Vocabulary in Context

1. **festive**
   Everybody felt happy and merry at the **festive** birthday dinner.

2. **ingredients**
   The **ingredients** in this salad include tomatoes, lettuce, and cucumbers.

3. **degrees**
   This snack was baked in a hot oven. It was set to 350 **degrees**.

4. **recommended**
   It is **recommended** that pizza cool before you eat it. That is good advice.
Study each **Context Card**.

- Use two Vocabulary words to tell about an experience you had.

5. **anxiously**
   - This boy **anxiously** measured the sugar. He was afraid of making a mistake.

6. **cross**
   - Children often feel **cross**, or angry, when asked to eat food they dislike.

7. **remarked**
   - The guest **remarked**, or said, that the meal was delicious.

8. **tense**
   - Relax when you frost a cake. If you’re **tense** your hand will shake and ruin it.
Background

TARGET VOCABULARY

Following Recipes Do you anxiously examine your plate each night, only to find there’s nothing on it that you like? Have friends and family remarked that you are a picky eater? Well, try cooking dinner yourself! That way, you can use only your own recommended ingredients. Remember, an oven as low as two hundred degrees can still burn, so always ask an adult for help. Get ready to leave those tense, cross feelings behind and enjoy your festive meal!

Cornbread Recipe

**Ingredients:**
- 1 cup yellow cornmeal
- 3/4 cup flour
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/4 cups milk
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1 egg, lightly beaten

**Directions:**
1. Preheat oven to 400° F.
   Grease an 8-inch-square baking pan.
2. Combine cornmeal, flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt in large bowl.
3. Combine milk, oil, and egg in small bowl.
4. Add milk mixture to flour mixture.
   Stir until blended.
5. Pour into greased baking pan, and bake for 20 to 25 minutes.

Read this cornbread recipe. Then explain it to a friend.
Comprehension

**TARGET SKILL**  Understanding Characters
In *The Extra-good Sunday*, the characters speak and act like real people. The characters’ thoughts, actions, and words are clues about their feelings and traits, or what they’re like. Use a chart like this to list details and your ideas about the traits of one character.

![Diagram of a chart with three boxes labeled “Detail” and an arrow pointing to a box labeled “Traits”]

**TARGET STRATEGY**  Infer/Predict
Use your understanding of the characters’ traits and your chart to think more about why the characters think, speak, and act as they do. Also use story details to predict, or figure out, what the characters might do next.
MEET THE AUTHOR

Beverly Cleary

One day, while working on one of her first stories about Klickitat Street, Beverly Cleary couldn’t come up with a name for the bothersome younger sister. “At the moment when I needed a name,” says Cleary, “a neighbor called out ‘Ramona!’ to another neighbor, and so I just named her Ramona.”

MEET THE ILLUSTRATOR

Tuesday Mourning

Like Ramona Quimby, Tuesday Mourning knows all about not getting along with her older sister. In fact, Mourning grew up with four sisters. Although they sometimes used to fight, today she calls them her “best friends.”
THE EXTRA-GOOD SUNDAY
from Ramona Quimby, Age 8
by Beverly Cleary
selection illustrated by Tuesday Mourning

Essential Question
What clues in a story help you understand its characters?
After Beezus and Ramona refuse to eat tongue for dinner, Mr. Quimby suggests the girls cook dinner themselves the very next night. Can Beezus and Ramona make their parents forget this request by acting on their best behavior?

Sunday morning Ramona and Beezus were still resolved to be perfect until dinnertime. They got up without being called, avoided arguing over who should read Dear Abby’s advice first in the paper, complimented their mother on her French toast, and went off through the drizzly rain to Sunday school neat, combed, and bravely smiling.

Later they cleaned up their rooms without being told. At lunchtime they ate without complaint the sandwiches they knew were made of ground-up tongue. A little added pickle relish did not fool them, but it did help. They dried the dishes and carefully avoided looking in the direction of the refrigerator lest their mother be reminded they were supposed to cook the evening meal.
Mr. and Mrs. Quimby were good-humored. In fact, everyone was so unnaturally pleasant that Ramona almost wished someone would say something cross. By early afternoon the question was still hanging in the air. Would the girls really have to prepare dinner?

Why doesn’t somebody say something? Ramona thought, weary of being so good.

“Well, back to the old foot,” said Mr. Quimby, as he once more settled himself on the couch with the drawing pad and pencil and pulled off his shoe and sock.

The rain finally stopped. Ramona watched for dry spots to appear on the sidewalk and thought of her roller skates in the closet. She looked into Beezus’ room and found her sister reading. The day dragged on.
When dry spots on the concrete in front of the Quimbys’ house widened until moisture remained only in the cracks of the sidewalk, Ramona pulled her skates out of her closet. To her father, who was holding a drawing of his foot at arm’s length to study it, she said, “Well, I guess I’ll go out and skate.”

“Aren’t you forgetting something?” he asked.

“What?” asked Ramona, knowing very well what.

“Dinner,” he said.

The question that had hung in the air all day was answered. The matter was settled.
"We're stuck," Ramona told Beezus. "Now we can stop being so good."

The sisters went into the kitchen, shut the door, and opened the refrigerator.

"A package of chicken thighs," said Beezus with a groan. "And a package of frozen peas. And yogurt, one carton of plain and one of banana. There must have been a special on yogurt." She closed the refrigerator and reached for a cookbook.

"I could make place cards," said Ramona, as Beezus frantically flipped pages.

"We can't eat place cards," said Beezus. "Besides, corn bread is your job because you brought it up." Both girls spoke in whispers. There was no need to let their parents, their mean old parents, know what was going on in the kitchen.
In her mother’s recipe file, Ramona found the card for corn bread written in Mr. Quimby’s grandmother’s shaky handwriting, which Ramona found difficult to read.

“I can’t find a recipe for chicken thighs,” said Beezus, “just whole chicken. All I know is that Mother bakes thighs in the flat glass dish with some kind of sauce.”

“Mushroom soup mixed with something and with some kind of little specks stirred in.” Ramona remembered that much from watching her mother.

Beezus opened the cupboard of canned goods. “But there isn’t any mushroom soup,” she said. “What are we going to do?”

“Mix up something wet,” suggested Ramona. “It would serve them right if it tasted awful.”
“Why don’t we make something awful?” asked Beezus. “So they will know how we feel when we have to eat tongue.”

“What tastes really awful?” Ramona was eager to go along with the suggestion, united with her sister against their enemy—for the moment, their parents.

Beezus, always practical, changed her mind. “It wouldn’t work. We have to eat it too, and they’re so mean we’ll probably have to do the dishes besides. Anyway, I guess you might say our honor is at stake, because they think we can’t cook a good meal.”

Ramona was ready with another solution. “Throw everything in one dish.”
Beezus opened the package of chicken thighs and stared at them with distaste. "I can't stand touching raw meat," she said, as she picked up a thigh between two forks.

"Do we have to eat the skin?" asked Ramona. "All those yucky little bumps."

Beezus found a pair of kitchen tongs. She tried holding down a thigh with a fork and pulling off the skin with the tongs.

"Here, let me hold it," said Ramona, who was not squeamish about touching such things as worms or raw meat. She took a firm hold on the thigh while Beezus grasped the skin with the tongs. Both pulled, and the skin peeled away. They played tug-of-war with each thigh, leaving a sad-looking heap of skins on the counter and a layer of chicken thighs in the glass dish.

"Can't you remember what little specks Mother uses?" asked Beezus. Ramona could not. The girls studied the spice shelf, unscrewed jar lids and sniffed. Nutmeg? No. Cloves? Terrible. Cinnamon? Uh-uh. Chili powder? Well... Yes, that must be it. Ramona remembered that the specks were red. Beezus stirred half a teaspoon of the dark red powder into the yogurt, which she poured over the chicken. She slid the dish into the oven set at 350 degrees, the temperature for chicken recommended by the cookbook.

**STOP AND THINK**

**Author's Craft** What comparison does the author make to help you picture the sisters peeling skin off the chicken?
From the living room came the sound of their parents' conversation, sometimes serious and sometimes highlighted by laughter. While we're slaving out here, thought Ramona, as she climbed up on the counter to reach a box of cornmeal. After she climbed down, she discovered she had to climb up again for baking powder and soda. She finally knelt on the counter to save time and asked Beezus to bring her an egg.

"It's a good thing Mother can't see you up there," remarked Beezus, as she handed Ramona an egg.

"How else am I supposed to reach things?" Ramona successfully broke the egg and tossed the shell onto the counter. "Now I need buttermilk."
Beezus broke the news. There was no buttermilk in the refrigerator. "What'll I do?" whispered Ramona in a panic.

"Here. Use this." Beezus thrust the carton of banana yogurt at her sister. "Yogurt is sort of sour, so it might work."

The kitchen door opened a crack. "What's going on in there?" inquired Mr. Quimby.

Beezus hurled herself against the door. "You stay out!" she ordered. "Dinner is going to be a—surprise!"

For a moment Ramona thought Beezus had been going to say a mess. She stirred egg and yogurt together, measured flour, spilling some on the floor, and then discovered she was short of cornmeal. More panic.

"My cooking teacher says you should always check to see if you have all the ingredients before you start to cook," said Beezus.

"Oh, shut up." Ramona reached for a package of hot breakfast cereal, because its grains were about the same size as cornmeal. She scattered only a little on the floor.

STOP AND THINK
Understanding Characters Does Beezus answer truthfully when Mr. Quimby asks what's going on? Why is Beezus so determined to keep him out of the kitchen?
Something was needed to sop up the sauce with the little red specks when the chicken was served. Rice! The spilled cereal gritted underneath Beezus’s feet as she measured rice and boiled water according to the directions on the package. When the rice was cooking, she slipped into the dining room to set the table and then remembered they had forgotten salad. Salad! Carrot sticks were quickest. Beezus began to scrape carrots into the sink.

“Yipe!” yelped Ramona from the counter. “The rice!” The lid of the pan was chittering. Beezus snatched a larger pan from the cupboard and transferred the rice.
"Do you girls need any help?" Mrs. Quimby called from the living room.

"No!" answered her daughters.

Another calamity. The corn bread should bake at 400 degrees, a higher temperature than that needed for the chicken. What was Ramona to do?

"Stick it in the oven anyway." Beezus's face was flushed.

In went the corn bread beside the chicken.

"Dessert!" whispered Beezus. All she could find was a can of boring pear halves. Back to the cookbook. "Heat with a little butter and serve with jelly in each half," she read. Jelly. Half a jar of apricot jam would have to do. The pears and butter went into the saucepan. Never mind the syrup spilled on the floor.

"Beezus!" Ramona held up the package of peas.

Beezus groaned. Out came the partially cooked chicken while she stirred the thawing peas into the yogurt and shoved the dish back into the oven.
The rice! They had forgotten the rice, which was only beginning to stick to the pan. Quick! Take it off the burner. How did their mother manage to get everything cooked at the right time? Put the carrot sticks on a dish. Pour the milk. "Candles!" Beezus whispered. "Dinner might look better if we have candles."

Ramona found two candle holders and two partly melted candles of uneven length. Beezus struck the match to light them, because although Ramona was brave about touching raw meat, she was skittish about lighting matches.

Was the chicken done? The girls anxiously examined their main dish, bubbling and brown around the edges. Beezus stabbed a thigh with a fork, and when it did not bleed, she decided it must be done. A toothpick pricked into the corn bread came out clean. The corn bread was done—flat, but done.
Grit, grit, grit sounded the girls’ feet. It was amazing how a tiny bit of spilled cereal could make the entire kitchen floor gritty. At last their dinner was served, the dining-room light turned off, dinner announced, and the cooks, tense with anxiety that was hidden by candlelight, fell into their chairs as their parents seated themselves. Was this dinner going to be edible?
"Candles!" exclaimed Mrs. Quimby. "What a festive meal!"

"Let's taste it before we decide," said Mr. Quimby with his most wicked grin.

The girls watched anxiously as their father took his first bite of chicken. He chewed thoughtfully and said with more surprise than necessary, "Why this is good!"

"It really is," agreed Mrs. Quimby, and took a bit of corn bread. "Very good, Ramona," she said.

Mr. Quimby tasted the corn bread. "Just like Grandmother used to make," he pronounced.

The girls exchanged suppressed smiles. They could not taste the banana yogurt, and by candlelight no one could tell that the corn bread was a little pale. The chicken, Ramona decided, was not as good as her parents thought—or pretended to think—but she could eat it without gagging.
Everyone relaxed, and Mrs. Quimby said chili powder was more interesting than paprika and asked which recipe they used for the chicken.

Ramona answered, "Our own," as she exchanged another look with Beezus. Paprika! Those little specks in the sauce should have been paprika.

"We wanted to be creative," said Beezus.

Conversation was more comfortable than it had been the previous evening. Mr. Quimby said he was finally satisfied with his drawing, which looked like a real foot. Beezus said her cooking class was studying the food groups everyone should eat every day. Ramona said there was this boy at school who called her Egghead. Mr. Quimby explained that Egghead was slang for a very smart person.

The meal was a success. If the chicken did not taste as good as the girls had hoped and the corn bread did not rise like their mother's, both were edible. Beezus and Ramona were silently grateful to their parents for enjoying—or pretending to enjoy—their cooking. The whole family cheered up.
When they had finished their pears with apricot jam, Ramona gave her mother a shy smile. Mrs. Quimby smiled back and patted Ramona’s hand. Ramona felt much lighter.

“You cooks have worked so hard,” said Mr. Quimby, “that I’m going to wash the dishes. I’ll even finish clearing the table.”

“I’ll help,” volunteered Mrs. Quimby.

The girls exchanged another secret smile as they excused themselves and skipped off to their rooms before their parents discovered the pile of chicken skins and the broken eggshell on the counter, the carrot scrapings in the sink, and the cereal, flour, and pear syrup on the floor.
**Grammar**

**Forming the Past Tense** You can make most verbs show **past tense** just by adding -ed. However, the spelling of some verbs changes in other ways when you add -ed.

- Some verbs end with e. Drop the e and add -ed.
- Some verbs end with a consonant and y. Change the y to i and add -ed.
- Some verbs end with one vowel followed by one consonant. Double the consonant and add -ed.

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**Try This!** Write each verb in the past tense.

1. smile
2. dry
3. drop
4. carry
5. chat
6. juggle
**Word Choice**  Use exact verbs in your writing so that readers can picture the action you write about. Spell exact verbs correctly when you write about them in the past tense.

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**Connect Grammar to Writing**

As you revise your autobiography, look for verbs that you could change to more exact verbs.