




LESSON TOPIC: Improving Vocabulary through a Synonym Search

 <p>Note to the teacher</p>	<p>When selecting vocabulary words to teach, look for words that students don't already know. The words should be ones that mature language users would use. They should be words that connect to other known words, and ones for which students understand the general concept but provide greater specificity in describing the concept.</p> <p>You may select vocabulary words from an age-appropriate read-aloud. For this sample lesson, the first two words in the activity were selected from Chapter 2 of <i>The Cricket in Times Square</i> by George Selden.</p>
<p>State the lesson objective(s) <i>Identify a clear, specific objective.</i></p>	<p>We're going on a Synonym Search! You are going to discover and learn lots of different ways to describe the way you feel.</p>
<p>Review prerequisite skills and teach related vocabulary <i>Set up the tools students need to succeed.</i></p>	<p>A synonym is a word that means the same thing, or about the same thing, as another word. Many very simple words, like good or bad, have a lot of synonyms. <i>Good</i> means about the same thing as <i>fantastic</i>, <i>wonderful</i>, or <i>incredible</i>. When we use the synonyms instead of using the simple word, it can make our speaking and writing sound more intelligent and sophisticated.</p>

 <p>I do it!—Demonstrate <i>Teach the new skill. Model with clear explanations. Verbalize your thinking process.</i></p>	<p>Write the word <i>happy</i> at the top of a sheet of posterboard so all students can see it. Leave room below the word to add at least 15-20 other words.</p> <p>This word is <i>happy</i>. It's a simple word—one you probably use every day. I found it in a sentence in Chapter 2 of <i>The Cricket in Times Square</i>. Here's the sentence: <i>He was so happy and excited that when anyone walked through the station, he forgot to shout "Newspapers!" and "Magazines!"</i></p> <p>The author used the word <i>happy</i>, and he also used a synonym—a word that means almost the same thing as <i>happy</i>. The synonym is <i>excited</i>. I'm going to write the word <i>excited</i> on our poster. <i>Excited</i> is a synonym for <i>happy</i>.</p>
 <p>We do it!—Provide guided practice <i>Provide opportunities for students to practice as a group with teacher scaffolding. Provide immediate and specific feedback.</i></p>	<p>Let's try it together!</p> <p>The word is <i>happy</i>. What's the word? Students: <i>happy</i></p> <p>Work with a partner to come up with two more synonyms for <i>happy</i>. What can you say instead of the word <i>happy</i> that means about the same thing? You have two minutes.</p> <p>Listen to the conversations. Provide scaffolding when needed.</p> <p>After two minutes, call students back together. Give each partner pair a chance to say/read the two synonyms they came up with. Write any new synonyms on the chart, provided their meaning is almost the same as <i>happy</i>.</p> <p>Look at all the synonyms you came up with! Let's read each one together. If the words are not yet decodable for the students, have them echo read—you point to a word and read it, and they read the word after you.</p>

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You do it!—Provide independent practice

Provide individual students with multiple opportunities to practice independently and provide feedback as needed.

This is a great list of synonyms for *happy*, but I know that there are a LOT more words that also mean about the same thing.

Throughout the day today, both at school and at home, listen for words that mean the same thing as *happy*. You may ask friends and family to help you come up with synonyms. Write them down, or have an adult write them, and bring them tomorrow morning. We'll add them to the list.

Also, any time today, if you're going to say or write the word *happy*, stop and think: what's another word I can use instead of *happy*? Use our poster to come up with a really great word to use instead.

Check for understanding

Assess students (either formally or informally) to determine level of mastery for stated objective.

Observe individual students as they respond during guided and independent practice. Scaffold or correct all errors. Provide specific feedback for accurate responses.



Note to the teacher

Make additional posters for other "feeling" words, such as *sad*, *mad*, and *scared*. Follow the routine above with the new words. Leave the posters displayed in the room and encourage students to continue to add new words to them and also use the synonyms both in conversation and in writing.