

Teaching year 5 children with reading difficulties, synonyms and discussing word meanings will improve their comprehension

Teaching Sequence

ACTIVITY	TASK DESCRIPTION	TIME
Clarify Terms	Orally discuss what a synonym is. Write down what a synonym is. Our learning outcome is to identify synonyms by looking at the title of the text and the illustration on the front cover of the book “Stay Calm”	7 mins
Target Words Vocab Building	Look at the front cover. As a group read the title what are other word /synonyms for the title. Write a new title. Make a list of words which describe the characters on the front cover. Think of other words which mean the same. Read the words together.	7 mins
Putting words in a context.	Write the words from above in a sentence. Teacher modelling and then student make a sentence.	7 mins
Manipulating & experimenting with synonyms.	Each student cut up a sentences, put them back together. Read the sentence aloud. Then swap synonyms from their sentence to another student’s sentence. Read the new sentence aloud.	10 mins
Reflective	Ask each child what they have learnt in the session. Give assistance to verbalise their learning if required.	5 mins

ACTIVITY	TASK DESCRIPTION	TIME
Clarifying Terms	<p>Talk about what a synonym is. Give a definition.</p> <p>Revise synonyms given for the title and front cover characters.</p> <p>Learning outcome: To read first 2 pages of text and identify synonyms for target words.</p>	5 mins
Text Reading Target Words	<p>Read the first 2 pages of the text, stopping to identify & discuss synonyms for the target words.</p> <p>Normal, collecting, warm, long, leaped, good, swayed.</p>	10 mins
Synonyms & vocab building	<p>Write target words and match with synonyms. Read words in groups of similar meanings. Orally make up sentences with the words.</p>	10 mins
Manipulate & experiment with synonyms	<p>Students take turns to act out target words. Others guess the word and give a synonym for the word.</p>	5 mins
Reflective	<p>Re read text.</p> <p>Ask each child what they have learnt in the session.</p> <p>Give assistance to verbalise their learning if required.</p>	5 Mins

ACTIVITY	TASK DESCRIPTION	TIME
Clarify Terms	Revise Synonyms from previous session. Retell story so far. Learning outcome: To read next 2 pages of text and identify synonyms for target words.	5 min
Text Reading Target Words	Read the next 2 pages of the text, stopping to identify & discuss synonyms for the target words. Closer, peeked, speaks, strange, urgent, bundled	10 min
Synonyms & vocab building	Orally locate target words in the text and use a synonym to replace the target word. Make flash cards of words and synonyms.	10 min
Manipulate & experiment with synonyms	Play a matching game with target words and their synonyms. Play the game again using words from previous sessions.	5 min
Reflective	Re read text and retell what has been read. Encourage the use of synonyms. Children verbalise what they have learnt in the session.	5 min

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Clarify Terms	Revise Synonyms from previous session. Retell story so far. Learning outcome: To read next 2 pages of text and identify synonyms for target words.	5 min
Text Reading Target Words	Read the next 2 pages of the text, stopping to identify & discuss synonyms for the target words. Explanation, experimental, co-operation, anti climax, trudged	10 min
Synonyms & vocab building	Orally locate target words in the text and use a synonym to replace the target word. Make flash cards of words and synonyms.	5 min
Manipulate & experiment with synonyms	Cloze activity with target words. I will include some of the previously used words.	10 min
Reflective	Re read text and retell what has been read. Encourage the use of synonyms. Children verbalise what they have learnt in the session.	5 min

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Clarify Terms	Revise Synonyms from previous session. Retell story so far. Learning outcome: To read next 2 pages of text and identify synonyms for target words.	5 min
Text Reading Target Words	Read the next 2 pages of the text, stopping to identify & discuss synonyms for the target words. Wander, staring, creature, monstrous, huge, remembered	10 min
Synonyms & vocab building	Orally locate target words in the text and use a synonym to replace the target word. Make flash cards of words and synonyms.	5 min
Manipulate & experiment with synonyms	Find synonyms for target words by looking through the newspaper	10 min
Reflective	Re read text and retell what has been read. Encourage the use of synonyms. Children verbalise what they have learnt in the session.	5 min

ACTIVITY	TASK DESCRIPTION	TIME
Clarify Terms	Revise Synonyms from previous session. Retell story so far. Learning outcome: To read next 2 pages of text and identify synonyms for target words.	5 min
Text Reading Target Words	Read the next 2 pages of the text, stopping to identify & discuss synonyms for the target words. Screamed, crazy, frantically, nasty, pounding	10 min
Synonyms & vocab building	Each student makes 2 flashcards one with a target word and the other with a matching synonym. Present to group	5 min
Manipulate & experiment with synonyms	Make a group wordfind with the target words and use the synonyms as clues	10 min
Reflective	Re read text and retell what has been read. Encourage the use of synonyms. Children verbalise what they have learnt in the session.	5 min

ACTIVITY	TASK DESCRIPTION	TIME
Clarify Terms	Revise Synonyms from previous session. Retell story so far. Learning outcome: To read next 2 pages of text and identify synonyms for target words.	5 min
Text Reading Target Words	Read the next 2 pages of the text, stopping to identify & discuss synonyms for the target words. Panic, enormous, authorities, scary, though.	10min
Synonyms & vocab building	Match the target words with prepared synonyms.	5 min
Manipulate & experiment with synonyms	Look at all the synonyms we have gathered from the text so far and group them according to meaning. E.g walking words – pounding, trudged. Add any others words known by the students	10 min
Reflective	Re read text and retell what has been read. Encourage the use of synonyms. Children verbalise what they have learnt in the session.	5 min

ACTIVITY	TASK DESCRIPTION	TIME
Clarify Terms	Revise Synonyms from previous session. Retell story so far. Learning outcome: To read next 2 pages of text and identify synonyms for target words.	5 min
Text Reading Target Words	Read the next 2 pages of the text, stopping to identify & discuss synonyms for the target words. Count on, sensible, burst, slither, good	10 min
Synonyms & vocab building	Continue matching game with all the synonyms and target words can we add other words to any of the target words	5 min
Manipulate & experiment with synonyms	Write target words in a sentence.	10 min
Reflective	Re read text and retell what has been read. Encourage the use of synonyms. Children verbalise what they have learnt in the session.	5 min

ACTIVITY	TASK DESCRIPTION	TIME
Clarify Terms	Revise Synonyms from previous session. Retell story so far. Learning outcome: To read next 2 pages of text and identify synonyms for target words.	5 min
Text Reading Target Words	Read the next 2 pages of the text, stopping to identify & discuss synonyms for the target words. Fortunately, raced, surprised, complete, slammed, boring	10 min
Synonyms & vocab building	Give oral sentences for each of the target words.	5 min
Manipulate & experiment with synonyms	Use a newspaper to find synonyms for the target words.	10 min
Reflective	Re read text and retell what has been read. Encourage the use of synonyms. Children verbalise what they have learnt in the session.	5 min

ACTIVITY	TASK DESCRIPTION	TIME
Clarify Terms	Revise Synonyms from previous session. Retell story so far. Learning outcome: Complete text and identify synonyms for target words.	5 min
Text Reading Target Words	Read the last 2 pages of the text, stopping to identify & discuss synonyms for the target words. Great, walk, crash, courage, guess	10 min
Synonyms & vocab building	Discuss if we already have some synonyms for the target words Refer to groups of words made E.g. Walking words, speaking words.	5 min
Manipulate & experiment with synonyms	Build on groups of words that have similar meanings. Read the words together. Play “What word am I?”	10 min
Reflective	Re read text and retell what has been read. Encourage the use of synonyms. Children verbalise what they have learnt in the session.	5 min

Appendix 1:

Sentence memory for sentences task: Student form

John Munro

Student name: _____ **Grade:** _____
Date: _____

1. They eat pumpkin.	
2. The rabbit did not run.	
3. They ate the fresh bread from the bakers' shop after they bought the paper	
4. In the bus he could see his friend. 5. The woman watched the basketball match and the girl ate a pie	
6. The family used their red beach umbrella to avoid the intense sunlight. 7. The lizard drank the water, the rabbit scratched itself and the boy blew bubbles.	
8. Heavy fog caused several accidents on the highway.	
9. If David walks around the lake he will see the three pink ducklings	
10. The puppies in the box were warm.	
11. It took the younger boys more than ten minutes to eat the apple pie. 12. In the autumn they often enjoy long bike rides through the park. 13. She was there with the boats on the river and the dog was under the tree. 14. Late every afternoon Jack wanted to swim with Ann at the beach. 15. They were excited about the photos and waited at the corner.	
16. When Jill kicks the ball she drops it quickly onto her left foot. 17. Before they went into the shop the car tooted its horn loudly.	

18.	As it was cold they decided to move to the other room upstairs	
19.	The class was told to do examples 4 to 7 on page 14 of their word book.	
20.	Jean will paint her doll's house red if she can find yellow flowers.	
21.	Reading is fun as long as the story is interesting and has at least three pictures in each chapter.	
22.	The car was in the scrap yard because we lived in a street nearby	
23.	The old clown explained why he never wore a scarf and shirt that matched.	
24.	All the rats were much slower after the rain had shrunk their paws.	
25.	Tina walked through the bush many times but never once saw the three tiny possums.	
26.	The further the old horse walked, the more his muscles ached and his joints creaked	
27.	The lolly pop lady was a kind person who made the children happy when she wore her plastic roses.	
28.	Once out of the city Peter and his friends plan to stop at they travel to the farm.	
29.	Jean's new truck with the red doors also has a large wide tray which can rise quickly.	
30.	When we go hiking in the bush we prepare to spend a lot of time searching for different kinds of insects on the leaves.	

Appendix 2: Synonym Task

Synonyms task: Student form

John Munro

Student name: _____ Grade: _____

Date: _____

	Target word	Possible correct responses	Child's response
1.	small	tiny, little, wee, mini, miniature, short, shrimp, slight, stunted, teensy, minor, trifling	
2.	fast	quick, rapid, brisk, snappy, speedy, hasty, swift	
3.	old	aged, ancient, elderly, experienced, geriatric, senior, veteran, outdated, stale	
4.	leave	go, clear out, scam, stop	
5.	car	vehicle, automobile, sedan	
6.	shoe	boot, slipper, runners, sneaker	
7.	child	boy, girl, infant, tot, baby, youngster, brat, kid, kiddie, toddler	
8.	fat	rotund, plump, overweight, burly, corpulent, obese, oversize, paunchy, portly, stout, blubbery, bulk, lard	
9.	walk	stroll, amble, hike, march, pathway, amble, tramp	
10.	cat	kitten, moggy, puss, leopard, lion, tabby	
11.	fatigued	tired, all in, beat, exhausted, weary, worn-out, zonked, sapped	
12.	boat	ship, types of boats	
13.	clean	neat, tidy, clear, flawless, trim, sparkling	
14.	sick	ill, unhealthy, unwell, weak, queasy, diseased,	
15.	tiger	cat, cheetah, cougar, jaguar, leopard, lion, panther	
16.	engine	motor machine, apparatus, appliance, gadget	
17.	ignore	disregard, avoid, cut, neglect, omit, overlook,	

	reject	
18.	precious	expensive, dear, prized, treasured, valued, invaluable, prized
19.	angry	mad, irate, crazy, cross, out/enraged, fiery, fuming, furious, storming
20.	hit	slap, strike, punch, bat, smack, smash, sock, swipe, success, achievement, triumph
21.	give	donate, provide, contribute, dole out
22.	stop	prevent, bar, impede, halt, end, block, close, finish, terminate, rest, still
23.	cage	pen, cell, prison, enclosure, coop, cavity, chest
24.	adolescent	teenager, immature, juvenile, youthful, minor
25.	station	terminus, headquarters, stop, base, depot, terminal
26.	release	free, liberate, acquit, let go
27.	flow	run, move, drift, ooze, stream, abound, progress
28.	liberate	free, let out, loosen, release
29.	a building	a construction, edifice, home, house, dwelling, structure

Appendix 3: Cued retell

Characteristic of retelling	Ideas in the Story	No. of ideas
Main Characters	Matt, other boys, the galahs, mum	4
Plot of the Story	About finding some dead and injured galahs in the park and deciding what to do with them.	4
Events of the story	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finding the galahs• The other boy deciding to use the dead galahs for yabby bait.• The other boys playing football• Matt taking the injured galah home.• Talking with mum about how to save the galah• Feeding the galah.	6
Total		14

Cued Retelling

1. Who were the main characters of the story?
2. Where did the story take place?
3. What did the boys find?
4. What did Matt decide to do?
5. What did the other boys decide to do?
6. Who did Matt ask for help to look after the bird?

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