

## Lesson 5

# More Indirect Context Clues

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As we have seen, writers sometimes tell you exactly what they mean by the words they use:

Some scientists think that the dinosaurs disappeared as a result of a collision between the Earth and an *asteroid*, one of the many minor planets that revolve around the sun between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter.

However, the clues to unfamiliar words are not always so easy to find. A writer may give only general clues to the meaning of a word:

In the *tumulus*, buried along with the body of the warrior to whom they belonged, were weapons, armor, and a set of chessmen carved of walrus ivory.

The word *tumulus* is not defined, but there are several indirect clues to its meaning. Things from a bygone age—"weapons," "armor," "chessmen carved of walrus ivory"—are "buried" in the *tumulus*, and they are buried along with the body of a "warrior." Therefore, a *tumulus* is probably an ancient grave.

Sometimes the indirect clues lead up to an unfamiliar word, so that it appears to summarize them:

The yearbook photographer took a number of shots of each cheerleader doing a different cheer or stunt and then put them together in one large photo *montage* to introduce the sports section.

*Montage* summarizes three clues: (1) a photographer takes a number of shots; (2) the subjects are different; (3) the shots are put together in one large picture. Therefore, a *montage* must be "a combination of several separate pictures to make one picture."

### Exercise

Each following sentence contains indirect context clues to the meaning of the unfamiliar word. Read each sentence carefully and then use those clues to help figure out the meaning of the unfamiliar word. Write the letter of the best meaning for the word on the line in front of the sentence.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The *itinerant* salesman told me that in his work he went from town to town and state to state, sometimes more than a thousand miles a month.
- important
  - angry
  - traveling
  - wealthy

- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. With all the candidates for office shouting at each other, and their supporters cheering, booing, and throwing things, the student council debate was turning into a *fray*.
- chat
  - quarrel
  - lecture
  - meeting
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Allen never gives in even when he knows that he's wrong—a really *obstinate* person.
- friendly
  - truthful
  - stubborn
  - lazy
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. The woman's *haggard* face was thin, pale, and lined, with dark circles beneath her eyes.
- cheerful
  - careworn
  - silly
  - angry
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. He always carried the rabbit's foot as a *talisman* to bring him luck in a race.
- charm
  - friend
  - sign
  - prayer
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Jason seems to *thrive* on challenge; he's only happy when he has a difficult project to complete.
- struggle
  - weaken
  - do well
  - fall apart
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. She claims to have made a *momentous* discovery, but some scientists think her work is unimportant.
- quick
  - important
  - small
  - unhappy

## Lesson 16

# Reviewing Figurative Language

In the following passage, the boy James is sitting by a lake. Down the beach a fence extends out into the lake separating him from a resort on the other side. He's just met a girl who's chased her brother, Jacky, through a hole in the fence. The little boy is playing with his golf ball.

### Exercise

Read the passage and answer the questions about figurative language at the end.

#### *from* A FABULOUS CREATURE

by Zilpha Keatley Snyder

"Wait a minute. He's wearing me out. I've got to get rid of him for a minute." Holding out the golf ball she said, "Look Jacky. Here it is. Here's your ball. Now, go get it." She threw the ball as hard as she could down the beach.

Jacky gave a final angry yelp and trotted off, while the girl watched him go approvingly. "He's a real killer," she said. "Isn't he? I mean for barely two years old?"

Wrapping one of his arms around his neck, James gingerly explored his shoulder blade with the tips of his fingers. "You can say that again," he said grimly.

She glanced at him quickly, as if surprised. "Oh, the golf ball." She shrugged. "Well, don't take it personally. He throws it at everyone."

"Yeah? Why do you let him? I mean, why doesn't someone just take it away from him?"

"Oh, we couldn't do that. He has to have it. My mom did take it away once, but it didn't do any good. All he did was scream the house down until he got it back. Even when he just loses it—look out!" Making pistols of both her hands she shot them off into her temples. "Ka-pow! He drives everybody crazy until he gets it back. Besides my dad doesn't want us to take it away. He thinks Jacky's old golf ball is a real riot."

"Doesn't he ever throw it at him? At your dad?"

"Oh sure. He doesn't mind."

Glancing up, James noticed Jacky stomping purposefully in their direction, golf ball clutched in sandy fist. The girl was crouching slightly preparing to dodge, and he followed her example.

"Look out," she said. "Here it comes." The ball whistled between them, and running after it, she scooped it up and headed toward the fence. "I've got to go," she called. "Come over here and help me get him through the fence."

James followed, wondering how she planned to get Jacky through the hole, which looked as if it would be a tight squeeze, if he didn't want to go. Would she try to stuff him through it, or—he grinned, thinking of a more

satisfying possibility—perhaps, throw him over the top? But when he reached the fence the problem had already been partly solved. The girl had thrown the golf ball through the fence, and Jacky was already frantically burrowing after it. Now all that remained for James to do was to make sure he didn't come back while his sister was swimming around the end of the fence in the lake.

It wasn't too difficult. When Jacky tried to crawl back under, James sat down and, instead of vulnerable hands, used a tooth-proof hiking boot to shove him back to the other side. And when the kid gave up on the hole and threatened to golf ball him through the fence, he simply spoke to him firmly. "You throw that thing over here, you little turkey, and you'll never see it again." He wasn't sure how much of that Jacky understood, but it seemed to be enough. He was still clutching his Spaulding torpedo when his sister rose from the lake like a hot-pink mermaid. Grabbing his wrist she towed him, stiff-legged and bellowing, toward the center of The Camp.

1. Underline the figurative expression the sister uses to describe Jacky in the second paragraph. What does she mean by this?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. The girl's father calls Jacky's golf ball a "real riot." Is this literal or figurative? What does the father mean?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Underline the figurative expression James uses in speaking to Jacky.
4. Is Jacky literally holding a torpedo? What is he holding? Why might it be called a torpedo?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Is the girl literally a mermaid? What does this mean?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Lesson 31

# Pronoun Agreement

A pronoun should agree with its antecedent.

As you know, an **antecedent** is the word to which a pronoun refers. When the antecedent is **singular**, the pronoun referring to it should be singular. When the antecedent is **plural**, the pronoun should be plural. Here are examples.

The **cowboy** went out riding on **his** horse.

The **cowgirl** attended to **her** horse at the stable.

The **horses** served **their** owners well.

The pronouns and antecedents above also agree in gender. That means the masculine pronoun *his* refers to the masculine noun *cowboy*. The feminine pronoun *her* agrees with the feminine noun *cowgirl*.

If a driver is careful, **he** or **she** can avoid many accidents.

If drivers are careful, **they** can avoid many accidents.

A careful driver can avoid many accidents.

Since the noun *driver* can refer to either a man or a woman, some writers use the phrase *he or she*. Another, less repetitious, solution is to reword the sentence, if possible.

Although in everyday conversation you sometimes hear *they* or *you* used with a singular antecedent, this use of a plural pronoun should be avoided in formal writing.

**Do not write:** If a driver is careful, **they** can avoid many accidents.

If a driver is careful, **you** can avoid many accidents.

Singular indefinite pronouns like *each*, *anybody*, *everyone*, *either*, *someone*, and *neither* should be referred to by singular pronouns. Although in conversation plural pronouns are sometimes used, this should be avoided in formal speech and in all writing. Plural indefinite pronouns like *both*, *few*, *many*, and *several* should be referred to by plural pronouns.

**Each** of the girls displayed **her** entry. (Not: their)

**Both** of the winners proudly held up **their** prizes. (Not: her)

### Exercise A

Place a check before each sentence in which the underlined pronoun is used correctly.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Has either of the women had their turn yet?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Each of the boys offered his help.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. If a person is wrong, they should admit the fact.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Many of the participants brought their radios.

**Exercise B**

Write a pronoun that correctly completes each sentence in formal English.

**Example:** A female member of the expedition unpacked \_\_\_\_\_ gear.

**Answer:** her

1. Each person had \_\_\_\_\_ own backpack.
2. Many of the women carried cameras around \_\_\_\_\_ necks.
3. Every explorer had \_\_\_\_\_ own goal.
4. Several of the hikers followed \_\_\_\_\_ guide along a river.
5. On the third day somebody lost \_\_\_\_\_ sleeping bag.
6. Neither of the guides ever lost \_\_\_\_\_ patience.
7. Both of the guides carried equipment on \_\_\_\_\_ heads at times.
8. Everyone knew that \_\_\_\_\_ should wear sunglasses.
9. At night no one was to leave \_\_\_\_\_ tent.
10. The explorers took time to write about \_\_\_\_\_ discoveries that day.
11. Each of the guides had \_\_\_\_\_ own tent.
12. Some of the party did voice \_\_\_\_\_ other complaints.
13. Most said \_\_\_\_\_ were covered with insect bites.
14. A few of the explorers said \_\_\_\_\_ would be glad to get home.
15. Everybody said \_\_\_\_\_ had a great time.

**Exercise C**

Circle the pronoun that agrees with each indefinite pronoun in formal English.

**Example:** If someone on the boys' team volunteers, (they, he) should be prepared to work.

**Answer:** (he)

1. Everyone on the boys' team did (their, his) work.
2. Each of the girls spent (their, her) time at the car wash.
3. Many of the girls brought (their, her) towels and sponges.
4. Neither of the twins brought (their, her) old clothes.
5. Neither of them had time for (her, their) lunch.
6. Many of the boys also gave (their, his) time at the retirement home.

7. Each of the boys was using (their, his) parents' lawnmower.
8. Many of them spent (their, his) time trimming hedges.

**Exercise D**

If the antecedent and pronoun in a sentence agree, write **Correct**. If they do not agree, rewrite the sentence, correcting the pronoun.

**Example:** Each of the bakers has their own specialty.

**Answer:** Each of the bakers has his own specialty.

1. If a repair person will be late, they should call.

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2. Each of the mechanics bought their own tools.

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3. If you are a plumber, you must take care of your tools.

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4. Neither of the chefs owned their own restaurant.

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5. Before a lawyer can practice, they must pass a bar exam.

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6. If a farmer has a good crop, they feel lucky.

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## Lesson 32

### Using *who* and *whom*

*Who* is generally used as a subject. *Whom* is used as a direct object or object of a preposition.

*Who* is usually used as a subject of a sentence or clause.

Who knows anything about books?

The man who brought the message left immediately.

In the first sentence, *who* is the subject of the verb *knows*. In the second sentence *who* is the subject of *brought* in the clause *who brought the message*.

The pronoun *whom* is used as the direct object of an action verb or with a preposition such as *for*, *from*, *to*, and *with*. Look at these two uses of *whom* in the sentences below.

Whom do we call for information?

Is this the man whom the bank president hired?

From whom did you hear the news?

In the first sentence the pronoun *whom* is the direct object of the sentence (*we do call whom*). In the next sentence *whom* is the direct object of the verb *hired* in the clause *whom the bank president hired* (*the bank president hired whom*). In the third sentence the pronoun *whom* is the object of the preposition *from*.

*Who* is being used as a subject in the sentences on the left. *Whom* is being used as an object in the sentences on the right.

Who is the next appointment?

Whom do you see at 3:00?

Those who arrived can sign in.

To whom do I give this?

In everyday conversation *who* is often used in place of *whom*, especially at the beginning of questions. *Who did you write?* However, in writing and formal speech, use *whom* as a direct object or object of a preposition: *Whom did you write?*

#### Exercise A

Write S if the underlined word is a subject or O if it is an object.

1. Whom did you sell the ticket to? \_\_\_\_\_
2. The one who sold the most tickets was Patty. \_\_\_\_\_
3. That is the actor whom I admire. \_\_\_\_\_



**Exercise B**

Circle the word that correctly completes each sentence below.

**Example:** (Who, Whom) called you yesterday?

**Answer:** (Who)

1. (Who, Whom) wants a ride downtown?
2. From (who, whom) did you get a ride?
3. (Who, Whom) gave you an invitation?
4. This is the girl (who, whom) Jon invited.
5. (Who, Whom) do you usually invite?
6. Ramon was the one (who, whom) thought of the idea.
7. I don't know anyone (who, whom) wouldn't like it.
8. Ramon and Pia are the ones (who, whom) we should thank.
9. (Who, Whom) arranged the flowers on the tables?
10. (Who, Whom) cooked these delicious foods?

**Exercise C**

Complete each sentence with **who** or **whom**.

**Example:** Do you know for \_\_\_\_\_ this hairstyle is named?

**Answer:** Do you know for whom this hairstyle is named?

1. Rudolph Diesel was the German engineer \_\_\_\_\_ invented the diesel engine.
2. For \_\_\_\_\_ was the state of Virginia named?
3. Jean Martinet was a military leader \_\_\_\_\_ people hated.
4. Someone \_\_\_\_\_ is too strict is called a martinet.
5. The man \_\_\_\_\_ ran from Marathon to Athens in 490 B.C. became famous.
6. People for \_\_\_\_\_ running is a sport enter marathons.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ was the Earl of Sandwich?
8. He is the person after \_\_\_\_\_ the sandwich is named.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ was Napoleon Bonaparte?
10. From \_\_\_\_\_ did you receive that biography about Napoleon Bonaparte's life?

## Spelling Practice 7: Changing y to i

You must change the spelling of a base word that ends in a consonant + y before adding a suffix.

**Spelling Rule:** Change a final y that is preceded by a consonant to an i before adding a suffix.

**Examples:** carry + es = carries      certify + ed = certified  
 duty + ful = dutiful      easy + ly = easily

**A.** Add suffixes to the words, and write the new words. Check your spelling in a dictionary.

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|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. memory + es = _____    | 9. qualify + ed = _____   |
| 2. discovery + es = _____ | 10. battery + es = _____  |
| 3. identify + ed = _____  | 11. pity + ful = _____    |
| 4. variety + es = _____   | 12. costly + est = _____  |
| 5. supply + es = _____    | 13. facility + es = _____ |
| 6. necessary + ly = _____ | 14. mystery + ous = _____ |
| 7. notify + ed = _____    | 15. carry + age = _____   |
| 8. family + es = _____    |                           |

**B.** In each sentence, one word is spelled incorrectly. Underline the incorrectly spelled words, and write them correctly below the sentences.

1. At one time, the British Empire had colonys all over the world.
2. Loss of power and water are emergencys for which you can prepare yourself.
3. Because of the rain, apples have been delicious and plentyful this year.
4. The Gomezes held their marryage ceremony at Blue Mountain Lake.
5. That book presents the gloomyest picture of the Middle Ages that I've ever read.
6. Because the child was wearing the flimsyest of pajamas, he could not stay warm.
7. Persistence and a cooperative attitude are qualitys that employer is looking for.
8. My sister applyed to five colleges last fall.
9. If you answer too hastyly, you may jump to the wrong conclusion.
10. Please give me a hand carrying those heavy grocerys into the house.

**Words Spelled Correctly**

- |          |           |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____  |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____  |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____  |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____  |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |