

Tone Signal Sort

Sort close-meaning words by the feeling they suggest.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.5c "Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., bullheaded, willful, firm, persistent, resolute)."

NAME _____

DATE _____

POSITIVE ASSOCIATION

This word suggests an admired, helpful, or strong quality.

cheerful, as in "a cheerful greeting"

NEGATIVE ASSOCIATION

This word suggests an unpleasant, unhelpful, or disliked quality.

gloomy, as in "a gloomy forecast"

1 SORT _____ 8 items

Part 1 SORT: For each word, circle its tone category; Part 2 PROVE IT: choose two words and explain the associations that guided your choices.

1. bullheaded

POSITIVE

NEGATIVE

2. persistent

POSITIVE

NEGATIVE

3. resolute

POSITIVE

NEGATIVE

4. stubborn

POSITIVE

NEGATIVE

5. obstinate

POSITIVE

NEGATIVE

6. determined

POSITIVE

NEGATIVE

7. steadfast

POSITIVE

NEGATIVE

8. tenacious

POSITIVE

NEGATIVE

2 PROVE IT Explain your thinking

Pick two items from Part 1. For each one, tell how you knew where it belonged.

ITEM # _____ HOW I KNEW _____

ITEM # _____ HOW I KNEW _____

3 MAKE YOUR OWN One of each

Part 3 MAKE YOUR OWN: Write one new word with a positive association and one new word with a negative association.

POSITIVE _____

NEGATIVE _____

CHALLENGE

Write one sentence that uses two words with similar definitions but different connotations. Label the positive word and the negative word.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	bullheaded	NEGATIVE	It suggests refusing to listen to reasonable advice.
2	persistent	POSITIVE	It suggests continuing effort toward a goal.
3	resolute	POSITIVE	It suggests firm, purposeful determination.
4	stubborn	NEGATIVE	It suggests an unwillingness to change or listen.
5	obstinate	NEGATIVE	It suggests an unreasonable refusal to change.
6	determined	POSITIVE	It suggests focused effort and purpose.
7	steadfast	POSITIVE	It suggests dependable commitment to a goal or belief.
8	tenacious	POSITIVE	It suggests an admirable refusal to give up.

PART 2 • PROVE IT

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item.

PART 3 • MAKE YOUR OWN (SAMPLE ANSWERS)

- **POSITIVE:** Positive association: loyal
- **NEGATIVE:** Negative association: selfish

Challenge: The curious reporter asked about the city's water plan, but the nosy neighbor asked about a family's private mail. Positive: curious. Negative: nosy.

The words in Part 1 all relate to holding firmly to a goal, decision, or belief, but their usual associations differ. Accept equivalent student explanations that identify the word's positive or negative association.