

 SCHOLASTIC



Building

FCAT

ENDURANCE

Reading and Writing+

Elementary Sample Lessons

- Reading, Chapter 1: Words and Phrases in Context
- Writing, Chapter 12: Writing Prompts

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CHAPTER 1

Words and Phrases in Context



Benchmark

LA.A.1.2.3: Uses simple strategies to determine meaning and increase vocabulary for reading, including the use of prefixes, suffixes, root words, multiple meanings, antonyms, synonyms, and word relationships.



FCAT FAST FOCUS

On the FCAT in reading, you will be asked to:

- use word parts and context clues to figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word or phrase in a reading passage
- make inferences about the meaning of a word or phrase
- identify a synonym or antonym for a word in a passage

Many reading passages will use words and phrases that are unfamiliar to you. Or they may use words that seem familiar but are used in unusual ways. By using word parts and other clues, you can figure out the meanings of these words.

For some words, you can figure out the meaning by using word parts, such as prefixes, suffixes, and root words. Look at the word *rejoin*, for example. It is made up of the prefix *re-*, meaning “again,” and the word *join*. You can figure out that *rejoin* means “to join again.”

To use context clues to figure out the meaning of a word, look at the words around it. You may find clues in the same sentence as the word. Or you may find clues in the sentences before or after it.

Sometimes authors use words or phrases that can only be understood in the context of the article or passage. For example, suppose an author writes, “The woman left a tip on the table.”

Does this mean that she left the tip of her pen? Or a helpful tip of information? Or a tip (money) for the waiter? The meaning depends on the context. You must go back and read the passage to figure out how the word is used.

The Big Questions

When you read a word or phrase on the FCAT that you do not understand, ask yourself these questions:

- What clues in the passage can help me figure out the meaning?
- Can parts of the word be used to figure out the meaning?

Here are some examples of questions for this benchmark:

- Read this sentence from the story. . . . What does this sentence mean?
- What does the word ____ mean as it is used in this sentence?
- Which word means about the same as ____?

Strategies for Analyzing Words

Here are some strategies to help you figure out word meanings.

Word Analysis	<p>Look for word parts to help find the meaning of a word. Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prefixes (<i>re-</i>, <i>un-</i>, <i>pre-</i>) and suffixes (<i>-ful</i>, <i>-less</i>, <i>-able</i>) • root words (such as <i>break</i> in <i>unbreakable</i>) <p>Use word relationships to help figure out what a word means. Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • synonyms (words that mean the same, such as <i>talked</i> and <i>spoke</i>) • antonyms (opposites, such as <i>smooth</i> and <i>rough</i>) • words with multiple meanings (such as <i>bat</i> or <i>set</i>)
Context Clues	<p>Look for clues in the sentence to help find the meaning of an unfamiliar word. A clue may be a definition, an example, a synonym, or an antonym. Example: “Let’s put your picture on the <i>mantle</i>, that <u>shelf over the fireplace</u>.”</p> <p>Look for clues in the sentences before and after the word. Example: “I can’t believe Max isn’t here. He has never been <u>absent</u> before.”</p>

Starting on the next page, you can try some of these strategies as you read a passage and answer some questions.

Warm-Up

On the FCAT in reading, you will need to figure out the meanings of unfamiliar words. After reading a passage, you may answer multiple-choice questions about word meaning.



Read this passage from *Black Mirror*. Then answer questions 1 through 3.

A New Path

by Diane Gonzales Bertrand

This story tells about two brothers, Gilbert and Jaime. Something odd has just happened to them. They are standing on a dirt path. But they don't know where they are.

I turned around and saw a girl standing between two trees. She had black hair with feathers of different colors woven into it. She seemed to be about my age. She wore a cape of feathers over a white dress. I wanted to say something to her, but I noticed that she wasn't smiling. She was swinging something in her hand. It looked like a slingshot and it held a black stone. That must be what went whizzing by me. She looked ready to sling another rock.

"Who are you?" she yelled. "And what do you seek?"

She spoke funny, but luckily she spoke English. So I smiled big. "Hi, there. I mean, hello. I am Gilbert, and this is Jaime. We are here looking for a better path."

Finally she stopped swinging the slingshot.

"I am Ría," she said as she walked closer. "Do you live in another village?" she asked.

"Sort of," I said. I didn't know how I could explain it.

"Do you tell me truth or lies?" she said, without letting me finish.



Think and Discuss

Which words in the passage are unfamiliar? What do you think they mean?

I started to tell her that I never lied, but she held up her hand. “Don’t speak. I will take you to our leader. He will know what to do.” Then she turned to walk away.

Jaime and I followed her. Jaime got in front of me, but I pushed him out of the way. I wanted to walk next to Ría.

“Ría, what can you tell me about this place?”

“My people are starving,” she said, “and I’m scared we will all die.”

I wanted to ask her more, but I had to concentrate on walking. She hopped over roots and vines with no problem. It looked like she had done it a hundred times. I stumbled whenever I didn’t think about my feet.

“Gilbert, wait! I’m stuck!” Jaime called out.

I turned around. Jaime’s knee was caught between two vines. He tugged. But that only seemed to tangle him up worse.

“Jaime, don’t be so lame,” I said. “Come on!”

I looked at Ría. “He’s just looking for attention. Ignore him.”

She gave me a look and then walked back toward my brother.

“It’s a rope plant,” Ría spoke gently. “The more you pull, the more it grabs you.” She knelt down beside Jaime. “Don’t move,” she said. She stroked the vines like you would stroke a cat, and in a minute the vines seemed to relax. They let go of Jaime’s legs.

“Thanks,” he said as he stood up next to her.

She smiled at him and then turned back to me. Her smile faded. “Your brother asked for your help. Why didn’t you listen?”

I didn’t know what to say. She made me feel bad. I didn’t like this weird place. I wanted to go back home.



Now answer questions 1 through 3 based on “A New Path.”

- 1 Read this sentence from the passage.
She looked ready to sling another rock.
What does the word *sling* mean in this sentence?

- Ⓐ to search for
- Ⓑ to throw or hurl
- Ⓒ to find and pick up
- Ⓓ to appear suddenly

TEST-TAKING STRATEGY

Go back to the passage and look for clues in the sentences before and after the word.

- 2 Read this sentence from the passage.
I had to concentrate on walking.
This sentence means that Gilbert had to

- Ⓕ walk faster.
- Ⓖ make a new path.
- Ⓗ rest for a while.
- Ⓘ pay attention.

- 3 Read this sentence from the passage.
I didn't like this weird place.
Which word has about the same meaning as *weird*?

- Ⓐ strange
- Ⓑ quiet
- Ⓒ dark
- Ⓓ friendly

TEST-TAKING STRATEGY

Read all the answer choices before you choose one.

✓ Check Your Progress

Here are the answers to questions 1 through 3 based on the passage “A New Path.” Check how well you did. Compare your answers to the answers below.

Question 1:

- **Choice B** is the correct answer. The first paragraph says that a stone went “whizzing” by Gilbert’s face. Someone must have thrown it. So the word *sling* means “to throw or hurl.”
- **Choices A and C** are incorrect. Both meanings fit in the sentence. But neither of these is a meaning of the word *sling*.
- **Choice D** is wrong. Even though Ría does appear suddenly, the word *sling* is not related to how she arrives.

Question 2:

- **Choice I** is the correct answer. If you do not know what the word *concentrate* means, you can find clues in the story to help you figure out the meaning of the sentence. The paragraph says that Gilbert stumbled when he did not think about his feet and where he was walking.
- **Choice F** is incorrect. Gilbert had to walk more carefully, not faster.
- **Choice G** is wrong because Gilbert was trying to follow Ría, not make a new path.
- **Choice H** is wrong because they had just started walking and did not need to rest yet.

Question 3:

- **Choice A** is correct. The word *strange* has the same meaning as *weird*.
- **Choices B, C, and D** are incorrect. All of these words could fit in the sentence. But they do not have the same meaning as *weird*.

Building Endurance

In this part, you will take a short practice test. Use what you learned at the beginning of this chapter and in the Warm-Up. The “Think and Discuss” boxes will help you focus on figuring out the meanings of words as you read.



Read this passage from *Bernardo de Galvez: Hero of the American Revolution*. Then answer questions 1 through 6.

Helping the Patriots

by Eduardo Ortiz

During the American Revolution (1775–1781), the American Patriots fought against the British. Sometimes the Americans got help from people from other countries. One of those people was Bernardo de Galvez of Spain.

As governor of Louisiana, Bernardo de Galvez assisted the Patriots many times. But he had to be careful. The British had spies in New Orleans.

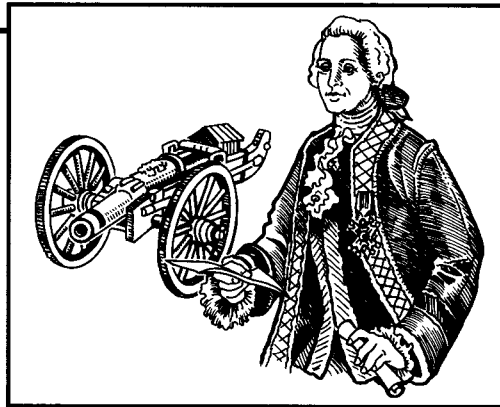
Sometimes he pretended to seize and destroy American supplies. But that wasn't his only trick.

One day a ship full of guns and medicine landed at New Orleans. Bernardo claimed the goods were for his soldiers. Bernardo went to look at the supplies. He acted shocked. “This medicine is old!” he said. “These guns are rusty! These goods are worthless! My men cannot use them.”

A businessman pretended to buy the “damaged” goods. Then he secretly gave these supplies to the Patriots. The British guessed that it was all a ruse. But they couldn't prove it.

New Flags for the Patriots

The Patriots were in trouble again. Farther up the Mississippi River, their soldiers needed supplies. But their boats could not travel.



A British colony, West Florida, was on the right side of the river. When Patriot boats went by, the British would shoot at them.

Bernardo had a plan. He gave the Patriots Spanish flags. They put the flags on their boats. The British would not attack a Spanish ship. Now the Patriots could send supplies to their soldiers.

But Bernardo knew that he could not keep playing games with the British. He worried that they might attack his colony. He got ready to defend his land. He made his army stronger. And he sent a spy to West Florida in 1778 to look at the British forts.

Then, in June 1779, Spain entered the war against Great Britain. Bernardo was ready. "At last!" he told his men. "Now we can fight the British in the open."

British Forts

Bernardo had learned that Spain and Britain were at war. But the British in West Florida hadn't heard the news yet. So, Bernardo decided to attack them before they found out. The British had built some small forts on their side of the river. Bernardo's plan was to take these forts one by one.

Bernardo attacked Fort Manchac first. It was about 90 miles north of New Orleans. Bernardo's army of 1,000 men walked the whole way. But they rested too, so they'd be ready to fight.

Bernardo's men attacked the fort at sunrise. Their gunfire woke the sleeping British! Bernardo and his men easily prevailed.

The next fort was at Baton Rouge. It would not be as easy to attack. The fort was new and strong. About 600 British soldiers protected it. But Bernardo had an idea. One night Bernardo sent a small group of his soldiers to a hill outside the fort. "Make as much noise as you can!" he told them.

The men chopped down trees. They built a wall of dirt. They worked all night long. And all night long the British shot cannonballs at this small group.

But in the morning, the British saw their mistake. They had been firing the wrong way!

Meanwhile, Bernardo’s army had set up cannons on the other side of the fort. Boom! The Spanish cannons roared. They hit their mark. Soon, the fort began to split apart. There was nothing the British soldiers could do. Bernardo had won again!



Now answer questions 1 through 6 based on the passage “Helping the Patriots.”

- 1** Read this sentence from the passage.
As governor of Louisiana, Bernardo de Galvez assisted the Patriots many times.
 What does the word *assisted* mean in this sentence?
- (A) fought against
 - (B) stood up for
 - (C) ruled over
 - (D) gave help to

TEST-TAKING STRATEGY

Look in the passage for clues about word meaning. Look in the sentences before and after the unknown word.

- 2** Read this sentence from the passage.
These goods are worthless!
 If *worth* means “value,” what does *worthless* mean?
- (F) a person of value
 - (G) having no value
 - (H) to value again
 - (I) of great value

TEST-TAKING STRATEGY

Try each answer choice in the sentence to see if it makes sense.

- 3 Read this sentence from the passage.
The British guessed that it was all a ruse.
 What does the word *ruse* mean in this sentence?
- (A) secret
 - (B) plan
 - (C) trick
 - (D) joke

TEST-TAKING STRATEGY

Try to figure out the meaning of the word before you look at the answer choices.

- 4 Read this sentence from the passage.
He worried that they might attack his colony.
 Which word means the OPPOSITE of *attack*?
- (F) defend
 - (G) control
 - (H) destroy
 - (I) escape

- 5 Read this sentence from the passage.
Bernardo and his men easily prevailed.
 This sentence means that Bernardo and his men
- (A) fought for a long time.
 - (B) won the battle.
 - (C) got lost in the dark.
 - (D) left the fort.

- 6 Read this sentence from the passage.
They hit their mark.
 What does the word *mark* mean in this sentence?
- (F) a scratch
 - (G) a grade or score
 - (H) a target
 - (I) a written sign or symbol

Writing Prompts



Benchmark

LA.B.1.2.2: Drafts and revises writing in cursive that focuses on the topic; has a logical organizational pattern, including a beginning, middle, conclusion, and transitional devices; has ample development of supporting ideas; demonstrates a sense of completeness or wholeness; and demonstrates a command of language, including precision in word choice.

LA.B.2.2.3: Writes for a variety of occasions, audiences, and purposes.

LA.B.2.2.5: Creates narratives in which ideas, details, and events are in a logical order and are relevant to the story line.

LA.B.2.2.6: Creates expository responses in which ideas and details follow an organizational pattern and are relevant to the purpose.



FCAT FAST FOCUS

On the FCAT in writing, you will be asked to:

- write a story or personal narrative
- write an informational paper or explanation

The FCAT in writing at Grade 4 begins with a writing prompt. The prompt is a brief statement that gives you a writing task. You will read the prompt, plan what you want to write, and write a draft response. This part of the test takes about 45 minutes.

The actual test provides a writing prompt and a planning page. Use the planning page to plan your writing. You may write some notes on this page, make a web or chart, or use an outline. Your planning will not be scored as part of the test, but you have to turn in this page with your written draft. The response to the prompt will be written on separate lined pages in a writing folder.

There are two kinds of prompts in Grade 4. A narrative prompt asks you to tell a story. It may be a story about a personal experience or something you make up. For example, “Write a story telling about a day when you did something really fun.” An expository prompt asks you to explain something. It may be an explanation that gives information, or it may explain how or why something happens, the steps in a process, or what something means. For example, “Write to explain one of the chores or jobs you do at home.”

Every prompt has two parts: the situation and the directions. The “situation” tells the subject you will write about. The “directions” give guidelines for what to write.

Here is an example of a narrative prompt:

Most people have good memories of places they have visited.
 Think of a time when you visited a special place.
 Now tell a story about the time you visited a special place that you will always remember.

The first sentence tells what you will write about: a place you have visited. The second sentence tells you to think about a time when you visited a place. It might be a relative’s house, a state park, or even a museum. Then the third sentence tells you what to write.

The most important focus in narrative writing is to tell a story in a logical order. Narrative prompts usually include phrases such as “write a story about a time” or “tell what happened.”

In both narrative and expository writing, your task is to plan and write a good response. Your written draft will be scored by two readers. Each reader will give your paper a score from 1 to 6. The final score you receive will be the average of the two scores. The scorers will judge your writing based on these four elements of writing.

Here is an example of an expository prompt:

Everyone knows how to make some kind of food or dish for a meal.
 Think about what kind of food or dish you can make.
 Now write to explain how to make the food or dish.

The first sentence tells what you will write about: some kind of food. The second sentence tells you to think of a food you can make. It might be a piece of toast, a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, or a cup of soup. Then the third sentence tells you what to write.

The most important focus of expository writing is to give a clear explanation. Expository prompts usually include words such as “explain what,” “explain why,” or “explain how.”

Elements of Writing

Focus

The paper should present a main idea or theme and stay focused on it.

Organization

Your writing should be organized in a logical way. For example, it might state a main idea and then present several supporting ideas. Or it might tell a story in time order, from beginning to end. Using transitional words and phrases (such as “after that” and “then” and “as a result”) will help connect ideas or events.

Support

The paper should include supporting details to explain the main point or make clear what happens. For example, a paper explaining why an event happened might give details about the causes or reasons for the event and who was involved.

Conventions

In your writing, you should use correct punctuation, capitalization, spelling, usage, and sentence structure.

When you get a score for your writing, it will usually be a number from 1 to 6, with 6 being the best. A “6” means that your writing is focused and well organized. It has good supporting ideas or examples, shows command of language and correct conventions, and uses a variety of sentence structures. On the other end of the scale, a paper scored a “1” does not have any of these traits. It has no focus and is not organized, and it does not respond adequately to the prompt.

Starting on the next page, you will have a chance to put some of these ideas to work. The “Warm-Up” offers a writing prompt and a planning space. After you have written a response to the prompt, review your writing with a teacher or parent and decide what score you think you have earned. Then think about things you might do better on the next prompt.

