

# Synonyms, Antonyms, and Shades of Meaning

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Score: \_\_\_\_\_ / 10



## Quick Review

**Synonyms** mean about the same (*begin/start*). **Antonyms** mean the opposite (*hot/cold*). Many synonyms differ only in **intensity** — you can order them on a scale: *cool < chilly < cold < freezing*.

## PRACTICE

Choose the best answer. For ordering items, the same words appear in different orders — you must pick the one that goes from weakest to strongest.

- Which choice is the BEST synonym for **furious**?
  - very angry; enraged
  - mildly upset and grumpy
  - surprised and confused
  - quiet and sulking
- Which is the BEST antonym for **generous**?
  - friendly and warm with everyone
  - cautious about what to share
  - helpful whenever people ask
  - stingy and unwilling to share
- Which sentence uses the STRONGEST synonym of **scared**?  
*The hikers were \_\_\_\_\_ when they heard the bear right behind them.*
  - annoyed by the noise
  - terrified and frozen with fear
  - curious about the sound
  - a little uneasy
- Which list is in order from LEAST cold to MOST cold?
  - chilly, cold, freezing, frigid
  - freezing, cold, chilly, cool
  - cool, chilly, cold, freezing
  - cold, cool, freezing, chilly



5. Which list is in order from LEAST happy to MOST happy?
  - A. ecstatic, delighted, happy, glad
  - B. glad, happy, delighted, ecstatic
  - C. happy, glad, delighted, ecstatic
  - D. delighted, glad, happy, ecstatic
6. Which is the BEST antonym for **ancient**?
  - A. recent
  - B. fresh
  - C. young
  - D. modern
7. Which is the STRONGEST synonym for **tired**?
  - A. exhausted — completely drained of energy
  - B. drowsy — heavy-eyed and ready to sleep
  - C. weary — worn from long effort but still able
  - D. fatigued — tired in a formal/medical sense
8. Sort these words from WEAKEST to STRONGEST: **warm, hot, scorching**.
9. Which is the BEST antonym for **noisy** in this sentence?  
*The library was very \_\_\_\_\_.*
  - A. quiet
  - B. loud
  - C. silent
  - D. peaceful
10. Which pair are SYNONYMS (mean about the same)?
  - A. happy / sad
  - B. small / tiny
  - C. cold / hot
  - D. open / closed



# Answer Keys

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|---|---|
| <p>1 <input checked="" type="radio"/> A <input type="radio"/> B <input type="radio"/> C <input type="radio"/> D</p> <p>2 <input type="radio"/> A <input type="radio"/> B <input type="radio"/> C <input checked="" type="radio"/> D</p> <p>3 <input type="radio"/> A <input checked="" type="radio"/> B <input type="radio"/> C <input type="radio"/> D</p> <p>4 <input type="radio"/> A <input type="radio"/> B <input checked="" type="radio"/> C <input type="radio"/> D</p> <p>5 <input type="radio"/> A <input checked="" type="radio"/> B <input type="radio"/> C <input type="radio"/> D</p> | <p>6 <input type="radio"/> A <input type="radio"/> B <input type="radio"/> C <input checked="" type="radio"/> D</p> <p>7 <input checked="" type="radio"/> A <input type="radio"/> B <input type="radio"/> C <input type="radio"/> D</p> <p>8 <input type="text" value="warm → hot → scorching"/></p> <p>9 <input type="radio"/> A <input type="radio"/> B <input checked="" type="radio"/> C <input type="radio"/> D</p> <p>10 <input type="radio"/> A <input checked="" type="radio"/> B <input type="radio"/> C <input type="radio"/> D</p> |
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| Explanations |   |
|--------------|---|
| <b>1. A</b>  | All four describe negative moods. <b>Furious</b> sits at the high end of the anger scale, so A ( <i>very angry; enraged</i> ) is the match. B is anger at a lower intensity (annoyed); C is a different feeling (surprise); D names a withdrawn mood, not furious.  |
| <b>2. D</b>  | Each option is a real personality word. <b>Stingy</b> = unwilling to share = the direct opposite of generous. A and C are positive traits (not opposites); B is mildly negative (careful) but not the true opposite of generous.                                    |
| <b>3. B</b>  | All four describe feelings, but only B is on the <i>scared</i> scale at high intensity. A and C are wrong feelings; D is on the right scale but too mild for a bear right behind you.   |
| <b>4. C</b>  | All four lists use the same kind of words. The true intensity order is <i>cool &lt; chilly &lt; cold &lt; freezing</i> . A skips <i>cool</i> and starts too cold; B reverses the order; D scrambles it.   |
| <b>5. B</b>  | True intensity: <i>glad &lt; happy &lt; delighted &lt; ecstatic</i> . A is reversed; C swaps glad and happy; D is scrambled.  |
| <b>6. D</b>  | All four hint at “newness.” <b>Modern</b> is the standard opposite of ancient (both describe time periods). <i>Recent</i> means a short time ago (not the time-period opposite); <i>fresh</i> usually describes food; <i>young</i> usually describes living things. |
| <b>7. A</b>  | All four are real tired-words. <b>Exhausted</b> is the most intense — no energy left at all. <i>Drowsy</i> is about sleepiness, not effort; <i>weary</i> still has some energy left; <i>fatigued</i> is similar to tired but less extreme than exhausted.           |
| <b>8.</b>    | <b>Answer:</b> warm → hot → scorching<br>All three describe heat at different intensities: <i>warm</i> is mild, <i>hot</i> is strong, and <i>scorching</i> means so hot it burns. A reversed list would put scorching first — wrong intensity order.                |
| <b>9. C</b>  | All four are sound-related. <b>Silent</b> is the strongest opposite of noisy and fits a library best. <i>Quiet</i> is close but milder; <i>loud</i> is a synonym (the trap); <i>peaceful</i> describes mood as much as sound.                                       |
| <b>10. B</b> | <b>Small</b> and <b>tiny</b> are synonyms — tiny is just more intense. The other three pairs are all antonyms (opposites). Students who don’t look closely may pick any familiar pair.  |



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