

What is a Lexical Set and Specialized Vocabulary?

Worksheet

A lexical set is a collection of words unified by a shared semantic domain; for example, cooking vocabulary (sauté, simmer, blanch) or legal terminology (tort, plaintiff, defendant) forms distinct lexical sets.

Questions

1. What defines a lexical set?

- A) Words with the same root
- B) Words related by grammar
- C) Words sharing a semantic domain
- D) Words that rhyme

2. Which is a cooking lexical set?

- A) happy, sad, angry
- B) knife, plate, fork, spoon
- C) sauté, simmer, blanch, poach
- D) dog, cat, mouse, bird

3. Legal lexicon example?

- A) attorney, judge, plaintiff, defendant
- B) beautiful, ugly, pretty, handsome
- C) run, walk, jump, hop
- D) table, chair, desk, bench

4. Difference: lexical set vs. word family?

- A) No difference
- B) Lexical set = semantic domain; word family = shared root
- C) Word family = semantic; lexical set = root-based
- D) They're the same thing

5. Identify the lexical set for sailing vocabulary.

6. What is the legal lexical set?

7. Give a lexical set for music.

8. Define: What is a lexical set?

9. Define: What is a semantic field?

10. Define: Examples of lexical sets

Answer Key

1. C) Words sharing a semantic domain — A lexical set is defined by shared semantic domain—all words belong to the same field of meaning.
2. C) sauté, simmer, blanch, poach — Sauté, simmer, blanch, and poach are cooking verbs sharing the semantic field of food preparation.
3. A) attorney, judge, plaintiff, defendant — Attorney, judge, plaintiff, and defendant are legal terms forming a specialized lexical set.
4. B) Lexical set = semantic domain; word family = shared root — Lexical sets group by meaning (sailing terms); word families group by morphology (happy, unhappy, happiness).
5. Domain: sailing and maritime activity Words: tack, jib, hull, mast, ballast, keel All belong to one semantic field—sailing terminology
6. Domain: law and litigation Words: tort, plaintiff, defendant, verdict, precedent, injunction
Specialized vocabulary for the legal domain
7. Domain: musical instruments and concepts Words: pitch, timbre, crescendo, harmony, chord, fugue All terms used by musicians and music students
8. A group of words that share a common semantic field or domain.
9. An area of meaning shared by a group of related words.
10. Cooking (sauté, simmer, blanch), Medicine (symptom, diagnosis, prognosis), Music (pitch, harmony, crescendo)

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