

# Teaching Tips

*My Words*  
My Personal Word Book  
Grades 3 to 6

Please see the last page of this document for the Table of Contents for *My Words*.

*My Words* contains age-appropriate words:

- Common vocabulary such as *province*
- Canadian terms such as *elder*
- High-interest words such as *trampoline*
- Confusing words such as *breath* and *breathe*
- Spelling variations such as *neighbor* and *neighbour*
- Words that are tricky to spell — such as *phone*
- Contractions such as *isn't*

The book includes punctuation, capitalization, parts of speech, basic writing tips, and alternatives for overused words, such as *nice*. Students can add new words to the spaces provided. There are special word lists, such as for planets and the five senses, as well as printed and cursive alphabets.

Some students might want to highlight, underline, circle, or check off words as they need them. As their language confidence grows and their vocabulary builds, they will refer to other words and pages. *My Words* is designed to be used by the same student from one grade to the next.

At the beginning of a task, or even at the beginning of the day, the teacher can ask all students to take out *My Words* and keep it handy for reference. When they're unsure of spelling, they can independently look for a word. If they do need help finding it, a classmate or adult can quickly point it out. If they want to add a new word, they can write it in the space provided. For example, a student can find *microscope* on page 21. Can't find *madness*? Add it to page 21.

*My Words* includes tips for finding words with tricky beginnings, such as *sugar*, *phone*, and *use*. Can't decide whether to write *pray* or *prey*? Turn to page 28 of *My Words* to see a brief explanation beside each of these sound-alike words.

## Teaching with *My Words*

*My Words* can support your lessons in many ways. Here are a few teaching ideas to get you started:

Topic	Page	Basic Lesson	Extension
And	2	Join phrases and sentences, and make lists, such as <i>I need a pencil, eraser, and ruler.</i>	Edit your writing. Remove some instances of <i>and</i> . Avoid beginning a sentence with <i>and</i> .
Au	3	Look at "au" beginnings: <i>aunt, aurora borealis, Australia, author, and autumn.</i> What other words begin with "au"?	What words have "au" in the middle? Examples: <i>sausage, saucer.</i>
Word meanings	3, 26	What is the difference between <i>archaeology</i> and <i>palaeontology</i> ?	What do "ology," "archaeo," and "palaeo" mean?
Bad	4	What does each <i>bad</i> synonym mean?	What are appropriate uses for <i>bad</i> synonyms? Use them in your writing.
Beautiful	4	What does each <i>beautiful</i> synonym mean?	Use <i>beautiful</i> synonyms in your writing.
Big	4	What does each <i>big</i> synonym mean?	What are appropriate uses for <i>big</i> synonyms? Use them in your writing.
But	5	Join phrases and sentences.	Avoid beginning a sentence with <i>but</i> .
Homophones	5, 13, 37	Examine <i>buy, by, and bye;</i> or <i>there, their, and they're;</i> or <i>forth and fourth.</i>	Find other homophones in this book. Can you think of more?
"C" sounds	6-8	What vowel follows "c" when it makes a "k" or "s" sound?	List words to find patterns.
"Ch" sounds	6-7	What letter follows "ch" when it makes a "k," "sh," or "ch" sound? Is there a pattern?	What happens when "ch" occurs in the middle or at the end of a word? Examples: <i>kitchen, church.</i>
Cold	7	What does each <i>cold</i> synonym mean? Create <i>cold</i> similes. Example: <i>as cold as a glacier.</i>	What does it mean to <i>catch a cold</i> or <i>behave coldly</i> ? Use <i>cold</i> synonyms in your writing.
Coniferous, deciduous	8-9	How does a <i>coniferous</i> tree differ from a <i>deciduous</i> tree?	List trees for each category. Collect leaves, cones, and needles.
Ex	11	What does "ex" mean? How many words begin with "ex" in this book?	What "ex" words could be added?
Gh	11	When does "gh" sound like "f" and when is it silent? Examples: <i>enough, eight.</i>	List other words for each sound. Can you find patterns?
4 and 40	13, 51	Note the spelling of <i>four</i> and <i>forty</i> .	Look at other ways that number words differ, such as <i>one</i> and <i>first</i> (page 51).

Topic	Page	Basic Lesson	Extension
Fun	13	List fun activities.	Play a game. Learn a song. Dance! Use <i>fun</i> synonyms in your writing.
Good	14-15	What does each <i>good</i> synonym mean?	What are appropriate uses for <i>good</i> synonyms? Use them in your writing.
"G" sounds	14-15	When does "g" make a "j" sound?	List words with different "g" sounds to find patterns.
Gotta, gonna	14	Explain proper use of <i>have to, going to</i> , etc.	Discuss casual speech versus writing.
Happy	16	What does each <i>happy</i> synonym mean?	What makes you feel happy? Brainstorm other <i>happy</i> synonyms. Use them in your writing.
Hot	17	What does each <i>hot</i> synonym mean?	What are appropriate uses for <i>hot</i> synonyms? For example, consider weather, a stove, and spicy food.
Inter	18	What does "inter" mean? How does it affect the meaning of words such as <i>intersection</i> ?	Brainstorm other "inter" words.
Kn	19	Do words beginning with "kn" share a common general meaning?	Brainstorm other "kn" words and look for patterns.
Left, right	20, 30	What are all of the meanings for <i>left</i> and <i>right</i> ?	Try doing tasks, such as writing or using chopsticks, with your non-dominant hand. How would you stand on a skateboard?
Mad	21	What does each <i>mad</i> synonym mean?	What are appropriate uses for <i>mad</i> synonyms? Consider <i>crazy</i> and <i>angry</i> .
Milli	22	What does "milli" mean? Examine <i>milligram, milliliter, and millimetre</i> .	Can you add more words to this list?
Nice	23	What does each <i>nice</i> synonym mean?	What are appropriate uses for <i>nice</i> synonyms?
Q	29	Why do so few words begin with "q"?	Can you add more words to the list?
Rh	30	What words begin with "rh"? Do they have anything in common?	Can you add more words to the list?
Sad	31	What does each <i>sad</i> synonym mean?	What makes you feel sad?
Said	31	Role-play synonyms for <i>said</i> .	Explore conversations that would be appropriate for variations of <i>said</i> . Learn about quotation marks.
Small	33	What does each <i>small</i> synonym mean?	What are appropriate uses for <i>small</i> synonyms?

Topic	Page	Basic Lesson	Extension
Short and long vowels	33	Point out the difference between <i>snack</i> and <i>snake</i> , and between <i>slim</i> and <i>slimy</i> .	Discuss general rules for short and long vowel sounds. Discuss exceptions.
So	34	Practise using <i>so</i> as an adverb and as a conjunction.	Avoid beginning a sentence with <i>so</i> .
Then	37-38	How does <i>then</i> differ from <i>than</i> ?	Limit the use of <i>then</i> to begin a sentence.
Un	39	What does “un” mean?	Add new “un” words to the list.
Walk	41	Role-play synonyms for <i>walk</i> .	What character or creature might walk each way?
Wanna, woulda	42	Explain proper use of <i>want to</i> , <i>would've</i> , etc.	Discuss casual speech versus writing.
Punctuation	44-45	What is the job of punctuation marks? Discuss possession on page 34.	Examine a sentence or paragraph without punctuation, and add it.
Capitals	46	What is the job of a capital, or upper-case, letter?	Find capitalized words in this book, or in other text. Separate them into lists for place names, special days, etc. Examine a sentence or paragraph without capitals, and add them.
Parts of speech	47	Learn basic parts of speech.	Parse sentences. Act out parts of speech.
Colours	48-49	Brainstorm more variations for each colour. Examples for <i>green</i> : <i>apple, grass, jade, olive, pea, celery</i> .	Edit your writing. Describe colours vividly and precisely. Experiment with similes, such as <i>The flower was as pink as bubblegum</i> .
Sports and fitness	53	Act out activities. Write about your favourite sport or activity.	Discuss rules, techniques, and equipment. List indoor/outdoor, summer/winter, or team/individual activities. Research favourite athletes. Sketch and label a bike.
Feelings and behaviour	54-55	Describe your feelings and behaviour right now. What does it mean to be <i>in a good mood, blue, or out of sorts</i> ?	Role-play feelings, behaviour, gestures, and expressions for different situations. Describe people in photographs and drawings. Describe fictional characters and real people in the news.
The five senses	56-57	Describe a setting that you can see right now, or an object that you can see and pick up.	Touch, smell, and describe an item in a paper bag. Listen to sounds and describe them. Taste and describe food samples.

Topic	Page	Basic Lesson	Extension
Food	58-59	Discuss meals, nutrition, and food preparation. What is the difference between <i>roasting</i> and <i>frying</i> ? Discuss words such as <i>picnic</i> and <i>snack</i> .	Write about an ideal holiday meal, school lunch, or picnic. Read recipes and food labels. Discuss composting, recycling, and reusable containers.
Animals	60-61	List house pets, zoo animals, farm animals, and wild animals. Sketch animals and label features such as <i>horns, feathers, wings, beak, talons, antennae, and tail</i> .	Discuss features of animal groups. For example, what are the traits of an insect? What is its life cycle?
Dinosaurs	62	Research and write about your favourite dinosaur.	Research roots of dino names. For example, what do <i>cera</i> and <i>tops</i> mean? Invent a new dinosaur with an appropriate name.
Superheroes	63	Write about your favourite superhero or the nastiest villain.	Invent a new one!

*Other lesson ideas:*

- Find compound words, such as *scarecrow* and *swimsuit*.
- Discuss adding “s” or “es” for a plural. List irregular plurals, such as *person/people*.
- Why do so few words begin with “u,” “v,” “x,” “y,” and “z”?
- Find cultural words. Examples: *Inuit, Kwanza*. What words could you add for your own family background and traditions?
- Find subject-specific words. Examples: *hypothesis, hexagon*. Find all of the words related to weather, measurement, or clothing.
- Canadians say *toque*. What words do other countries use instead?
- Go on a treasure hunt for words that end in “tion” or “sion.” Is there a pattern?
- Do words ending with “umble” share a common meaning? Find them. Can you add more?
- What does *omnivore* mean? Find it on page 25, and search for other “vore” words. Does “omni” begin other words?
- Very few English words end in “i.” What is the origin of *ski*?
- Add “the ing thing.” Examples: *smile/smiling, trip/tripping, reach/reaching*.
- Find contractions. Example: *aren’t/are not*.
- How do double consonants affect the preceding vowel sound? Some words to examine: *antenna, allergy, smelly, letter*. Can all consonants be doubled?
- Examine past tense words ending in “ed.” List those that end with a “d” sound, a “t” sound, or a full “ed” syllable. Is there a pattern? Examine words with regular or irregular past tenses. What is the difference between *lay* and *lie*? Explore their past tenses.

- Many words end in a silent “e.” Does it always reach over the preceding single consonant and cause the preceding single vowel to “say its name”? If not, then what is its job? Examples: *have, give*.
- Discuss onomatopoeia. Find *Kaboom!* on page 19. Add other sound words.
- Metric abbreviations do not end with a period. For example, *grams* is abbreviated to *g* only.
- Should *old-fashioned* have a hyphen? Explain.
- Build alliterative phrases or sentences. Example: *The glass globe glittered.*
- Explore idioms, such as *I need a cat nap* or *I’m tickled pink*.

### *Legibility*

- Refer to the inside covers for printed and cursive letters.

### *Art*

- Learn the proper proportions for a face. Carefully draw your self-portrait on the front cover.
- Learn how to draw a mandala. Draw one on the front cover.
- Draw doodles, zentangles, or your favourite animal on the front cover.

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