



## Vocabulary Skill Sequence

- Basic Categories
- Basic Concept Words
- Describing Words
- Combining Adjectives
- Categorizing Words
- Multiple Meaning Words
- Synonyms & Antonyms
- Similes & Metaphors
- Idioms
- Simple Analogies
- Affix & Root Meaning (Structural Analysis)
- Academic Vocabulary
- **SHADES OF MEANING**
- Complex Analogies

### Curriculum Connection

Select words from class vocabulary and texts and discuss words as part of a spectrum of meaning. For example, if a new science vocabulary word is *microscopic*, discuss other words related to size and where each belongs on a spectrum. Words can be posted in the classroom or recorded in a journal.

## Shades of Meaning

Words can be related to the same topic but can have slightly different meanings or subtle shades of meaning. As students work with shades of meaning that involve degree, they begin to understand that words can be similar in their literal meanings but also have differences in their implied meanings.

### Classroom Ideas

#### Teach or Review

As necessary, teach or review the definition of shades of meaning. Provide example sets of words (e.g., hot, warm, boiling), working together with students to identify the core concept (e.g., temperature) and then order the words along a continuum (e.g., warm → hot → boiling).

#### Tell Me More

Review the concept of an antonym and have students generate an antonym pair (e.g., hot/cold). Then, have them think of a word that has a meaning that fits between these words (hot/warm/cold). Talk about the differences in meanings and have students use each word in a sentence.

#### Phrases & Sentences

Provide students with a list of negative and positive words (e.g., nosy/curious, cramped/cozy). Explain that these words have similar meanings (denotations) but different implied meanings (connotations). Students can mark the negative word (-) and the positive word (+). They can then write sentences to show how each word is used in different contexts.

#### Brainstorm

Using the word sets on the following page as models, present one word set to students. Have students organize the words across the spectrum. Then, have students brainstorm other words that could be added to the set, using a thesaurus if needed. Finally, students can write short stories or paragraphs using each word from the set.

#### Act It Out

Divide students into groups of four. Using the word sets on the following page as models, assign each student a word from the spectrum to act out or illustrate. Have the students discuss the similarities and differences between their performances and/or illustrations.

**Shades of Meaning Word Sets**

microscopic	little	large	huge
silent	quiet	noisy	thunderous
dry	damp	soggy	drenched
exhausted	drowsy	alert	energized
filthy	dirty	clean	spotless
easy	tricky	challenging	grueling
frigid	chilly	warm	hot
stand	walk	jog	sprint
drip	trickle	flow	gush
dab	wipe	scrub	scour