

Name _____



Context Clue Sleuthing

Directions: Read each passage. Use contrast, cause and effect, and tone clues to infer the meaning of the bold word. Write your best definition in your own words, then cite one or two clue phrases from the passage that helped you.

1. **Venture** Night at the local library was usually quiet, but today the teen council pitched a brand new idea. Some students wanted to **convene** in the auditorium for speeches, while others argued for small circles in the reading nooks so everyone could talk. In the end, they chose the smaller groups because the goal was discussion, not performance.

Inferred meaning: _____

Clue phrase(s): _____

2. When the cafeteria ran out of forks, the lunch line slowed to a crawl, and frustration spread fast. The principal announced a new routine: student volunteers would restock supplies before lunch, and each table would return utensils to labeled bins afterward. Since that change, the line moves quickly and fewer items go missing. The plan was **pragmatic**, not fancy, but it worked.

Inferred meaning: _____

Clue phrase(s): _____

3. The coach did not yell; his voice stayed calm, almost too calm. After the team arrived late for the third time, he smiled and said, "No worries. We will just start practice at six A M tomorrow." The players understood immediately that the "smile" did not mean approval. His tone was **sardonic**.

Inferred meaning: _____

Clue phrase(s): _____

4. Maya stared at the class group chat as messages piled up. Some friends praised the new student, calling him helpful and funny; others criticized him for "trying too hard." Maya felt torn because both sides sounded certain. Still, she refused to join the pile on until she had met him herself. Her response was cautious and **ambivalent**.

Inferred meaning: _____

Clue phrase(s): _____

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5. The poster for the student election looked confident, but the speech sounded shaky. The candidate promised "big changes" yet never explained how any of them would happen. Meanwhile, another candidate listed specific steps, deadlines, and who would help. Compared to that plan, the first speech felt **vague**.

Inferred meaning: _____

Clue phrase(s): _____

6. After the science fair, Jordan acted like his project barely mattered. He shrugged, joked about "accidentally winning," and insisted the trophy was just luck. But his notebook told a different story, filled with careful trials and revisions. His words were **nonchalant**, even though his effort was not.

Your inferred meaning of **nonchalant**: _____

Clue phrase(s): _____

7. The community garden had struggled for months because nobody agreed on a schedule. Then the coordinator created a shared calendar, assigned tasks, and posted clear rules for watering and weeding. Almost immediately, plants stopped dying and volunteers showed up on time. The garden became more **cohesive**.

Inferred meaning: _____

Clue phrase(s): _____

8. During the debate, one student kept cutting others off, rolling his eyes, and whispering jokes. The moderator warned him twice, but he continued, and the audience began to groan. Afterward, several classmates said his behavior was **disruptive**, not entertaining.

Inferred meaning: _____

Clue phrase(s): _____

