

CLOZE PASSAGE STRATEGIES

1

Read the passage once through before you fill in the blanks

Read the passage once through so that you have an understanding of the context and content of the passage.

2

Identify the parts of speech/word classes for the blank

- *Concrete Nouns - Animals, people, places and things (tangible objects)
eg. My parents are travelling to Japan next month.
- *Abstract Nouns – actions, feelings, ideals, concepts and qualities.
eg. Childhood memories are sources of great joy.
- *Verbs - main verbs (actions e.g. kicked) or helping verbs (e.g. is, had, do, will, might) In fact, any word that has tenses is actually a verb!
eg. I hear the train coming. (action verb)
eg. She was eating when the doorbell rang. (helping verb)
- *Adjectives - describing words for NOUNS (beautiful, greedy, excruciating)
eg. The flowers at the Gardens by the Bay are so beautiful.
- Adverbs - describing words for VERBS (happily, playfully)
eg. Hanie smiled gleefully when she received her birthday presents
- Pronouns - substitute for nouns (e.g. she, I, hers, these, that)
eg. Those cupcakes that she baked were so delicious.
- Preposition – word which expresses relationship of a noun or a pronoun to other words of the sentence:-
 - Time (eg. at, on, in etc)
eg. Helen was born on 3rd January 2018.
 - Place (eg. At, on, in, under etc)
eg. There is a cat under the table.
 - Direction (eg. into, to, through, towards etc)
eg. He threw a ball into the river.
 - Joining other Nouns (eg. On, by, with, without etc)
eg. He broke the piggy bank with a hammer.
- Conjunctions - connecting words (e.g. and, because, although)
eg. Amy and Lisa went shopping last week.
- Determiners - words that introduce a noun (e.g. the, an, many ducks, two)
eg. The boy is very smart.
- Quantifiers – words which provide information about the number of something: how much or how many. (eg. all, any, more, most, few, much etc)
eg. Both brothers work with their father.

*common ones

Ask yourself if the blank needs noun, verb or adjective first as these are the common ones. If not, then consider other word classes. Ask some questions eg

- Do I need a thing or action? (noun or verb)
- Is it describing a noun or a verb? (adjectives or adverbs)
- Is it talking about the number of something? (determiners)
- Is it a substitute for a noun? (pronoun)
- Is it a grammatical phrase about position, time or manner? (preposition)
- Do I need to connect ideas or events? (conjunctions)

3 Identify contextual clues

Your teacher always mentions 'contextual clues' but what does it mean? It just means "What do the surrounding words tell you?" Use arrows to link the clues to the blank.

- Subject-verb agreement keywords

(e.g. Timmy's **stomach** *was still growling* although he already **had** lunch.)

- synonyms (Words with similar meanings)

If a point is being emphasized, repeated or elaborated, it is likely that synonym is needed. Do note that the word should not be repeated

e.g. The shelves are **neat** and _____ after Mary cleaned them. (tidy)

- compare & contrast clues

These clues are easy to spot and the answers are usually straightforward once you found the clues. Look out for words that signal whether two events are the same or different. (**However, but, while, similarly**)

e.g. All the **girls** in the school are dressed in white **while** the _____ are dressed in yellow. (boys)

- cause and effect clue

It is important for us to read the entire passage and sentence to understand the meaning in totality. You will need to identify the cause or effect in order to have an idea of what the other is.

e.g. Due to the **heavy rain**, many people were _____ for work that morning. (late)

- grammar clues

These will include phrasal verb clues (*put **out** a fire, put **away** his books*) and also prepositions to indicate which word is suitable (**refrain from shouting** and not **avoid from shouting**).

- figurative/idiomatic expressions

For figurative or idiomatic expressions, there will usually be only one answer as the expression cannot be changed.

e.g. There is no point crying over spilt _____ now. (milk)