

Context clues

Context clues, along with your own ideas, will help you make a good guess at a word's meaning.

Read the passage. Then write each underlined word from the passage next to its definition below.

Early Native Americans in North America

The rocky land of the northern forests in North America was never good for farming. Without fish and game, the early natives would have starved. Their lives were contingent on the animals they hunted.



In order to survive, the early Native Americans of the North American forests played games that incorporated the skills they needed to be successful in their culture. They needed to be able to judge distances, pick up clues and signs from their environment, and conceal themselves from the animals they hunted. In one of the games the Native Americans played, the men threw axes. In another, they took turns throwing spears or sticks into a hoop on the ground. Such games improved the players' accuracy.

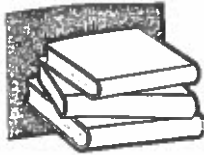
Moose and caribou were very important to the tribes. Moose usually lived and traveled by themselves. Caribou migrated in herds covering a large territory each season. The Native Americans stalked the moose from one range to another, but when hunting caribou they would wait for them at a place along the caribou's trails.

Weirs, nets, traps, hooks, and spears were used to catch fish. Whitefish and jackfish were caught in lakes, and Arctic grayling and trout were caught in rivers. The Native Americans fished from the shore or in canoes in summer and through holes cut in the ice in winter.

After the ice melted, the traps were set. Sometimes the Native Americans would discover a bear still hibernating in its den. Such a kill would feed the camp for a few days. Sometimes when meat was scarce, the Native Americans would eat rabbit, mink, or wolverine. When hunting became poor, they lived on dried meat and fish, and on pemmican, a mixture of dried berries, dried meat, and animal fat.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. open area upon which animals roam
_____ | 2. combined into one body
_____ |
| 3. original inhabitants _____ | 4. dependent upon _____ |
| 5. to pursue prey _____ | 6. quality of being exact _____ |
| 7. to hide _____ | 8. enclosures set in a waterway for catching fish _____ |
| 9. one's social group _____ | |

Name _____



Unfamiliar Words

using context clues

The meaning of an unfamiliar word can often be determined by its context, or the words around it. Use the context to define each underlined word.

1. Carbon dioxide, nitrogen, and oxygen were exhaled from the mofette, or vent, on the side of the volcano.

mofette: _____

2. The huge sauropod ate leaves and plants. This dinosaur weighed 16 times more than an elephant.

sauropod: _____

3. Minna politely asked Al to move. When he did not respond, she gently nudged him with her elbow.

nudged: _____

4. The greenish slime was a homogeneous mixture. We looked at it closely, and it was the same throughout.

homogeneous: _____

5. The beaver chewed the limbs off several trees. It gnawed a last branch before dragging them one by one into the pond.

limbs: _____

gnawed: _____

6. The late students had a plethora of excuses. They always had an excessive number of reasons for being tardy.

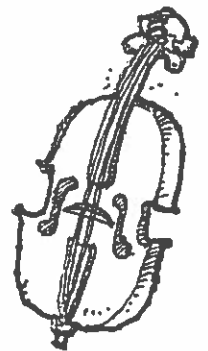
plethora: _____

tardy: _____

7. The cello soloist played the ritornello, a short recurrent instrumental passage, for the third time during the arrangement.

ritornello: _____

recurrent: _____



8. Atoms, the smallest building blocks of matter, are made up of protons (positively charged particles), electrons (negatively charged particles), and neutrons (particles with no charge).

atoms: _____

protons: _____

electrons: _____

neutrons: _____