

# Focus on Synonyms and Antonyms TASKS

## Vocabulary Development – Synonyms and Antonyms

Using synonyms and antonyms keeps your writing interesting, helps in paraphrasing argument and in keeping your own writing cohesive. Do remember however, that synonym means similar in meaning not the same. Also, words may have a similar meaning but be used in different grammatical constructions, have different collocations and/or have different connotations.

**Synonyms for say/argue** *Say* and *argue* are commonly used verbs but a good academic writer uses verbs with more specific meanings when appropriate.

**Task 1** Work alone or in a group (or with your ASK Tutor) to check meaning and use of one group of words. Use Flax <http://flax.nzdl.org/greenstone3/flax> to find usage under 'learning collocations' then clicking to find example sentences. Add your own sentence (relating it to your essay title if possible).

Group 1	Group 2
<p><b>Acknowledge</b></p> <p><i>Example of use</i></p> <p><i>My example</i></p>	<p><b>Add</b></p> <p><i>Example of use</i></p> <p><i>My example</i></p>
<p><b>Attest</b></p> <p><i>Example of use</i></p> <p><i>My example</i></p>	<p><b>Contradict</b></p> <p><i>Example of use</i></p> <p><i>My example</i></p>
<p><b>Elaborate</b></p> <p><i>Example of use</i></p>	<p><b>Imply</b></p> <p><i>Example of use</i></p>

<i>My example</i>	<i>My example</i>
<b>Point out</b> <i>Example of use</i>  <i>My example</i>	<b>Note</b> <i>Example of use</i>  <i>My example</i>
<b>Predict</b> <i>Example of use</i>  <i>My example</i>	<b>Respond</b> <i>Example of use</i>  <i>My example</i>
<b>Agree</b> <i>Example of use</i>  <i>My example</i>	<b>Stress</b> <i>Example of use</i>  <i>My example</i>
<b>Object</b> <i>Example of use</i>  <i>My example</i>	<b>Advocate</b> <i>Example of use</i>  <i>My example</i>

**Task 2** Look at the words below. Can you provide an antonym for each? Are there any differences in usage? Now choose 5 pairs (plus antonym?) and write a sentence. Extra marks if you can make it related to your essay topic!

<b>Nouns</b> production	type	disadvantage	increase	part	target
system	research	field	findings	advantage	idea
conduct	topic	figures	structure	tendency	source
<b>Verbs</b> reinforce	explain	speed up	question	keep	
keep	help	join	decrease	focus	forecast
demonstrate	change	examine	remove	reach	cite
					evolve

nouns		verbs	
goal		reduce	
study		achieve	
results		alter	
area		evaluate	
authority		assist	
benefit		attach	
category		challenge	
component		clarify	
concept		quote	
behaviour		concentrate	
expansion		show	
issue		eliminate	
method		develop	
statistics		maintain	
trend		predict	
framework		retain	
drawback		strengthen	
output		accelerate	

**Task 3** Identify the synonyms in the text by underlining them and linking them to the word they are substituting for.

*Example agency – organisation*

*The chairman of the UK food's standards **agency** has said that a national advertising campaign is necessary to raise low levels of personal hygiene. The **organisation** is planning a £3million publicity programme to improve British eating habits. A survey has shown that half the population do not wash before*

*eating and one in five fail to wash before preparing food. There are over 6 million cases of food poisoning in this country ever year and the advertising blitz aims to cut this by 20%. This reduction, the food body believes, could be achieved by regular hand washing prior to meals.*

**Task 4** In the following text, replace all the words or phrases in italics with suitable synonyms

A leading French company has started a new programme to reduce costs. The *company's programme* aims to *reduce costs* by \$100 million. All staff have had pay cuts and work longer. The *company aims* to increase profits by 35% next year and promises that *pay* for all *staff* will be *increased* if that happens.

What do you notice about the use of synonyms here? Ask your ASK Tutor for guidance.

**Task 5:** Look at an excerpt from a Klare reading. Comment on his use of synonyms and the way he substitutes pronouns for nouns. Discuss with your ASK Tutor.

Since ancient times, **this area** has been inhabited by many distinct tribes and peoples—all of whom claim a legitimate right to draw on the water resources of the region. As particular groups have gained in strength and numbers, their need for water has grown, forcing others to fight for their continued survival. Many of the ancient texts of Mesopotamia record **such contests** in the Euphrates area, and much of the Book of Exodus in the Old Testament is devoted to accounts of clashes between the Israelites and other tribes for control of the Jordan River Valley. **Struggles of this sort** have also arisen in more recent times, as the imperial powers of Europe penetrated the area and sought to impose their dominion over it.

As we enter the twenty-first century, **the three river systems** remain divided among competing political entities. The Jordan River basin flows through Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Palestinian territory; the Tigris-Euphrates system passes through Iran, Iraq, Syria, Turkey, and areas occupied by the Kurdish population; and the Indus is shared among Afghanistan, China, India, Pakistan, and Kashmir (some of whose inhabitants seek to become independent). **These countries** and regions are deeply divided along political,



religious, ethnic, and ideological lines. Disputes over water are therefore likely to be intensified by historical grievances and animosities.

For many of **these countries**, disputes over water have taken on a deeply emotional or symbolic character, as matters of national (or regime) survival and identity. The Zionists who established the State of Israel were not interested solely in finding a sanctuary for European Jews; **they** also sought to resettle Jews on the land, in order to shed **their** urban, European identity and re-establish their ties with the ancient soil of Israel. **This** could only be achieved, they believed, by gaining access to the Jordan River and other sources of water for irrigation purposes, as the land in much of Israel is otherwise too dry for intensive agriculture. Similarly, the leaders of modern Iraq and Syria rest much of **their** claim to legitimacy on their success in developing new agricultural zones in the Tigris-Euphrates basin. Any threat to the survival of **these endeavours** is, therefore, likely to be met with unyielding resistance.