

CONNOTATIONS vs. DENOTATIONS

High School English Worksheet

Part I: Understanding Denotation and Connotation

Denotation is the **literal, dictionary definition** of a word.

Connotation is the **feeling, emotion, or association** connected to a word. A word can have a **positive, negative, or neutral** connotation.

1. Which statement best describes the denotation of a word?
 - A. The emotions the word creates
 - B. The dictionary definition of the word
 - C. The opinion a person has about the word
 - D. The historical meaning of the word
2. Which statement best describes connotation?
 - A. The exact dictionary definition
 - B. The pronunciation of a word
 - C. The feelings or associations connected to a word
 - D. The number of syllables in a word
3. Which word has a positive connotation?
 - A. selfish
 - B. stubborn
 - C. confident
 - D. arrogant
4. Which word has a negative connotation?
 - A. determined
 - B. persistent
 - C. ambitious
 - D. pushy
5. Which word is most likely neutral in connotation?
 - A. residence
 - B. mansion
 - C. shack
 - D. palace

Part II: Positive, Negative, or Neutral?

Directions: Write **P** for positive, **N** for negative, or **NE** for neutral connotation.

- | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| 6. ____ generous | 11. ____ home | 16. ____ curious |
| 7. ____ stingy | 12. ____ arrogant | 17. ____ nosy |
| 8. ____ determined | 13. ____ confident | 18. ____ youthful |
| 9. ____ stubborn | 14. ____ inexpensive | 19. ____ childish |
| 10. ____ residence | 15. ____ cheap | 20. ____ unique |

Part III: Comparing Connotations

Directions: For each pair of words, identify which word has the **more positive connotation**.

- | | | | |
|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|
| 21. A. confident | B. arrogant | 26. A. courageous | B. reckless |
| 22. A. economical | B. cheap | 27. A. nosy | B. curious |
| 23. A. stubborn | B. determined | 28. A. assertive | B. bossy |
| 24. A. relaxed | B. lazy | 29. A. thrifty | B. stingy |
| 25. A. youthful | B. childish | 30. A. strange | B. unique |

Part IV: Choose the Best Word

Directions: Choose the word with the connotation that best fits the sentence.

31. The coach praised Maya for being _____ and never giving up, even when the team was losing.
A. stubborn
B. determined
C. difficult
D. pushy
32. The journalist was criticized for being too _____ and asking questions about the celebrity's private life.
A. curious
B. interested
C. nosy
D. observant
33. Our new principal is very ____; she listens carefully to everyone's ideas and treats students respectfully.
A. bossy
B. considerate
C. controlling
D. demanding
34. The family lives in a small _____ near the edge of town.
A. mansion
B. palace
C. residence
D. estate
35. The millionaire lives in a huge _____ overlooking the ocean.
A. house
B. residence
C. mansion
D. building
36. The student was _____ enough to admit that he had made a mistake.
A. courageous
B. foolish
C. careless
D. reckless

Part V: Rewrite for Connotation

Directions: Replace the underlined word with a word that has a **more positive connotation** while keeping approximately the same meaning.

REMEMBER!

Denotation = Dictionary Definition

Connotation = Feelings or Associations

A word's connotation can be: **Positive • Negative • Neutral**

37. The manager said that Jordan was bossy because he often took charge of group projects.
Replacement: _____
38. The teacher described Sarah as nosy because she asked many questions about other students.
Replacement: _____
39. The student was stubborn about finishing the difficult assignment.
Replacement: _____
40. The company hired a cheap supplier to reduce expenses.
Replacement: _____