocabulary easily, making the reading experience more exciting. Context clues are very helpful in a reading process because you don't have to stop to look up the word just because you didn't understand it, which can speed up your reading. Context clues can be in every part of the text, in the same sentence or the next one that follows or that comes before. Mostly our vocabulary is gained by reading, so it is important to recognize and use advantage of the context clues clearly. In this one, we'll break down the main ones for you to confidently recognize them.

Context clues are useful resources when it comes to reading and understanding unfamiliar words. When we do reading, we usually come across new words in the passage then end with interruptions in the middle of the reading. Instead of stopping and

looking up the dictionary, we can pick up the meaning by reading the sentences and words around the unfamiliar words. So why do we need them? Using context clues allows us to figure out the unfamiliar words without using a dictionary, especially during the exam or in the classroom and somewhere we cannot use translation applications or dictionaries. There are 5 types of context clues which are Inference, Definition or Explanations, Examples, Antonym and Synonym. To put it shortly, we can memorize as I.D.E.A.S for types of context clues.

Inference Clue

An inference clue is when the sentence doesn't imply the meaning directly, but gives you hints so you can think of the meaning yourself. You will need to use thinking, practical sense, and hints from the sentence to understand the unknown word.

Example1: He kept glancing at his watch, tapping his foot non-stop. Inference: He's in a hurry or impatient.

Example2: She stood in silence, jaw clenched and eyes wet. Inference: She's trying not to cry or holding back emotions.

Definition Clue

A definition clue directly states or explains the meaning of an unfamiliar word within the sentence or a nearby sentence. The author essentially defines the word for you. How to spot them: Look for words or phrases like "is," "means," "refers to," "is defined as," "that is," or "in other words." Punctuation such as commas, parentheses, brackets, or dashes often set off the definition.

Example1: "The arboretum, a place where various trees and shrubs are grown, was a peaceful spot for a picnic."

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Here, "a place where various trees and shrubs are grown" directly defines arboretum.

Example

Example clues are where the author provides examples to help the reader understand an unfamiliar word. The reader can guess the word by listing examples that are given after an unfamiliar word in the sentence. Including words like "such as, for example, including, and like" that often signal example clues.

Example 1: "He enjoys extreme sports, for example, skydiving and bungee jumping." **From the examples, we can tell that extreme sports are exciting and risky activities.

Example 2: "The manager disliked obsequious behavior, such as fawning and kowtowing." **In this sentence, the words "fawning and kowtowing" are examples of obsequious behavior, helping the reader understand that "obsequious" likely means excessively eager to please or flatter.

Antonym Clue

These kinds of clues rely on the reader recognizing a word with the opposite meaning to understand the unfamiliar word in the same sentence.

Words like but, however, unlike, instead of, and whereas often signal an antonym clue.

Example 1: "She was not generous, but rather stingy."

The word "but" shows contrast. Since generous means giving, stingy must mean not giving much.

Example 2: "The first presenter was very original and kept the audience interested and entertained, on the other hand, the second was simply insipid,"

The word "insipid" goes against "original and interesting," shows that "insipid" means the opposite, or something dull and uninteresting.

Synonym Clue

A synonym clue uses a word or phrase with a similar meaning to the unfamiliar word in the same sentence or a nearby one. By knowing the meaning of the familiar synonym, you can infer the meaning of the unfamiliar word.

**How to spot them: Look for words or phrases like "or," "in other words," "also known as," "that is to say," or even just commas, parentheses, or dashes that separate the unfamiliar word from its synonym.

Example: "The ancient manuscript was illegible, or unreadable, due to

the fading ink and torn pages. **In this sentence, "unreadable" is a synonym for "illegible," helping you understand the latter's meaning.

Benefits Of Using Context clues

Context clues help us enhance our vocabulary skills and make our reading less frustrating and more enjoyable. Not only can reading skills be developed, but they can also develop our critical and logical skills. When we use context clues, we have to use comparing ideas, smart guessing, and logical thinking— you're solving word puzzles!! In addition, it can boost your reading comprehension skills which makes it easier and fun to read.

Overall, context clues help us understand new or hard words by looking at the words around them. They are like little hints that make reading easier. When we learn how to use them, we don't always need a dictionary. The more we read and practice, the better we get at using context clues. we can become better readers and improve our vocabulary without even realizing

it. This skill is useful not only in school, but also in everyday life when reading books, articles, almost everything. So next time you find a word you don't know, remember to stop a bit and look around! it might not be as hard as it seems.



Preserving Tradition: GPIS Celebrates Htamane Festival in Mandalay and Yangon

At Global Pathways International School (GPIS), we believe in nurturing not only academic excellence but also a deep appreciation for our cultural roots. This January, students from our Mandalay and Yangon campuses came together to celebrate the traditional Htamane-making festival, a vibrant Myanmar custom that symbolizes unity, teamwork, and cultural pride.

Htamane-making is a cherished annual tradition held during the month of Tabodwe, a cool-season festival time in Myanmar when communities gather to prepare this special sticky rice delicacy as an offering and a symbol of merit. The event reflects the spirit of cooperation while helping younger generations connect with and



preserve Myanmar's rich heritage through hands-on participation.

On January 26th, GPIS Mandalay hosted its 2nd Htamane-making festival at the Sekkya Wun Monastery in Chan Mya Thar Zi Township. The lively event featured 11 competing teams from across our programmes. After a spirited display of skill, energy, and teamwork, prizes were awarded for the best technique, taste, and collective effort.

Continuing the celebration, the GPIS

Yangon campus held its 3rd Htamane-making festival on January 29th, 2026, at the historic Bagaya Taw Ya Monastery. Four enthusiastic teams participated, filling the atmosphere with joy as students worked side-by-side to create the perfect Htamane. Awards were presented to recognize their dedication and success.

After the Htamane-making competitions were completed, the Htamane was shared with teachers, parents, students, and neighbors. These meaningful events were made possible by the guidance of our respected teachers and the enthusiastic support of our students. Together, we continue to build a school culture that honors tradition while looking confidently toward the future.



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