UNIT 2: VOCABULARY BUILDING AND READING COMPREHENSION:

1. **VOCABULARY BUILDING –SYNONYMS AND ANTONYMS**

**1.1 Synonyms**

A synonym is a word, or in some cases a phrase that has the same meaning as another word with regards to the same language. If the meaning is not exactly the same, the words have very similar meanings in the context.

When two words are synonyms of one another, we call them synonymous words. Let us take the example of the word “jump”. The words leap, bounce, hop are all synonymous to jump, i.e. they have the same (or very similar) meanings.

Learn more about [Types of Phrases here](https://www.toppr.com/guides/english/vocabulary/types-of-phrases/) in detail.

At some times there are cases where the word has more than one meaning. The meaning of the word can only be judged by the context in which it has been used as a sentence. In such a case the synonyms of the word will also differ according to the context. Let us take the example of the word “free”.

* One meaning of the word free is to be without restrictions, and in this case, the synonym would be ‘independent’.
* Another meaning of the word free is to be free of charge, and so here the synonym would be ‘complementary’ or ‘gratuitous’.

**Antonyms**

Now as opposed to a synonym, an antonym is a word whose meaning is exactly opposite to another word, in the same language. It originates from the Greek word “anti” which stands for opposite and “onym” which stands for “name”. For example the antonym for hot is cold, and the antonym for up is down.

Antonyms are actually quite useful in the English language. At times it is easy to understand the meaning and the context of a difficult word, by knowing what the opposite of the word means. Take for example the word “mundane” whose synonym is “humdrum”. The antonym for mundane is “extraordinary” or “imaginative”. Now the word mundane has much better clarity.

Understand the [concept of Homonyms here](https://www.toppr.com/guides/english/vocabulary/homonyms/) in detail.

Even while writing, one may be using the same words too often making the prose drab and boring. Using antonyms, without changing the meaning of a sentence, can be a good way to make things interesting.

***Examples of Synonyms and Antonyms***

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| Word | Synonym | Antonym |
| Abundant | Plentiful, Ample | Scarce, Sparse |
| Appeal | Attract, Interest | Bore |
| Elaborate | Detailed, Inticrate | Simple, Plain |
| Optimistic | Bright, Promising | Pessimistic |
| Boisterous | Lively, Exuberant | Quire, Restrained |
| Inept | Incompetent, Unskilled | Competant |
| Soothe | Ease, Relieve | Aggravate |
| Linger | Stay put, Remain | Vanish |
| Vital | Essential, Crucial | Unimportant |

**WORD ROOTS, ONE-WORD SUBSTITUTES, PREFIXES AND SUFFIXES**

STUDY OF WORD ORIGIN:

ANALOGY

IDIOMS AND PHRASES,

SITUATIONAL VOCABULARY.READING COMPREHENSION – READING FOR FACTS,

GUESSING MEANINGS FROM CONTEX

SCANNING

SKIMMING AND CRITICAL READING.