

Date: \_\_\_\_\_


## Instructional Routines template


PLAN

**Component:** Vocabulary

**Instructional Activity:** Semantic Gradients (for younger students)

**Materials Needed:** Two pre-selected vocabulary words that have opposite meanings and five synonyms for each of those words. Option to write those words on index cards. A piece of string or yarn the length of your classroom.

 **Approximate Time:**  
30 minutes

 **Click here for video example**

X Individual

X Small Group

X Large Group

OBJECTIVE

**State the objective(s):**

Students will have a deeper understanding of related words and distinguish between shades of meaning of words.

REVIEW &  
VOCABULARY

**Review prerequisite skills and teach related vocabulary:** *Set up the tools needed to succeed.*

Students will need to understand the concept of "opposites." The teacher can say "when something is opposite of something else that means it is TOTALLY different. For example, HOT is the opposite of COLD." Depending on the words chosen and their synonyms, the teacher may decide to further clarify some words.

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I DO IT!

**I do it! – Demonstrate:** *Teach the new skill, model with clear explanations, verbalize your thinking process.*

The teacher shows students the two opposite words and introduces meaning. For example: "Loud" and "softly spoken" Teacher has these two words plus and the synonyms listed along the gradient on the board for all students to see.

Pointing to the board and moving down the gradient as they describe and act out each word : "We are going to be looking at two words that have opposite meanings, so they are totally different from one another. LOUD (teacher says this in a loud voice) and softly spoken (teacher says this softly)."

As teacher reads the words along the gradient- speak the words in the tone and voice level you think matched the word --- softly spoken- whispered- murmured – whimpered- muttered- sighed- said- answered – moaned- hissed- exclaimed- shouted- loud.

"We could have decided that some of these are in a different order. Maybe, you think that whispered and murmured should be switched because when someone murmurs you typically do not hear the whole message it is so low and "under their breath."

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WE DO IT!

**We do it! - Provide guided practice:** *Provide opportunities for students to practice as a group with teacher scaffolding. Provide immediate and specific feedback.*

You do not have to agree with the order in which I placed these words. I am going to give everyone a moment to look at this gradient. Where would you make a change? Think for a minute and pick one word that you feel should be moved to a different position and a reason why.

Turn and talk to the student next to you. Share the word that you think should be placed in a different position and see if your partner agrees or not. (Teacher circulates to pairs to help with the conversations).

Have student pairs share out. The goal is to make sure students can clearly communicate and defend their opinions on word placement.



If students need support with:	Then try this:
Language	Provide sentence stems to assist students in verbally share thinking. Provide appropriate images to help represent their word.

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YOU DO IT!

**You do it! - Provide independent practice:** *Provide individual students with multiple opportunities to practice independently, provide feedback as needed.*

“Our two OPPOSITE words today are slow and fast. Remember, opposite means to mean something totally different. Everyone stand up. If I asked you to walk in place slowly, how would that look? (does motion) Great! Now if I asked you to walk in fast in place, how would that look? (does motion with class). Great! There are also a lot of ways to move that are in between those two opposite words. We may jog or prance or crawl. We are going to look at a list of words and decide which words are closer to “slow” and which are closer to “fast”?

Teacher can decide to have cards with the list of words written on them, one word per card, or choose to do this activity completely orally with the words listed on the board.

Pair, or group students into groups of 3-4 kids depending on class size and assign them one of the words chosen for the continuum to each pair/small group.

The words on the continuum: crawl, limp, prance, meander, stroll, jog, dart, run, sprint (mix these words up so they are in no order when they are assigned to the groups.

Have groups turn and talk and discuss their words. Check in to ensure that they understand what their word means and assist them in figuring out if it is closer to SLOW or FAST. Groups will also figure out a movement that represents their word and the correct pace their word is (i.e., what does sprinting in place look like).

Teacher will create a line across her classroom. Place the word SLOW at one end and FAST at the other. A piece of yard or string to connect the two words across the classroom and create the line that the students will stand on to create their continuum.

Once the teacher assesses that each group has a good understanding of their word, begin to encourage the dialogue to where they should be placed on the continuum.

Teacher: “We will take turns having each group share their word and demonstrate their motion. Once you do, please go stand on the line where you think you best fit.”

As student groups begin to form the line, encourage conversations between groups about where their place should be on the line. When disagreements arise on the order, have students explain to the other group and the class why they think they should be in that place. If the groups cannot solve the order on their own, turn it to a whole class vote after they have heard from both sides. Continue this process until the continuum is built and then the teacher will jot it down.



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ASSESS

**Assess students (formally or informally):** *Determine the level of mastery for the stated objective.*

Students' placement of their word anywhere on the gradient that makes sense given the meaning of the word and then how they can orally defend their choice among their peers within the small group and/or whole class.

ENRICH/EXTEND

**Enrichment/Extension:** *Provide enrichment and extension activities for students who need less support.*

For students who demonstrate ease with word knowledge , consider moving toward having students add additional words from their lexicon that would fit on the gradient and have them place them in a position they think makes sense.