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	NEGATIVE ASSOCIATION
This word suggests an admired, helpful, or strong quality. cheerful, as in "a cheerful greeting"	This word suggests an unpleasant, unhelpful, or disliked quality. gloomy, as in "a gloomy forecast"

1 SORT

8 items

For each word, circle its tone category.

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

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.

ANSWER KEY

Tone Signal Sort

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.