

DENOTATION AND CONNOTATION (pp. 119–120) • Name _____

A word’s denotation is its dictionary definition, the idea the word represents. A word’s connotation involves the emotional associations that the word brings to mind. It’s important to consider both denotation and connotation as you communicate.

A Identify Negative Connotations: The words in each of these pairs have similar denotations; they could refer to the same thing. In each pair circle the word that has a negative connotation, that brings less favorable associations to your mind.

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|-----------|-------------|------------|-------------|
| 1. slim | skinny | 4. new | unproven |
| 2. cheap | inexpensive | 5. thrifty | miserly |
| 3. invest | gamble | 6. trailer | mobile home |

B Provide Different Connotations: The following words are neutral; they have neither a positive nor a negative connotation. For each neutral word, supply one word with a favorable connotation and one with an unfavorable connotation. The denotation of all three words in each item should be the same.

<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Positive</u>	<u>Negative</u>
1. car	_____	_____
2. speak	_____	_____
3. walk	_____	_____

C Recognize Bias: A person might use—perhaps unconsciously—words with a positive or negative connotation that supports a bias. *Bias* is an attitude formed ahead of time that keeps a person from looking at a subject objectively. It’s important to know the bias of an author or speaker so that you can better evaluate what you read and hear. Look for bias in the headlines below. Circle the letter of the best response.

- Which headline would you be likely to find in the Cubs’ hometown paper?
a. Cubs Trounce Cards 5–3 b. Cards’ Effort Falls Short; Cubs Win 5–3
- Which newspaper favors the development project?
a. Mall to Destroy 300 Homes b. Mall to Bring 3,000 Jobs

D Quiz Yourself: A word’s _____ involves the emotional associations that the word brings to mind. A word’s _____ is an objective definition. _____ is an opinion formed ahead of time that causes a person to lean toward one side of an issue.