Abstract

Eight students in the fourth grade learned how to use context clue strategies to identify the meaning of unfamiliar words while reading text. These students are English Language Learners who are functioning at the low intermediate level in language proficiency. Using these context clue strategies will help them comprehend text better and improve their scores on standardized tests. Students learned how to identify the meaning of unfamiliar words by using five different context clue strategies. These strategies included using nonsense words, cloze, semantic gradients, combining sentences, and de-combining sentences. Learning to use context clue strategies is a lifelong skill that these students will need as they increase their proficiency with the English language.
Context Clues Instruction
for English Language Learners
Diana Wagner

An Action Research Report
Presented to the City University Graduate School of Education
March 2009
Vita

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Problem Statement

The problem in learning is that students in third, fourth, and fifth grade who are English Language Learners (ELL) in a large elementary school in Everett, Washington need to know how to use context clues to understand the meaning of a word. This is their primary difficulty with the English language. As these students read a text in English, they struggle with various words that they come across in a sentence. The source of the problem is that these students only pause long enough to read the word, and then they move on to the rest of the words in the sentence. Through observation, the researcher intentionally asked students about various words that they struggled with to check their understanding. The results showed that although they could read the word in English, they didn't know the meaning of the word, and lacked the reading skill of context clues to try to understand the word. The Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) results show that the Limited English category was one in which our school did not pass. This is due to not understanding the vocabulary in the stories in the reading section, along with the math vocabulary in the word problems. If ELL students were able to use context clues to understand the meaning of a word, they would score much better on the WASL test. Another test that shows low scores on comprehension is the Washington Language Proficiency Test (WLPT) administered to them each February. Comprehension is impossible if these students lack the context clues skill in order to understand words. There is a high need to help these students learn how to use context clues.

Rationale

The researcher identified the problem as English Language Learners have not been using context clues to find out the meaning of an unfamiliar word in a text. The researcher as the teacher will be able to directly affect change by implement best practices to teach ELL students
to identify the context of the word in the sentence, both syntactically and semantically. Once the student is able to understand the context of a word, then they are ready to learn the definition of a new word using context clues. These context clues are “proven to be heavily relied upon for word anticipation and comprehension by developing readers, particularly those struggling with fluency” (Fenton, p. 3). When ELL students learn how to increase their vocabulary using context clues, they will understand better what they read. Through practice and application of new context clue strategies, students can become more fluent readers. The stakeholder group will consist of eight third, fourth, and fifth grade ELL students who struggle with using context clues to find the meaning of an unfamiliar word and therefore are not getting the content needed to meet grade level expectations.

As a result of students learning new context clues strategies, they will demonstrate an overall improvement on their Reading section of the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) and the Washington Language Proficiency Test II (WLPT II). These students will also meet Washington State EALR Benchmark 1.1.2 which states, *Use vocabulary (word meaning) strategies to comprehend text* (Washington State Standards in Reading: Office of Public Instruction, 2006).

Objectives

The goal for this project is to narrow the focus to eight students in the researcher’s ELL classroom learning several context clue strategies to increase understanding of unfamiliar words in a text. All English Language Learners (ELL) in this study have been assessed at the intermediate level in their English language proficiency and have scored low on their WASL reading test. Through this intervention, the researcher predicts that at least 90% of the students will score higher on the 2009 WASL by learning the necessary strategies to use context clues to
find the meaning of an unfamiliar word. These students will be systematically taught the skills necessary to find the meaning of vocabulary words in different contexts. Students will be introduced to a semantic gradient which will help them to see the relationship between words and their shades of meaning. They will be able to identify the meaning of nonsense words by being forced to look at the rest of the sentence to decide on the meaning of the context word. Students will effectively use cloze activities to decide upon a word that would make sense in a sentence. They will use the method of sentence combining that requires them to look at the relationships of words in sentences. Students will separate two sentences to focus on vocabulary. Throughout this intervention, student samples will be collected and assessed in order to monitor and determine if teaching strategies need to be adjusted in order to ensure success in learning context clues to find the meaning of words.

Review of Literature

History of Context Clues

In recent years, research in the field of literacy education has provided a very clear picture as to the importance of decoding and comprehension in the development of reading. The development of context clue strategies is an integral part in becoming a proficient and independent reader. Cooper (2006) mentions that when students come to words they don’t recognize in a text, they must have some strategies they can use in order to decode and then comprehend the text. Proficient readers function with an interdependence using three cueing systems: semantics, syntax, and grapho-phonics (Routman, 1994). Routman continues by saying that while phonics is integral to the reading process, it is subordinate to semantics and syntax. As such, learning to use context clue strategies is arguably the most important academic skill learned in school because it leads to comprehension of a text, which is the ultimate goal for all readers. Native speakers of a language are able to infer the meanings of words from context due
to their large vocabulary. However, English Language Learners (ELLs) are at a disadvantage because of their limited English proficiency. Hughes and Chinn (1986) mention that direct vocabulary instruction is only effective for the first several thousand words in a language. Therefore, the context clue strategies “must be systematically taught to students of foreign languages” (Hughes & Chinn, 1986, p. 95) in order for them to start comprehending texts independently. Once these context clue strategies are learned, ELLs will be able to use their own language and prior knowledge to construct meaning from a text and become more fluent readers.

In the past, many context clue strategies have been attempted with students, but little attention has been paid to which strategy is the most effective. Hughes and Chinn (1986) developed a new classification scheme for teaching context clues, which included four categories. These four categories are strategies that are necessary for students to learn, but there are more practical and meaningful context clue strategies that have developed that provide a better framework and are less time-consuming for teachers.

**Effective Context Clue Practices**

In his article, Smith (2003) lists the five most commonly used context clues used by readers to try to infer meaning. First, readers can use their experience or prior knowledge. Second, readers can see if there is a comparison or a contrast used in the sentence. Third, readers can check if the unfamiliar word has been summarized in the sentence (also known as definition). Fourth, readers can see if the unfamiliar word has been associated with some examples. Finally, readers can check if there has been a reflection of a mood or situation given in the sentence. Cooper (2006) adds to this list by mentioning several steps that students can take to infer meaning. His first step is to read to the end of a sentence or paragraph to decide if the word is important. If the word is important, the student then looks for base words, prefixes, or suffixes.
The second step is for ELLs to see if there is a word in their first language that looks like the word they don’t know. Next, the reader can try to pronounce the word to infer meaning. The fourth step is to reread the sentence and try to use context to infer the meaning. Then the reader can look for a dictionary or ask someone for help. The last step to infer meaning is to reread the text to be sure it makes sense.

**Semantic Gradients overlap vocabulary and comprehension**

Greenwood and Flanigan (2007) introduce a technique that addresses the disconnection between vocabulary and comprehension. The technique is a combination of context clues and semantic gradients that help students see that there are related sets of words that have degrees of meaning. “Ninety percent of words are learned through repeated, meaningful encounters in direct experience” (Greenwood & Flanigan, 2007, p. 249). Therefore, a strategy that optimizes this type of learning is essential for students. Using semantic gradients require students to look carefully at the small differences in the meaning of words in relation to each other. This particular technique is beneficial to students because they can build their own semantic gradients once they have been taught how to build one, along with expanding their vocabulary. Cooper (2006) suggests a variation to the semantic gradient called the Linear Array and states that they “can help at-risk learners or second-language learners see the relationships among words more concretely” (p. 265).

**Overlapping Semantics and Syntax**

Fenton (1998) states that semantic and syntactic context clues “are proven to be heavily relied upon for word anticipation and comprehension by developing readers, particularly those struggling with fluency” (p. 3). Overlapping semantic and syntactic processes helps students decode the meaning of a word due to how it is used in a sentence. Lorey (1999) submitted her
own strategy for teaching context clues to her own students, which the researcher has found to be beneficial. Her context clue strategy includes giving students a page of text with the last word in each line removed. Students are forced to use context clues to figure out which word would make sense. After students insert words into each line, a whole-class discussion follows about how students were able to find out which word to use. This skill is then transferred to their daily class assignments when they come across an unfamiliar word. Au, Mason, and Scheu (1995) mention that “the goal of instruction in word identification is to help children use semantics, syntax, and visual clue systems simultaneously” (p. 60). Fox (1996) further supports overlapping semantics and syntax by stating the “syntactic and semantic context clues, together with the overall conditions under which materials are read, create a rich base on which word identification and reading comprehension rest” (p. 6). Since Lorey’s (1999) deletion strategy removes random words from each line, students rely on utilizing both semantic and syntactic context clues in reading, along with any available graphic or visual clues.

English Language Learners and Context Clues

Walters (2006) discusses research that was conducted that investigated whether training ELL student to use context clues while reading was a worthwhile skill. Three methods of training were used: overall strategy to use when encountering unfamiliar words, instruction in using specific context clues, and developing awareness of context through practice with cloze activities. Walters (2006) concludes that “it may be worthwhile to initiate the process of training in this skill, with beginning learners, with a general strategy for dealing with unknown words, with specific instruction in the recognition and interpretation of context clues reserved for high intermediate and advanced learners” (p. 188). Through this research, there is an indication that language proficiency in ELLs must be addressed as to whether instruction in the use of context
clues will be a worthwhile endeavor. The findings also suggest that progress in using context
clues may not reveal itself in improved ability to make inferences from context. Rather, progress
in using context clues will be revealed through improved reading comprehension on a test.

Synthesis

Through this review of literature, the researcher has learned that teaching context clues is
an integral part of teaching reading to students. ELL students need to have these strategies to find
meaning in an unfamiliar word in order to build fluency and comprehension in a text. Through
the use of effective context clue strategies, students can teach themselves the different steps to
use while taking a test, such as the WLPT or the WASL. Since students who have limited
English proficiency have failed to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in the area of reading,
treatments must be taken in helping them comprehend different texts. Coomber, Peet, and
Smith (1998) state that “vocabulary activities that call on learners to create contexts and become
actively involved in building their vocabularies result in better learning and retention” (p. 4).

Semantic gradients are one strategy that involves students creating their own contexts of
new vocabulary words to see the relationship with other words that they have encountered.
Semantic gradients are effective because students can add to them when they encounter a new
related word. The researcher has used cloze activities with her own students, which has been
shown to be effective in making students look at context to figure out a word that would make
sense in that sentence. Throughout this research, the researcher has seen the importance that
context clue use has for reader’s comprehension of a text. Regarding context clues, Coomber,
Peet, and Smith (1998) stated that when we help learners develop strong context skills, we give
them powerful vocabulary tools for their reading and writing. As an educator, the researcher will
make sure to include these context clue strategies in the vocabulary packet given to students each unit to help them see the words in different contexts.

Data Sources

The information for this project will be collected using a variety of instruments focusing on a triangulation, which include data taken before the intervention in the form of a pretest, data taken during the intervention by gathering student samples, and a posttest after the intervention to see how much progress has been made by students in learning a specific strategy for finding context clues. Students will also be given a survey to determine their attitude about using these new strategies and skills while reading.

Students will be given a pretest (Appendix A) - to include - a sentence to read. Students will then be asked to use a context clue strategy to find the meaning of an unfamiliar word. The same test will be given after the intervention as the posttest, but the word will be changed. After the pretest, students will be interviewed with questions about what strategy they used and how they feel when they come across an unfamiliar word while they are reading a book (Appendix B). A rubric will be designed to track progress (Appendix C).

During this process the students will practice applying a new context clue strategy to several unfamiliar words in a text. The samples of student work that the teacher gathers will demonstrate growth in using context clues to find the meaning of unfamiliar words that students come across in a text. Continuous observations will be recorded in a journal as well as feedback given to the students on their success in using context clue strategies.

A posttest and a survey will determine student gains in areas of context clues and their approach behaviors using them to find the meaning of unfamiliar words. A posttest will be given to students to demonstrate growth in the area of using context clues. The data will be recorded
using a rubric as numeric 0-4 showing how well the student met the standard of finding context clues at the fourth grade level.

Action Plan

This study will run for three weeks and will focus on introducing different strategies students can use for finding context clues when they come upon an unfamiliar word in a text. Students will be given instruction in small groups of four or five. Each session will last approximately thirty minutes in the ELL classroom each day. Times may vary due to special projects, holidays, and other circumstances.

During the first week, each student will take the pretest to gage initial behaviors and strategies used when an unfamiliar word appears in a text. Students will then be interviewed to determine their approach behaviors and strategy they used on the pretest to find the meaning of the unfamiliar word.

In the second week, students will be taught five different context clue strategies (nonsense words, cloze, sentence combining, decombining sentences, and semantic gradient), along with how to use them to find the meaning of a word in a text. Students will write down the new strategy each day in a spiral notebook that will act as a journal reflection for their learning. These will be collected each day and assessed for accuracy and progress in learning the different strategies. During this week, students will continue to add new strategies in their journals, which will serve as an indication of how well they are learning context clue strategies. Throughout this week, the teacher will gather student samples of work.

During the third week, each student will review each of the five context clue strategies in small groups and study for the posttest. They will be adding new words to semantic gradients that they have created in their journals to demonstrate knowledge of newly discovered words. At
the end of the third week, each student will be given a posttest with an unfamiliar word that will test one of the context clue strategies. Each student will also be interviewed to determine if there is a change of attitude or behaviors toward strategies to use when they come across an unfamiliar word in a text.

*Teacher Procedure for the pre-assessment*

Students will begin the project by taking a pretest to gage initial behaviors and strategies used when an unfamiliar word appears in a text. After the pretest, students will then be interviewed to gather data on strategies used when encountering unfamiliar words in a text. Questions will include: “Why is it important to know the meanings of words?” and “What do you do when you come across a word you don’t know?”

*Teaching the Semantic Gradient Strategy*

The researcher will introduce the Semantic Gradient Strategy by writing the words “Hot” and “Cold” on either side of a long piece of poster paper. Each student will be given several different words to add to the semantic gradient in their journal, along with recording any questions they may have about the strategy. The researcher will then explain that semantic gradients deepen and broaden the student’s understanding of a word by looking at their shades of meaning. A class discussion will follow with students adding their words to the semantic gradient, along with any other words they may want to add at that time. Students will also have the opportunity to ask any questions they may have about the strategy. Some questions will be added at this time by the researcher.

*Teaching the Nonsense Word Strategy*

The researcher will introduce the Nonsense Word Strategy to the students by writing a sentence on poster paper containing a nonsense word. Each child will be given time to write the
sentence in their journal and to record the guesses and questions they have for what the possible nonsense word could mean. The researcher will then explain that inferring a synonym for an unfamiliar word is an effective strategy to use. A class discussion will follow in which students will volunteer their guesses and questions for the researcher to write onto the poster papers. Some questions will be added at this time by the researcher. These inferences and questions will help guide the research throughout the study. The poster paper with this nonsense word strategy will be posted in the room throughout the duration of this study.

Teaching the Cloze Activity

The researcher will introduce the cloze activity to the students by giving them a text with several of the words removed and replaced with a line for them to write their guess. Each student will be given time to fill in the lines on their own worksheet, and then will be given time to record what questions they have about the activity in their journal. After all students have completed the activity, the researcher will ask for volunteers to guess what word belongs on each line, along with any questions that they may have about the activity. The researcher will then explain to the students that cloze activities give them practice in using context which will aid them with comprehension. Some questions will be added at this time by the researcher. Any questions that students may have will be written onto poster paper and posted in the room, which will help guide the research throughout this unit of study.

Teaching the Sentence Combining Strategy

The researcher will introduce the Sentence Combining Strategy to the class by writing three short sentences on poster paper, which will need to be combined into a single, longer sentence. Each student will be given time to combine those three short sentences into one longer sentence in their journal. Students will also record what questions they have about this strategy.
The researcher will then ask for volunteers to write possible sentences onto the poster paper, along with any questions that may arise from the students. A class discussion will follow about this strategy and its effectiveness in teaching students that the same meaning can be expressed in a number of ways. Some questions will be added at this time by the researcher. This strategy will be continued throughout the duration of this study.

*Teaching the Sentence De-combining Strategy*

The researcher will introduce the Sentence De-combining strategy by writing a complex sentence onto poster paper. Each student will then be given time to de-combine the sentence as much as they can so that they have two to three simple sentences for the complex sentence written in their journal, along with any questions they may have. The researcher will then ask for volunteers to give their de-combined sentences and ask questions. Some questions will be added at this time by the researcher. The poster paper will be posted throughout the duration of the study.

*Results*

*Implementation Process*

The implementation process of this action research project was a great learning experience. The students were active and excited to complete the tasks each day. I had observed them during small-group instruction as their ELL teacher this year, as well as discussing their strengths and areas of improvement with their regular teachers, so I felt I had a good sense of their strengths and challenges when I started this intervention. One issue was that one of the teachers wanted to keep her students one of days because of a guest speaker, but I reminded her about the project, so then she understood that I needed them in my classroom for the thirty minutes. The timeline in my action plan has been followed with no problems. My pre-tests and
interviews were finished in two days, so I was able to start the Week 2 lessons during this week. During the interviews, I did find out that my students usually just read over any unfamiliar words and hoped that it wouldn’t be a factor for comprehension. They were very excited each day to learn the context clue strategies in this intervention.

Data Analysis Plan

The pre-test was a quantitative instrument that involved short-answer questions and a question that required the stakeholders to use a context clue strategy to find the meaning of an unfamiliar word in text. The short-answer questions revealed their knowledge about context clue strategies, along with their attitude and behavior when they come across unfamiliar words while reading text. The pre-test was used as a starting point for learning, and the post-test was used to show growth in the stakeholders’ use and knowledge of context clue strategies. The pre-test data was scored using a rubric on a scale of 1-4, and then shared with the stakeholder to inspire improvement. A score of 1 meant that the student was two grade levels below standard and a score of 4 meant that the student exceeded standard. The post-test data was scored using the same rubric, and was also shared with the stakeholder to show their improvement during the intervention.

The student interview qualitative data was unitized to provide a basis for the action plan and to guide the activities used during the action research. The interview also took into account their perspectives and experiences when they come across unfamiliar words while reading. This data was shared with their classroom teachers and the administrators, and then added into a “student perspectives” category. Teacher and administrator perspectives were added as other categories for coding. A post-interview took place after the action research was completed to show any change of attitude or growth of knowledge concerning the use of context clue
strategies. The interview was not scored by the researcher.

The quantitative data in the student response journal demonstrated construction of meaning from each session of the action plan. After each context clue strategy lesson, each student wrote the strategy into their response journal, wrote his/her own example, and then reflected on the usefulness of the strategy while reading a text. This data provided student views, experiences, insights, and information about their learning, which was scored on the level of completeness. A score of 1 showed that the student didn’t provide enough information or reflection on the context clue strategy, and a score of 4 meant that they exceeded the expectation. The data from the student journal was also used by the researcher to guide instruction in a meaningful way. If a student demonstrates learning, the researcher went on to teach the next context clue strategy. However, if the student did not demonstrate their learning, the researcher reviewed the context clue strategy with that student so that learning could take place.

*Evaluation Results*

During the first week of the intervention, the stakeholders were given a pretest to determine their attitude and knowledge of context clue strategies. Five out of the eight students viewed themselves as low readers in their classroom. Three students wrote that they thought that they were good readers. All of the stakeholders wrote that they skip over the unfamiliar word instead of trying to figure out what it means, which demonstrated a lack of context clue strategies. None of the stakeholders could list any context clue strategies on their pretest.

During the third week of the intervention, the stakeholders were given a post-test with the same questions as the pretest to determine what changes occurred. One of the students moved, so there were results for only seven of the original stakeholders. All seven students wrote that they now thought of themselves as good readers, which showed an improvement in their confidence.
All seven students wrote that when they came across an unfamiliar word, they would use one of the context clue strategies to try to find the meaning. This result demonstrated that the stakeholders gained the knowledge and use of context clue strategies during the intervention. Four students could list four context clue strategies, two students could list three strategies, and one student could only list two. All of the stakeholders gained reading comprehension skills through the use of context clue strategies learned through this intervention. They also gained confidence in their reading ability, as shown from the student interviews at the end of the intervention.

Conclusion/Discussion

Possible Limitations of Study

One possible limitation of this research study is that it is difficult to generalize my intervention results to other student populations. The first reason is that the stakeholder group consists of only eight students. Because of this, it is difficult to generalize to other classrooms, grade levels, or schools. My stakeholder group consisted of four boys and four girls in the fourth grade speaking a native language other than English. Five of them speak Spanish as a native language, and three of them speak Russian. They all tested below standard on the WASL in the area of reading comprehension, and their language ability falls into the intermediate range. The second reason is that there are only two different native languages being spoken by my stakeholder group. It is difficult to generalize the findings of this study to all ELL students. A third reason is that my students live in a low socio-economic area, so it is difficult to generalize these research results to other socio-economic populations. Further research with a larger stakeholder group will be needed to see if teaching these context clues is effective for improving
standardized test scores and reading comprehension for English Language Learners.

A second possible limitation of this study is due to the fact that my assessments have not gone through rigorous reliability and validity testing, so the data from the results of my action research are suspect. My assessments would need to be standardized to reveal any reliable or valid results.

A third possible limitation is in the implementation of the research. During the intervention, one of my students moved to a different school. This occurred at the end of the second week, after the context clue strategies had been taught, so I was unable to assess him with the student interview or post-test. This brought my stakeholder group down to seven for the final week of the intervention. If I were to implement this action research intervention again, I would increase the size of my stakeholder group to increase the generalizability of the study findings. This would allow for the possibility of any attendance issues that may occur during the intervention.

Attainment of Goals and Objectives

The students in the action research showed great improvement using context clue strategies while reading. The goals and objectives were attained during the three weeks of the action plan. The goal was that these ELL students learn some context clues to use while reading in order to better understand a text. The students enjoyed the new strategies, and their learning was evident from their journal entries. The nonsense word strategy seemed to keep the students entertained, as they knew that this word did not exist in the English language. Cloze strategies proved to be a successful in checking the lexicon of each student and how different the students think as they come across the blanks. Some portions of the lessons proved to be challenging for the students due to their limited language proficiency. I modified my initial lessons to use more
visual aids to help those students who had very limited lexicons. This helped significantly. A few students expressed their frustration with unfamiliar words in their journals each day, but as the project continued, the frustrations seemed to lessen. By the end of the third week, students were more frequently able to use the different strategies to identify and understand unfamiliar words. Even though we only met for three weeks, with very limited time and a few distractions, each student did show some improvement and attained the goals and objectives.

*Evaluation of Further Intervention according to results*

According to the results, all of the stakeholders have improved their ability to identify the meaning of unknown words in a text by using the context clue strategies learned during this intervention. The answers from the student interview show that attitudes toward identifying new words has improved, demonstrating a definite increase in confidence. Although the objectives were met, the stakeholder group still needs to learn more strategies to determine the meaning of unknown words while reading in order to comprehend text better.

Further intervention is needed for this stakeholder group to learn more context clue strategies, along with allowing more practice with the learned strategies. The student journals demonstrated that learning and confidence using the strategies was taking place during each day of the second week of the intervention. One more week would have allowed students to work with each strategy even more in different contexts and applications.

For further assessment ideas, the students would benefit from reading a story at the fourth grade reading level to determine how well the students would use their context clue strategies when taking a state assessment. The assessments were beneficial for findings in this intervention, but an additional week would really show growth and improvement in the attitude of the stakeholders toward unfamiliar words and their confidence with context clue strategies.
Benefits of Findings

This action research study has shown to be very beneficial for students, teachers, and me. At the start of this study, my students told about their frustrations of reading because they did not know how to address unfamiliar words in a text. Now my students have a list of strategies that they can try in order to understand new words while they are reading. Through this study, my students are able to comprehend text better. These benefits are not only for my own ELL students, but all ELL students may benefit from this action plan of teaching context clues. Another benefit is that teachers now have a way to systematically teach their students some context clue strategies so that their students could possibly improve their reading comprehension. Teachers may see improvement on standardized test scores from their ELL students from the lessons in this study. This action research intervention has been beneficial for me because I now have a bigger repertoire of knowledge about teaching context clue strategies. Overall, this action research was beneficial to all involved and can easily be reproduced to teach these five context clue strategies to other ELL students.
References


HarperCollins College Publishers


Heinemann


Appendix A
### Pretest/Postest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How do you view yourself as a reader?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you do when you come upon a word that you don’t know?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why is it important to know the meaning of words?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### What are some context clue strategies that you use while reading?

1. [ ]
2. [ ]
3. [ ]
4. [ ]
5. [ ]

### Read the following sentence and use context clues to write the meaning of the bold word.

1. The rich man was so **shorted** that he didn’t have to work for a living.

   Meaning: [ ]
Appendix B
Student Interview

1) How do you feel when you come across a word that you don’t know while reading?

_____________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________

2) What strategy did you use to figure out the meaning of the word?

_____________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________

3) Why do you think that it is important to know what words mean?

_____________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________
Appendix C
## Pre/Post Test Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre/Post Test Element</th>
<th>1 Little or no progress</th>
<th>2 Some progress, but below standard</th>
<th>3 Meets standard</th>
<th>4 Exceeds standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Context Clues</strong> (Nonsense words, Cloze, Sentence combining, Sentence decombining, Semantic gradient)</td>
<td>Names two or fewer context clues</td>
<td>Names three context clues</td>
<td>Names four context clues</td>
<td>Names five context clues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pre/Post Test</strong> (Meaning of word)</td>
<td>Does not know meaning of word</td>
<td>Writes an incorrect meaning of word</td>
<td>Writes a correct meaning of word with prompting</td>
<td>Writes a correct meaning of word without prompting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Interview</strong> (Feelings toward unfamiliar words)</td>
<td>Skips over word without trying</td>
<td>Seeks help for finding meaning of word</td>
<td>Uses context clues with some prompting</td>
<td>Uses context clues without prompting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>