



Grade 3. Building Vocabulary. Synonyms and Antonyms.

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You've heard the proverb "A child who reads is an adult who thinks." Indeed, reading develops critical thinking, and [critical thinking](#) is arguably a key skill for future success in life. Third grade is a pivotal time for developing your child's [reading skills](#). You may have noticed that your child's interest in reading has changed: he chooses books by topic, he expresses interest in fiction and non-fiction books, or he selects books that are longer. This is because third-grade students begin to switch from "learning to read" to "reading to learn."

At the same time, they are still developing reading skills – skills that will make them better readers and thinkers. One essential skill is building vocabulary. [Building vocabulary](#) focuses on increasing the words your child knows and uses. As they read, your child is introduced to words that are not part of their everyday vocabulary. They may struggle with learning to understand these words and how to use them.

Teaching your child about how words relate to each other will help them learn new words as they read. Two types of words that share a specific relationship are synonyms and antonyms. This article helps you teach synonyms and antonyms, access learning activities to practice identifying synonyms and antonyms, and build your child's vocabulary and develop their reading comprehension.

Synonyms are words that have the same meaning. In fact, the prefix syn- comes from Greek and means "together." Synonyms go together because they have the same or similar meaning. You can watch this video "[Synonyms for Kids](#)" to get a better understanding of this concept.

Now that your child has learned about synonyms, encourage him to use what he has learned by identifying synonyms with the activity "[Synonym Check Worksheet](#)."

SYNONYM CHECK



Help the teacher grade the papers.
Check the box if the words are synonyms.

error/mistake

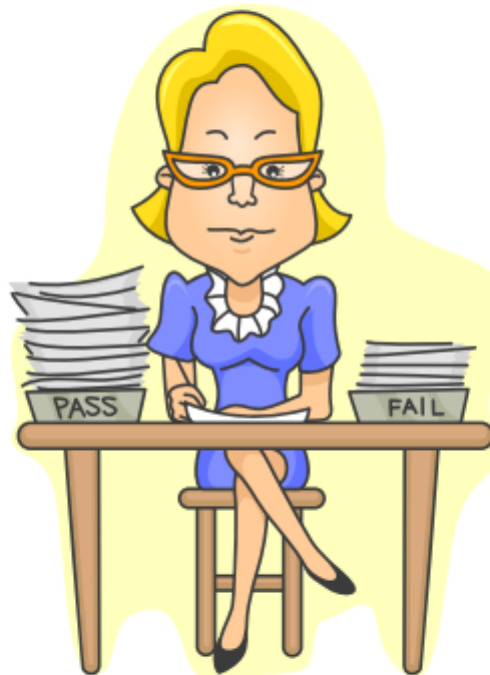
sleep/awake

sad/unhappy

late/early

cry/sob

cool/chilly



save/toss

friend/enemy

quiet/silent

rush/stroll

For more practice with synonyms, try "[Synonyms: The Tortoise and Hare Worksheet](#)" with some fun animals.

Synonyms: The Tortoise and the Hare

Read the words next to the animals.
Check the animal if the two words are synonyms.

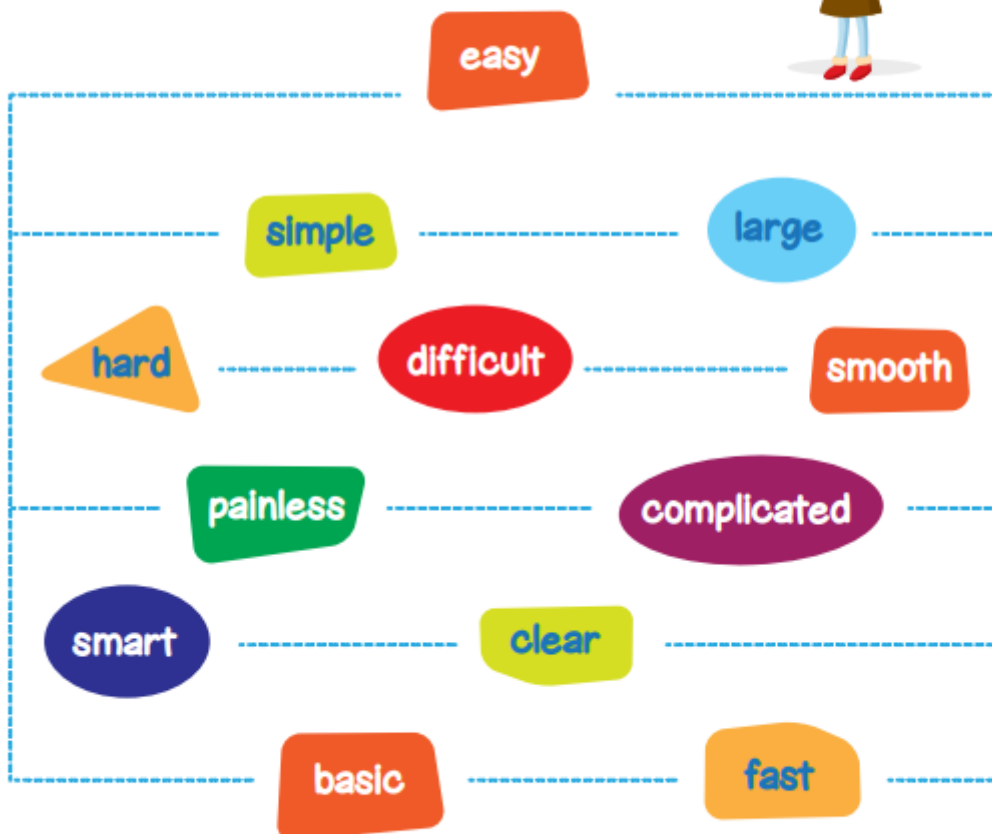


Once your children have a working knowledge of synonyms, they are ready to understand that any word may have many synonyms. "Free Synonym Worksheet" has an example of this with the word "easy."

Synonyms: Easy!

Synonyms are different words with similar meanings.
Understand and **realize** are synonyms.

Draw a line to connect all the beads with the words close in meaning to **easy**. You should start at the bead with **easy**.



If there are words that have the same meanings, then there are words that have opposite meanings. These are called antonyms. The prefix ant- also comes from Greek and means "against." Antonyms go against each other because they have opposite meanings. You can practise antonyms learning together with our inimitable teacher Michael!



Watch on [YouTube](#)

Now have your child practice what they have learned by identifying antonyms with "[Antonyms: Prometheus Worksheet.](#)"

Antonyms: PROMETHEUS

Help the people get warm. Trace the lines to the fireplace if the words are antonyms.

hard
soft

tiny
small

on
off

big
large

rough
smooth

clean
tidy

rich
poor

happy
glad



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“Vocabulary Antonyms Worksheet” provides more practice and fun with antonyms.

Antonym Mix-Up



Antonyms are words with the **opposite** meaning.
Open and **close** are antonyms.

Correct the sentences below by replacing each highlighted word with its antonym.

1. The octopus lives **above** the sea.

near

under

on



2. Penguins live in a **hot** climate.

warm

tropical

cold

3. The cheetah is very **slow**.

fast

big

dangerous



4. Rabbits **always** eat meat.

often

usually

never

The next step is to distinguish between synonyms and antonyms. "[Synonyms or Antonyms: Assessment Worksheet](#)" is a tool to test your child's knowledge of these word types.



SYNONYMS OR ANTONYMS?

Check the correct box for each row.

	Synonyms	Antonyms
fast and slow	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
hot and cold	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
chilly and cool	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
speedy and quick	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
quiet and loud	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
begin and start	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
save and toss	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 cry and sob	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Don't let the fun and learning stop here. Show your child how to use this knowledge in his or her everyday reading. As you read with your child, identify synonyms and antonyms or stop and ask for a synonym or antonym of a word within the text.