Word Pair Detectives

Do the words mean nearly the same thing or opposite things?

3.RC.12 "Identify relationships among words, including synonyms, antonyms, homographs, homonyms, and multiple-meaning words (e.g., puzzle, fire)."

NAME _____ DATE _____

SYNONYMS

Synonyms are words that mean the same thing or nearly the same thing.

happy / glad

ANTONYMS

Antonyms are words with opposite meanings.

hot / cold

1 SORT

8 items

Circle SYNONYM or ANTONYM for each numbered pair, then pick one pair of each kind and explain how you know.

1.	silent / quiet	SYNONYM ANTONYM
2.	quick / fast	SYNONYM ANTONYM
3.	empty / full	SYNONYM ANTONYM
4.	tiny / small	SYNONYM ANTONYM
5.	early / late	SYNONYM ANTONYM
6.	open / closed	SYNONYM ANTONYM
7.	angry / mad	SYNONYM ANTONYM
8.	begin / start	SYNONYM ANTONYM

2 PROVE IT

Explain your thinking

Pick two items from Part 1. For each one, tell how you knew where it belonged.

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

3 MAKE YOUR OWN

One of each

Write one new pair of synonyms and one new pair of antonyms.

SYNONYM _____

ANTONYM _____

CHALLENGE

Choose one word that can make both kinds of pairs: write its synonym pair and its antonym pair, and label each.

ANSWER KEY # Word Pair Detectives

GRADE 3 · 3.RC.12

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	silent / quiet	**SYNONYM**	Both describe little or no noise.
2	quick / fast	**SYNONYM**	Both mean moving or happening with speed.
3	empty / full	**ANTONYM**	Empty means having nothing inside; full means holding as much as possible.
4	tiny / small	**SYNONYM**	Both describe something that is not large.
5	early / late	**ANTONYM**	Early means before the expected time; late means after it.
6	open / closed	**ANTONYM**	They describe opposite states of a door or container.
7	angry / mad	**SYNONYM**	Both can mean feeling upset or cross.
8	begin / start	**SYNONYM**	Both mean to get something going.

PART 2 · PROVE IT

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item.

PART 3 · MAKE YOUR OWN (SAMPLE ANSWERS)

- **SYNONYM**: Synonyms: large / big
- **ANTONYM**: Antonyms: soft / hard

Challenge: small / little: synonyms; small / huge: antonyms

For Part 2, students should explain the meanings of one synonym pair and one antonym pair. For example, silent and quiet both describe little or no noise, while empty and full have opposite meanings.