Unit 3 Lesson 5 Semantics

Crib Sheet. Exercises taken from UKLO.

Slide 1: Read out the objective for today's lesson: to look at semantics. The words 'semantic' and 'semantically' relate to the *meaning* of a sentence. Sentences can be grammatically correct but semantically incorrect. The cartoon shows this with the confusion over the word "orange."

Slide 2: Read out the information about the famous linguist, Noam Chomsky.

Slide 3: Ask pupils to work out why the sentences a - e are nonsensical.

a. The verb "neighing" is associated semantically with horses, NOT with birds.
b. The adverbial phrase "next Friday" suggests a future event, yet the verb phrase "had left" is a past tense – perfect, which suggests the action has already been completed.
c. Scarves are not items that can be broken in the way a cup or a mobile phone can.
d. Sky is an abstract concept, which makes it strange to think of it as an object that can be counted.
e. The verb "crash" suggests a one-off event that only happens for an instant, yet the adverbial "for two hours" suggests that the action was ongoing.

Slide 4: Hand out the worksheet for the lesson. **Colourless green ideas sleep furiously.** Pupils write their three reasons why this sentence is makes no sense, despite being grammatically accurate.

Something colourless cannot also be green / If something is green, it is not colourless. **1 mark**
An idea is not a living being so does not / cannot sleep. **1 mark**
Something which sleeps, does not do so furiously. **1 mark**

Slide 5: Pupils continue to work on the worksheet to cross out one word from Noam Chomsky's sentence, and replace it with one which makes it *grammatically incorrect*. Individual pupil response: many answers are possible.
They should try to imagine / draw / describe / say their sentences aloud as they go. This should help you get a picture of whether a sentence 'sounds right or wrong.' Go through some of the pupil sentences.

Slide 6: Pupils now make the sentence correct in terms of grammar and semantics. Ask for examples from pupils.

Slide 7: Pupils write a nonsense sentence. Ask for their examples.

Slide 8: Moving on to another way we can create a nonsense sentence by changing the grammar rather than semantics. Read out the text in the photo. Pupils need to write a sentence with adjectives placed in that order. They then rearrange the adjectives to see if it sounds right or wrong.

Slide 9: Plenary – pupils fill in the gaps to create an accurate sentence. For language to make sense, we need accurate grammar and accurate semantics.