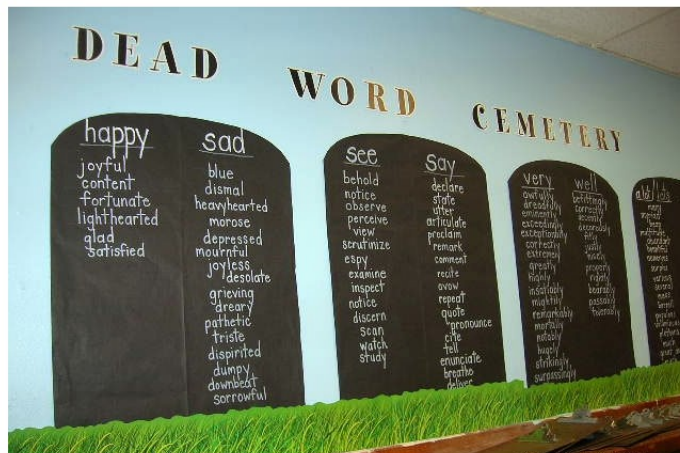


## ENCOURAGING HIGHER-LEVEL VOCABULARY



## Using ITA and Slash and Dash to Build Vocabulary

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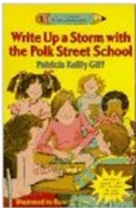
ITA Foundation, New York, NY

**Introduction:** When students write, they often use tired, shop-worn words like “sad,” “mad,” and “said.” This compendium of **Dead Words** offers synonyms that are more expressive. They help students expand their vocabulary and state more precisely exactly what they or their characters are seeing, doing, and feeling.

**How to use this compendium:** This document is intended to be used as an integral part of the creative writing session with your students. Here are the steps for helping your students develop rich, descriptive stories about themselves or characters, scenes, and situations that they create.

1. **Brainstorming:** Help your student develop a framework for the story. Use the following graphic organizer to create an outline of the first four elements of a story. The rest of the story will evolve as they write. And don’t forget to use the featured book for inspiration on how to develop characters, scenes, and problems.

**WRITING A “SUBSTANTIAL STORY” IN I.T.A.**

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2. As your student begins to dictate sentences to you, follow the ITA-only protocol for transcription of every word in ITA.
3. When he/she dictates one of the tired words listed in the compendium, stop to discuss vocabulary alternatives. Here you will need to make choices about which word(s) to suggest/teach to your student. Some are suitable for young children; others are more complex. Examples for “sad” substitutes for young students may be: *depressed, down in the dumps, glum, gloomy*. For older students, you may want to suggest and teach: *despondent, devastated*.
4. If the word is polysyllabic, use Slash and Dash to help your student process every syllable and every sound in the word.

That’s it! Enjoy the discussions and enhanced writing that will result from this approach.

amazing	astonishing, breathtaking, staggering, startling, mind-boggling
awesome	exceptional, extraordinary, phenomenal, astounding, remarkable, sensational, bodacious
awful	grievous, horrible, galling, horrendous, unbelievable, appalling, disgusting, frightful, hideous, horrendous, nasty, shocking, unpleasant, offensive
bad	horrendous, devious, horrible, unpleasant, devastating, atrocious, dreadful, unacceptable, shocking, offensive (bad action) despondent, depressed, dispirited, devastated, icky, discouraged, distressed, gloomy, unhappy, melancholic (person feels bad)
beautiful	attractive, gorgeous, comely, handsome, good-looking, lovely, cute, classy, charming, dazzling, elegant, bewitching, pulchritudinous
big	gigantic, huge, large, sizable, colossal, super colossal, enormous, humongous, jumbo, mammoth, walloping
boring	dull, monotonous, uninteresting, tedious, tiresome, ho hum, unexciting
easy	simple, piece of cake, uncomplicated, no sweat, no problem, manageable, simple as ABC, child's play
fast	quickly, in nothing flat, lickety split, on the double, rapidly, swiftly, in a flash, chop-chop
fat	heavy, pudgy, plump, chunky, obese, roly-poly, stout, beefy, oversize, jelly-belly, husky, rotund, butterball, corpulent
fine	first-rate, great, on top of the world, top-notch, splendid
fun	enjoyable, amusing, entertaining, riveting, pleasant, lively, diverting
good	(describing a person) angelic, wonderful, inspiring, admirable, exceptional, decent ( I feel good) on top of the world, super, splendid, marvelous,
got/get	acquire, obtain, accomplish, secure, get my hands on, succeed
great	substantial, enormous, fantastic, tremendous, immense, out of this world, stupendous, gigantic
happy	cheerful, chipper, delighted, gleeful, upbeat, overjoyed, ecstatic, content, exultant, on cloud nine, perky, walking on air, tickled pink,
hard	exhausting, difficult, daunting, complicated, backbreaking, laborious, irksome, fatiguing, effortful, strenuous, tiring
interesting	compelling, intriguing, engaging, gripping, stimulating, thought-provoking, captivating, enchanting, riveting

like (verb)	admire, appreciate, adore, approve, get a kick out of, take delight in, fancy, desire
love (verb)	admire, cherish, be fond of, be crazy about, fancy, have affection for, think the world of, be fascinated with
look	glimpse, notice, gaze, scrutinize, observe, behold, inspect
mad	angry, furious, agitated, enraged, irritated, hysterical, exasperated
make	produce, generate, accomplish, invent, assemble, manufacture
nice	kind, friendly, lovely, admirable, amiable, simpatico, gracious, helpful, charming, considerate, courteous, delightful, pleasant, affable, congenial, gregarious
old	(age) ancient, elderly, senior, along in years, gray-haired, (outdated) outdated, antique, old-fashioned, outmoded, antiquated, oldfangled, out-of-date, time-worn, worn-out
pretty	beautiful, attractive, gorgeous, comely, handsome, good-looking, lovely, cute, classy, charming, dazzling, elegant, bewitching, pulchritudinous
quiet	(person) soft-spoken, secretive, tight-lipped, speechless, not saying boo, silent  (event) could hear a pin drop, hushed, inaudible, noiseless, silent
really	absolutely, surely, in reality, no ifs ands or buts, positively, undoubtedly, indeed, literally, certainly, actually
run	dash, dart, spring, rush, race, take off, go like lightning, cut and run, speed, spurt, trot, scamper, hustle, depart, scoot, gallop, scramble, skitter, scurry
sad	gloomy, glum, downhearted, melancholy, pessimistic, down in the dumps, despondent, distressed, depressed, heavyhearted, woebegone, despairing
see	observe, glimpse, perceive, behold, recognize, gaze, examine, inspect, note, peek, peer, scrutinize, spy, catch sight of, gaze, take notice of, catch a glimpse of, scan, gawk, glare
said	announced, stated, communicated, articulated, mentioned, asserted, implied, expressed, told,
small	tiny, petite, slight, microscopic, miniature, diminutive, puny, runt, teensy, undersized, short, itty bitty
sick	ailing, frail, ill, nauseated, bedridden, feeble, laid-up, feeling lousy, unhealthy, sick as a dog, not so hot, queasy, under the weather
take	seize, grab, collect, capture, acquire, catch, clutch, grasp, obtain, carry off, snag, snatch, get hold of grotesque,

ugly	grotesque, hideous, monstrous, not much to look at, repulsive, homely, frightful, revolting
very	absolutely, highly, certainly, decidedly, extremely, truly, largely, positively, astonishingly, precisely, exactly
walk	hike, stride, amble, race, saunter, shuffle, stroll, strut, trudge, lumber, march, meander, plod, shamble, stalk, toddle, hit the road, hoof it
want	need, require, crave, wish for, covet, fancy, have an urge for, long for, yearn for, feel a need
try	seek, strive, undertake, knock oneself out, make a bid, make an effort, shoot for, do one's best, venture, contend
smart	astute, brainy, bright, intelligent, crafty, resourceful, shrewd, wise, genius, whiz kid, clever, ingenious, quick-witted, sassy
silly	daft, foolish, featherbrained, crazy, stupid, childish, idiotic, inappropriate, irresponsible, flighty, dippy, brainless, immature, nitwitted, muddle-headed, empty-headed, senseless, ludicrous, nonsensical, pointless, preposterous
loud	noisy, deafening, ear-splitting, blaring, roaring, rowdy, blustering, cacophonous, crashing, ear-piercing, thundering