Name _____ Date _____

# Choosing the best word

Pick the synonym or antonym that fits the sentence's meaning and strength.

## 1 Learn



Synonyms aren't all the same **strength**, and a word can mean different things in different sentences. Great writers check both!

**1. Strength: shades of meaning**



**warm** **hot** **boiling**

all synonyms, from weaker to stronger

**2. Meaning: which "light"?**

a **light** bag ↔ a **heavy** bag

a **light** room ↔ a **dark** room

same word, different meanings, so different antonyms

**Let's do one: "The hikers were ___ after climbing the mountain all day." (tired / sleepy / exhausted)**

**1.** Read the whole sentence. What is the clue? They climbed **all day**.

**2.** How strong should the word be? Climbing all day is hard work, so we want a **strong** word.

**3. Exhausted** is the strongest. *Sleepy* means ready for bed, which isn't quite the point.

**Flip's tip:** ask two questions. **What does the word mean here?** Then **how strong is it?** Read the sentence again with your choice to check it sounds right.

**Warm up:** number each set from **1** (weakest) to **3** (strongest).

wet ☐ damp ☐ soaked ☐

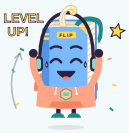
adore ☐ like ☐ love ☐

eat ☐ devour ☐ nibble ☐

**Grown-ups:** there's often more than one good answer. What matters is the reason: "I chose furious because he was shouting, so he was very angry."

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## 2 Try it together a child and a grown-up, about 10 minutes




### Shades of meaning line-up

**You need:** 12 scraps of paper, a pencil and a table or floor to lay them on.

1. Write each word on its own scrap: **whisper, say, shout, scream · walk, jog, run, sprint · cool, cold, chilly, freezing**.
2. Mix up each set of four. Lay one set in a line from **weakest** to **strongest**.
3. Talk about any you disagree on: is chilly colder than cold?
4. Write your final order for each set in the table.

| Weakest | → | → | Strongest |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

**Grown-ups:** disagreement is good: some words are very close. Ask your child to explain their choice.

## 3 Practise

**A.** Write each set in order from weakest to strongest.

*overjoyed, pleased, happy* _____ → _____ → _____

*stare, glance, look* _____ → _____ → _____

*downpour, drizzle, rain* _____ → _____ → _____

**B.** The word in bold has more than one meaning. Ring the antonym that fits **this** sentence.

1. Leo carried a **light** bag. **heavy** / **dark**
2. The maths question was **hard**. **soft** / **easy**
3. Mia sat on a **hard** wooden chair. **soft** / **easy**
4. Sam has **fair** hair. **unfair** / **dark**

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**C.** Choose the best word for each sentence. Explain your choice in a few words.

1. Ava **whispered** **said** **screamed** so she wouldn't wake the baby.

   Because… _____

2. The **big** **large** **colossal** whale was longer than three buses.

   Because… _____

3. Dad was **annoyed** **cross** **furious** when the dog ate his whole birthday cake.

   Because… _____

**D.** Make it stronger! Rewrite with a stronger synonym for each underlined word.

The **big** storm made the **scared** children **run** inside.

_____

## Challenge

Leo says, "The antonym of **light** is always **dark**." Is he right? Give an example to explain.

_____

_____

_____

## I can… Tick when you can.

- [ ] put synonyms in order of strength, like warm, hot, boiling
- [ ] choose the antonym that fits what a word means in a sentence
- [ ] explain why one word fits a sentence best