Words With Attitude

Sort words by the feeling they add.

8.4.R.2 "Students will use context clues, connotation, and denotation to determine or clarify the meaning of words or distinguish among multiple-meaning words."

NAME _____ DATE _____

POSITIVE CONNOTATION

A word with a positive connotation adds a feeling of approval to its basic meaning. Context can help you hear that approving tone.

The **meticulous** editor caught every error.

NEGATIVE CONNOTATION

A word with a negative connotation adds a feeling of disapproval to its basic meaning. Context can help you hear that critical tone.

The **picky** editor complained about every tiny detail.

1 SORT

8 items

Circle POSITIVE or NEGATIVE for each bold word, then choose two items and explain how the word's basic meaning and nearby clues helped you decide.

1.	Nia was **resourceful**, turning old boxes into sturdy shelves.	POSITIVE NEGATIVE
2.	Omar gave a **thoughtful** reply that considered everyone's ideas.	POSITIVE NEGATIVE
3.	The coach called Mara **reckless** for running onto the icy field without checking it.	POSITIVE NEGATIVE
4.	After the storm, the neighbors were **generous** with food and blankets.	POSITIVE NEGATIVE
5.	The speaker sounded **arrogant** when he claimed no one else could understand the topic.	POSITIVE NEGATIVE
6.	When teammates suggested a safer route, Jalen was **stubborn** and refused to listen.	POSITIVE NEGATIVE
7.	The scientist was **persistent**, testing her idea after several failed attempts.	POSITIVE NEGATIVE
8.	The new student made a **clever** plan to organize the crowded supply closet.	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 two new sentences, one using a word with a positive connotation and one using a word with a negative connotation; underline each chosen word.

POSITIVE _____

NEGATIVE _____

CHALLENGE

Write two sentences about someone who talks a lot, using a positive word in one and a negative word in the other; explain how the words change the feeling.

ANSWER KEY

Words With Attitude

GRADE 8 · 8.4.R.2

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	Nia was **resourceful**, turning old boxes into sturdy shelves.	**POSITIVE**	Resourceful praises Nia's ability to solve a problem with what she has.
2	Omar gave a **thoughtful** reply that considered everyone's ideas.	**POSITIVE**	Thoughtful suggests care and respect for others' ideas.
3	The coach called Mara **reckless** for running onto the icy field without checking it.	**NEGATIVE**	Reckless criticizes Mara for taking a risk without care.
4	After the storm, the neighbors were **generous** with food and blankets.	**POSITIVE**	Generous praises the neighbors for sharing.
5	The speaker sounded **arrogant** when he claimed no one else could understand the topic.	**NEGATIVE**	Arrogant criticizes the speaker's sense of superiority.
6	When teammates suggested a safer route, Jalen was **stubborn** and refused to listen.	**NEGATIVE**	Stubborn criticizes Jalen for refusing to consider advice.
7	The scientist was **persistent**, testing her idea after several failed attempts.	**POSITIVE**	Persistent praises the scientist for continuing despite difficulty.
8	The new student made a **clever** plan to organize the crowded supply closet.	**POSITIVE**	Clever praises the student's effective idea.

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**: The inventive drummer made a beat using empty jars.
- **NEGATIVE**: The selfish passenger took two seats on a crowded bus.

Challenge: Ava is chatty and makes new students feel welcome. Ava is long-winded and never lets anyone else speak. Both words describe someone who talks a lot, but chatty sounds friendly and long-winded sounds critical.

For Part 2, students should connect each word's basic meaning to its connotation and a context clue. For example, item 6 describes someone who will not change his mind, while 'refused to listen' makes stubborn critical; item 7 describes someone who keeps trying, while 'after several failed attempts' makes persistent approving.