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Altered State

Vocabulary

Building Program

For ages 9-12

Oral and Written Language

Absurdities Scenarios



A Friendly Reminder

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Altered State Oral Language Program

Introduction

An absurdity is a thing that is unreasonable or impossible. An absurdity could also be considered something that is foolish or not to be taken seriously. This program is designed for children to recognize absurdities and to comment on the thing that is unreasonable or impossible. The scenarios featured in this program introduce strange or odd situations that do not exist in the real world. The child's task is to first recognize the absurdity and then comment on what is wrong about the scenario. Each scenario comes with prompts which can be used to further explore the impossible situation.

Oral Language Stimulation

The Altered State scenarios are at core oral language prompts that target semantic world knowledge and to increase students' vocabulary. Other key language skills such as listening to instructions, understanding inference, higher order thinking skills and expressive language skills can also be targeted for intervention. The attached worksheets come complete with example sheets which have been provided to explore many of the tier 2 words and the rich vocabulary, that is a feature of each scenario, in more detail.

Tiered Word System

In the *Oddities and Quirks* context, tier one words would be simple words that are related to the functions of the scenario. For instance, in the *phone call* scenario *soft*, *lightly*, *spoke* are all common and familiar words and thus are considered *tier one* words. In contrast, *tier two* words are really the sweet spot in terms of teaching vocabulary to school-age students. Tier two words are words that are complex but have a high utility in that they are words that can be used in multiple contexts. Tier two words are not used frequently in conversation but will be used frequently in written text, so it is important to learn them. Studies indicate that the learning of tier two words

can have a strong effect on students' verbal expression and written comprehension abilities. The *oddities and quirks* program uses a number of tier two words. Four words in each scenario have been underlined and are words that can be explored by discussing their meaning and using a dictionary and thesaurus to study their significance while using the vocabulary map to link it to synonyms of that word.

Altered Reality vs Altered Sense

The scenarios are represented under two broad categories: *altered sense* and *altered reality*. Both sets of scenarios present students with absurd impossibilities and challenge them to confront an odd but somehow still familiar world. The attached real world and real sense worksheets both come complete with example sheets that demonstrate how to fill in the charts. Discuss the role our senses play in our interaction with the world.

Altered Sense Scenarios

Phone Call

Falling Colours

Sweet Sound

Sound Pie

Cold Wind

Cold Fire

Taste the Weather

Words on the Air

Delicious Sound

Selecting Colours

Altered Reality Scenarios

Diamonds in the Sky

The Blue Sun

Flying Whales

Planet in a Petri Dish

Green Minty Rain

Strong Wind

Words of Warning

The Planet's Glow

Whistle

Hot Day

Oddities and Quirks

Phone Call

I thought that the words I spoke tasted joyful. The words were light like a soufflé. I sampled the sounds as they chimed softly on my tongue.

What is odd about this scenario?

Why might a happy sound taste light, like a soufflé?

What flavor might 'I'm bored' taste like?

1

Oddities and Quirks

Diamonds in the Sky

After we dug the diamonds out of the dirt, we threw them high into the air. The diamonds surged skyward and perched in the heavens to become fiercely radiant stars.

What is odd about this scenario?

Are real diamonds buried in the dirt?

What are stars?

2

Oddities and Quirks

Falling Colours

I could hear the colours as they tumbled from the sky. Blue crashed and thundered where it struck, while yellow tinkled to the ground as a wispy drizzle.

What is odd about this scenario?

In this scenario, is blue a *frightening* sound? Why do you think that?

What might the colour red *sound* like?

3

Oddities and Quirks

The Blue Sun

The pale blue sun rose over the chilly field at dawn. The sapphire sun lit the sky in tints of purple, green and indigo that was both exquisite and cold.

What is odd about this scenario?

If our sun was blue, what colours might the sky display at sunset?

Do you think a blue sun would be beautiful?

4

Oddities and Quirks

Flying Whales

We rowed the tiny boat up into the air, higher than the loftiest mountain. We stared in amazement as the Blue Whales churned and soared through the immense thunderclouds.

What is odd about this scenario?

Why can we not row a boat up in the clouds?

What is an animal that *can* soar very high?

5

Oddities and Quirks

Planet in a Petri Dish

I looked through the microscope at the petri dish. I was astonished to see, buried deep within the hazy fluid, a reddish brown planet and two small moons orbit a golden sun.

What is odd about this scenario?

Why is it *not* possible to view a solar system through a microscope?

What instrument can view outer space?

6

Oddities and Quirks

Green Minty Rain

Green minty rain tumbled from rectangle formed clouds. The rain fell as mini square droplets, and bounced like supple green, plastic dice when they struck the ground.

What is odd about this sentence?

Would green minty rain shaped in cubes be pleasant or unpleasant?

How would green rain sound like as it fell?

7

Oddities and Quirks

Strong Wind

The wind blew so intensely that it seized my little sister from my mother's arms and elevated her high into the air. The wind gust set down my sister, unharmed, in the upper branches of a tall oak tree.

What is odd about this scenario?

Is wind capable of lifting people high into the air?

Was the sister at the top or bottom of the tree?

8

Oddities and Quirks

Sweet Sound

I touched the musical notes with my index finger as they swirled above me. Threads of the notes attached to my finger. I placed my finger in my mouth and the notes tasted fresh and crisp.

What is odd about this scenario?

Which of our senses detects sound?

What might a happy song taste like?

9

Oddities and Quirks

Sound Pie

Carl loved hot apple pie straight from the oven. He enjoyed placing his ear close to the pie and listen to its warm, restful tones as they steamed and wafted into the air.

What is odd about this scenario?

What sound might red jelly and ice-cream make?

What sense do we use to listen to sound? 10

Oddities and Quirks

Words of Warning

My friend shouted a warning to me as I stepped on to the road. His words arced rapidly toward me like black ribbon and spooled around my arms. My friend's words wrenched me back from the oncoming truck just in time.

What is odd about this scenario?

Can words float upon the air like black ribbon?

Can words move and shift people?

11

Oddities and Quirks

The Planet's Glow

The astronaut detached his helmet and relaxed onto the lounge chair. He was perched among the moon's numerous dunes. Above him in the deep star-filled sky, the blue planet reflected the sun's rays.

What is odd about this scenario?

Could an astronaut remove his helmet on the moon?

Why do astronauts wear pressure suits?

12

Oddities and Quirks

Cold Wind

The wintery blizzard was very cold. Its icy breath caused the flowers to bloom and insects to buzz. The frigid winds were so cold that I removed my jacket to stop from perspiring.

What's odd about this scenario?

Why do insects *not* buzz in icy weather?

What might happen to us if we removed a warm coat on an icy, windy day?

13

Oddities and Quirks

Cold Fire

The room was very cold so I placed ice cubes from the freezer into the fireplace and lit them. The ice cubes glowed vibrantly and gave off a pleasant cold that chilled my outstretched fingers.

What is odd about this scenario?

Why don't ice cubes *glow vibrantly*?

What should we do to warm a cold room?

14

Oddities and Quirks

Taste the Weather

I like to taste the weather before I go for a walk. I didn't walk today based on the flavor of the weather. The conditions had changed from tangy and sweet, like citrus fruit, to dark and heavy, like maple syrup.

What is odd about this scenario?

Which fruit do you think would be like a sunny day?

What might a thunderstorm taste like?

15

Oddities and Quirks

Words on the Air

My friend was at the bottom of the hill so I could not hear what he shouted to me. I was quick though to seize his words in my outstretched hands as they whizzed above me on the air current. I then sorted them in order on a whiteboard to read.

What is odd about this scenario?

Which of our senses do we use to hear words?

Why can't we seize words from the air?

16

Oddities and Quirks

Delicious Sound

My red lollipop had the liveliest sounds. The sounds zinged and popped on my tongue and were delicious. The sounds were so tasty and noisy that they made my tongue swell.

What is odd about this scenario?

Which of our senses is related to the tongue?

How might a sound like yellow taste?

17

Oddities and Quirks

Whistle

The umpire blew his whistle. A range of sounds in assorted shades of blue cascaded from the whistle. The blue tints informed players that our side had a free kick.

What is odd about this scenario?

What colour/s might a *goal* be?

Which of our senses detects sound?

18

Oddities and Quirks

Hot Day

The day was hot. The sun's rays were so extreme that my breath came out in flurries of mist. My skin shivered from the warmth so I hastily wrapped my overheated body in the heaviest coat I could find.

What is odd about this scenario?

Why don't we wear heavy coats on a hot day?

Why don't we have misty breath on hot days?

19

Oddities and Quirks

Selecting Colours

I selected two colours to paint the interior of my house. I used the tips of my fingers to select white, which had a cool, smooth, velvety feel. I chose brown for the walls, which had a warm, rich texture and was a lad rough to the touch.

What is odd about this scenario?

Which of our senses do we use to detect colour?

What might the colour blue feel like?

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Appendix

Dictionary Alphabet Guide

a b c d e

f g h i j k

l m n o p

q r s t u v

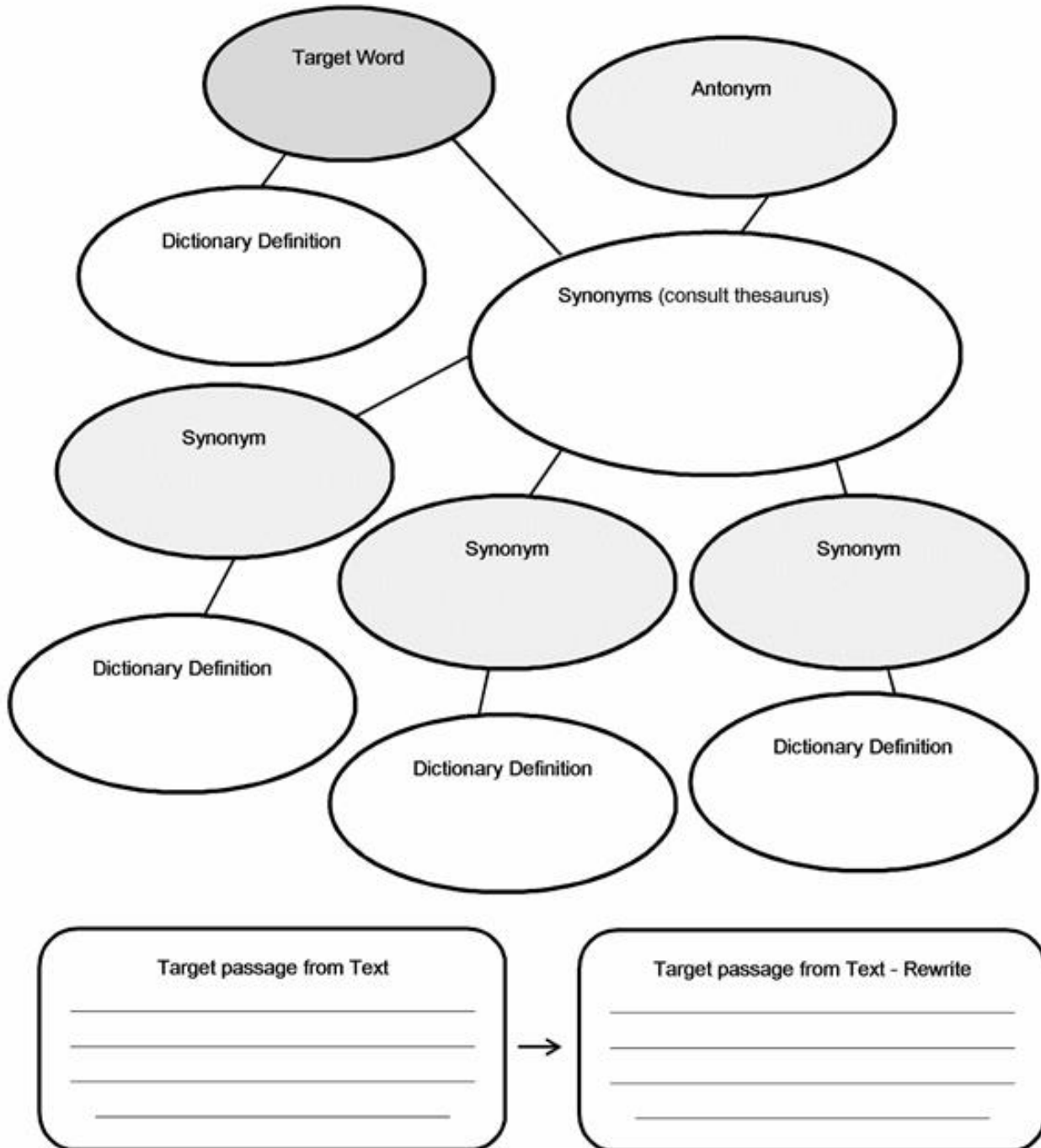
w x y z

Remember to use the **guide words** at the top of the dictionary. The guide words help you to locate your target word. The guide word at the top of the left side of the page repeats the *first* word; the guide word at the top right-hand page repeats the *last* word on that page. If you use the alphabet guide correctly, your target word should be somewhere on the double page spread, between the first and last guide words.

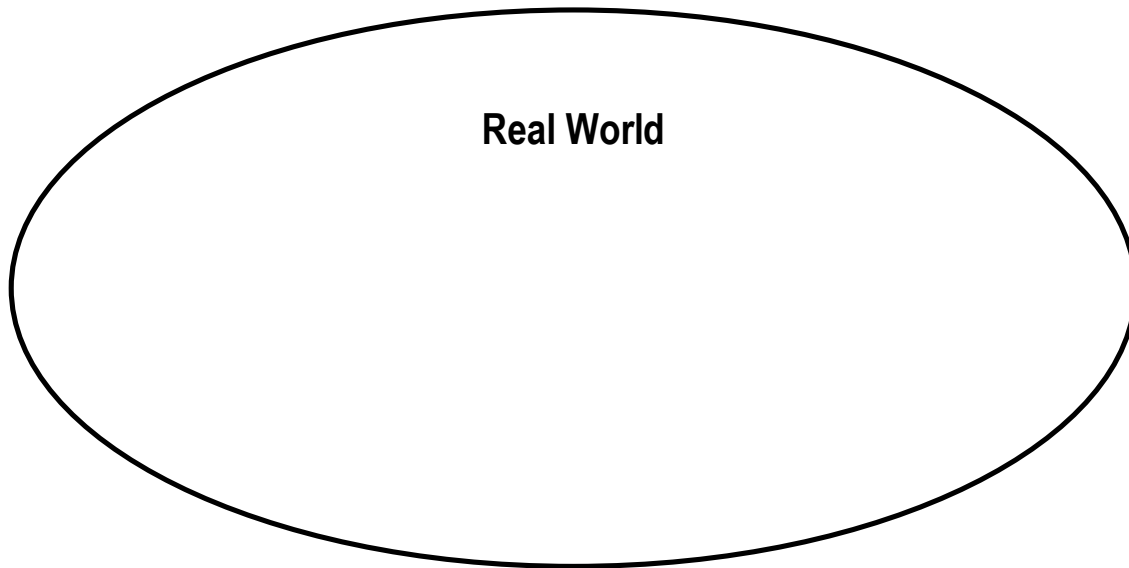
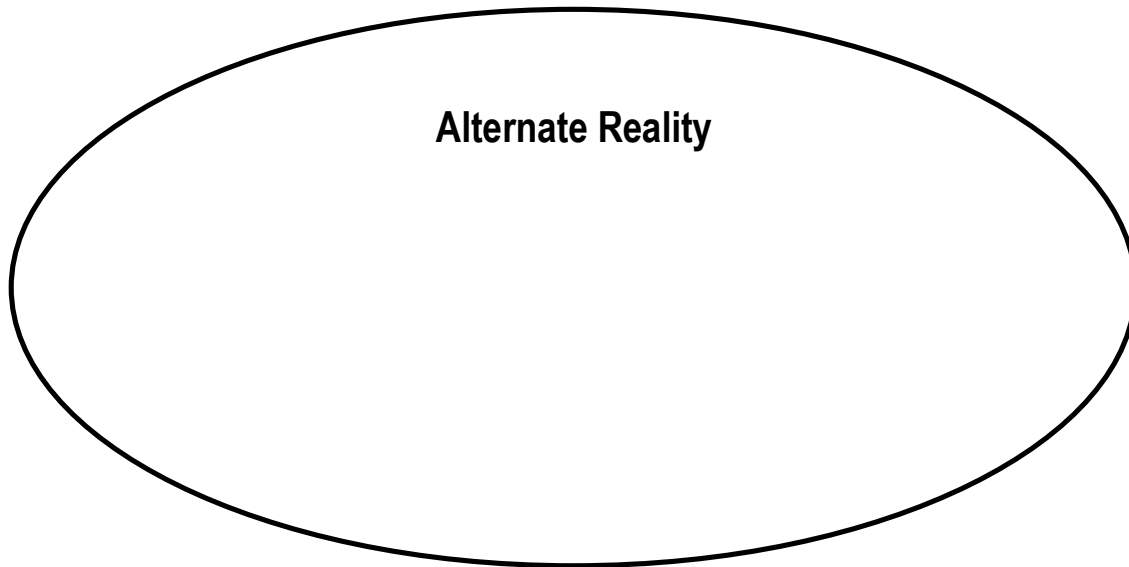
How to use this guide

- To find the word you are looking for you without wasting time and effort you need to have an intimate knowledge of how the alphabet is arranged.
- This guide provides a visual model of the alphabet, which helps to speed up the process of looking for new words in a dictionary.
- For example let's say you want to find the word **goal**. First letter is **g**, we turn to the first page in the **g** section. All words on the first page start with **ga**. If we scan down the **alphabet guide** we locate the letter **o**, which is some distance from the letter **a** on the **alphabet guide**. This allows us to scan the **g** section till we get to **go**.
- It should be then an easy task to find **goa**. The first word in this section is **goad**. Four or five words further along we should find **goal**.

Vocabulary Map



Alternate Reality – Real World Worksheet



Tier 2 Vocabulary Words
Word 1:

Word 2:

Word 3:

Word 4:

Alternate Reality – Real World Worksheet *Example*

Alternate Reality

After we dug the diamonds out of the dirt, we threw them high into the air. The diamonds surged skyward and perched in the heavens to become fiercely radiant stars.

Real World

Diamonds can be extracted from dirt but cannot be flung into the sky. Stars are huge spheres of burning energy that are billions of miles away.

Tier 2 Vocabulary Words

Word 1:

surge: to rise as if by a heaving or swelling force.

Word 2:

perched: to settle or rest upon a high up position.

Word 3:

fiercely: furious or violent in intensity.

Word 4:

radiant: giving off rays of light or something that is shining or bright.

Alternate Sense – Real Sense Worksheet

Alternate Sense

Real Sense

Tier 2 Vocabulary Words

Word 1:

Word 2:

Word 3:

Word 4:

Alternate Sense – Real Sense Worksheet *Example*

Alternate Sense

I thought that the words I spoke tasted joyful. The words were light like a soufflé. I sampled the sounds as they chimed softly on my tongue.

Real Sense

Words are detected by our sense of hearing. The alternate sense in this scenario is the sense of taste. We don't *taste* words, we *hear* them.

Tier 2 Vocabulary Words

Word 1:

joyful: showing or expressing great happiness in looks and or speech.

Word 2:

soufflé: a light baked dish which has been beaten from fluffy egg whites.

Word 3:

sample: try the qualities of food or drink by tasting it.

Word 4:

chime: a musical tone produced by striking a bell gently.