

# Word Meaning Through Conversation and Picture Clues — Pre-Kindergarten

## **Ohio Standards Connections**

### **Acquisition of Vocabulary**

#### **Benchmark A**

Use context clues to determine the meaning of new vocabulary.

(Grades Pre-Kindergarten - 3)

#### **Indicator 1**

Understand the meaning of new words from the context of conversations, the use of pictures that accompany text or the use of concrete objects.

(Grade Pre-Kindergarten)

### **Lesson Summary:**

*Children will identify the words that express feelings in the context of stories and/or the use of pictures as a reference to demonstrate their understanding of word meanings. In addition, children will increase their vocabulary around emotion-words synonymous with basic feelings by deciphering their meaning in the context of stories.*

### **Commentary:**

Expanding a child's vocabulary by using vocabulary exercises or drills has been found by researchers to be far less effective than by having children read. Young children's ability to pick up the meaning of words and to remember their meaning is enhanced through shared experiences, shared reading, read aloud experiences, conversations, daily routines and play.

For young children, understanding the meaning of emotions is the result of encouraging and supporting children to talk about their feelings during typical social encounters and conflict. Children's picture books and stories depicting problem situations and characters' expressions of emotions provide additionally meaningful tools for conversations that support and extend children's understandings of word meaning. This activity also gives children experience at replacing an unfamiliar word with a synonym that is familiar.

These are all effective ways by which a teacher can increase a child's vocabulary knowledge. In addition, the lesson demonstrates how a teacher, through the use of small groups and discussion or conversation, can help children feel more comfortable guessing at the meaning of words and asking for help from a partner or the teacher. Approximating the meaning of unknown words from a story shared orally is one way young children can learn vocabulary from text.

### **Pre-Assessment:**

Within the context of daily routines, experiences and play, observe and document children's appropriate use and understanding of words that depict feelings. Opportunities for recording individual children's vocabulary often result as children engage in problem-solving social conflict and/or shared reading, read alouds and storytelling. Documentation may be either an audio or video tape recording of language samples, a script or an anecdotal description of the interactions supported by language samples.

### **Post-Assessment:**

A formal post-assessment is not recommended. Assessment should be embedded within the lesson activities and context of daily routines, play and social conflict and problem solving, such as:

- Listening to and observing children during the lesson as they identify spoken "feeling words" and place chips on the appropriate picture on a game board (see Figure 1).
- Listening to and documenting individual children's use of new words or

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## Other Related Ohio Standards

### **Reading Process: Concepts of Print, Comprehension Strategies and Self-Monitoring Strategies**

#### Benchmark A

Establish a purpose for reading and use a range of reading comprehension strategies to understand literary passages and text.

(Grades Pre-Kindergarten - 3)

#### Indicator 3

Begin to distinguish print from pictures.

(Grade Pre-Kindergarten)

### **Communications: Oral and Visual**

#### Benchmark A

Use active listening strategies to identify the main idea and to gain information from oral presentations.

(Grades Pre-Kindergarten - 2)

#### Indicator 1

Attend to speakers, stories, poems and songs.

(Grade Pre-Kindergarten)

#### Benchmark B

Connect prior experiences, insights and ideas to those of a speaker.

(Grades Pre-Kindergarten - 2)

#### Indicator 2

Connect information and events to personal experiences by sharing or commenting.

(Grade Pre-Kindergarten)

#### Benchmark D

Speak clearly and at an appropriate pace and volume.

(Grades Pre-Kindergarten - 2)

#### Indicator 4

Speak clearly and understandably to express ideas, feelings and needs.

(Grade Pre-Kindergarten)

synonyms to express their emotions or other's feelings within the context of storytelling, shared reading, read alouds or social conflict. Compare word usage and understanding or meaning to prior documentation to indicate children's growth and to evaluate the effectiveness of the activity.

## **Instructional Procedures:**

1. Teachable moments around social conflict provide further opportunity to explore words to describe emotions, such as following social conflicts, children's books and stories.
2. Distribute a game board plus 12 chips to each group of two or three children. Tell the children the name of the game is "Feelings Bingo" (see Figure 1: Feelings Bingo Example).
3. Present and discuss photographs or pictures of children's faces that illustrate how feelings and emotions look and sound. Ask them to find (point to) these same pictures or photos on their game boards.
4. Explain that you are going to read a short story that you made up. Tell the children the story will have feeling words in it. They are to listen to the story and orally identify or say the feeling words heard (e.g., happy, sad, angry, scared). Then instruct the children to put chips on the faces that best represent the feeling words used in the story.
5. Read a second story and observe children's identification of the emotions as they use the chips to cover the faces.
6. Ask selected children why they chose the one feeling they did and then extend their thinking by asking questions (e.g., When have you felt this way? How could you help someone feel better who is angry, sad or scared?).
7. Repeat the game based on children's interest or based on new stories.
8. Create and share stories that are meaningful and relevant to young children and extend their understanding of more complex word meanings and synonyms for emotions such as:
  - Happy, glad, joyful
  - Sad, glum, sorrowful
  - Angry, mad, furious
  - Scared, afraid, fearful
9. See extensions for additional vocabulary words.

## **Differentiated Instructional Support:**

Instruction is differentiated according to learner needs, to help all learners either meet the intent of the specified indicator(s) or, if the indicator is already met, to advance learners beyond the specified indicator(s).

- Have children make faces in a mirror after pulling a feeling picture card out of a bag. Have the child make the face and have a peer or teacher guess the feeling.
- Help students, who do not understand the vocabulary, role-play a story to give more contextual meaning.
- Encourage children, who identify all four emotions, to apply their expanded vocabulary by creating and sharing their own stories through role playing,

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drawings or storytelling.

## **Extension:**

These are ideas for all children to continue learning on this topic – in or outside of class.

- Use social interactions and conflicts during daily routines and play to discuss and help children express emotions in appropriate ways.
- Read children's books that illustrate different feelings and emotions when emotions run high.
- Make new game boards, expanding the vocabulary to other words describing feelings (e.g., jealous, proud, anxious, frustrated, bored, surprised, brave, empathetic, threatened, alienated, left-out, lonely or greedy).

## **Homework Options and Home Connections:**

- Encourage families to read books about emotions to their children.
- Send home a vocabulary list of feelings, and ask parents or guardians to use these words during conversations that allow family members to orally describe their emotions or feelings.
- Suggest that families find and discuss pictures in magazines to create an emotions journal for children for later reference of feelings.
- Encourage families to help draw out their children's feelings when they have a difficult time expressing their feelings in words.

## **Technology Connections:**

- Record the stories composed by the teacher on audio tape and let children play the Feelings Bingo game themselves.
- Create short video recordings during class that illustrate emotions featured in the lesson (e.g., videos of puppet shows, videos of dramatic scenes performed by students or older children). Work with your students to create stories that will be used to illustrate each emotion depicted in the video. For example, ask students to describe particular situations that have made them feel happy, sad, angry or scared. Select a situation to use as a basis for a video story and help students to add detail to this story. What did students do in this type of situation? What did they say? What happened next?

## **Materials/Resources Needed:**

*For the teacher:* Teacher-made game board on 8.5" x 11" paper with pictures of children or adults expressing feelings (see Figure 1: Feelings Bingo Example), game chips and stories that describe situations that talk about emotions.

*For the students:* Several copies of Feelings Bingo game boards and chips.

## **Key Vocabulary:**

- emotions
- feelings
- happy
- sad
- angry
- scared

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### General Tips:

- Enabling a greater transfer to daily life, mount the game board on the wall at a height every student can reach so each student can point to an emotion.
- There are numerous books for the young child just learning how to process anger and other feelings (e.g., *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day* by Judith Viorst; *I Feel Silly: And Other Moods That Make My Day* by Jamie Lee Curtis; *Let's Be Enemies* by Janice Undry; *Peter's Chair* by Ezra Jack Keats; *Pip's Magic and Mouse Count* by Ellen Stoll Walsh; and *When Sophie Gets Angry, Really, Really Angry* by Molly Bang). Music experiences about feelings are also very good. Consider *Feelings* by Hap Palmer or *I'm So Mad* by Jim Gill.

### Attachments:

- Feelings Bingo Example