

DENOTATION/CONNOTATION EXERCISES

I. For each pair of words and a phrase, list the one that is positive in the "Positive Connotation" category, the one that is negative in the "Negative Connotation" category, and the phrase that is a more neutral definition for both words in the "Denotation" column.

Which is better? ...or...Is the glass half empty or half full?

Your Choices:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. gaze, look steadily, stare | 9. observe, watch, spy |
| 2. fragrance, odor, a smell sensed by the olfactory nerve | 10. a young age, youthful, immature |
| 3. delayed, not on time, tardy | 11. not having a care, irresponsible, carefree, |
| 4. somewhat interested, nosy, curious | 12. find, detect, snoop |
| 5. ask of someone, demand, request | 13. inexpensive, fairly priced, or cheap |
| 6. gathering, a large group, mob | 14. isolation, privacy, having an opportunity to be alone |
| 7. slim, skinny, less than average build | 15. assertive, firmly confident, pushy |
| 8. discuss with others, debate, argue | |

	<i>Positive Connotation</i>	<i>Denotation</i>	<i>Negative Connotation</i>
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			

Define denotation: _____

Define connotation: _____

II. Practice shifting your viewpoint so that you can describe the same object both favorably and unfavorably. You can do this by first using words with a positive connotation and then switching to words with a negative connotation. Choose three of the descriptions below. Write a sentence that shows positive connotation and a sentence that shows negative connotation.

For example, you might describe a banana as either sweetly ripe or mushy, depending on the desired connotation.

Guided Practice: Describe a wet street after the rain.

- Positive:
- Negative:

Independent Practice: Now choose three of the following (circle your choices).

1. Describe a college or professional football game.
2. Characterize a challenging high school class.
3. Describe a hamburger made in a fast-food restaurant.
4. Describe a group of three or four teen-age girls walking down the street together.
5. Describe a new regulation for student parking on campus.
6. Describe a recent movie or television program.

Positive Connotation #1: _____

Negative Connotation #1: _____

Positive Connotation #2: _____

Negative Connotation #2: _____

Positive Connotation #3: _____

Negative Connotation #3: _____

