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Verify Meaning

Definition

Verifying meaning is the process of confirming that you accurately understand a word, phrase, or text by checking multiple sources or using context clues. This important reading skill helps ensure comprehension and prevents misunderstandings based on assumptions or inaccurate interpretations.

Example

Strategy	Example	When to Use
Dictionary lookup	Looking up "photosynthesis" to confirm scientific meaning	When encountering unfamiliar vocabulary
Context analysis	Rereading surrounding sentences to understand a confusing statement	When meaning is unclear from initial reading
Cross-referencing	Comparing information about a historical event across multiple texts	When checking factual accuracy
Text features	Using a science textbook's glossary to verify terminology	When working with specialized vocabulary
Asking questions	Raising your hand to ask the teacher about an unclear instruction	When other verification methods are insufficient

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PART 1: Using Context Clues to Verify Meaning

Read each passage about the Indus Valley's drainage systems and use context clues to determine the meaning of the underlined word.

1. The sophisticated drainage systems of Mohenjo-daro included intricate networks of brick-lined channels that carried waste water from homes to larger drains. These intricate systems show remarkable engineering skills.

Based on context clues, "intricate" most likely means:

- a) simple
- b) complex and detailed
- c) damaged
- d) underground

2. Archaeological evidence indicates that the Indus Valley people maintained their drainage systems meticulously, preventing blockages that could cause flooding or disease. This meticulous maintenance ensured the systems remained functional.

Based on context clues, "meticulous" most likely means:

- a) careless
- b) occasional
- c) extremely careful
- d) Rapid

3. The drainage channels were constructed with a gradual incline to facilitate the flow of water toward the outskirts of the city. This deliberate incline was an important engineering feature.

Based on context clues, "incline" most likely means:

- a) a covering or lid
- b) a downward slope
- c) a water collection point
- d) a brick barrier

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PART 2: Comparing Information Across Sources

Read the two passages about Indus Valley drainage systems and answer the questions that follow.

Source 1:

"The Indus Valley Civilization built some of the first urban sanitation systems. Houses in cities like Harappa and Mohenjo-daro were connected to covered drains that ran beneath the streets. These drains were made of precisely cut bricks and included inspection points for maintenance."

Source 2:

"Archaeological excavations have revealed that homes in Indus Valley cities featured private bathrooms connected to a sophisticated network of drainage channels. These channels, constructed from kiln-fired bricks, directed waste water outside city boundaries. Unlike contemporaneous civilizations, even modest homes had access to drainage systems."

1. Based on both sources, which statement can be verified as accurate?

- a) Only wealthy homes had drainage connections
- b) Drainage systems were built using wooden materials
- c) Drains were located beneath street level
- d) Maintenance was impossible once drains were built

2. What additional information does Source 2 provide that is not mentioned in Source 1?

- a) The drains were covered
- b) Even modest homes had access to drainage
- c) The civilization was called the Indus Valley
- d) The drains were made of bricks

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PART 3: Using Reference Materials to Verify Meaning

For each term related to Indus Valley drainage systems, choose the most accurate definition based on archaeological evidence.

1. The term "corbelled drains" in Indus Valley archaeology refers to:

- a) drains constructed using overlapping bricks that gradually project inward
- b) open channels running alongside streets
- c) underground pipes made of clay
- d) simple ditches dug in the ground

2. In archaeological contexts, a "sump" in Indus Valley drainage systems is:

- a) a ceremonial bathing area
- b) a collection pit where sediment settles out of water
- c) a type of water storage jar
- d) a raised platform for water distribution

3. "Sedimentation tanks" in Indus Valley cities served what purpose?

- a) Collecting rainwater for drinking
- b) Trapping solid materials before water entered the main drains
- c) Growing aquatic plants for food
- d) Mixing clay for brick production

4. Archaeological reports describe "junction boxes" in the Indus drainage system. These most likely were:

- a) decorative elements at street corners
- b) connection points where multiple drains met
- c) containers for storing cleaning tools
- d) religious structures associated with water

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PART 4: Identifying and Clarifying Misconceptions

Read each statement about Indus Valley drainage systems. Identify whether it contains a misconception and explain the accurate information.

1. "The Indus Valley drainage systems used iron pipes to carry water away from buildings."

This statement is:

- a) Accurate, according to archaeological evidence
- b) A misconception, because iron was not used; drainage channels were made of brick

2. "Drainage systems in Indus Valley cities were primarily designed for religious purposes rather than sanitation."

This statement is:

- a) Accurate, according to archaeological evidence
- b) A misconception, because evidence indicates they were primarily for sanitation and hygiene

3. "Only public buildings in Indus Valley cities had connections to the drainage system."

This statement is:

- a) Accurate, according to archaeological evidence
- b) A misconception, because private homes also connected to the drainage system

4. "The drainage technology of the Indus Valley was far less advanced than that of ancient Rome."

This statement is:

- a) Accurate, according to archaeological evidence
- b) A misconception, because Indus Valley drainage predated Roman systems by approximately 2,000 years and was remarkably sophisticated for its time

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PART 5: Drawing Conclusions Based on Verified Information

Using the verified information from this worksheet, answer the following questions about Indus Valley drainage systems.

1. Based on verified information about Indus Valley drainage systems, which conclusion is most accurate?

- a) The systems were primarily designed for flood control
- b) The systems demonstrate advanced urban planning and engineering knowledge
- c) The systems were only found in ceremonial areas
- d) The systems were developed after contact with Mesopotamian civilizations

2. The materials and construction techniques used in Indus Valley drainage systems suggest that:

- a) the civilization had limited access to building materials
- b) the systems were temporary structures
- c) the civilization had standardized building practices and skilled engineers
- d) drainage was not considered important in urban planning

3. The presence of private bathrooms connected to public drainage systems in Indus Valley homes indicates:

- a) a concern for public hygiene and sanitation at a societal level
- b) that only elite members of society had access to sanitation
- c) religious requirements for physical cleanliness
- d) that homes were frequently flooded

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Verify Meaning – Answer Key

PART 1: Using Context Clues to Verify Meaning

1. b) complex and detailed
2. c) extremely careful
3. b) a downward slope

PART 2: Comparing Information Across Sources

- c) Drains were located beneath street level
- b) Even modest homes had access to drainage

PART 3: Using Reference Materials to Verify Meaning

- a) drains constructed using overlapping bricks that gradually project inward
- b) a collection pit where sediment settles out of water
- b) Trapping solid materials before water entered the main drains
- b) connection points where multiple drains met

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Verify Meaning – Answer Key

PART 4: Identifying and Clarifying Misconceptions

1. b) A misconception, because iron was not used; drainage channels were made of brick
2. b) A misconception, because evidence indicates they were primarily for sanitation and hygiene
3. b) A misconception, because private homes also connected to the drainage system
4. b) A misconception, because Indus Valley drainage predated Roman systems by approximately 2,000 years and was remarkably sophisticated for its time

PART 5: Drawing Conclusions Based on Verified Information

1. b) The systems demonstrate advanced urban planning and engineering knowledge
2. c) the civilization had standardized building practices and skilled engineers
3. a) a concern for public hygiene and sanitation at a societal level