



Activities

Synonym Salad!

Enlisting the help of older siblings or friends, concoct a "salad" of as many synonyms as possible in a game for two or more players.

Introduction

In the WordGirl episode, "The Wrath of Tobey," Tobey asks WordGirl why she used the word "demolish" instead of "destroy." WordGirl tells Tobey that "destroy" is overused. Synonyms -- or words that have the same or nearly the same meaning as another word or words -- are part of what make the English language so rich. "Demolish," for example, has 37 different synonyms! Synonyms spice up our writing and give it variety and color.

Encourage older siblings or friends to help your child create and play a game that depends on synonyms. In order to play the game, there are some initial steps to take.

Materials:

- Drawing Paper
- Markers or Colored Pencils
- 2 notepads (or more, depending on number of players)
- One salad bowl
- Two salad plates (or more, depending on number of players)
- Stop-watch
- Scorecard
- Dictionary
- Thesaurus

Directions:

First ask the participants to draw, color and cut out various foods that can be found in a salad. For example, tomatoes, cucumbers, different kinds of lettuce, celery, red, green and yellow peppers, olives, etc. There need to be twenty "pieces" in all. Encourage as much creativity as possible in designing the vegetable shapes, but make sure they are distinct from each other. When finished, put them to the side.

Explain the meaning of SYNONYM, and give a specific example. For example, some synonyms of "demolish" include: bulldoze, crush, decimate, flatten, ruin, smash, and wreck.

Now, between you and the players, create a list of twenty simple adjectives. In fact, the simpler the better, like "young" or "big." Ask the players to write out these adjectives on paper. Then glue them to the back of the vegetable shapes. After this is completed, put all the vegetable shapes into the salad bowl.



Place a notepad and writing utensil before each player. Now you're ready to play "Synonym Salad!"

Take one "piece of the salad" and place it word-up on the table. Each player writes down as many synonyms as she can think of in three minutes. Read out loud the players' lists of synonyms when the time is up. Whoever thinks of the most synonyms gets to keep "the piece of salad" on her plate.

Go through as many "pieces of salad" as the players have energy for. Each time they create a list of as many synonyms as they can think of for the adjective. Along the way, if there are any questions or concerns about the synonyms, consult the dictionary. Keep score each round. At the end of the game, see who has more of "the salad" on his plate!

Talk About It: Now that the game is over, explain to your child what a **THESAURUS** is, and show her one. Ask him when she might use a thesaurus.

Take It Further: Now show her how to use a thesaurus. Look up several of the adjectives she's just written synonyms for, and read aloud some of the synonyms she may have missed.

Education Sidebar

Episode: "The Wrath of Tobey" [117]

Age Range: 6-8 year olds

Objectives:

- To understand what a synonym is
- To practice using synonyms
- To expand vocabulary
- To promote use of the dictionary or thesaurus
- To express creativity
- To encourage problem-solving

Skills:

- Language and literacy
- Cognitive thinking
- Score-keeping
- Fine motor
- Creative expression

Subject Areas:

- Language Arts
- Math
- Art