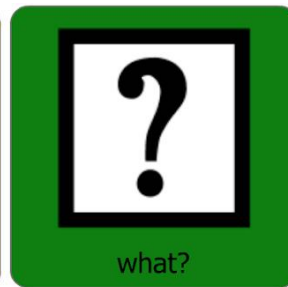




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## An Introduction to Colourful Semantics



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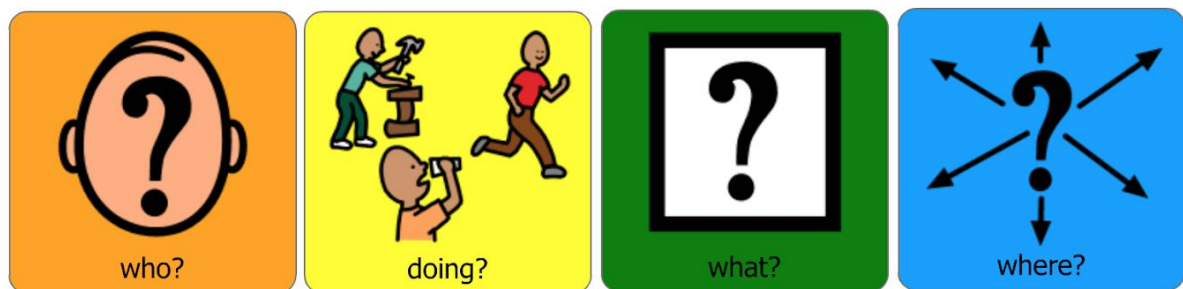
### What is Colourful Semantics?

Colourful Semantics is an approach created by Alison Bryan, a Speech and Language Therapist based in the UK. It is a method of teaching children how to understand and build sentences as well as to develop their grammar by linking the structure of a sentence (syntax) and the meaning of words (semantics).

Colourful Semantics has four key stages and these are colour coded:

- Who (Subject) – Orange
- What doing (Verb) – Yellow
- What (Object) – Green
- Where – Blue

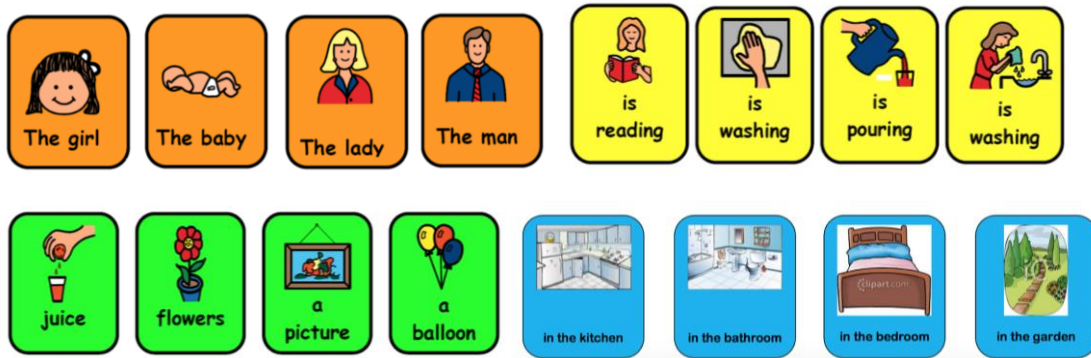
Once you have covered the above four stages, there are additional stages/colours/shapes for adverbs, adjectives, conjunctions and negatives. This image of a colour strip is an example of a child working at level 4.



Pictures/symbols (as shown below) can also be used alongside the key colours for each stage to help with those who may have difficulties with vocabulary.

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## Why use Colourful Semantics?

Research into Colourful Semantics has found that it:

- Encourages a wider vocabulary
- Increases the length of utterance/sentence length
- Helps children to answer questions (Who? Doing? What? Where?)
- Develops use of nouns, verbs, prepositions and adjectives
- Improves story-telling (narrative) skills
- Can be transferred to written sentences and reading comprehension
- Can be carried out individually, in small groups or as a whole class approach.

## Who can benefit from Colourful Semantics?

The approach can be used to help all children develop their language skills, but it can be especially helpful for children with a range of Speech, Language and Communication Needs, including (but not limited to):

- Developmental Language Disorder (previously known as Specific Language Impairment)
- Developmental Delay or Disorder
- Autistic Spectrum Condition

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- Down's Syndrome
- Literacy difficulties
- Dyslexia
- English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Colourful Semantics also works brilliantly as a whole-school approach for supporting language and literacy development and can be used across all age groups.

### Who can implement it?

A Speech and Language Therapist can train you on how to use Colourful Semantics with specific children or as a whole-school approach. This enables teachers and teaching assistants to implement the approach to those pupils who require support.

### Evidence for Colourful Semantics

Studies have shown that the Colourful Semantics approach is a useful strategy when working with children (Bolderson, Dosanjh, Milligan, Pring & Chiat, 2011).  
References  
Bolderson, S., Dosanjh, C., Milligan, C., Pring, T. & Chiat, S. (2011). Colourful semantics: a clinical investigation. *Child Language Teaching and Therapy*, 27, pp.344-353.

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