

# Lesson 1: Prerequisites and Introduction

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If you can find the meaning of an unfamiliar word from the sentence context, then you do not need to look up the word in a dictionary. These lessons will teach you several different ways to use context.

## WHAT IS CONTEXT?

You often hear or read a word you do not understand. One way to find out what the word means is to look it up in a dictionary, but sometimes you do not have a dictionary handy or you do not want to stop reading. What do you do then? Sometimes you can understand the new word because it is included in a list or group of words that you do know. The words you know become the **context** of the new word. They can help you to *infer* the meaning of the new word. (*Infer* means to find out the meaning by reasoning.)

## WORDS IN LISTS

Ada and Tom saw a sign in the supermarket. Here is the sign:

### ★Example

#### Sale on Jams and Jellies

apple	strawberry
peach	cherry
quince	grape

### ★Explanation

Tom asked, “What does *quince* mean?”

Ada thought, “Apples, peaches, strawberries, cherries, and grapes are kinds of fruit. So, a quince must be a kind of fruit, too.”

Ada understood the word *quince* because she understood the other words in the group. The context told her the meaning of the new word.