Georgia Performance Standards Framework for English Language Arts-Grade 3

Instructional/Learning Activity Task Template:

Overview

Unit Title: Narrative

Annotation:
This instructional task focuses upon the use of a narrative text to support the acquisition and understanding of vocabulary. The included learning activities emphasize both antonyms and synonyms in support of the Georgia Performance Standard, ELA3R2.

This instructional task is based upon the suggested picture book Owl Moon by Jane Yolen, however, other high quality picture books could be substituted as well. Teacher read-alouds should be carefully chosen. The read-alouds should have themes that reflect the lives of students. Chosen read-alouds may be at a reading level higher than the students’ instructional level so as to expose children to a more complex story structure. Through the use of such read-alouds, the teacher will help broaden and deepen the students’ vocabulary knowledge and awareness of the characteristics of narrative texts.

Activities contained as components of this instructional task include the reading of the above-mentioned text, vocabulary introduction, instructional games such as Synonym Partners and Antonym Riddles, thesaurus practice, and the creation of student-generated products to demonstrate understanding of both synonyms and antonyms.

Grade, Subject, Topic, Author(s):
3rd Grade, Narrative, Synonyms/Antonyms
Shannon Bryant and Jennifer Wynn, Houston County

Special Notes to Teacher:
Each session of this instructional task will take approximately 45 minutes. These sessions have been identified as “Mini-tasks.” Content should be taught over a series of days, most likely 4 separate class periods.

It may be beneficial for the teacher to have an auditory cue, such as a train whistle or a bell, to aid in class transitions for this instructional task. This will assist with organization, noise control, and classroom clean-up.

Standards

Focus Standard/Element(s):
ELA3R2-The student acquires and uses grade-level words to communicate effectively. The student:
c. Recognizes and applies the appropriate usage of homophones, homographs, antonyms, and synonyms.

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Kathy Cox, State Superintendent of Schools
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Complementary Standard/Element(s):
ELA3R3-The students uses a variety of strategies to gain meaning from grade-level text. The student:
a. Reads a variety of texts for information and pleasure.
i. Makes connections between texts and/or personal experiences.
r. Applies dictionary, thesaurus, and glossary skills to determine word meanings.
ELA3C1-The student demonstrates understanding and control of the rules of the English language, realizing that usage involves the appropriate application of conventions and grammar in both written and spoken formats. The student:
k. Uses the dictionary and thesaurus to support word choices.
l. Uses common rules of spelling and corrects words using dictionaries and other resources.
ELA3LSV1-The student uses oral and visual strategies to communicate. The student:
d. Listens to and views a variety of media to acquire information.

Learning Goals

Essential Question(s):
- How can I enhance my vocabulary to implement effective word choices in my writing in order to better engage my readers?
- How can a broader understanding of synonyms and antonyms enable me to become a more fluent reader with better comprehension?
- How can a broader understanding of synonyms and antonyms serve to make my writing more interesting and deepen my overall knowledge of vocabulary?

Knowledge:
- Definition and examples of synonyms.
- Definition and examples of antonyms.
- Examples of effective vocabulary choices that lead to better character and plot development and are central to producing high-quality, narrative pieces.
- Characteristics of narrative writing.
- An understanding that narrative writing can serve a variety of purposes, including telling a story, communicating real or imagined experiences, and expressing ideas in a chronological sequence.
- Practical use of the thesaurus as a writing and reading tool.

Skills:
The student will:
- Define and give examples of synonyms.
- Define and give examples of antonyms.
- Make effective vocabulary choices that lead to better character and plot development.
- Produce high-quality, narrative pieces.
- Distinguish the characteristics of narrative writing.
- Demonstrate narrative writing that serves a variety of purposes, including telling a story, communicating real or imagined experiences, and expressing ideas in a chronological sequence.
- Use the thesaurus as a writing and reading tool.
Balanced Assessment for Task

Assessment Method/Type:
Teacher Observation:
- For example, teachers will monitor and facilitate class creation of synonym/antonym vocabulary chart and participation in class game—Synonym Partners.

Student-Generated Products:
- Specifically, Animal Antonym Riddle Cards, Synonym Sentences, and Personal Narratives, and Student Understanding Rubric.

Description/Directions for Assessment:
- Student Understanding Rubric (Antonyms and Synonyms)—Along with multiple student products and ongoing teacher observation, students should also be encouraged to monitor their own progress and level of understanding. The attached rubric may be used by students in an effort to encourage such self-reflection. (See attachment.)

- Synonym Partners—While teacher observation should be ongoing in the elementary classroom, teachers should particularly take note of student responses, involvement, and accuracy in identifying, sorting, and defining antonyms and synonyms in the activities which are a part of this instructional task. (See attached Teacher Observation Checklist—Synonym Partners, however observations may be recorded in a variety of ways, including anecdotal notes on mailing labels, sticky notes, etc.)

- Animal Antonym Riddle Cards—Upon the conclusion of session 3, students will create antonym riddle cards about a specific animal to correlate with our suggested text, Owl Moon by Jane Yolen. Riddle cards should contain 5 clues which contain antonyms, or opposites, relating to an animal’s given appearance and/or behavior. For example, students may write the following about a dog:
  1. I am man’s worst enemy. (Translation: I am man’s best friend.)
  2. I do not have fur. (Translation: I do have fur.)
  3. My tail is never wagging. (Translation: My tail is always wagging.)
  4. I am a herbivore. (Translation: I am a carnivore.)
  5. I detest playing in the water. (Translation: I love playing in the water.)

  Student clues should be written on standard-sized notecards.

  Teachers may assess this activity in 2 ways. Not only should students be able to generate their own clues based upon their ability to create antonyms and antonym phrases, but they should also be able to decode the clues written by other students. For example, teachers might choose to display student clues on a bulletin board, assigning a number to each riddle card. Students may then try to solve the other riddles by recording their answers on a numbered sheet of paper.

- Synonym Sentences—After session 4, students will assume the role of editor to rewrite phrases from the suggested text, Owl Moon by Jane Yolen. Students will use their understanding of story vocabulary, author’s voice, antonyms, and synonyms to generate their own effective sentences. The teacher should choose key phrases from the narrative text to write on the board or prepare on a Power Point presentation. (An example of a Power Point is included as an attachment.) Students will rewrite
these sentences using synonyms for the underlined words. For example, the teacher may write, “If you go owling, you have to be quiet and make your own heat” from Yolen’s narrative. In response, a student may reciprocate with, “If you go owling, you have to be silent and create your own warmth.”

- **Personal Narratives**—After revising Yolen’s text, students are encouraged to write their own narratives about a walk they have taken, using key, powerful vocabulary from the class synonym/antonym chart generated in sessions 1 through 3. (An example of this chart is included as an attachment.)

***More information about these assessment activities is also included in the “Procedures” section below. Samples may also be found in the included attachments.***

**Student Work Samples (optional): N/A**

**Procedures, Directions, and Resources**

**Procedures/Directions (Detailed Steps) with Approximate Duration of Each Step:**
(This instructional task has been divided into 4 mini-tasks below. Each instructional session will take approximately 45 minutes and will guide the instructor in the teaching of ELA3R2 within the Narrative English Language Arts Unit.)

**Mini-task 1 (Day 1—30-45 minutes)**
**Opening**
The teacher will begin with a text opener. Students will respond orally to the question, “Have you ever looked for something that was hidden?” Students should think, then pair and share their responses to this question. In this manner teachers encourage children to make text-to-self connections with the book under study.

**Worktime**
After sharing time, the teacher will introduce students to the Caldecott winning picture book, *Owl Moon* by Jane Yolen. In this book a child takes a quiet walk through the woods, searching ardently for a hidden owl. (This is the suggested text; however, another quality picture book may be substituted as well.) The teacher will remind students that this is a narrative text—an account of events with a complex story structure that includes setting and characters. The teacher will then read the story orally to the students. While enjoying the story, students are encouraged to listen for “Vivid Vocabulary”—words which capture their attention or interest. Students may record their ideas on small dry erase boards or sticky notes.

**Closing**
At the conclusion of the story, a list of these words will be made on a chart. (See attached *Class Vocabulary Chart.*) Using context clues and classroom resources, the teacher will review story words with students. Closing discussion questions may be posed, such as “What type of mental picture does this word create?” or “Why do you think the author chose this word to use to describe the cold night in the woods?”
Mini-task 2 (Day 2—30-45 minutes)

Opening

The teacher should begin by reviewing the suggested text from yesterday, as well as the class list of Vivid Vocabulary from the story. This may be done by taking a “Book Walk,” in which the teacher reviews the illustrations with students, and students then summarize story events.

Worktime

The teacher should then explain to students that “synonyms” are words have the same meaning as other words. Synonym comes from the Greek syn (together, same) and onoma (name). The teacher should then help the class brainstorm examples of common synonym pairs such as hot-burning or wet-soaked. He/she should then go on to discuss with students that often authors use a tool called a thesaurus to help them think of synonyms to use in their writing, in order to make their narrative pieces more interesting or creative.

Each student will then be given a vocabulary word card. Teachers should prepare these in advance—one card per student. Each student will then be given time to look up his/her vocabulary word in both the dictionary and the thesaurus to ensure he/she has knowledge of the word’s definition and synonyms. Students may also rely on their contextual knowledge of the word from the suggested story, Owl Moon. (All of this should be done silently, without peer help. Words need to remain “secret” for use in the Synonym Partners game. The teacher will be available to answer student questions during this time.)

When all students are finished, the teacher will ask students to stand by their desks holding their cards. At the word “Go,” each student will move about the classroom looking for his/her “Synonym Partner.” Students will discuss their dictionary and thesaurus findings with their partners, as well as discuss any similarities or differences in shades of meaning they recognize between the 2 words. If students realize they have joined the wrong partner, additional time should be provided in order to form correct partnerships.

Closing

When all partners have been matched correctly, students will share their words and word meanings with the class. Matches will then be added to the class vocabulary chart under the column Similar Synonyms. A review of the vocabulary and any necessary clarification is also appropriate at this time. (See the attached Synonym Partner Cards for more information and examples.)

Mini-task 3 (Day 3—30-45 minutes)

Opening

Today’s session will focus on antonyms, rather than synonyms. The lesson should begin with a review of yesterday’s discussion of synonyms and also a review of the ongoing class vocabulary chart. Teachers may also wish to review the Synonym Partner game from the day before.

Worktime

Teachers should explain that while synonyms reflect words with similar meanings, antonyms refer to words that are opposites. Antonym comes from the Greek anti (against, opposing) and onoma (name). Common examples of antonyms are word pairs such as top-bottom and right-left. Time may be given for students to generate more antonym examples on the board.
Referring to the ongoing vocabulary chart, teachers will divide students into small groups and ask each group to use thesauruses to identify antonyms for the given Vivid Vocabulary on the chart. These words were adapted from the suggested text, Owl Moon by Jane Yolen, during Session 1. Today’s student responses should be recorded on the chart under the heading Opposing Antonyms.

Once students have completed the vocabulary chart, they will be asked to complete the Antonym Animal Riddle Cards activity. (See attachment). Each student will write 5 antonym riddle clues describing a “secret” animal on a notecard. Each clue card will then be numbered by the teacher and displayed on a table or bulletin board. Students should be given time in class to read through the clues and make their best deductions on a numbered sheet of notebook paper. Students should use their understanding of text vocabulary and antonyms to deduct the correct answers.

Riddle cards should contain 5 clues which contain antonyms, or opposites, relating to an animal’s given appearance and/or behavior. For example, students may write the following about a dog:
1. I am man’s worst enemy. (Translation: I am man’s best friend.)
2. I do not have fur. (Translation: I do have fur.)
3. My tail is never wagging. (Translation: My tail is always wagging.)
4. I am a herbivore. (Translation: I am a carnivore.)
5. I detest playing in the water. (Translation: I love playing in the water.)

Closing
After all students have completed their guesses, the teacher may use yarn to connect the animals to their matching clues, so that children can self-check their work. A class discussion may follow, concluding the learning game and discussing the antonym phrases used in each riddle. Teachers should also be certain to review the antonyms on the class vocabulary chart, highlighting differences between the synonym and antonym columns.

Mini-task 4 (Day 4—45-60 minutes)

Opening
The lesson should begin with a review of yesterday’s antonym activities and also a review of the ongoing class vocabulary chart. The teacher should open today’s lesson with a rereading of the suggested text, Owl Moon by Jane Yolen.

Worktime
After this rereading, the attached Power Point called Synonym Sentences should be used to highlight some descriptive passages from the narrative text. As students review each slide, they should respond as “editors,” offering suggested revisions to the author for the inclusion of more creative, descriptive vocabulary choices.

As a final, culminating activity, students will use their understanding of story vocabulary, author’s voice, antonyms, and synonyms to generate their own effective sentences. After revising Yolen’s text, students are encouraged to write their own narratives about a walk they have taken, using key, powerful vocabulary from the class synonym/antonym chart generated in sessions 1 through 3. (An example of this chart is included as an attachment.)
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Closing
Students may share their narrative writings during a classroom Author’s Chair celebration. The teacher should also review the vocabulary chart and display it in the classroom for ongoing use. Vocabulary words should be added to the Word Wall where appropriate. Teachers should take special note to encourage the ongoing use of classroom dictionaries and thesauruses to improve students’ narrative writing.

Resources, Materials, and Equipment:

Materials and Equipment:
- Suggested Text, Owl Moon by Jane Yolen, or another high-quality picture book containing vivid vocabulary.
- Chart tablets
- Markers
- Notecards
- Paper
- Pencils
- Teacher prepared passages from the suggested text (Power Point example is included in attachments.)
- Classroom computer(s)
- Sticky notes, mini dry erase or chalk boards, etc.
- Dictionaries and thesauruses available for student use

Resources:
The following web sites are very useful and may be used throughout the course of this study.
- [http://www.learningplanet.com](http://www.learningplanet.com) (Teachers may access both antonym and synonym learning games within this site.)
- [http://www.sadlier-oxford.com/phonics/synonyms/synonyms.htm](http://www.sadlier-oxford.com/phonics/synonyms/synonyms.htm) (Fast-paced synonym matching game--great way to expand student vocabulary!)
- [http://www.sadlier-oxford.com/phonics/antonyms/antonyms.htm](http://www.sadlier-oxford.com/phonics/antonyms/antonyms.htm) (Fast-paced antonym matching game--great way to expand student vocabulary!)
- [www.thesaurus.com](http://www.thesaurus.com) (A wonderful online thesaurus tool.)
Differentiating for Content, Procedures, Process, and/or Learning Environment:

Remediation:
- Students may work in small groups with the teacher for guided thesaurus and/or dictionary practice.
- As a culmination, each student may create a “Memory” game using pairs of antonyms or pairs of synonyms covered during this instructional task. Content will vary depending upon the student’s specific area of weakness or confusion. In this way teachers are able to monitor student progress.
- Students who are struggling to understand synonyms and antonyms may participate in concrete practice with the teacher to reinforce these concepts. For example, the teacher may provide tactile examples of antonyms such as wet and dry or hot and cold. In this way students are better able to move from the concrete to the abstract.

Enrichment/Extensions:
- Students may create a Power Point presentation which includes a minimum of 9 slides—3 “Vivid Vocabulary Word” slides, 3 corresponding synonym slides, and 3 antonym slides. Students may add backgrounds, pictures, animation, etc to their presentations. Slides should demonstrate a thorough understanding of antonyms and synonyms, as well as an advanced vocabulary repertoire.
- Students may use thesauruses to complete a “Thesaurus Scavenger Hunt.” The website www.thesaurus.com may also be used in this vocabulary word hunt. Sample scavenger hunt items might include:
  1. Find 4 synonyms for the word frigid. Each answer is worth 5 points.
  2. Find 2 antonyms for the word laughable. Each answer is worth 7 points.
- Students may work cooperatively to generate a list of vocabulary words that do not have antonyms or synonyms. Answers might include, for example, tennis or seven. Further analysis might involve a discussion of the similarities and differences of these words.
Examples of Word Cards for

Synonym Partners

Each student will be given a vocabulary word card. Teachers should prepare these in advance—1 card per student. Each student will then be given time to look up his/her vocabulary word in both the dictionary and the thesaurus to ensure he/she has knowledge of the word’s definition and synonyms. Students may also rely on their contextual knowledge of the word from the suggested story, *Owl Moon*. (All of this should be done silently, without peer help. Words need to remain “secret” for use in the *Synonym Partners* game. The teacher will be available to answer student questions during this time.)

When all students are finished, the teacher will ask students to stand by their desks holding their cards. At the word “Go,” each student will move about the classroom looking for his/her “Synonym Partner.” When all partners have been matched, students will share their words and word meanings with the class. Matches will then be added to the class vocabulary chart under the column *Similar Synonyms*. Below are examples of possible synonym cards from the suggested text, *Owl Moon* by Jane Yolen.
Examples of Student Riddle Cards for *Antonym Animal Riddles*

Each student will write 5 antonym riddle clues describing a “secret” animal on a notecard. Each clue card will then be numbered by the teacher and displayed on a table or bulletin board. Students should be given time in class to read through the clues and make their best deductions on a numbered sheet of notebook paper. Students should use their understanding of text vocabulary and antonyms to deduct the correct answers.

After all of the students have completed their guesses, the teacher may use yarn to connect the animals to their clues, so that children can self-check their work. A class discussion may follow, concluding the learning game and discussing the antonym phrases used in each riddle.
# Teacher Observation Checklist

**Synonym Partners**

Teacher’s Name _____________
Date _______________
The student. . . .

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Student Names</th>
<th>Defines given vocabulary word correctly.</th>
<th>Identifies synonyms from the thesaurus.</th>
<th>Actively participates in Synonym Partner game.</th>
<th>Is able to find correct “Synonym Partner.”</th>
<th>Self-corrects if an error is made.</th>
<th>Presents information to the class orally.</th>
<th>Additional anecdotal comments:</th>
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