

Content-Area Strategies

Language Arts

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Introduction

The goal of *Content-Area Strategies: Language Arts* is simple: to give students tools to communicate effectively. This book addresses language arts in terms of a set of integrated skills and strategies that work together to help students read, write, speak, and think critically for success in school and beyond. *Content-Area Strategies: Language Arts* is divided into three instructional sections: Vocabulary, Reading, and Writing.

Vocabulary

The building blocks of language are words. With this program, students begin by analyzing words, then synthesize what they have learned to develop strategies for comprehending new words. The Vocabulary section begins by introducing vocabulary strategies such as recognizing word parts, looking for word groups, and looking for context clues. Students then practice the strategies in a series of activities based on appealing short readings. Building vocabulary and learning how to figure out new words enhances reading, writing, speaking, listening, and thinking critically, giving students a broad base of language to draw on in classroom and real-life communication.

Reading

The second section presents reading strategies. Here, students acquire tools that help them read to learn. The transition from learning to read to reading to learn is vital to success in school and in life, and this section helps students broaden their expectations about text. Familiar patterns of narratives—stories with a beginning, a middle, and an end—are replaced by organizational constructs tailored to convey information. In this section, the act of reading is broken down into a process of steps. Students learn concrete strategies to read informational texts efficiently, to comprehend what they read, and to retain the information they have learned. The graphic organizers for the Reading section help students connect new information to their existing schemata, increasing their ability to recall and to take ownership of what they read. The reading strategies give students a way to “see” what they read—a great asset to visual learners. Organizing and writing what they read also cements information and concepts in students’ minds and helps them retain it.

Introduction *(continued)*

Writing

The Writing section is the third instructional part of *Content-Area Strategies: Language Arts*. In this section, students review the writing process and study models of good writing. Students learn to recognize common writing patterns and employ them themselves to write strong essays. The graphic organizers for the Writing section address each explicit step in the writing process. Breaking the process of writing an essay into a series of manageable steps makes the assignment easier to tackle and demystifies the act of writing.

Classroom Management

Content-Area Strategies: Language Arts is easy to use. Each lesson is self-contained and may be used in class or as homework. You may want to model the strategies used in each lesson, showing students that all readers and writers—including teachers—use tools and follow processes to communicate and comprehend. The blank graphic organizers may be photocopied for use in other assignments beyond this book. Students who need more support may benefit from more modeling or from completing some activities and graphic organizers in small groups. Metacognition—talking and writing about learning—can provide structure that supports new information and makes it easier to access. *Content-Area Strategies: Language Arts* transforms the abstract idea of learning into a concrete process that all students can master.

Vocabulary Strategies

Lesson 1

Prefixes and Suffixes

Many words are made by adding onto a word that already exists. The original word is called the **root**. The groups of letters, or word parts, added to the root can change the meaning. Sometimes a new word can be broken down into a root word you know and word parts that have been added. Knowing how the word parts change the root can help you figure out the meaning of the new word.

Word parts that are added at the beginning of a word are called **prefixes**. In fact, the word *pre-* is a prefix. It means “before.” The word *preschool* is made by adding *pre-* to the word *school*. Since *pre-* means “before,” a preschool is a school that children go to before regular school.

Word parts that are added to the end of a word are called **suffixes**. For instance, the suffix *-ness* means “state” or “quality of.” *Happiness* is “the state of being happy.” Another suffix is *-ist*. It means “one who specializes in or makes.” A *novelist* is “one who makes novels.”

Prefixes and Suffixes in Action

Read the following article. See if you can find the meaning of the underlined words by seeing how each root word is changed by its prefix or suffix.

An Accidental Success

Some people follow a predetermined path to success. Others, like Theodore Geisel, best known as Dr. Seuss, try many things before success finds them. Theodore went to a university to become a teacher. One day, another student saw him doodling in class. She told him that he should become an artist. Theodore dropped out of college and became a cartoonist. During World War II, he made movies for

the army. After the war, Theodore’s publisher had an idea. He thought that Theodore’s drawing style would be perfect for children’s books. It was Theodore’s book *The Cat in the Hat* became an instant classic. Theodore’s talent with pictures and words helped him become a success. It was his willingness to try new things, though, that made him one of the great children’s authors of all time.

Prefixes and Suffixes *(continued)*

Here is an example of how one reader used roots, prefixes, and suffixes to figure out the underlined words.

predetermined: Well, I know that the prefix *pre-* means “before.” I know that someone who is determined to do something is very serious about getting it done. I also know that *determine* can be another word for *decide*. So, by putting the meanings together, I think that *predetermined* means “decided on before” or “already decided.” I also think that *predetermined* has a strong meaning. Someone on a *predetermined* path must be very serious about following it.

artist: Well, I already know what this word means. But if I didn’t, I would look first at *art*. It means “things made by painting, drawing, or sculpting.” I just learned that the suffix *-ist* means “one who specializes in or makes.” So *artist* means “one who makes things by painting, drawing, or sculpting.”

cartoonist: I know that the word *cartoon* means “comic strip” or “funny drawing.” And the suffix *-ist* means “one who specializes in or makes.” So *cartoonist* must mean “one who makes comic strips or funny drawings.”

willingness: The word *willing* means something like “open to trying something.” I just learned that the suffix *-ness* means “state or quality.” The word *willingness* must mean “the state of being open to.”

Application

Here are a few common prefixes and suffixes. You will find many more as you read. Use them to help you figure out the meaning of the underlined words in the passage on the next page.

Prefixes		Suffixes	
mis-	wrong, bad	-ful	full of, like
pre-	before	-ist	one who specializes in or makes
re-	again; back	-less	without
un-	the opposite of; not	-ment	the state or act of
		-ness	state, quality of being

Prefixes and Suffixes *(continued)*

The Best Reporter in America

Nellie Bly was the pen name of Elizabeth Cochran. Born in 1864, this successful writer was called the “best reporter in America” by the *New York Journal*. This was at a time when most newspaper reporters were men. She was known for being heedless of danger. She was also one of the first reporters to do behind-the-

scenes journalism. Once, she checked herself into a mental hospital for ten days. Her report on the way the hospital was mismanaged led to changes in the way such hospitals were run. Bly is best known for traveling around the world in 72 days. This was an unheard-of speed in the days before air travel.

On the lines below, write the meaning of each underlined word. Use what you know about the root word and what you can apply from your knowledge of prefixes and suffixes.

1. **successful:** _____

2. **heedless:** _____

3. **mismanaged:** _____

4. **unheard-of:** _____

Lesson 2

Word Groups

You have learned that adding prefixes and suffixes to words can change their meanings. Sometimes adding a suffix also changes the way a word is used in a sentence. Adding a suffix can change a word's part of speech. A verb can become a noun. A noun can become a verb. A noun or verb can become an adjective or adverb.

You can sometimes figure out what a word means if it has a familiar suffix. Remove the suffix and see if you know the meaning of the root word. Then combine the meaning of the root and the meaning of the suffix to get the meaning of the new word.

Common Suffixes

One common suffix, **-ly**, is used to change nouns, verbs, and adjectives into adverbs.

Adverb Suffix	
-ly	like, in a certain way (<i>quietly</i>)

Here are some suffixes that are used to make nouns:

Noun Suffixes	
-ity	the quality of (<i>oddity</i>)
-ment	the state or act of (<i>amazement</i>)
-ness	the state or quality of being (<i>openness</i>)
-tion	the action or state of being (<i>prevention</i>)

Here are some suffixes that are used to make verbs:

Verb Suffixes	
-ate	to cause to be (<i>liquidate</i>)
-en	to become or make (<i>lighten</i>)
-ify, -ize	to cause something to be (<i>beautify</i>)

Word Groups *(continued)*

Here are some suffixes that are used to make adjectives:

Adjective Suffixes	
-able	possible to be or make (<i>understandable</i>)
-ful	full of (<i>thoughtful</i>)
-ish	like something (<i>babyish</i>)
-less	without (<i>bottomless</i>)
-ous	having a quality (<i>mysterious</i>)

Word Groups in Action

Read the following paragraph. Pay close attention to the underlined words. See if you can figure out the meaning of each word by first finding the suffix, then finding the root word.

An Amazing Victory

The Tour de France is one of the most difficult bicycle races in the world. Lance Armstrong has won this race more times than any American in history. Would you believe that, at one time, Lance had a very dangerous form of cancer? Doctors believed his cancer had less than a 50-50 chance of being survivable. Before Lance's experience with cancer, he had never even finished a Tour de France. The medicine Lance took

to treat his cancer made him sickly and unable to eat. When Lance's treatment was over, his weight had dropped from 175 pounds to less than 160 pounds. This meant that he had a lot less weight to carry up the high mountains of the course. After taking time to train and strengthen his body for cycling, Lance was able to win his first Tour de France.

Here is how you might use suffixes and roots to figure out the underlined words.

The word *danger* I know very well. It means "risk of harm." The suffix *-ous* means "having a quality." Something *dangerous* must "have the quality of risking harm."

I know that the suffix *-able* means "possible to be." The second underlined word begins "surviv." The root word is probably *survive*. Since *survive* means "to live through," the word *survivable* means "possible to be lived through."

Word Groups *(continued)*

The suffix *-ly* means “like or in a certain way.” I know what the word *sick* means. *Sickly* must mean “in a sick way.” It describes how the medicine made Lance feel.

Finally, the suffix *-en* means “to become or make.” *Strength* is a word I know well. It is another word for “power.” I guess *strengthen* means “to make more powerful.”

Application

Read the following paragraph. As you read, look at the underlined words and try to figure out their meanings. First, remember the meaning of the suffix. Then look for a root word that you already know. Put these two meanings together to find the meaning of each underlined word.

A Monumental Task

The faces of four famous presidents tower over the Black Hills of South Dakota at Mount Rushmore. This monument was the dream of Senator Peter Norbeck and artist Gutzon Borglum. It took 14 years for their dream to be realized. In 1927, when work began, the site was isolated. New roads had to be built. A power plant had to be

built to electrify the site. All of this took money—exactly \$989,992.32. In 1929, the Great Depression began. There was a scarcity of funds. Money ran out for the Mount Rushmore project. Still, Borglum was hopeful that Senator Norbeck would find new funding. Amazingly, Norbeck came through. In 1941, Mount Rushmore was finished.



Word Groups *(continued)*

Read the definitions that follow each word below. Circle the letter of the definition that is closest in meaning to the underlined word. Then explain how you figured out the meaning of the word.

1. famous

(a) hungry

(c) wise

(b) well-known

(d) good-looking

2. realized

(a) achieved

(c) destroyed

(b) understood

(d) begun

3. electrify

(a) to cause to be hot

(c) to give power to

(b) to create

(d) to bring in

Word Groups *(continued)*

4. exactly

- (a) around
- (b) no more than, no less than
- (c) under
- (d) in a bad way

5. scarcity

- (a) large amount
- (b) sadness
- (c) weakness
- (d) small amount

6. hopeful

- (a) confident
- (b) patient
- (c) angry
- (d) eager

7. amazingly

- (a) in a smart way
- (b) in an unbelievable way
- (c) in a slow way
- (d) in a confusing way

Lesson 3

Using Context Clues

Building Vocabulary

You read all the time—at school, at home, and in the community. To understand what you read, you need to understand the meanings of all of the words you come across in your reading. This section will show you some ways to build your vocabulary.

Strategies to Use

There are many ways to build vocabulary. For one, you can look up every new word. Doing this takes a lot of time, though. It also interrupts your reading. There are easier ways to figure out the meaning of a new word. You can check for context clues, recognize word parts, and look for words within words.

Analyzing Context Clues

A **context clue** is a hint about a new word's meaning found in the words around it. There are many different types of context clues.

- A definition of a word may be found in the text.

In the American South, life centered around the **plantation**, which was a large estate or farm.

- A synonym (word meaning the same thing) or antonym (word meaning the opposite) may be found in the text.

His actions were not smart, they were **foolish**.

- An example may help define the word.

There are several ways to **publish** your writing, such as having it printed in a book or posting it on the Internet.

- The author may restate the word or idea.

The man was a **migrant** worker. He would move from place to place to find jobs.

Context Clues in Action

The following article has examples of each type of context clue—example, definition, synonym or antonym, and restatement. See if you can guess the meanings of the underlined words from their context clues.

Using Context Clues *(continued)*

Da Vinci's Flying Machines

Leonardo da Vinci, an Italian painter and inventor, lived in the late 1400s and early 1500s. He is said to have drawn prototypes of the car, the submarine, the diving helmet, and the parachute. His best-known inventions, though, are his flying machines. To figure out how a flying machine might work, da Vinci spent hours observing and watching birds in flight. Because birds flap their wings, da Vinci's earliest

machines had wings that the pilot had to flap. These machines were far too weighty to fly. The flapping machinery made them too heavy to get off the ground. Da Vinci later switched to wings that were immobile, which means "fixed in place." He created something more like a glider. In modern times, people have actually flown gliders based on da Vinci's design.

Below are some ways to use context clues to find the meaning of the underlined words.

prototypes

context clue—example

I'm not sure what the word prototypes means. Right after it, though, the author lists types of machines. The machines listed have only begun to be used in modern times. Since Leonardo da Vinci lived hundreds of years ago, I'd guess that a prototype might be an early example of a machine.

observing

context clue—synonym or antonym

I don't know what the word observing means, but right next to it is the word "watching." They are both used to show how da Vinci got his ideas from birds. I think observing means "watching something to learn about it."

weighty

context clue—restatement

The author says da Vinci's early machines were too weighty to fly. In the next sentence, the author says that they were too heavy to get off the ground. I can figure out that weighty must be another word for "heavy."

Using Context Clues *(continued)*

immobile

context clue—definition

Right after the word immobile come the words “which means ‘fixed in place.’” This makes it clear that immobile means “fixed in place.”

Application

Read the following article and try to figure out the meaning of the underlined words using context clues.

Is It Really a da Vinci?

Leonardo da Vinci lived almost five hundred years ago. Because so much time has passed, it is hard to prove that he came up with all the machines for which he gets credit. His drawings are the only evidence, which means “something that can be used as proof,” we have of his inventions. Some of the machines, such as one that works like a car jack to lift heavy things, are very simple and

practical. Some people think he was drawing machines that he saw in use. Other people think, because of flaws, or mistakes, in the drawings, that some of the drawings were done by da Vinci’s students and not by the master himself. One of his drawings, of a bicycle, was not found until 1974. Because it looks very modern, some people think it is not authentic but is instead a fake.

Write the definition of each vocabulary word below. Then explain the context clue you used to figure out the meaning.

1. **evidence:** _____

context clue: _____

2. **practical:** _____

context clue: _____

3. **flaws:** _____

context clue: _____

4. **authentic:** _____

context clue: _____

Lesson 4

We All Scream for Ice Cream

Activity 1: Introducing Vocabulary in Context

Read the following article. While you read, notice the words in bold type. Try to figure out what those words mean by looking at the context.

“Chocolate!” “Vanilla!” “Rocky Road!” “Strawberry!” The noisy **clamor** for ice cream can be heard around the world. There may not be agreement on a favorite flavor. There is, though, worldwide **unanimity** on one thing: Everyone loves ice cream!

No one knows exactly where or when ice cream was first invented. There is **ample** evidence that it was developed over the centuries in many cultures. Stories suggest that the ancient Chinese, Romans, and Greeks each enjoyed snowy treats flavored with wine, honey, or fruit syrups.

Ice cream was first served in America in the late 1700s. Dolley Madison chose it as the featured dessert when her husband, James, was **inaugurated** president of the United States in 1813. The ice-cream cone was officially invented in 1903. In that year, the first United States **patent** for this edible holder was issued.

Worldwide, the ice-cream industry today is worth over

\$11 billion. Americans eat about 25 quarts per person each year. With **luscious** low-fat choices, even people watching their weight can **indulge** in a delicious scoop or two.

Moderate, or reasonable, amounts of ice cream are fine for most diets. However, ice cream can still hurt. An ice-cream headache lasts only seconds but causes intense, **excruciating** pain. It occurs most often on very hot days. Perhaps this is why less ice cream is eaten in tropical climates than in cold ones.

Regardless of the climate, each country around the globe has its favorite flavor. The sharp **tang** of mango ice cream is favored in Pakistan and India. Super-sweet cookie dough ice cream is a frequent choice in America. The most popular flavor of all, however, is an old favorite. Over one half of all the ice cream eaten in the world is—vanilla!

We All Scream for Ice Cream *(continued)*

Activity 2: Developing Vocabulary in Context

Read each sentence below. Look at the underlined word or phrase. Choose the vocabulary word from this lesson that is closest in meaning. Write that word on the line provided.

ample	indulge	patent
clamor	luscious	tang
excruciating	moderate	unanimity
inaugurated		

1. In our family there is total agreement regarding ice cream.

2. We all love this cold, delicious treat. _____
3. My mom says that one scoop is a(n) reasonable amount of ice cream but that four scoops is extreme. _____
4. When it comes to ice cream, millions of people give in to their craving.

5. U.S. dairies make sure there is a(n) plentiful supply of milk to meet the demand for ice cream. _____
6. The noisy outcry for ice cream can be heard all over the country.

7. If you eat ice cream on a very hot day, you should watch out for the agonizing pain of the ice-cream headache. _____
8. Some people prefer the sharp flavor of sherbet to ice cream.

9. Nancy Johnson invented the hand-cranked freezer in 1846, but some people think she did not apply for the official document giving exclusive right to sell an invention. _____
10. When James Madison was inducted into office, he celebrated with ice cream. _____

We All Scream for Ice Cream *(continued)*

Activity 3: Extending Vocabulary Strategies

Use this lesson’s vocabulary words to complete the crossword puzzle.

ample	indulge	patent
clamor	luscious	tang
excruciating	moderate	unanimity
inaugurated		

Across

- 3. tasty
- 5. inducted into office
- 7. to give in to a craving or desire
- 8. reasonable; not extreme
- 10. total agreement

Down

- 1. agonizing; very painful
- 2. official document giving exclusive right to sell an invention
- 4. sharp flavor
- 6. noisy outcry
- 9. plentiful

