

SEMCHAQUIZ

Fill the gaps with the appropriate terms for semantic change or try to guess the kind of semantic change in question.

GROUP 1

► 1. _____ (cf 3.1)

Examples: *dog*: 'a specific powerful breed of dog' > 'all breeds or races of dogs'
great: 'large in size' > 'very large, of high rank or status, important, in a very good state of physical or mental health, ...'

In semantic changes involving _____, an _____ of meaning takes place until a word's signification covers _____ than the idea originally conveyed.

► 2. _____ (cf 3.2)

Examples: *starve*: 'to die' > 'to suffer or perish from hunger'
meat: 'food' > 'food or flesh'

In semantic _____, the range of meanings is _____ so that a word gradually acquires a more _____ sense. It now is used in _____ contexts than before the change.

► 3. _____ (cf 3.3)

Examples: *stud*: 'a male animal (especially a horse) used for breeding' > 'good-looking, sexy man'
bead: 'prayer' > 'small piece of (decorative) material pierced for threading on a line'
_____ involves the transfer of a term because of an imagined _____. It involves _____ in the meaning of a word.

GROUP 2

► 4. _____ (cf 3.4)

Type of semantic change where a word takes on new senses which are closely associated with the word's original meaning. Tip: The term comes from Greek *metonomia* 'transformation of the name'.

► 5. _____ (cf 3.5)

Type of semantic change where a term with more comprehensive meaning is used to refer to a less comprehensive meaning or the other way round. Tip: The term comes from Greek *sunekdokhe* 'inclusion'.

► 6. _____ (cf 3.6)

Type of semantic change where a word takes on a more negative meaning (two solutions).

GROUP 3

► 7. _____ (cf 3.7)

English *knight* ‘mounted warrior serving a king’, ‘lesser nobility (below baronet)’ comes from Old English *cniht* ‘boy, servant’, which shifted to ‘servant’, then ‘military servant’, and finally to the modern senses of ‘warrior in service of the king’ and ‘lesser nobility’ (cf Campbell 1998: 263).

In Old English *pretty* (or *prættig*, as it was then) meant ‘clever’ in a bad sense – ‘crafty, cunning’. Not until the 15th century had it passed via ‘clever’, ‘skilfully made’ and ‘fine’ to ‘beautiful’ (cf Ayto 2001: 411).

► 8. _____ (cf 3.8)

Praline: [...] Now that's what I call a *dead* parrot.

Shopkeeper: No, no it's stunned.

Praline: Look my lad, [...]. That parrot is definitely *deceased*. [...]

Shopkeeper: It's probably pining for the fjords. [...]

Praline: Look matey [...] this parrot [is] bleeding *demised*.

Shopkeeper: It's not, it's pining.

Praline: It's not pining, it's *passed on*. This parrot *is no more*. It has *ceased to be*. It's *expired* and *gone to meet its maker*. This is a *late* parrot. It's a *stiff*. *Bereft of life*, it *rests in peace*. If you hadn't nailed it to the perch, it would *be pushing up the daisies*. It's *rung down the curtain* and *joined the choir invisible*. This is an *ex-parrot*.

Shopkeeper: Well, I'd better replace it then.

Monty Python's *Dead Parrot* (Gratzke 1995: 109 ff.)

Praline uses a lot of synonyms – paradoxically – not to veil the concept of death, but to underline it (humour!). What strategy does she resort to?

► 9. _____ (cf 3.9)

We witness a constant change of English intensifying adverbs meaning ‘very’, from Old English *swipe* to Middle English *full* and modern *very* (< Old French *verrai* ‘true’), *really*, *extremely*, *awfully*, *terribly*, *horribly*. The latter have come to have no real connection with their origins, *awe*, *terror*, *horror* and so on (cf Schendl 2001: 32, Campbell 1998: 265). Which ‘stylistic device’ provokes such a kind of shift in meaning?

► 10. _____ (cf 3.10)

In many languages, examples of _____ are found involving verbs meaning ‘to kill’. For example, English *kill* originally meant ‘to strike, beat, hit, knock’. If you were to say *hit* but intend it to mean ‘kill’, this would be an _____ (cf Campbell 1998: 266).