

**HYPOTHESIS:** Teaching students in Year 3 to follow a sequence (cued in by ‘Triple M’) for learning word meanings through oral language increases their ability to generate synonyms and improves their reading comprehension.

**Session 1: Introducing the Targeted Teaching Session: John Munro’s (2006) ‘Sequence for teaching the meaning of novel words’.**

*When we are reading, we often come across new or difficult words. Sometimes we skip over words we don’t know, but when we do this, we also lose the meaning of what we are reading. Instead of skipping over these words you are going to learn a way of helping you to know what to do when you come across such a word.*

*The first way of helping you is to “Tune into ‘Triple M’, that is, ‘Make Meaning Matter’. It is really important to make yourself stop reading when you don’t know the meaning of a word. I want you to always say to yourself that you are tuned into ‘Triple M’ and that you will Make Meaning Matter.*

Once you have tuned into ‘Triple M’, ( Make Meaning Matter ), there is a sequence you can follow that will help you work out word meanings.

Sequence	Teaching Activity
Introduce the word in a context that clearly shows its meaning for the students. Say the word and then say the word in a sentence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “couch”</li> <li>• <i>I can sit on a couch</i></li> </ul>
Show 3 or 4 pictures of the word and talk about them. What do all the pictures show? Say what seems to be the same or shared by all of them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Here are pictures of couches I have seen in people’s houses. Show the pictures. Describe what you can see that is similar by all of them.</i></li> </ul>
Link a key action with the word; When students hear the word, they link characteristic actions with it.	<p>Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use their arms and legs to make the shape of a couch</li> </ul>
Show pictures of non-examples of the word; that is, examples of what the word does not mean. Students say how the real differ from the non-real	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I have some pictures that are not couches. Show pictures of chairs, stools, benches, seats, steps. How are they different from couches?</i></li> </ul>
Synonyms for the word: students link the word with words they already know that are similar to it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>A couch is like a sofa.</i></li> <li>• <i>A couch is like a lounge.</i></li> <li>• <i>We can sit or lie down on a couch.</i></li> </ul>
Show the word in several other contexts. Students say the word in a sentence that describes each context.	<p><i>We can sit or lie down on a couch. Three or four people can fit on a couch. Most houses have at least one couch. A couch is usually in the lounge room. A couch is usually very soft.</i></p>
Students recognize real and non-real examples of the word	<p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hear sentences and decide whether each could describe the word, (couch), for example: ~ <i>Only one person can fit on it</i> ~ <i>It is used for standing</i> ~ <i>People like to sit on a couch</i></li> </ul>
Meaning of the word: students use the word in several sentences that illustrate word meaning	

*(Adapted from John Munro, 2006)*

## Samples of Teaching Sequence:

Sessions 2:

Activity	Task Description	Time
Introduction to teaching sequence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tune into <i>Triple M ~ Make Meaning Matter</i>. Ask students ‘<i>Why is it important to make the meaning matter?</i>’</li> <li>• Review the sequence that students can use to help work out word meaning from the previous session</li> <li>• Ask students ‘<i>What is a synonym?</i>’</li> </ul>	10 mins
Text Reading ~ Shared reading Synonym selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students and teacher read passage on pages 1 -3 from text</li> <li>• Students to give synonyms for the 6 teacher-selected key content words, (<i>tubby, short, stumbled, sofa, flashed, wail</i> ), using the sequence to assist in working out word meanings</li> <li>• Students orally replace key word with a suggested synonym, re-read sentence using the synonym and state whether the meaning is retained.</li> <li>• Using the chart, teacher writes the synonym next to the target word as each student gives his/her response</li> </ul>	20 mins
Synonym Task.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are given a list of 5 target words and are to write down one or more synonyms for each.</li> </ul>	10 mins
Student Reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask each student to restate the word meaning procedure</li> <li>• Students comment individually on what they have learnt in the session</li> </ul>	5 mins

Sessions 3:

Activity	Task Description	Time
Revise the action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tune into <i>Triple M ~ Make Meaning Matter</i>. Ask students ‘<i>Why is it important to make the meaning matter?</i>’</li> <li>• Review the sequence that students can use to help work out word meaning from the previous session</li> <li>• Ask students ‘<i>What is a synonym?</i>’</li> </ul>	5 mins
More Than One Name	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students look at each picture on the worksheet and then find a word in the box that means the same thing as the word next to the picture; each student writes their word (synonym) underneath each picture.</li> <li>• Each student reads target word and appropriate synonym; teacher writes each pair onto chart.</li> <li>• Each student chooses a synonym from the chart and gives a sentence containing new word; ask group if sentence makes sense.</li> </ul>	20 mins
Synonym Task.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are given a list of 5 target words and are to write down one or more synonyms for each. (This is to be used for anecdotal information)</li> </ul>	10 mins
Student Reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each student restates the word meaning procedure</li> <li>• Students comment individually on what they have learnt in the session</li> </ul>	5 ins

Session 4:

Activity	Task Description	Time
Revise the action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tune into <i>Triple M ~ Make Meaning Matter</i>. Ask students ‘<i>Why is it important to make the meaning matter?</i>’</li> <li>• Review the sequence that students can use to help work out word meaning from the previous session</li> <li>• Ask students ‘<i>What is a synonym?</i>’</li> </ul>	5 mins
Vocabulary :word meaning / synonym activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students work in pairs and are given task sheet; teacher reads the words in the box and explains procedure</li> <li>• Students look at each picture on task sheet and find two words in the box that can name the picture; in pairs, they each write their choice of word in the space underneath each picture and work out actions for words</li> <li>• Each pair has a turn to read out their written set of words and demonstrate actions</li> <li>• As these are read out the teacher writes each set onto a chart which will be given a heading of ‘Synonym Chart’ following the next step:</li> <li>• Students are asked to identify what the activity was actually having them do and what the word pairs can be called (synonyms).Following this step, the teacher labels the chart as ‘Synonym Chart’</li> </ul>	20 mins
Putting words in a context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The words from the above activity are used by each student and they place their choice of word into a sentence.</li> </ul>	10 mins
Student Reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask each student what they have learnt in the session.</li> <li>• Each student restates the word meaning procedure</li> </ul>	5 mins

Session 5 & 6:

Activity	Task Description	Time
Revise the action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “<i>Triple M ... , Make Meaning Matter</i>” Ask students ‘<i>Why is it important to make the meaning matter?</i>’</li> <li>• Revise the action that will help you work out word meaning: ‘<i>When I reach a word I don’t know I ...</i>’</li> <li>• Ask students ‘<i>What is a synonym?</i>’</li> </ul>	5 mins
Shared reading of text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher reads first chapter of text aloud with target words written on chart</li> <li>• Teacher asks students to orally apply above ‘<i>Triple M... Make Meaning Matter</i>’ strategy...<i>when I come to a word I don’t know...to the target words.</i></li> </ul>	5 mins
Building synonyms and meanings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students take turns to read the above text and when they reach the target word, they articulate and apply the learnt strategy to work out the synonym for the target word</li> <li>• Students are asked ‘does the sentence still make sense with the new synonym?’</li> <li>• Teacher lists synonyms next to written target words on the chart as each student applies the strategy</li> </ul>	20 mins
Synonym Task - (Lesson 5 only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are given a list of 5 target words and are to write down one or more synonyms for each. (This is to be used for anecdotal information)</li> </ul>	5 mins
Student Reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask each student what they have learnt in the session.</li> <li>• Each student restates the word meaning procedure</li> </ul>	5 mins

Session 7:

Activity	Task Description	Time
Revise the action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise ‘<i>Triple M... Make Meaning Matter</i>’, Ask students ‘<i>Why is it important to make the meaning matter?</i>’</li> <li>• Revise the action that will help you work out word meaning: ‘<i>When I reach a word I don’t know I ...</i>’</li> <li>• Ask students ‘What is a synonym?’</li> </ul>	5 mins
Synonym Game	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Game: students work with a partner; each pair is given a set of flashcards of target words and their synonyms; these are to be sorted with each student taking turns with their partner and matching a target word with its synonym.</li> <li>• Each student reads out list of words</li> </ul>	10mins
Means the Same	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group is presented with a chart containing sentences; the first sentence has a target word circled and then the sentence is repeated with a synonym given for the target word.</li> <li>• Each student comes out and uses a texta to circle the synonym in the sentences.</li> <li>• Words and synonyms are added to a separate synonym chart</li> </ul>	10 mins
Synonym Task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are given a list of 5 target words and are to write down one or more synonyms for each. (This is to be used for anecdotal information)</li> </ul>	10 mins
Student Reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask each student what they have learnt today</li> <li>• Students articulate how they work out word meanings ‘When I come to a word I don’t know I ...</li> </ul>	5 ins

Session 8:

Activity	Task description	Time
Revise the Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise ‘Triple M... Make Meaning Matter’ Students individually state why it is important to understand the meaning of words</li> <li>• Revise what you are going to do to help work out word meanings: ‘When I come to a word I don’t know I...’</li> <li>• Clarify term ‘synonym’</li> </ul>	5 mins
Synonym Game	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Game: students work with a partner; each pair is given a new set of flashcards of target words and their synonyms; these are to be sorted with each student taking turns with their partner and matching a target word with its synonym.</li> <li>• Each student reads out list of words</li> </ul>	10 mins
Find a Synonym	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are presented with a chart containing sentences. Each sentence has a space for a word (synonym for target word) to be inserted; the target word is written underneath this space.</li> <li>• Teacher completes first sentence to demonstrate activity;</li> <li>• Each student has a turn to write their synonym onto the chart.</li> <li>• Student then reads new sentence to the group and teacher asks the group ‘Does this sentence make sense?’</li> </ul>	20 mins
Student Reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask each student what they have learnt today</li> <li>• Students articulate how they work out word meanings ‘When I come to a word I don’t know I ...’</li> </ul>	5 mins

Sessions 9:

Activity	Task Description	Time
Revise the action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise ‘<i>Triple M... Make Meaning Matter</i>’</li> <li>• Revise the action that will help you work out word meaning: ‘<i>When I reach a word I don’t know I say the word, I...</i>’</li> </ul>	5 mins
Synonym Game	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each student has own set of flashcards containing target words and their synonyms; these are to be sorted and each word matched to its synonym. Each student reads out own list.</li> </ul>	5 mins
Shared Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present a short passage with the target word written under the gap where the word would normally be written; (this is presented as a similar activity to a cloze activity except that the space is to be filled in using a synonym for the target word which is written under the gap) Each student has a turn to read aloud one sentence until the passage is finished.</li> </ul>	5 mins
Building synonyms and meanings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual students come out to the enlarged version of the passage and using a texta, they each have a turn to fill in their choice of synonym.</li> <li>• Student then reads back the sentence and group decides if it makes sense.</li> <li>• If there are more synonym choices, they are also written onto the chart.</li> <li>• Words and synonyms are added to chart</li> </ul>	15 mins
Synonym Task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are given a list of 5 target words and are to write down one or more synonyms for each. (This is to be used for anecdotal information)</li> </ul>	10 mins
Student reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask each student what they have learnt today?</li> <li>• <i>What have you learnt in the sessions that you will use when you read?</i></li> </ul>	5 mins

Session 10:

Activity	Task Description	Time
Revise the action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise ‘<i>Triple M... Make Meaning Matter</i>’ Students individually state why it is important to understand the meaning of words</li> <li>• Revise what you are going to do to help work out word meanings: ‘<i>When I come to a word I don’t know I...</i>’</li> <li>• Clarify term ‘synonym’</li> </ul>	5 mins
Shared reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present a short passage with the target word written under the gap where the word would normally be written; (this is presented as a similar activity to a cloze activity except that the space is to be filled in using a synonym for the target word which is written under the gap) Each student has a turn to read aloud one sentence until the passage is finished.</li> </ul>	5 mins
Building synonyms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each student is given their own copy of the story and using their own pencils, they complete the synonym activity.</li> <li>• Upon completion of activity, individual students come out to the enlarged version of the passage and using a texta, they each have a turn to fill in their choice of synonym.</li> <li>• Student then reads back the sentence and group decides if it makes sense.</li> <li>• If there are more synonym choices, they are also written onto the chart.</li> </ul>	20 mins
Student Reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask each student what they have learnt today?</li> <li>• Students articulate how they work out word meanings.</li> <li>• Students reflect on their learning from the 10 lessons and articulate how they are going to use this strategy back in the classroom.</li> </ul>	10 mins

**Appendix 2:**

**Sample of Synonym Activity.**

**Synonym Activity #1**

**Student Name.....**

	<b>Word</b>	<b>Synonym</b>	<b>Synonym</b>	<b>Synonym</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>gap</b>			
<b>2</b>	<b>close</b>			
<b>3</b>	<b>enter</b>			
<b>4</b>	<b>halt</b>			
<b>5</b>	<b>home</b>			

Appendix 3

