**3 Steps to Figuring Out the Meanings of Words**

You can be strategic in figuring out the meanings of words in just 3 easy steps.

1. **Morphology (inside word clues)**



* Do I know any roots, prefixes, or suffixes in the word and what they mean?
* Does the spelling of this word remind me of the spelling of any other words I know (in English or another language?)
* Can my knowledge help me guess a meaning for this word? If the answer is no or you are not sure, move to step 2.
1. **Context (outside word clues)**



* What does it seem like this word could mean from the words and sentences before and after it?
* Do the words and sentences around the word confirm the meaning I guessed when I looked at the word parts?
* Are there enough clues around the word for me to understand its meaning? If the answer is no or you are not sure, move on to step 3.
1. **Resource (outside text help)**
* What does the dictionary (print or online) say? Does a thesaurus help me understand its meaning?
* Do any of my classmates know the meaning?
* Does my teacher know the meaning?
* Does anyone in my family know this word?