Word Cline helps students to build, refine and use new vocabulary as they generate synonyms and discuss connotations and nuances of meaning. They generate words with similar meaning and arrange them to show a graduating intensity, according to a given criterion.

- Select a relevant key word e.g. family. It is important for students to be able to generate at least four synonyms for the chosen key word.
- Have students generate synonyms (or words that are closely related) for the key word, e.g. relatives, kin, people, folks, ancestors, relations.
- Invite students to arrange the words in rising intensity against a criterion such as distant relationship to close relationship.
- Organise students in small groups to discuss the words and reach a consensus about the order of the arrangement. Have them reflect on the factors that influenced the choice of placement.
- As a whole class, discuss how the use of the different words from the Word Cline could impact on your speaking.
- Provide time for students to review a selected piece of their own speaking and identify vocabulary that could be replaced with more specific words. (Note: This activity also works well with pupils analysing their writing)

Activity- Try it yourself

1. In our text we identified two words with similar meanings detest and despise.
2. See if you can generate 4 more words of similar meaning.
3. Discuss your words and arrange these words in rising intensity on the sheet provided.