

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

- 1 A B C D
- 2 A B C D
- 3 A B C D
- 4 A B C D
- 5 A B C D

- 6 A B C D
- 7 A B C D
- 8 warm → hot → scorching
- 9 A B C D
- 10 A B C D

Explanations

1. A	All four describe negative moods. Furious 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 B is anger at a lower intensity (annoyed); C is a different feeling (surprise); D names a withdrawn mood, not furious.
2. D	Each option is a real personality word. Stingy = 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.
3. 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.
4. C	All four lists use the same kind of words. The true intensity order is <i>cool</i> < <i>chilly</i> < <i>cold</i> < <i>freezing</i> . A skips <i>cool</i> and starts too cold; B reverses the order; D scrambles it.
5. B	True intensity: <i>glad</i> < <i>happy</i> < <i>delighted</i> < <i>ecstatic</i> . A is reversed; C swaps glad and happy; D is scrambled.
6. D	All four hint at “newness.” Modern 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.
7. A	All four are real tired-words. Exhausted 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.
8.	Answer: warm → hot → scorching 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.
9. C	All four are sound-related. Silent 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.
10. B	Small and tiny 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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