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The same strategies used in *Word Joggers* activities can be applied to classroom or daily communication tasks. Players should be encouraged to talk about how they can apply their semantic skills to these situations. Using context cues to determine word meaning, making associations to improve recall of vocabulary words, recalling related information, and using precise word selection are important for success in reading, writing, and content area classes. Semantic skills are also essential for effective communication in a wide variety of work, home, and community settings.

## Using Word Joggers Activities

### Materials

*Word Joggers* consists of the following components:

- Seven *Word Joggers* card decks. Each deck is color-coded:
  - (72) *Picture It!* (yellow)
  - (108) *Words, Words, Words!* (orange)
  - (72) *More Words, Words, Words!* (red)
  - (36) *Finish It!* (green)
  - (108) *Categories!* (blue)
  - (72) *Just the Opposite!* (pink)
  - (36) *More Than One Meaning!* (purple)
- A one-minute sand timer

### Where to Begin Jogging

*Word Joggers* includes seven activities for developing semantic competence. In all activities, a player chooses a card from the activity deck and either gives clues about the items on the card or reads the card to listeners who give responses based on the objectives of the activity. All the activities focus on developing a set of semantic skills. Activities should be chosen based on the intervention goals and objectives that have been identified for the players. Refer to the objectives listed in the *Goals and Objectives Chart* on page 8 to make a decision about a starting point. In addition, consider the following purposes of each activity.

*Picture It!* is a word description activity. One player provides a description of an object pictured on the card, and the listeners guess what is being described. It is the only activity that uses pictures together with words to assist in identifying physical characteristics and to support players with low reading skills. The Warm-Up Stretch for *Picture It!* provides an introduction to the use of Venn diagrams for analyzing the semantic features of words. *Picture It!* is an appropriate beginning activity for most players.

The activities *Words, Words, Words!* and *More Words, Words, Words!* are also description activities, but these activities use words rather than pictures. These two activities differ only in the vocabulary level of the words. Reading materials from grades 2–3 were used to gather words for *Words, Words, Words!* while reading materials from grades 5–6 were used for *More Words, Words, Words!* Young players and those with more severe semantic deficits may find *Words, Words, Words!* and *More Words, Words, Words!* too challenging. Warm-Up Stretches for these two activities introduce players to web organizers.

*Finish It!* provides strategies for rapid association and word retrieval based on context. One player reads a phrase, and the listeners fill in the blank with a familiar ending. This activity is most comfortably read by players in late grade 3 and up; however, if reading is challenging for players, the items on the card may be read by the instructor without losing the effectiveness of the activity.

*Categories!* provides further association and retrieval strategies based on internalized semantic networks. A player reads a card that names a category, and the listeners list as many members of the category as they can. Web organizers assist in recalling basic everyday vocabulary and classifying vocabulary into categories.

*Just the Opposite!* specifically targets the concept of antonyms. One player gives clues, which focus on the opposite meaning, about each of four words on a card. Listeners guess the words on the card. *Just the Opposite!* emphasizes rapid clue giving and naming. Players learn to compare the shared and unshared semantic features of the opposites. Opposites are provided on two levels (based on the author's experience in classroom curricula) so younger and older players' needs are met.

*More Than One Meaning!* targets homonyms and multiple-meaning words. One player gives clues about target word pairs, and the listeners name the word pairs. Players learn to use context clues and spelling to distinguish between words. Typically, multiple-meaning words and homonyms are understood by 6-year-old children if the words have two concrete meanings (e.g., *duck* [the bird] and *duck* [the action]) and by 10–12 year olds if the words have the double functions of a physical and psychological referent (e.g., *cold* room and *cold* person) (Blue, 1981).

## Warm Up Before Jogging

Warm-Up Stretches are included for each *Word Joggers* activity. These are included as a way to pre-teach strategies that will be helpful during activity play. Time spent in warm-up discussions encourages players to internalize a visual picture of the graphic organizer that ultimately assists word storage and retrieval. The Warm-Up Stretches are valuable as an introduction to the activities; however, they are most valuable as a way to encourage the development of effective semantic networking. Many of the Warm-Up Stretches use graphic organizers as a way to help players organize their thoughts.

## Playing the Activities

Each activity has specific instructions for play; however, before beginning, decisions about these aspects of play should be made:

- Form of player response—Determine how the listening players will respond. Decide if the listening players will call out answers as they think of them or take turns responding.
- Cuing allowed—Decide on the cuing that will be allowed in each activity based on the objectives for each player. For instance, if the objective is to improve descriptive elaboration, including any part of the target name or providing the first sound of the word in the clue would be disallowed (e.g., the following clues for the target word *thumbtacks* would not be allowed: “a kind of tack” or “it begins with the sound *th*”). If improving word retrieval is the primary objective, the use of the first sound in the word or a part of the word could be allowed at first and then gradually faded.
- Use of points—The use of points in most activities is optional. Some players may not need points to be motivated, while others may be more enthusiastic if points can be earned. Suggestions for how to award points are provided in each activity.
- Use of the card protector—Using the card protector will prolong the life of the cards by preventing soiling or damage. Each time a card is drawn by a player, it may be placed in the protector for the duration of that player’s turn. As an alternative, you may place several cards in the protector before play begins; then remove and set aside the top card after each player’s turn.

*Word Joggers* activities can also be modified to add variety to each session or to better meet players’ individual needs. Consider the following suggestions for variations:

- Allow more time during each turn by turning the timer over again when time has run out or by not using the timer.
- Challenge the players to name the objects in less and less time by recording the amount of time each round takes.
- Pair players for team play. Have each player take a turn giving clues to a teammate. Use a point system to motivate the teams. For example, if the team guesses all the words on a card, it wins a point for each word and an additional five points for guessing all the words. If the team does not guess all the words before the time is up, it wins one point for each word guessed.

## Strategy Discussion

Each activity description concludes with a Strategy Discussion that identifies important skills to emphasize before, during, and after play. Strategies help players become more able to complete the activities quickly and accurately. More importantly, the Strategy Discussions help players make connections for how to use the strategies outside of the intervention session.

# Picture It!

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*Picture It!* increases metacognitive awareness of the diverse and fundamental nature of words. Players learn to carefully analyze target words and describe them according to their semantic features and categorical membership. Players compare words according to similarities and differences and describe them by attributes and essential characteristics. Practice in this organizational activity helps activate an associative process—the presentation of one word ignites a chain reaction of recognition of related words and concepts.

Cards in the *Picture It!* card deck contain both pictures of objects and the words themselves. This activity specifically targets players who have difficulty reading or who may need a visual representation to help them determine features. Use *Picture It!* to introduce all *Word Joggers* activities and to ensure success for younger players and those with more severe language disorders.

## Objectives

- Describe an object or action so that it can be recognized and labeled by a listener
- Identify the semantic category an object belongs in
- Identify the primary features that distinguish one object from another

## Warm-Up Stretch

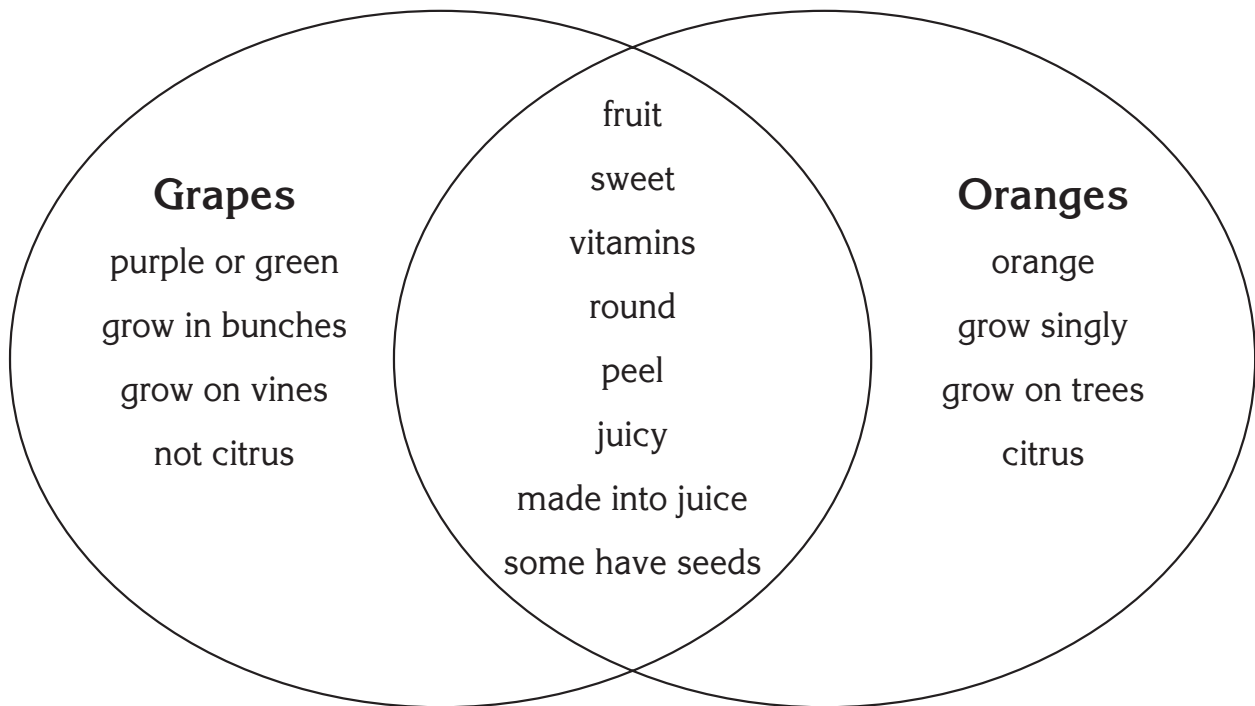
The *Picture It!* Warm-Up Stretch helps players become aware of the semantic category an item belongs in and the features that make the item different from others in the same semantic category. This awareness helps players become more specific in their descriptions and more precise in their choice of vocabulary when describing.

To conduct a Warm-Up Stretch for *Picture It!*

1. Choose a picture from a card to use as an example (e.g., grapes).
2. Think of a category the picture might belong in (e.g., fruit).
3. Think of another word within the same category (e.g., if the category is fruit, then choose *oranges*) to use to compare similarities and differences.
4. Make a copy of the *Venn Diagram* from Appendix C for each player, or draw one where all players can see it. Use the *Venn Diagram* to compare and list the important features of the two words (e.g., compare by color, shape, food group, texture, and use).

5. Compare similarities and differences. Include similarities in the overlapping area of the circles and differences in the circle corresponding to each word. (See the example below.)
6. After comparing the words, have players cooperatively decide on the ways they could describe the words so that a listener could name them.
7. Repeat this process with other pictures.

## Venn Diagram



If players have difficulty with any step in this Warm-Up Stretch, take the time to provide extra practice for that particular step.

## Activity Play

Place the *Picture It!* card deck in front of players. Choose one player to be the first clue giver. This player takes a card from the top of the deck, places it in the card protector, looks at the pictures, turns over the timer, and begins giving descriptive clues about the pictures without naming them. The listening players in the group must deduce the name of each picture. The object of the activity is for the clue giver to get all the words on the card named before time runs out. When time runs out, another player takes a turn as the clue giver.

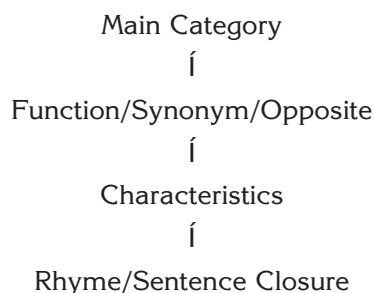
Clues may be given in ways other than describing. They may be presented:

- In a sentence closure format—“I went to the orchard and picked an \_\_\_\_.” (*apple*)
- As a similar word—“It’s not a *bush*, it’s a \_\_\_\_.” (*tree*)
- As a rhyme word—“It rhymes with *car* and *bar*.” (*star*)

If using points to play this activity, one point could be given for each correct response even if the answers are given at the same time by more than one player. For clue givers, one point could be given for each of the words on the card that was successfully elicited within the time limit. Other variations for playing *Picture It!* are possible; see page 18 for descriptions.

## Strategy Discussion

Before playing the activity, ask players to describe the clues that are most likely to elicit the target words. For example, first describing the category an item belongs in will help narrow the choices for the listening players; adding other descriptors will further narrow the choices. The following can be presented to players in a discussion of strategies:



The *Order of Clues* graphic in Appendix D displays this information. It can be duplicated and posted or distributed to players to help them organize their clue giving.

During play, periodically ask players to reflect on their use of a strategy by asking questions such as, “What strategy helped you come up with so many ideas?” “How did thinking about categories help you come up with the answer?” or “Did you think about similarities and differences when you were making up clues?” Explain to players how they can use these strategies by mentally picturing a Venn diagram or the *Order of Clues* graphic as they generate their descriptions.

End the activity by discussing how learning strategies for describing an item might be useful to players. For example, ask questions such as, “When else might you have to describe an object to someone?” “How could these strategies help you define words more precisely?” “When else do you have to define words?” and “How does thinking of descriptors help you come up with a precise word choice?”

**Venn Diagram**

