

# Chapter 7

## DEFINING FROM CONTEXT

### WHAT IS CONTEXT?

Have you ever heard your mom talking about someone? You've never met the person, but you can tell from her tone of voice and the words she uses to describe them that she doesn't like the person at all or that she likes the person a lot. That's **CONTEXT**: the things around something that help us understand it.

### EXAMPLE:

Say you see a man with a big hose. Why does he have it? What kind of person is he? That depends on the context!



If he's filling a swimming pool, he might be the caretaker of a pool.



If he's shooting it at a burning building, he might be a fireman.

If he's watering a plant, he might be a master gardener.



## USING CONTEXT to DEFINE a WORD

The same thing goes for words—sometimes we don't know what a word means, but we can still figure out something about it from context in the sentence.

### EXAMPLE:

Some people like lions, and others like tigers, but I prefer **bandersnatches**.



From the comparison to people who like lions or tigers, you can guess that a banded snatch is probably:

1. an animal like a lion or tiger
2. somehow different from a lion or tiger
3. perhaps better than a lion or tiger

### "BANDERSNATCH"

is an imaginary word created by Lewis Carroll.