Word Pair Detectives

Sort word pairs by how their meanings connect.

6.4.R.1 "Students will analyze the relationships among synonyms, antonyms, and analogies."

NAME _____ DATE _____

SYNONYMS

Synonyms have the same or nearly the same meaning.

glad / happy

ANTONYMS

Antonyms have opposite meanings.

open / closed

1 SORT

8 items

For Part 1, circle SYNONYM or ANTONYM for each numbered pair; for Part 2, choose two pairs and explain how you know where each belongs.

1.	scarce / plentiful	SYNONYM ANTONYM
2.	weary / tired	SYNONYM ANTONYM
3.	cautious / careful	SYNONYM ANTONYM
4.	enormous / huge	SYNONYM ANTONYM
5.	timid / bold	SYNONYM ANTONYM
6.	ancient / modern	SYNONYM ANTONYM
7.	rapid / swift	SYNONYM ANTONYM
8.	tiny / small	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 synonym pair and one new antonym pair without using words from Part 1.

SYNONYM _____

ANTONYM _____

CHALLENGE

Write an analogy using two synonym pairs, then explain how the pairs are related.

ANSWER KEY

Word Pair Detectives

GRADE 6 · 6.4.R.1

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	scarce / plentiful	**ANTONYM**	Scarce means hard to find, while plentiful means available in large amounts.
2	weary / tired	**SYNONYM**	Both words mean needing rest.
3	cautious / careful	**SYNONYM**	Both words describe trying to avoid danger or mistakes.
4	enormous / huge	**SYNONYM**	Both words mean very large.
5	timid / bold	**ANTONYM**	Timid means shy or fearful, while bold means confident and willing to take risks.
6	ancient / modern	**ANTONYM**	Ancient describes something from long ago, while modern describes something from recent times.
7	rapid / swift	**SYNONYM**	Both words mean fast.
8	tiny / small	**SYNONYM**	Both words mean not large.

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**: angry / mad
- **ANTONYM**: awake / asleep

Challenge: Brave is to courageous as clever is to smart. Both pairs have nearly the same meaning.

Items 1, 5, and 6 are antonyms; items 2, 3, 4, 7, and 8 are synonyms. For Part 2, accept explanations that accurately compare the meanings of both chosen pairs.