

Brief Focus Lesson

Expand Vocabulary: Use Prior Knowledge and Context to Predict and Confirm Meaning
for Grade 5

Text: *The Solar System, Meteors, and Comets* by Clive Gifford

CAFE Goal	Expand Vocabulary
CAFE Strategy	Use Prior Knowledge and Context to Predict and Confirm Meaning.
Observe and Relate (1–2 min.)	Have you ever noticed that every subject you learn about has its own special vocabulary or language? In math, science, and social studies, there are special words that writers use. Even if the words seem hard or unusual, we can figure out what they mean by using context clues. These context clues can help us unlock the meanings of words that we do not know. The more meanings we unlock, the bigger our vocabularies become.
Teach and Reinforce (2–3 min.)	<p>Establish purpose Today we are learning to Use Prior Knowledge and Context to Predict and Confirm Meaning.</p> <p>Create urgency We are learning to Use Prior Knowledge and Context to Predict and Confirm Meaning because it helps us understand new words better and enables us to build our vocabularies, too.</p> <p>Explicit teacher modeling Outer space is so interesting, isn't it? Today we will read some fascinating information about space from the book <i>The Solar System, Meteors, and Comets</i> by Clive Gifford. We will explore ways that we can figure out the meanings of new words. Whenever I come to a word I do not know, the first thing I do is ask myself if I have ever seen it before. I'll also look at the base word and any prefixes or suffixes and use them to figure out the meaning. If I need more help, I look at the context clues around it. Sometimes writers will give us clues in the forms of synonyms, definitions, examples, or contrasts that we can use to figure out the word. Or, they might give clues so that the reader can make an inference. Occasionally, writers will use punctuation, too, to help readers and point them to additional information that enables them to understand better. For example, the writer will give the definition right after the word by putting it between commas, dashes, or parentheses. To help you keep these ideas in mind, I'll jot down the words <i>synonyms, definitions, examples, contrasts, inference, and punctuation</i> on the board. Writers provide these</p>

as supports to the reader. You won't find them on every page of a book, but pay attention when you see them, because they are helpful.

Let's take a look at this two-page spread about comets. [Display the text on a document camera and show pages 26–27.] I'll think aloud and explain how I use my prior knowledge and context to figure out the meanings of new words.

Paragraph 1

[Read paragraph 1.] The very first sentence gives a definition of *comet*. I thought I knew what this word *comet* meant, but this definition gives me a fuller picture of the meaning. Listen as I reread the meaning of *comet*.

In sentence 2, I wonder why the writer used parentheses and added the number of kilometers that equal 25 miles. Oh, now I get it. If a reader is more familiar with the metric system, that information will be useful.

Paragraph 2

[Read paragraph 2, "Burning Up" and call attention to the phrase *hazy head, or coma*.] I'm glad the writer told me that the front part of the comet is known as a *coma*. That small clue word *or* tells me that *hazy head* and *coma* are synonyms. The picture of the comet with the coma and its tails labeled helps me understand its structure.

Paragraph 3

[Read the section "Hairy Stars" and explain how you can infer why this is a good name for a comet.] The writer says that the word *comet* is Greek for "hairy star." With its tail, a comet definitely looks like a hairy star to me!

Paragraph 4

[After reading "Comet Hunter" point out that the writer gives an example of a comet that Carolyn Shoemaker discovered. Add that the writer used commas as punctuation to set off the example of Shoemaker-Levy 9.]

When I look at the callout, I see that the writer has given me another definition. He explains that the Bayeaux tapestry shows a picture of a battle where the comet appeared. This adds to my understanding of the importance of this comet.

Practice (2–3 min.)

I've just shared my thinking as I read "Comets." Now you will have the opportunity to share your thinking about the next topic in the book called "Exoplanets" [pages 28–29]. [Include two to four of the "turn and talk" practice opportunities, depending on the needs of your class.]

Turn and Talk 1

Have you ever heard this word *exoplanet* before? How might you figure out what it means? Turn and talk to an elbow buddy about the meaning.

	<p>Think of one way that you could figure it out. [Students might talk about the meaning of the prefix <i>exo-</i> and the base word <i>planet</i>.] Who would like to share?</p> <p>Turn and Talk 2 Look at the callout titled “Ultimate Exoplanet Finder.” What definitions do you see here? What is the Kepler 16-b? What is the Kepler 70-b? Talk to your partner. [After partners have shared, invite a volunteer or two to respond.]</p> <p>Turn and Talk 3 Now look at the section called “Will We Ever Find Another Earth?” What clues does the writer provide to help you figure out the meaning of <i>habitable zone</i>? If no clues were provided, how might you use your prior knowledge to figure out the meaning of the word?</p> <p>Turn and Talk 4 Last of all, focus on the section called “Peculiar Planets.” What examples does the writer give you of unusual exoplanets? How does the writer help you understand the word <i>silica</i>? What definition do you find in the sentence?</p>
<p>Encourage and Plan (1–2 min.)</p>	<p>The strategy of Use Prior Knowledge and Context to Predict and Confirm Meaning will help you figure out the meanings of unknown words. Today whenever you come across a word that you do not know, look closely at it. Try to remember if you have ever seen the word before, or see if you recognize any prefixes, base words, or suffixes in it. Use the context clues that the writer used to figure it out. Find clue words that might help you. For example, the writer of the text we studied used the word <i>or</i> to signal that a synonym would follow some of the more difficult vocabulary. Look for definitions, sometimes set apart by commas, dashes, or brackets, that the writer offers readers so that they can grasp the meaning of new words.</p>
<p>Common Core Alignment</p>	<p>Most strategies are applicable to all grade levels. Use Prior Knowledge and Context to Predict and Confirm Meaning aligns with Standards RL.5.4, RF.5.4, and L.5.4 on our Grade 5 CAFE menu or CCSS Grade Level Matrix.</p>