Colourful Semantics Pack

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• Who? – What doing?
• What doing? – Where?
• What doing? – What?
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• What cards
• To whom card
Colourful Semantics

Who is this for?

All children benefit from visual learning, but this approach is particularly recommended for children with identified language difficulties.

What is it?

- A versatile colour-coded system, which:
  - Helps understanding of words and sentences;
  - Develops an awareness of how sentences work;
  - Supports more effective use of sentences in reading, writing and speaking;
  - Supports class-based literacy;
  - Is easily integrated across the whole curriculum;
  - Supports vocabulary development;
  - Is evidence-based.

How does it work?

Every sentence must have a verb around which the rest of the sentence is built. This answers the question, “what doing?”. The colour of the “what doing?” word is yellow:

![What doing?](image)

All the other elements of the sentence are then built around this verb by answering the following questions:

![Who?](image) ![Where?](image) ![What?](image) ![To whom?](image)

Some examples:

Fred is writing the story
Fred is writing the story on the train
Fred is giving the book to John
The colours remain the same irrespective of tense:

Fred wrote
Fred wrote the book
Fred wrote the book on the train
Fred gave the book to John

Fred is going to write
Fred is going to write the book
Fred is going to write the book on the train
Fred is going to give the book to John

It is very important with this approach not to become preoccupied with the fine details of grammar such as verb tenses, and prepositions, but to concentrate on the key questions and the underlying meaning of the sentence that answers the questions:


How does it work?

You have probably been given this pack because there is a child in your class who is using Colourful Semantics with a member of the speech and language therapy service. Listed below are some simple ideas on how the colour-coding system can be easily integrated into your teaching.

The use of ongoing strategies in the classroom will be essential in the child learning to apply these skills outside of the therapy sessions, and will also benefit the other children in the class.
Classroom strategies:

- Display the five question words individually on the appropriate colour paper around the classroom. Whenever asking these questions point to the words in the room. Continually make the link between the colour of the question and the colour of the response.
- When identifying key new vocabulary, sort according to the questions and related answers:
  
e.g. “The Fire of London”

Colour coded activity

- Make a list of some topic vocabulary
- Draw coloured boxes
- Sort the vocabulary into these (using the key question words as a guide)
- Transfer the coded information onto a semantic web/mind map
- Use to connect key topic vocabulary
- Use to support question comprehension in topic work
- Use to “thought shower” key vocabulary needed for written work

Extending the technique

One of the key methods used for extending sentences and making them more interesting is the use of adjectives and adverbs.

Adjectives are presented in white speech bubbles:
Looking at our previous sentence, it can be extended as follows:

Fred is writing the story on the train

Adverbs are presented in brown triangles:

Yesterday Fred quickly wrote the book on the train

**Vocabulary**

Consistently presenting the new vocabulary children need to know visually within this colour-coded system will ensure that children learn, remember and use the words more effectively:

**Prepositions**

- on
- in front
- under
- between

**Adjectives**

- big
- slimy
- scary
- bumpy
- purple

Chief Executive: Andrew Morgan
Speech and Language Therapy Programme

COLOURFUL SEMANTICS: example sentences

WHO? + WHAT DOING?
- The cat is writing
- The fish is swimming
- Jack is painting
- The fireman is driving
- The bird is drawing

WHAT DOING? + WHERE?
- Swimming in the sea
- Drawing in the park
- Talking in the car
- Painting on the table
- Sleeping in the bedroom

WHO? + WHAT DOING? + WHERE?
- The dog is cooking in the kitchen
- The fish is swimming in the sea
- Jack is painting in the garden
- The snake is talking in the bathroom
- The policeman is driving in the car

WHAT DOING? + WHAT?
- Cutting the paper
- Kicking the cat
- Painting the picture
- Throwing the ball
- Taking the cake

WHO? + WHAT DOING? + WHAT?
- Jack is kicking the ball
- The cat is eating the cake
- The farmer is driving the tractor
- The cow is pushing the gate
- The girl is looking at the flower

WHO? + WHAT DOING? + WHAT? + WHERE?
- The cow is eating cake in the kitchen
- The astronaut is writing a letter in the garden
- The bird is cutting flowers in the living room
- Jack is painting a picture in his bedroom
- The boy is brushing his hair on the train
WHO? + WHAT DOING? + WHAT? + TO WHOM?

- Jack is taking the bike to Fred
- The cat is giving the biscuit to the dog
- The fireman is driving the car to the policeman
- The snake is giving the toffee to the fish
- The sheep is giving the hat to the lion
Who?

What doing?
What doing?

Where?
Who?

What doing?

Where?
### Additional activities for use with Colourful Semantics
- for each colour and word concept alone

#### WHO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who am I? (puppets, pictures, feely bags, objects)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Me and my family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People who help us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mini beasts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm animals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story characters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People in the school/work place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV soap characters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Film stars (use magazines for pictures)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book characters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic specific vocabulary characters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### WHAT HAPPENS?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What happened next?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What would happen if?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favourite things to do (e.g. running, jumping, playing, colouring etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mimbing games (what is he doing?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copying games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simon says (with actions)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### WHERE?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stations (where does x lives?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorting games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where would you go if...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where am I?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lottos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who lives where?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barrier games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pairs/matching games e.g. bucket and seaside</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### WHAT?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What am I (describing objects)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you need to... (e.g. clean the car)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorting games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What would you take if... (e.g. you were going to the beach)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What would you wear if...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favourite foods, games etc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WHEN?

Day and night sorting games  
Birthdays, Christmas etc  
Daily sequences  
Time lines  
Story boards  
Seasons

Additional activities for use with Colourful Semantics  
- for building stories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story boards</th>
<th>Story sacks</th>
<th>Story strings</th>
<th>Story aprons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do you think happened next?</td>
<td>Silly/sensible sentences</td>
<td>Retelling familiar stories with cue cards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story footprints</td>
<td>Film preview sheets</td>
<td>Party invitations</td>
<td>Wanted posters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washing lines</td>
<td>Caterpillars</td>
<td>Footprints</td>
<td>Flowers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples:

![Diagram 1](image1)

![Diagram 2](image2)