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Connotation and Denotation

In writing, there are two different kinds of meanings of the words you use. The denotation of a word is the meaning that you would find in the dictionary. The connotation of a word is the feeling or mental picture that people associate with the word.

For example, the words *notorious* and *famous* have different connotations. Notorious has a negative connotation. It makes you think that a person is well known for bad or outrageous things. Famous suggests that a person is well known for all the good and wonderful things he or she did.

Think carefully about the connotations of the words you use. Connotations can have an important effect on your writing and the meanings that words convey to your reader.

A. Label each of the words below, writing either *positive* or *negative* to describe its connotation.

1. _____ quickly/hastily _____
2. _____ debate/argument _____
3. _____ odor/fragrance _____
4. _____ snoop/investigate _____
5. _____ attract/lure _____
6. _____ call/yell _____

B. For each of the following words, write a word that has a similar denotation but has a different connotation. Feel free to use a thesaurus for this activity.

1. mistake _____
2. revere _____
3. regretful _____
4. mend _____
5. melt _____
6. spunk _____

Spelling Champions

Listed below are commonly misspelled words. Study each of the words in preparation for your own class spelling bee. Discuss as a class how much time you each need to prepare for the spelling bee. It might be fun to choose some of your own words to add to the class spelling bee list.

ache	angle	believe	breathe	bruise
weird	careful	chief	cousin	embarrass
receive	rhythm	height	whole	excite
finally	tying	unusual	grammar	theirs



Bamboozled!

Every time you see the word *bamboozled* in the sentences below, cross it out and write the correct vocabulary word on the line provided. Choose from the words provided at the bottom of the page.

1. She **bamboozled** the dress that her mother had made for her to wear. _____
2. The baby seemed **bamboozled** and distressed when the babysitter spilled the milk from the bottle. _____
3. It would be **bamboozled** if everyone graduated from high school and there weren't any dropouts. _____
4. The confident athlete was very **bamboozled** about whether his jump would be good enough for the final high jump competition. _____
5. They **bamboozled** a large amount of their time and services to the cause.

6. The doctors feel that the tumor is probably **bamboozled**. _____
7. We thought that the new girl was going to be especially ostentatious, but she was actually very **bamboozled**. _____
8. The teacher was energetic and **bamboozled** as the quiet students walked into the classroom. _____
9. The crowd cheered **bamboozled** as the football players came onto the football field.

10. The voters were very **bamboozled** when the candidate for governor promised to eliminate taxes completely. _____
11. Since he has put on so much weight, he has become awkward and **bamboozled**.

12. They were **bamboozled** when they walked into the bank and found that the vault door was wide open. _____
13. The portions at the banquet were **bamboozled**, and we walked away hungry.

14. The kids were **bamboozled** when they finally finished the test. _____

marvelous
vivacious
jubilantly
despised
congenial

scant
optimistic
fatigued
ungainly
agitated

skeptical
dumbfounded
benign
donated