

## Vocabulary • Context Clues

Sometimes you can use **context clues**—the words and sentences around an unknown word—to help you figure out the meaning of the word.

**Directions** Read the following passage. Then answer the questions below.

**H**eather came from a daring family. They had no fear and took many risks. Her brother Kyle was a stunt pilot, or aviator. You can see him in the cockpit of planes in a few famous movies. Her mother sailed ships. She once sailed across an ocean all by herself. She loved this solo journey because she was alone with nothing but the sound of the sea. Then

there was Heather. She enjoyed acrobatics and gymnastics. Her talents led her to the circus where she became a tightrope walker. Heather would dress up in elegant, or stylish, costumes and walk as light as a feather on the thin rope. When asked why she chose the tightrope, Heather said she was just following in her family's footsteps.

### Possible answers given for 3–5.

1. What does *daring* mean? How do you know?

**fearless; The next sentence says they had no fear and took risks.**

2. What context clue helps you to figure out the meaning of *aviator*?

**It says Kyle was a “stunt pilot, or aviator,” so *aviator* must be another word for pilot.**

3. What is the *cockpit* of a plane? How do you know?

**where the pilot sits; that's where you can see Kyle, a pilot.**

4. Why would sailing *solo* in a ship be a risky decision?

**because you are sailing alone, and no one is there to help you**

5. Find the sentence with the word *elegant*. Rewrite it so you give the context clue in a different way.

**Heather felt elegant in her stylish costumes as she walked across the tightrope.**



**Home Activity** Your child identified the meanings of unfamiliar words using context clues. Invent a few new words for common everyday items (for example: a hat could be a *tah*). Give clues as to their meanings in a conversation with your child. Have your child guess the real words. Switch roles and repeat the activity.