LANGUAGE ARTS 1110
REVIEWING COMMUNICATION SKILLS
AND LITERATURE

CONTENTS

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REVIEWING COMMUNICATION SKILLS AND LITERATURE

The purpose of this review is to demonstrate how the English language works, particularly the written English language. The pattern of organization for this summary is a process of moving from the smallest part to the finished whole—from the simple building blocks of words all the way to the massive literary structures of novels, plays, and epic poems. This LIFEPAC® will first explain the basic tools of the English language in detail and then demonstrate how to use those tools in the creation of literature itself. These skills are vital to everyone in all phases of life because communication, whether written or oral, is probably the greatest problem in the world today. Mastering these reading and writing skills will enable you to successfully communicate with others—in the business world, in college, or in social and personal situations.

The first section concentrates on words themselves, those fundamental building blocks of all languages. This part of the review highlights the use of words in writing (context skills), the origin of words (prefixes and roots), and lexicography (types, history, and usage of dictionaries).

Section two deals with the sentence, the second step in the writing process, the foundation of all literature that is created from those single building blocks of words. In this segment you will study clauses, independent and subordinate, and modifying phrases of all types. You will also examine in detail the problem areas commonly encountered in composition and discover how to correct those difficulties.

The third section focuses on the review of technical methods involved in the actual writing of three kinds of class papers: expository themes, research papers, and critical analyses. These papers are, obviously, the next step in the language process; they are the structures built upon the foundation of the sentence.

The fourth section of this LIFEPAC reviews four genres of American literature and demonstrates how poets, playwrights, novelists, and other writers throughout our history have used the basic tools of language in their work. The immortal structures these great authors have built with those simple tools—Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*, Wilder's *Our Town*, or Frost's "Birches" are just three examples—are proof enough of the enormous value of mastering the composition and reading of the English language.

OBJECTIVES

Read these objectives. The objectives tell you what you will be able to do when you have successfully completed this LIFEPAC.

When you have finished this LIFEPAC, you should be able to:

1. Explain context skills.

2. Identify prefixes and roots.

3. Explain lexicography.

4. Identify main clauses.

5. Define subordinate clauses.

6. Explain modifying phrases.

7. Identify and correct trouble spots within sentences.

8. Describe the process of writing an objective theme.

9. Explain how to compose a research paper using a variety of library sources.

10. Describe the elements of a critical analysis.

11. Identify, explain, and illustrate the genre of drama.

12. Define, discuss, and describe the genre of poetry.

13. Trace the history, development, and elements of the American novel.

14. Identify, define, and explain the genre of nonfiction.

Survey the LIFEPAC. Ask yourself some questions about this study. Write your questions here.

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I. ANALYZING WRITTEN WORDS

Very often in our reading or listening experiences we come across unfamiliar words. In a speech, a sermon, or any other oral presentation the speaker may provide clues through facial expression or body language. In written work we are deprived of such physical clues. Of course, we could simply ignore those unfamiliar words and concentrate on the rest of the meaning. By skipping over unfamiliar words, however, we might misunderstand the rest of the passage. In this section you will review context clues, those clues a writer may include as explanatory material, and word construction, the meanings of various elements contained within a particular word. You will review the use of the dictionary as a very helpful method of locating information.

SECTION OBJECTIVES

Review these objectives. When you have completed this section, you should be able to:

1. Explain context skills:
    1.1 Identify and use several types of context clues.
    1.2 Tell how to determine whether context clues are sufficient or whether it is necessary to consult a dictionary.

2. Identify prefixes and roots:
    2.1 Identify frequently encountered Greek and Latin prefixes and roots.
    2.2 Define words through the knowledge of Greek and Latin prefixes and roots.

3. Explain lexicography:
    3.1 Discuss the historical method of compiling a dictionary.
    3.2 Identify the contributions of Dr. Samuel Johnson, Noah Webster, and the *Oxford English Dictionary* to lexicography.
    3.3 Explain the purposes of a standard English dictionary.
    3.4 Identify a dictionary entry as the source for the correct spelling, pronunciation, grammar function, and definition of a word.
    3.5 Identify other types of reference dictionaries.

VOCABULARY

Study these words to enhance your learning success in this section.

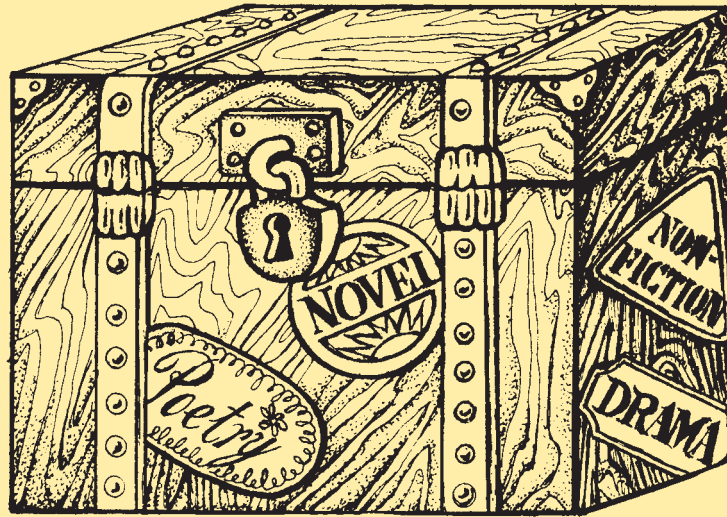|		
annotated bibliography	etymology	synonyms
antonym	lexicography	thesaurus
context	morpheme	unabridged

Note: All vocabulary words in this LIFEPAC appear in **boldface** print the first time they are used. If you are unsure of the meaning when you are reading, study the definitions given.

CONTEXT SKILLS

In your reading you may often encounter unfamiliar words. The advice—look up any word you do not know—certainly is good advice; but it is also time-consuming, sometimes even unnecessary, because you may already possess the keys for understanding that word.

Context clue of direct explanation. An important key to discovering the meaning of a new word is by using **context** clues, the material around the new word that might suggest its meaning. Very often a writer will include the definition of a word or phrase as a direct explanation within an appositive immediately following the unfamiliar word. Usually the appositive is set off with either commas or dashes. Many textbooks employ this type of clue.

Example: Hawthorne's "Young Goodman Brown" may be read on one level as a *Bildungsroman*, or a narrative wherein a young person goes from innocence to experience of the world.

Complete these activities.

1.1 Using this LIFEPAC or any other source of information, find a direct explanation context clue and write it on the lines provided.

_____

_____

_____

_____

1.2   Using one of the terms in the glossary at the end of this LIFEPAC, compose your own sentence
       defining a term by using an appositive phrase.

.   _____
       _____
       _____

> **Synonym as context clue.** A second type of context clue involves the use of one or
> more **synonyms** to restate the meaning of the unfamiliar word. In this way a writer may
> provide clues to atmosphere or mood, often using the context notes either to summarize or
> to expand the original word. The following sentences use synonyms as context clues.
>
> **Examples:**   The ice pond was *coruscant* in the starlight; it glimmered, sparkled,
>   nearly danced with thousands of tiny lights. At midday, the desert was
>   an *inferno*, an oven on earth.

➡ **Complete this activity.**

1.3   Decide on a mood (of carnival, terror, climate, etc.), then check a dictionary or a thesaurus,
       looking for an unfamiliar synonym. Now write an original sentence using the word, defining it with
       your sentence so that the entire sentence creates a mood. Have a classmate evaluate your context
       clue.

       _____
       _____
       _____
       _____

✓ Helper check _____
                          name

   comment: _____

> **Limitations of context clues.** Although context clues may be quite helpful, do not
> rely on context clues in all situations. If a word appears frequently and you wish to add it
> to your own vocabulary, look up the word for an exact dictionary meaning. If the context
> clues are inadequate, you should certainly use a dictionary to clarify the meaning. If the
> surrounding words are unfamiliar to you, always consult a dictionary.

➡ **Complete these activities.**

1.4   List the circumstances under which you should *not* use context clues.

       a. _____
           _____
       b. _____
           _____
       c. _____
           _____

1.5   When should context clues be used?

a. _____

_____

b. _____

_____

1.6   List two types of context clues.

a. _____   b. _____

PREFIXES AND ROOTS

In addition to using context clues to determine the meaning of a new word, you may find some knowledge of **morphemes** helpful. In this section you will review Greek and Latin prefixes, or word parts added to the beginning of a word that modify the basic meaning of that word, or root. When you are analyzing a word for its components, morphemes will help you to understand and to remember an unfamiliar word's meaning. Many college placement tests, such as the ACT and SAT, include a section devoted entirely to vocabulary skills as well as other sections where good reading skills are necessary for a high score.

Greek prefixes. The following chart contains some commonly encountered Greek prefixes. Recognizing them in your reading will help you decipher many words.

When You See	It Means	The Opposite Prefix is	It Means
ec-	out of	en-	into
ex-	out from	em-	within
exo-	outside	endo-	within
epi-	upon	hypo-	under,
hyper-	above, over, more than ordinary		underneath, less than ordinary
poly-	many	mono-	one
syl-	with,	anti-	against
sym-	together	a-, an-	without
syn-		apo-	away from
en-	good	dys-	ill
macro-	large, long	micro-	small

Not all Greek prefixes have opposite equivalents in English. Notice the following list

a-	not	meta-	across
amphi-	both	pan-	all
cata-	down	para-	beside
dia-	through	peri-	around, near,
pro-	before		enclosing