

New Word Checklist

Use this checklist to help you work with new words that you see as you read.

Name: _____

How important is the word?

Start at the top. If the answer to the question is “yes,” check the box and move on to the next question. If the answer is “no,” you may need to continue reading the text. Return to the questions if you cannot understand what you are reading.

- Do I need to understand the word in order to understand the text I am reading?
- Is the word important enough that I need to figure out its meaning?

Can context clues help me figure out the word’s meaning?

Ask yourself each of the following questions. Do not check the box until you have thought carefully about an answer.

- What clues to the word’s meaning can you find in other words in the sentence, nearby sentences, or illustrations?
- What is another word or phrase that would make sense in place of the word that I don’t know?
- Does my replacement make sense in the overall meaning of the text?
- Does my replacement help me understand what I am reading?

Can I figure out the word’s meaning from its parts?

Ask yourself each of the following questions. Do not check the box until you have thought carefully about an answer.

- Can I break the word up into parts?
- Which parts of the word do I recognize?
- What do these word parts mean?
- What other words do I know that have similar word parts?
- Did breaking the word into word parts help me understand its meaning?

What can I figure out?

- Using all of these steps, what is the best meaning for the word that I can figure out?
- Does this meaning help me understand the text?
- Do I need further help (use a dictionary, ask an adult, etc.)?