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0-5 5-7 7-9 9-12 12+

opening extract from

Oxford First Thesaurus

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Preface for teachers and parents

The **Oxford First Thesaurus** introduces primary school children to the idea of a thesaurus and helps them develop the skills they need in using one. It is a tool that can be used to help build children's vocabulary and to add variety and liveliness to their writing. All the words have been carefully chosen and are the words young children will use most frequently in their writing. Special attention has been given to such overused words as **bad**, **big**, **do**, **get**, **go**, **good**, **nice**, and **say**.

This thesaurus is arranged alphabetically. There are three main types of entry. There are entries that give synonyms. These are words that are close in meaning to the headword. Each synonym is supported by a definition or example sentence to help children choose the most appropriate word. At the headword **eat** for example, the different meanings of **bite**, **chew**, **gobble**, **munch**, **nibble**, and **taste** are explained. Sometimes the headword has two or more different meanings. So under the headword **hard**, words that mean 'not soft' and also words meaning 'not easy' are included.

There are also entries that give related words. For example, under the headword **water**, the related words **flow**, **pour**, **splash**, **drip**, and **trickle** are listed. Under the headword **farm**, animals and other things you find on a farm are listed. Then there are topic entries that give lists of different kinds of things. For example, under the headword **bird**, you will find **chicken**, **magpie**, **parrot**, **pelican**, and **swan**.

Remember a thesaurus is not the same as a dictionary. A thesaurus does not necessarily give you explanations or definitions of what words mean. If you want to know what a word means, you may need to look it up in a dictionary such as the *Oxford First Dictionary*.

Using a thesaurus can be fun; we hope children will enjoy using this thesaurus to find a voice of their own in their writing. The colour illustrations support the entries and draw very young readers into the book. The text has greatly benefited from extensive trialling in primary schools. The author, illustrator, and publishers are most grateful to all those teachers whose comments and suggestions have helped make this book as useful as possible.





Antonyms

Some words have opposite meanings, called **antonyms**. You can sometimes find these at the bottom of the page. If you look at the bottom of the page that has the headword **soft**, you can see that its opposite or antonym is **hard**.

Related words

Related words are useful words for talking or writing about a subject given for some headwords. Under the headword **space**, you can find words such as **spaceship**, **astronaut**, **moon**, and **planet**.

Topic entries

If you look up the headword **book** you will find different books listed such as **atlas**, **diary**, **dictionary**, and **thesaurus**.

Index

If you want to find a word quickly in the thesaurus try looking in the index at the back. This lists all the headwords in the thesaurus in alphabetical order, with their page numbers.

Making your writing more interesting



Imagine you are writing about what you did at the weekend. You might start like this:

I had a nice day on Saturday. The weather was nice so we went to a nature park. The lady who showed us round was very nice. We saw lots of nice animals, including some deer. I had a nice chocolate ice cream.

Can you see how the word **nice** is used over and over again? It would be more interesting if you sometimes used another word instead. If you look up **nice** in the thesaurus you will find other words you can choose which have a similar meaning. So you could write this instead:

I had an enjoyable day on Saturday. The weather was fine so we went to a nature park. The lady who showed us round was very friendly. We saw lots of nice animals, including some deer. I had a delicious chocolate ice cream.

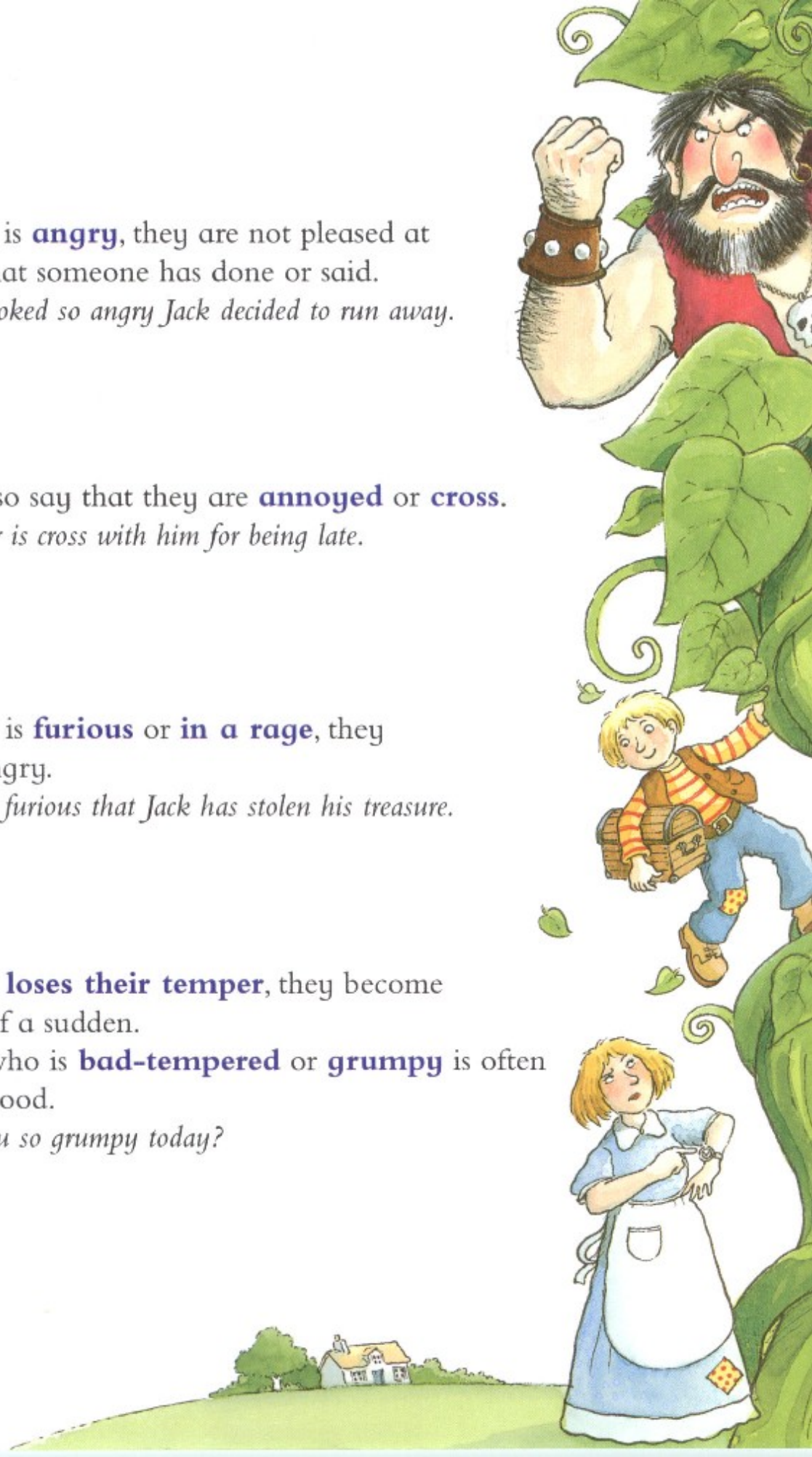
angry

If someone is **angry**, they are not pleased at all with what someone has done or said.
The giant looked so angry Jack decided to run away.

You can also say that they are **annoyed** or **cross**.
Jack's mother is cross with him for being late.

If someone is **furious** or **in a rage**, they are very angry.
The giant is furious that Jack has stolen his treasure.

If someone **loses their temper**, they become angry all of a sudden.
Someone who is **bad-tempered** or **grumpy** is often in a bad mood.
Why are you so grumpy today?



bad

Bad is a very common word and it has a lot of different meanings. You can often use another word instead.

What a bad child!
You could say **naughty** instead.



The king was a bad man.
You could say **wicked** instead.

She is bad at spelling.
You could say **poor** instead.

There's a bad smell coming from the dustbin.
You could say **nasty** or **revolting** or **horrible** instead.

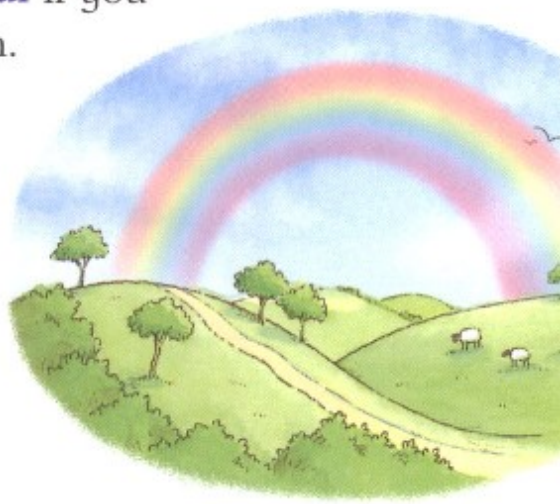
I feel bad about forgetting his birthday.
You could say **awful** or **dreadful** or **terrible** instead.



The opposite of **bad** is **good**.

beautiful

You say someone or something is **beautiful** if you enjoy looking at them or listening to them.
What a beautiful rainbow!



Here are some other words you can use.

lovely
The princess sang a lovely song.



pretty
She wore a pretty dress.



handsome
A handsome knight listened to her singing.

sweet
'What a sweet voice!' he said.

bend

If you **bend** something, you change its shape so it is not straight any more.
See if you can bend this wire.

If something **curves**, it bends round smoothly.
The road curves gently.

If something **turns**, it changes direction.
The bus turns left at the top of the road.

If something **twists** or **winds**, it keeps changing direction.
The road twists and turns between the hills.

To **zigzag** means to move from one side to the other with sharp turns.
The road zigzags up the mountain.

big

Big things are larger than others of the same kind.
Can I have a big piece of cake?

Large means the same as big.
An elephant is a large animal.

Something that is **tall** measures more than usual from top to bottom.
This crane is very tall.

Something that is **long** measures a lot from one end to the other.
A giraffe has a long neck.

You can use these words to describe things that are very big.

enormous

giant

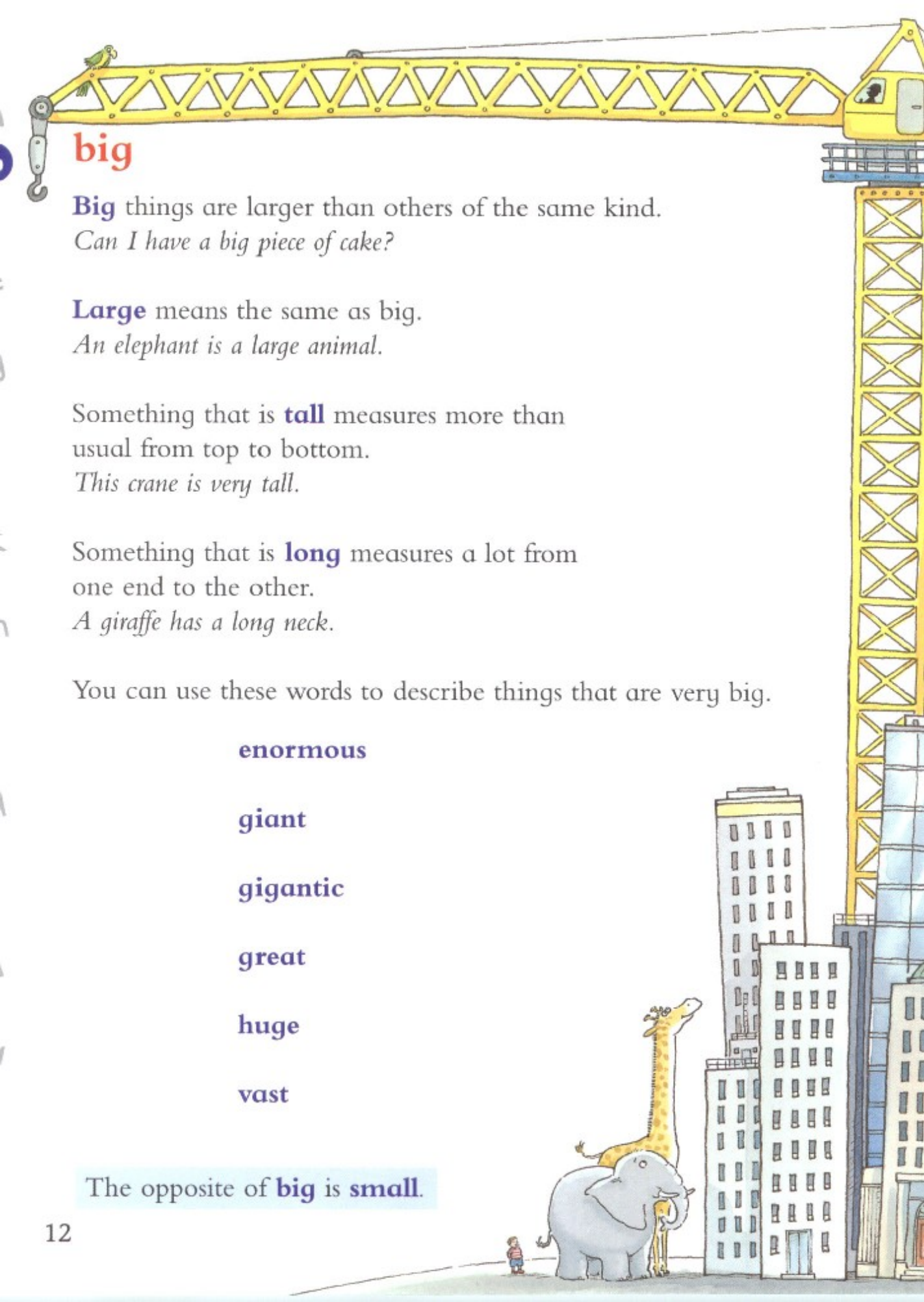
gigantic

great

huge

vast

The opposite of **big** is **small**.



bird

These are all different kinds of bird.

budgerigar

chicken

eagle

magpie

owl

parrot

pelican

penguin

pigeon

robin

swan

woodpecker













