

Supports
the Science
of Reading

THE

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MEGABOOK

Strategies to Boost
Word Learning for
Reading, Writing,
Speaking & Listening

OF

GRADES
K-8

VOCABULARY

 SCHOLASTIC

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What Are the Elements of “WISE” Vocabulary Instruction?

A comprehensive approach to vocabulary instruction should contain and integrate the following four core elements.



Word Consciousness

First, varied language experiences, where students are curious about words they encounter and precise about words they choose, are the marker of a classroom centered around **word consciousness**, an essential component of a vocabulary-rich classroom (Graves, 2016; Scott et al., 2008; Beck et al., 2013). Word conscious students notice and use interesting and precise language in writing and speaking. See Chapter 1 for more on word consciousness.



Individual-Word Learning

Second, facilitating **individual-word learning** is a must to increase student vocabulary. According to Beck, McKeown, and Kucan (2013), effective vocabulary instruction focuses on frequently encountered academic words and provides multiple exposures to them in meaningful contexts. Direct, repeated exposure to new vocabulary allows for deeper understanding of words and helps store that vocabulary in long-term memory (Stahl & Nagy, 2006; Altalhab, 2018). Directly teaching words in content areas or units of study is also essential because it enables students to engage more confidently with grade-level academic texts and discussions. See Chapter 2 for more on individual-word learning.



Student Tools for Determining Meaning

Third, students need instruction and practice in using **tools for determining meaning** when they encounter unknown words while reading and conversing with others. Using context clues, morphology, and reference materials are three proven strategies that aid students' independence in deciphering the meaning of unfamiliar words (Nagy & Scott, 2000; Graves, 2016). See Chapter 3 for more on student tools for determining meaning.

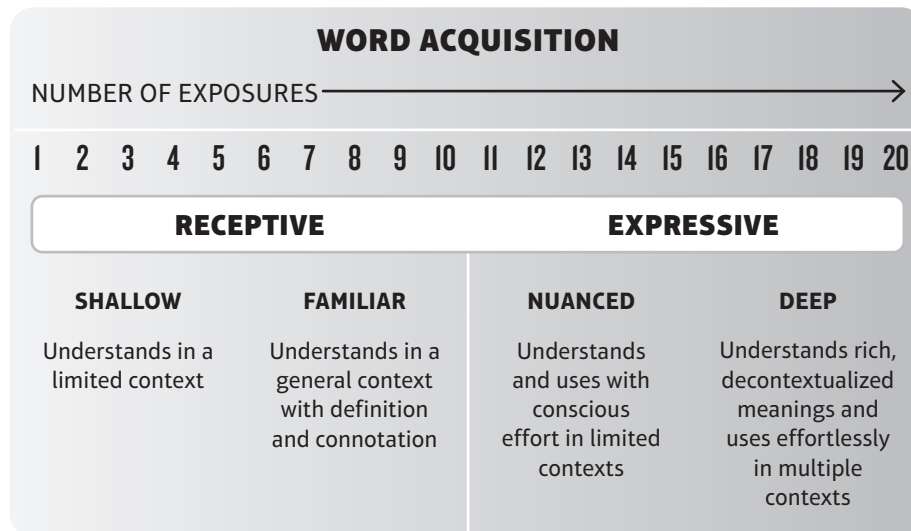


Exploration of Word Relationships

Lastly, students need time to deepen their understanding of words they are familiar with by **exploring word relationships**, such as multiple-meaning words, homophones, and figurative language. This type of exploration is essential in building a deeper understanding of language (Baumann & Kame'enui, 1991; Blachowicz & Fisher, 2010; Stahl & Nagy, 2006). See Chapter 4 for more on the exploration of word relationships.

This book is structured around those four core elements, which are explored in greater detail in the chapter introductions.

Stages of Vocabulary Acquisition



Numbers are approximate and based on an average from numerous studies. Factors such as student acquisition rate, complexity of a word, and level of context in an encounter can vary the number of exposures needed for each stage. (Graves, 2016 and Beck et al., 2013)

Vocabulary acquisition occurs daily in students' lives. Let's dive into learning opportunities that help students to move from *shallow* to *deep* understanding of words.

- **Incidental word learning** refers to the process of acquiring vocabulary naturally through exposure to language in conversations and everyday experiences (Beck et al., 2013). According to Beck et al. (2013), this type of learning happens in informal or social settings, and when students are reading widely and independently, often without purposely focusing on the words themselves.
- **Explicit vocabulary instruction** involves teaching carefully selected words that are critical for comprehension and academic success. Those words often come from a book study or content-area unit of study. Teachers typically provide a student-friendly definition of a word before engaging students in a variety of meaningful, contextualizing activities to reinforce their understanding of that word. Explicit instruction also involves teaching strategies for determining word meanings, such as using context clues, analyzing morphemes, and consulting reference materials, which helps students unlock unfamiliar words independently. In addition, explicit instruction involves exploring word relationships by focusing on figurative language, multiple-meaning words, and homophones to deepen students' understanding of and flexibility with language (Fisher & Frey, 2014; Graves, 2016). You'll find activities and strategies for explicit instruction throughout this book.
- **Implicit vocabulary instruction** involves acquiring vocabulary during discussions, read-alouds, field trips, collaborative classroom experiences, and spontaneous teachable moments throughout the school day. Rather than directly teaching specific words, teachers purposely introduce and clarify word meanings as opportunities arise, allowing students to absorb vocabulary through meaningful interactions (Graves, 2016). Although implicit vocabulary instruction is not something that's typically planned, it can be a key part of the curriculum in the directions and feedback you give, the curiosity about words you encourage, and other everyday interactions you have with students when vocabulary learning opportunities arise.

CHAPTER 1

Word
Consciousness



Strategies for Developing a Curiosity About Words

LANGUAGE DOMAINS



Reading



Writing



Speaking



Listening



1.D Weekly Word Quests



Weekly Word Quests encourage students and staff to engage actively with words. Every week, a selected teacher presents an age-appropriate, word-related challenge to all students, such as, “Find words with a prefix meaning *again*.” Use the Weekly Word Quests examples on pages 29–30. Each teacher then receives a name tag with a word, with some that meet the requirement (*redecorate*) and others that don’t (*reaching*). The words are also posted outside each classroom, allowing students another way to discover them. Throughout the week, students casually explore name tags and classroom displays to find words that match the required task before sharing their findings at the end of the week.

Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• name-tag stickers or 2-x-4 mailing labels (one for each participating teacher)• sheet protectors (for outside each teacher’s door)• Weekly Word Quests examples, pages 29–30
Grade Band	K–8
Length of Activity	Varies
Differentiation Ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Striving Learners: Adapt the challenge based on students’ skill levels. If a requirement is too advanced, it can be modified using the same words, but focusing on a simpler feature such as a digraph, vowel team, ending, or syllable count.• English Learners: Write the words in English and in your students’ native language(s) to allow all students access to the challenge, when appropriate. Utilizing images on the displays outside the classroom can provide additional support.• Thriving Learners: After completing the first quest, students tackle an extra question, such as identifying a different word part, meaning, or usage.
Extension Ideas	Word Scavenger Hunt: Ask students to search for correct words that are NOT displayed as part of the challenge. Have students search for words that fit the challenge in books, signs, or their surroundings. They can write down words they find and share during a class discussion.
Answers	Answers integrated in Weekly Word Quests examples, pages 29–30

Example 1: Find words that mean the opposite of the underlined word in the sentence. *The massive skyscraper towered over the city.*

Correct Answers		Distractors/Incorrect Answers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tiny • little • small • miniature • teeny 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • slight • undersized • minuscule • puny • petite 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • colossal • tremendous • gigantic • huge • large 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • big • vast • enormous

Example 2: Find words that have a suffix AND a prefix.

Correct Answers		Distractors/Incorrect Answers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unlucky • unhelpful • replayed • unbelievable • pretreatment • unreadable • rereading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • indescribable • rereads • previews • misspelled • dishonestly • triangles • bicycles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • replay • disagree • preheat • subway • misstep • outrun • freedom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • childhood • beautiful • simply • heavy • teacher • garland • mindful

Example 3: Find words with a prefix that means “back or again.”

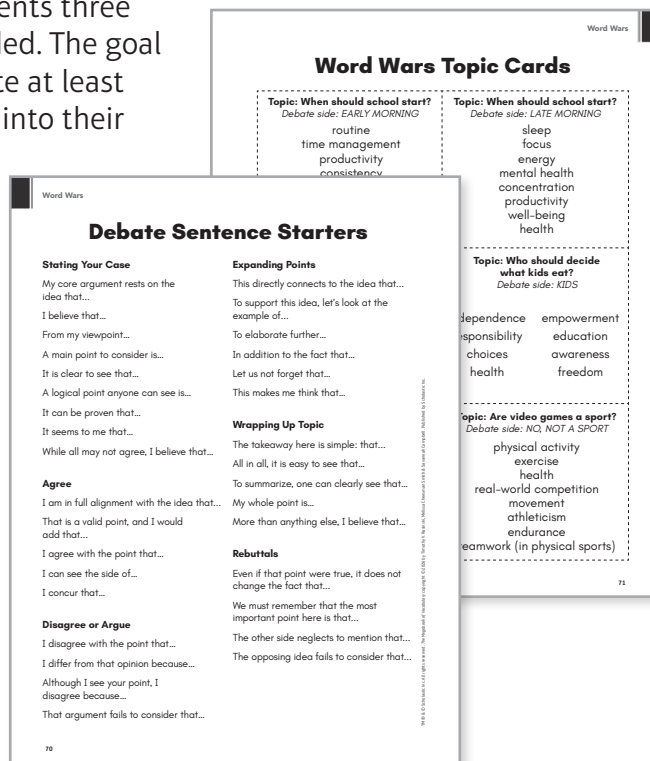
Correct Answers		Distractors/Incorrect Answers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • remind • resend • renew • rematch • report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • restart • restocked • retrace • reword • reuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reach • ready • rent • reef • reader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • really • rental • reaped • reptile • reckon

Example 4: Find words that are synonyms for *happy*.

Correct Answers		Distractors/Incorrect Answers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • joyful • cheerful • glad • content • satisfied 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ecstatic • overjoyed • elated • blissful • thrilled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sad • unhappy • miserable • upset • heartbroken 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • devastated • gloomy • displeased • troubled • uneasy

1.R Word Wars

For this strategy, students engage in mini-debates with classmates to practice using precise language. Give each student a Word Wars Topic Card on page 71 and access to the Debate Sentence Starters on page 70, which you can project on the screen or distribute a copy of to each student. Give students several minutes to prepare before the debate begins. During the debate, allow each student to speak for 10 seconds, alternating arguments three times. Modify times as needed. The goal is for students to incorporate at least six of the vocabulary words into their argument. The debates can be held in front of the class, one group at a time, or simultaneously with students paired up around the room while you circulate. Encourage students to listen carefully to the other side so they can respond thoughtfully and counter-argue. This strategy helps students use more formal language, expanding their expressive vocabularies for future conversations.



Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debate Sentence Starters, page 70 • Word Wars Topic Cards, page 71
Grade Band	4–8
Length of Activity	10 minutes
Differentiation Ideas	Striving Learners and English Learners: Read each vocabulary word aloud to support oral language development and troubleshoot any pronunciation or comprehension issues.
Extension Ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create debates with topics being studied in class (two sides of a historical debate) with a list of words for students to use. • Have students write a paragraph that solidifies their ideas using all the vocabulary words.



Strategies for Choosing the Right Expressive Words

LANGUAGE DOMAINS



Reading



Writing



Speaking



Listening



Word Wars Topic Cards

Topic: When should school start?

Debate side: EARLY MORNING

routine
time management
productivity
consistency
preparation
efficiency
balance
organization

Topic: When should school start?

Debate side: LATE MORNING

sleep
focus
energy
mental health
concentration
productivity
well-being
health

Topic: Who should decide what kids eat?

Debate side: PARENTS / ADULTS

nutrition guidance
health habit
control balance
protection safety

Topic: Who should decide what kids eat?

Debate side: KIDS

independence empowerment
responsibility education
choices awareness
health freedom

Topic: Are video games a sport?

Debate side: YES, A SPORT

strategy
teamwork
skill
competition
coordination
training
focus
reflexes

Topic: Are video games a sport?

Debate side: NO, NOT A SPORT

physical activity
exercise
health
real-world competition
movement
athleticism
endurance
teamwork (in physical sports)

CHAPTER 2

Individual-Word Learning



Strategies for Learning Words We Provide

LANGUAGE DOMAINS



Reading



Writing



Speaking



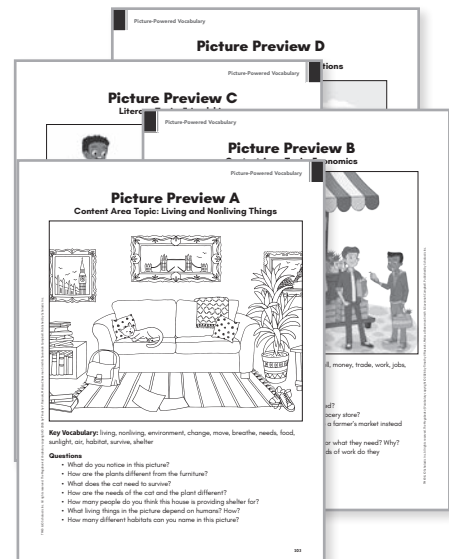
Listening



2.K Picture-Powered Vocabulary



Help students acquire vocabulary by front-loading an upcoming concept to be learned with images to help students visualize that concept. For example, for a unit on habitats, gather pictures of different animal habitats. Another option is to use one of the Picture Preview sheets on pages 103–106. After presenting the images, invite students to discuss what they notice with a partner, modeling how to notice specific details in the scenes. Refer to the provided or created vocabulary list as needed during the discussion and encourage students to use the words in their noticings.



Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Picture Preview A, page 103 • Picture Preview B, page 104 • Picture Preview C, page 105 • Picture Preview D, page 106 • images related to a new unit or topic • vocabulary to support images and unit or topic
Grade Band	K–8
Length of Activity	10–20 minutes
Differentiation Ideas	English Learners: Provide students with a vocabulary notebook where they can record words in their native language, as well as the English translation. Invite students to use the vocabulary notebook to add words they notice from their Picture Previews.
Extension Ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print the images and label with any vocabulary discussed. Hang the images with the labeled terms on the wall. • Find additional images to discuss. See if students can remember any of the vocabulary discussed in the first Picture Preview.

Picture Preview D

Literary Topic: Change and Transitions



Key Vocabulary: change, grow, move, new, different, temporary, permanent, feelings, brave, learn, try, adapt, choice, finish, adjust, step, journey, improve, experience

Questions:

- What do you notice in this picture?
- Why might the boy be sad that he is moving?
- What parts of moving are temporary, and what parts are permanent?
- What choices does it appear the boy has made to help him handle this big change?
- How could this move be the beginning of a journey for him?
- Can you think of a time when a change helped you grow or improve?
- Is change always hard, or are there times when it is easy?
- What might the boy do to become comfortable with moving to a new place?

CHAPTER 2

Individual-Word Learning



Strategies for Learning Words We Provide

LANGUAGE DOMAINS



Reading



Writing



Speaking



Listening



2.5 My Character Traits

Distribute the Character Traits List on page 135 and read aloud or have students chorally read each trait and its definition. Then have students rate themselves on a scale from 1 to 10 to show to what extent they feel they embody the trait: *1 = not at all*, *10 = perfectly*. Provide explanations and examples as needed to ensure students understand the meaning of the words. Say and have students say the words as many times as possible to provide multiple exposures. Then have students review their lists and select five of their top-ranked traits and write why these words best describe them. Students can share, if they choose, to read their writing aloud in small groups or to the class.

My Character Traits

Name _____ Date _____

Character Traits List

Directions: Rate yourself on a scale of 1 to 10 for each of the following character traits to describe how well it describes you.

NOT AT ALL ← 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 → PERFECTLY

1. **diligent**: working hard and putting in effort to complete tasks well
2. **empathetic**: understanding and caring about other people's feelings
3. **impulsive**: doing things quickly without thinking them through
4. **optimistic**: expecting good things and seeing the bright side
5. **moody**: changing emotions quickly and often being unpredictable
6. **humble**: not bragging or thinking you're better than others
7. **witty**: smart and funny in a clever way
8. **resilient**: able to recover quickly from challenges or setbacks
9. **forthright**: speaking honestly and directly, without hiding feelings
10. **pragmatic**: focused on realistic solutions rather than emotions
11. **perceptive**: quick to notice and see things that others might miss
12. **charismatic**: naturally able to attract and inspire others
13. **stubborn**: sticking to your ideas and not easily changing your mind
14. **skeptical**: questioning everything and not easily believing things
15. **astute**: able to notice and understand things quickly and clearly
16. **diplomatic**: skilled at handling situations without upsetting people
17. **meticulous**: extremely careful about details and accuracy
18. **tenacious**: determined and forceful, even when facing obstacles

135

Materials	Character Traits List, page 135
Grade Band	4–8
Length of Activity	15 minutes
Differentiation Ideas	Striving Learners and English Learners: Check on learners before writing the paragraph to ensure they understand the meaning of the words they have chosen to best describe themselves.
Extension Ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have students rate other people they know on these traits. This should be fun and lighthearted and give students the opportunity to engage in the meaning of the word with multiple exposures, as they are now reading each word another time, each time they rate someone new.• Have students rate a well-known character from a literature study on a scale from 1 to 10 and describe why. This could be just an oral activity when they've finished a book, or while they're still reading it to study how an author develops characters.



**Strategies
for Learning
Words We
Provide**

**LANGUAGE
DOMAINS**



Reading



Writing



Speaking

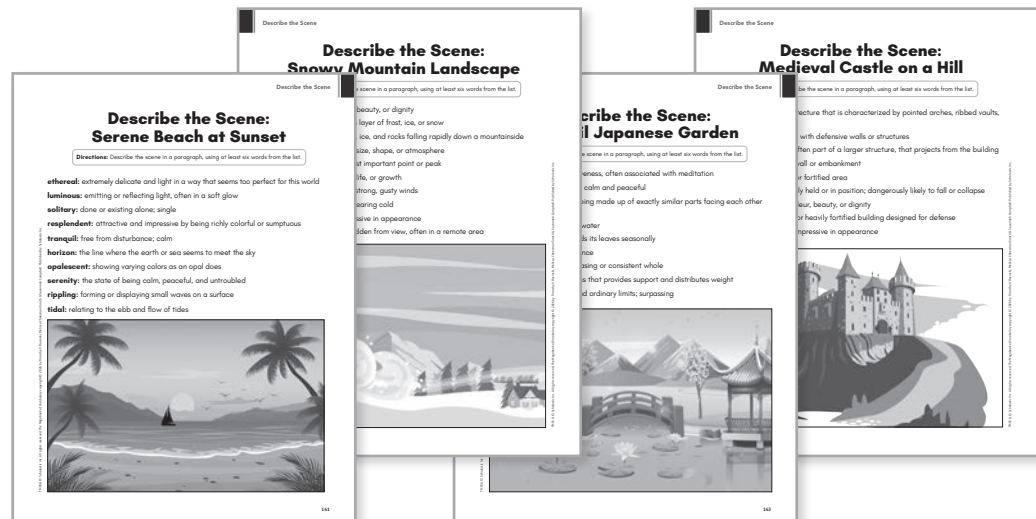


Listening



2.V Describe the Scene

Select a Describe the Scene on pages 141–144 and make copies for students, or copy a few Describe the Scenes and let each student choose one. To begin, read each word aloud and have students chorally repeat them. Then have students study the details in the picture and identify the ones that stand out by discussing them in small groups. Have students write a paragraph describing the scene, aiming to incorporate at least six of the listed words. Once they’ve finished, invite students to share their descriptions in small groups. This strategy will provide multiple exposures to the vocabulary words as students read, discuss, and write with the words.



Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the Scene: Serene Beach at Sunset, page 141 • Describe the Scene: Snowy Mountain Landscape, page 142 • Describe the Scene: Tranquil Japanese Garden, page 143 • Describe the Scene: Medieval Castle on a Hill, page 144
Grade Band	4–8
Length of Activity	30 minutes
Differentiation Ideas	English Learners: Point out which part of the picture each word relates to, providing a visual context.
Extension Ideas	Have students use these paragraphs as a basis for a setting in an upcoming story they write, which will now include a ready-to-go, well-written setting.

Describe the Scene: Serene Beach at Sunset

Directions: Describe the scene in a paragraph, using at least six words from the list.

ethereal: extremely delicate and light in a way that seems too perfect for this world

luminous: emitting or reflecting light, often in a soft glow

solitary: done or existing alone; single

resplendent: attractive and impressive by being richly colorful or sumptuous

tranquil: free from disturbance; calm

horizon: the line where the earth or sea seems to meet the sky

opalescent: showing varying colors as an opal does

serenity: the state of being calm, peaceful, and untroubled

rippling: forming or displaying small waves on a surface

tidal: relating to the ebb and flow of tides



Roots

a not, without

anti against

arch rule

aster star

aud to hear

auto self

bio life

chron time

cracy rule

cred to believe

cycle wheel, circle

deme people

dict to say

duct to lead

epi upon, into

eu good

fact to make

fer to carry

flex to bend

form to shape

geo earth

graph to write

gress to step

hydro water

hyper over

hypo under

ject to throw

log word

logy study of

meter measure

micro small

mit, mis to send

mon one

path feeling

ped foot

pend to hang

phile love

phobia fear, hatred

phon sound

photo light

phys nature, natural

plic to fold

polis city

poly many

port to carry

pos to put, place

psych mind

rupt to break

scope to look at

scrib,
script to write

sist to stand

soph wisdom

spect to see

struct to build

sym, syn together

techn skill

tele distant

ten to hold

therm heat

tract to pull

vis, vid to see

CHAPTER 4

Exploration of Word Relationships



Strategies for Understanding Relationships Among Words

LANGUAGE DOMAINS



Reading



Writing



Speaking

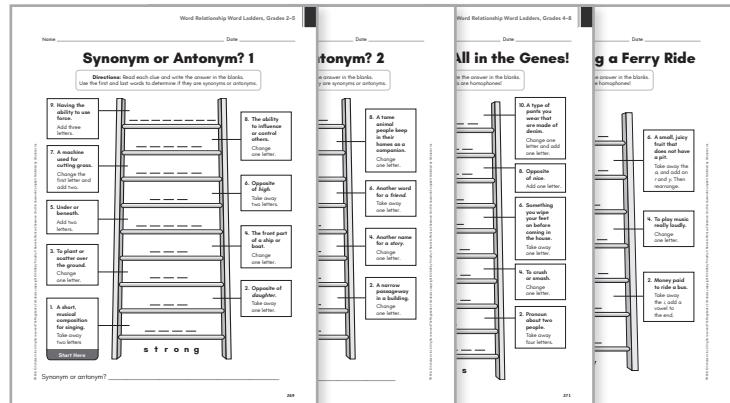


Listening



4.N Word Relationship Word Ladders

Copy and distribute one of the Word Ladders on pages 269–272. Have students read each clue, determine an answer, and fill in the blank. Give additional clues if necessary for students to determine an answer. When they've completed the ladder, have them decide if the first and last words are synonyms or antonyms (for the first two word ladders) and note the homophones (for the last two word ladders).



Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word Ladder: Synonym or Antonym? 1, Grades 2–5, page 269 • Word Ladder: Synonym or Antonym? 2, Grades 2–5, page 270 • Word Ladder: Homophones: It's All in the Genes!, Grades 4–8, page 271 • Word Ladder: Homophones: Taking a Ferry Ride, Grades 4–8, page 272
Grade Band	2–8
Length of Activity	10 minutes per activity
Differentiation Ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Striving Learners: Provide the word for the more challenging parts of the word ladder, or provide the first letter of each word to offer a clue. • English Learners: Provide all the words but in a different order so students have a list to choose from and can choose words that match the semantic and letter clues.
Extension Ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give short lessons along the way about words, tenses, definitions, word relationships, etc., as the opportunity arises. • Check out more <i>Word Ladders</i> books from Scholastic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Daily Word Ladders: Idioms</i>, Rasinski & Smith • <i>Daily Word Ladders: Content Areas</i>, Rasinski & Smith • <i>Daily Word Ladders: Grades K–1</i>, Rasinski • <i>Daily Word Ladders: Grades 2–3</i>, Rasinski • <i>Daily Word Ladders: Grades 4–6</i>, Rasinski • <i>Partner Poems & Word Ladders for Building Foundational Literacy Skills</i>, Harrison, Rasinski, & Fresch
Answers	All bottom to top: Synonym or Antonym? 1: (synonym) strong, song, son, sow, bow, below, low, mower, power, powerful; Synonym or Antonym? 2: (antonym) full, hull, hall, tall, tale, pale, pal, pat, pet, empty; It's All in the Genes! genes, genius, us, mush, mash, mast, mat, man, mean, lean, jeans; Taking a Ferry Ride: fairy, fair, fare, flare, blare, bare, berry, ferry

Name: _____ Date: _____

Synonym or Antonym? 1

Directions: Read each clue and write the answer in the blanks. Use the first and last words to determine if they are synonyms or antonyms.

9. Having the ability to use force.
Add three letters.

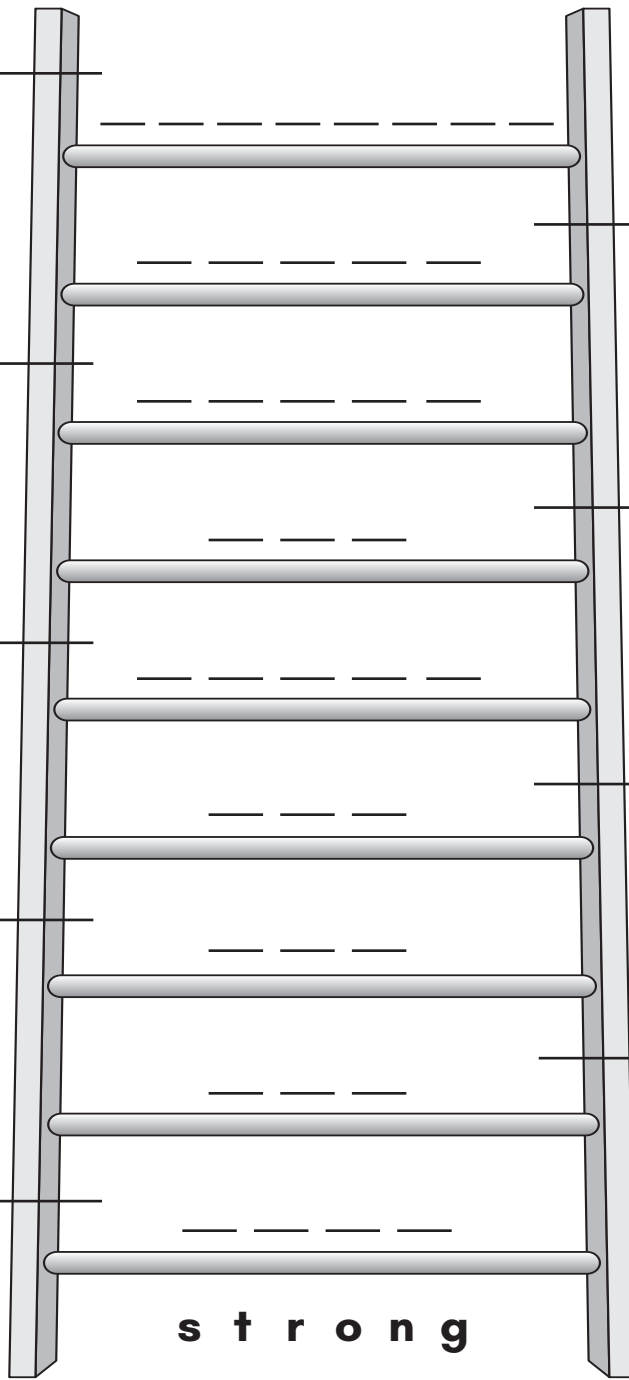
7. A machine used for cutting grass.
Change the first letter and add two.

5. Under or beneath.
Add two letters.

3. To plant or scatter over the ground.
Change one letter.

1. A short, musical composition for singing.
Take away two letters.

Start Here



8. The ability to influence or control others.
Change one letter.

6. Opposite of high.
Take away two letters.

4. The front part of a ship or boat.
Change one letter.

2. Opposite of daughter.
Take away one letter.

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Synonym or antonym? _____

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“This megabook is absolutely packed with activities that foster rich language development. Students of all ages will delight in acquiring the vocabulary necessary for writing, reading, speaking, and listening. Trusted experts Rasinski, Smith, and Campbell translate the evidence base into fun, engaging strategies that make word learning joyful!”

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See more remarks on the inside front cover.



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Professor Emeritus of Literacy Education at Kent State University, has authored over 50 books and more than 200 articles on reading fluency, word study, and support for struggling readers. He has served in key leadership roles in national literacy organizations and is widely recognized in the field of literacy. He was inducted into the International Reading Hall of Fame in 2010.



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