

Tone Takes Sides

Sort words by the feeling or judgment they suggest.

8.L.V.3.c “Distinguish between the connotations of words that share a similar denotation (e.g., confident, assertive, egotistic, pompous, smug). (1)”

NAME _____

DATE _____

POSITIVE CONNOTATION

These words suggest a favorable feeling or judgment about a person. They often sound like praise.

Thrifty suggests careful spending, so it has a positive connotation.

NEGATIVE CONNOTATION

These words suggest an unfavorable feeling or judgment about a person. They often sound like criticism.

Wasteful suggests careless spending, so it has a negative connotation.

1 SORT _____ 8 items

For each word, circle POSITIVE or NEGATIVE, then choose two words and explain which feeling or judgment gave each word its connotation.

1. confident

POSITIVE

NEGATIVE

2. pompous

POSITIVE

NEGATIVE

3. smug

POSITIVE

NEGATIVE

4. assertive

POSITIVE

NEGATIVE

5. determined

POSITIVE

NEGATIVE

6. curious

POSITIVE

NEGATIVE

7. egotistic

POSITIVE

NEGATIVE

8. nosy

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 connotation and one new word with a negative connotation. Each word should describe a person and should not come from Part 1.

POSITIVE

NEGATIVE

CHALLENGE

Write two sentences about the same action. Use a positive-connotation word in one sentence and a negative-connotation word in the other, and underline both connotation words.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	confident	POSITIVE	It suggests healthy self-assurance.
2	pompous	NEGATIVE	It suggests an irritatingly self-important attitude.
3	smug	NEGATIVE	It suggests being too pleased with oneself.
4	assertive	POSITIVE	It suggests speaking up clearly and respectfully.
5	determined	POSITIVE	It suggests focused effort toward a goal.
6	curious	POSITIVE	It suggests an interested desire to learn.
7	egotistic	NEGATIVE	It suggests excessive concern with oneself.
8	nosy	NEGATIVE	It suggests unwanted interest in other people's private matters.

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:** generous
- **NEGATIVE:** selfish

Challenge: Jules was resourceful when he used a paper clip to open the supply cabinet. Jules was sneaky when he used a paper clip to open the supply cabinet.

For Part 2, accept explanations that identify the favorable or unfavorable judgment suggested by each chosen word. In context, connotation can shift, but these answers reflect each word's usual association.