

# Denotation & Connotation Writing Module

## Teacher Masters

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## TM#1: Engage Prior Knowledge—Silent Warm-Up

**Directions:** Read the words and definition in each row. After reading both words and the definition, circle the word in each row that you think is more positive.

	Word #1:	Definition of both words:	Word #2:
1	slender	sized thinner than average	scrawny
2	odor	a smell or scent	fragrance
3	acquaintance	a person known by another	friend
4	leisurely	unhurried, slower pace	lazily
5	youthful	a young age	immature

## TM#2: Engage Prior Knowledge—Silent Warm-Up Answer Key

Directions: Read the words and definition in each row. After reading both words and the definition, circle the word in each row that you think is more positive.

	Word #1:	Definition of both words:	Word #2:
1	slender	sized thinner than average	scrawny
2	odor	a smell or scent	fragrance
3	acquaintance	a person known by another	friend
4	leisurely	unhurried, slower pace	lazily
5	youthful	a young age	immature

## TM#3: Denotation and Connotation Poster

**Denotation**—the dictionary definition of a word.

**Connotation**—an idea or feeling that is associated with a word in addition to its literal meaning

### Implied Connotative Meaning Examples

(of words with similar meanings):

Positive +

*slender*

*leisurely*

*youthful*

Negative -

*scrawny*

*lazily*

*immature*

## TM#4: Demonstrate—Denotation and Connotation in Poetry

### Part 1: Read the poem once.

Adapted from “Sympathy” by Paul Lawrence Dunbar

I know why the caged bird sings, ah me,  
When his wing is bruised and his chest sore,—  
When he beats his bars and he would be free;  
It is not a carol <sup>2</sup>of joy or glee<sup>3</sup>,  
But a prayer that he sends from his heart's deep core,  
But a plea<sup>4</sup>, that upward to Heaven he flings —  
I know why the caged bird sings!

### Part 2: Identify the denotation and positive or negative connotation of the three underlined words in the poem.

Word	Denotation	Connotation	+ / -
bruised	Injured as a result of striking or pressing	negative feelings of hurt and abuse	-
free	enjoying personal right or liberty	positive feelings of happiness	+
flings	Throws forcefully	negative feelings of desperation	-

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<sup>2</sup> song

<sup>3</sup> delight and pleasure

<sup>4</sup> an appeal

# TM#5: Practice—Denotation and Connotation in Poetry

## Part 1: Read the poem once.

From “Still I Rise” by Maya Angelou

Out of the huts of history's shame  
I rise  
Up from a past that's rooted in pain  
I rise  
I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,  
Welling<sup>1</sup> and swelling<sup>2</sup> I bear in the tide.  
Leaving behind nights of terror and fear  
I rise  
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear  
I rise  
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors <sup>3</sup>gave,  
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.  
I rise  
I rise  
I rise.

## Part 2: Identify the denotation and positive or negative connotation of the three underlined words in the poem.

Word	Denotation	Connotation	+ / -
shame			
terror			
hope			

<sup>1</sup> to rise, spring, or gush as water

<sup>2</sup> to enlarge, to bulge, to rise in the waves

<sup>3</sup> a person from whom one is descended

# TM#6: Practice—Denotation and Connotation in Poetry Answer Key

## Part 1: Read the poem once.

From “Still I Rise” by Maya Angelou

Out of the huts of history's shame  
 I rise  
 Up from a past that's rooted in pain  
 I rise  
 I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,  
 Welling<sup>1</sup> and swelling <sup>2</sup>I bear in the tide.  
 Leaving behind nights of terror and fear  
 I rise  
 Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear  
 I rise  
 Bringing the gifts that my ancestors<sup>3</sup> gave,  
 I am the dream and the hope of the slave.  
 I rise  
 I rise  
 I rise.

## Part 2: Identify the denotation and positive or negative connotation of the three underlined words in the poem.

Word	Denotation	Connotation	+ / -
shame	<i>painful feeling arising from the consciousness of something dishonorable</i>	<i>negative feelings associated with past acts of wrongdoing</i>	—
terror	<i>an instance or cause of intense fear or anxiety</i>	<i>negative, fearful feelings</i>	—
hope	<i>the feeling that what is wanted can be had or that events will turn out for the best</i>	<i>positive, joyful feelings</i>	+

<sup>1</sup> to rise, spring, or gush as water

<sup>2</sup> to enlarge, to bulge, to rise in the waves

<sup>3</sup> a person from whom one is descended

## TM#7: Partner Practice—Denotation and Connotation in Poetry Answer Key

### Part 1: Read the poem once.

From “Pause” by Nikki Grimes

The sky is slate  
and the world is a cold  
and slushy place till  
Kiara stops by Video Haven,  
sunshine in jeans  
and knee-high boots.

...

“Catch you later,”  
I tell her,  
and she blows me a kiss  
warm enough to melt  
every patch of ice  
on the planet.  
Gotta watch out  
for sun.

### Part 2: Identify the denotation and positive or negative connotation of the three underlined words in the poem.

Word	Denotation	Connotation	+ / -
slate	<i>a bluish—gray color</i>	<i>negative feelings of sadness associated with feeling blue</i>	-
sunshine	<i>direct light from the sun unbroken by clouds</i>	<i>positive feelings happiness associated with the imagery of brightness</i>	+
melt	<i>become liquefied by heat; become more tender or loving</i>	<i>positive feelings of associated with love and likeness</i>	+

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## TM#8: Independent Practice Answer Key

### Part 1: Review key terms

Directions: Define each key term from the lesson

1. Denotation: *the dictionary definition of a word*
2. Connotation: *the emotions or set of associations attached to a word that is implied rather than literal*

### Part 2: Read the poem once.

From “Oranges” by Gary Soto

The first time I walked  
With a girl, I was twelve,  
Cold, and weighted down  
With two oranges in my jacket.  
December. Frost cracking  
Beneath my steps  
...

## TM#8: Independent Practice Answer Key (cont.)

### Part 2: Read the poem once. (cont.)

I took my girl's hand  
In mine for two blocks,  
Then released it to let  
Her unwrap the chocolate.  
I peeled my orange  
That was so bright against  
The gray of December  
That, from some distance,  
Someone might have thought  
I was making a fire in my hands.

### Part 3: Identify the denotation and positive or negative connotation of the four underlined words in the poem.

Word	Denotation	Connotation	+ / -
cold	<i>having a low temperature; having little warmth</i>	<i>negative feelings associated with freezing</i>	-
bright	<i>filled with light; vivid or brilliant</i>	<i>positive feelings associated with beauty and warmth</i>	+
gray	<i>a color between white and black</i>	<i>negative feelings associated with sadness and bad weather</i>	-
fire	<i>a burning mass of material</i>	<i>positive feelings associated with warmth and survival</i>	+