

THE CONNOTATION CONTINUUM

A SDAIE/SIOP DENOTATION/CONNOTATION LESSON FOR ENGLISH LEARNERS AND STANDARD ENGLISH LEARNERS

Summary:

This lesson works either as a stand-alone lesson to teach/review the concepts of Denotation and Connotation, or (preferred) as a way of integrating these concepts into an overarching rhetoric unit involving an in-depth treatment of Pathos, Logos, and Ethos.

As a stand-alone lesson, it can be used with various lists of synonyms (words and phrases that share a similar denotation, but that are connotatively different) that do not necessarily have to be related to a particular text. The lesson is both extremely rigorous and heavily scaffolded to allow English Learners, Standards English Learners, RSP students, and students who are below grade level to access the curriculum.

In the context of a unit, the vocabulary used **should be generated from the texts the students are analyzing** (it can be used with any text). This lesson should be part of a series of lessons designed to help students analyze and evaluate how good authors, speakers, and artists choose their words and images very carefully in order to achieve precise emotional appeals, highlight the logical features of their arguments, and/or create the appearance of reliability. At the unit's close, students should be able to display these skills in their own writing, speaking, and art.

California State Standard Addressed: (grades 9/10)

Reading 1.2 – Students will distinguish between the denotative and connotative meanings of words and interpret the connotative power of words.

Common Core State Standards Alignment: (grades 9/10)

Reading Standard for Literature 4: Students will determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).

Reading Standard for Informational Text 4: Students will determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone.

Speaking and Listening Standard 1: Students will initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9–10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Big Idea:

Words have power.

Content Objective:

Students will demonstrate understanding of **denotation** and **connotation** by **ranking** vocabulary along a Connotation Continuum and **justifying** their choices.

Language Objective:

Students will **negotiate** and **justify** their group responses, **record** their findings on a chart, and **report** to the class using dependent clauses beginning with because that embed discipline specific academic vocabulary.

Lesson Duration: 120-180 minutes, depending on student needs and abilities

Language Forms:

All SDAIE/SIOP lessons and units should embed language forms containing discipline-specific academic vocabulary so that students can practice using academic language when they read, write, listen, and speak. These forms can be written as sentence frames, which can be crafted specifically to trigger higher-order thinking skills. In terms of Bloom’s Taxonomy, all of the following language forms require students to justify their answers, and thus require students to take cognitive steps beyond the level of **Understanding** to the level of **Evaluation**.

- 1) We argue that _____ is the neutral word because _____.

- 2) We argue that _____ has a negative connotation because it makes us think of _____ and feel _____.

- 3) _____ has a more negative connotation than _____ because _____.

- 4) _____ connotes less negativity than _____ because _____.

- 5) We maintain that _____ has a positive connotation because it makes us think of _____ and feel _____.

- 6) _____ has a more positive connotation than _____
because _____.
- 7) _____ connotes less positivity than _____
because _____.
- 8) This is the group's best justification for their continuum ranking because _____
_____.
- 9) This group could improve their justification for this continuum ranking by _____
_____.

Materials Needed:

- 1) Red, Purple, and Black Dry Erase Markers (for the white board)
- 2) Sufficient Chart Paper (each collaborative group will need two sheets – please do not use the expensive stuff with a sticky strip, but rather the cheap stuff – in a pinch, butcher paper or old, faded, not truly fadeless bulletin board paper can be used instead)
- 3) Red, Purple, and Black Water-Based Chart Markers (each collaborative group should have a set - one of each color)
- 4) 1 Dictionary for each group (in the case of a dearth of dictionaries, one handout per group listing student-friendly definitions of all the vocabulary words you will use in the lesson can be used instead)
- 5) Sticky charts with the numbered sentence frames from above written large in dark ink.
- 6) Tape
- 7) Post-its

Room Configuration: The desk should be set up in pods of three desks (4 is too many for this activity, in my experience – it is better to do groups of three, and have a couple of pods be made up of a pair of students, so that the pairs can “adopt” a third student who many have been absent on the first day of the lesson). Each pod should have one sheet of chart paper, one dictionary or denotation handout, and three chart markers, one red, one purple, and one black, already set up before the students enter the room.

Agenda: (all times are adjustable based on the needs/levels of your students)

- 1) Direct Instruction/Activating Prior Knowledge: 10 minutes
- 2) Modeling (Teacher Does It): 10 minutes
- 3) Co-Modeling (Teacher Does It With the Students): 10 minutes
- 4) Collaborative Charts (Students Do It Together): 20-25 minutes
- 5) Group Share Out/Teacher Assessment & Feedback: 10-15 minutes
- 6) Collaborative Charts Part 2(Students Do It Together): 20-25 minutes
- 7) Gallery Walk/Intergroup Assessment & Feedback: 30-40 minutes
- 8) Individual Graphic Organizers (Students Do It Alone): 15-20 minutes

Direct Instruction/Activating Prior Knowledge:

Note:

The examples used here can easily be substituted with any that would be appropriate given the levels and backgrounds of students in the class, and any relevant texts the teacher will be using this lesson in conjunction with studying. I personally use the word “slaughter” as an example because in one of the texts I use in my rhetoric unit, an animal rights activist uses the term to describe vivisection, and it leads up to our study of how the connotation of the words authors and speakers choose is part of Pathos. I use the term “gang” because I teach high school in the inner city, and street gangs are an unfortunate part of my students’ physical environment, whether or not they are a member of one (most of them are not, but some lean that way, sadly).

Initial Board Set-up:

In the upper left hand corner of the usable board space, the teacher should have the following definitions available (using the following colors):

DENOTATION: The dictionary definition/neutral meaning of a word.

CONNOTATION: The thoughts and emotions the word evokes in the mind of the audience when they read or hear it.

In the upper right hand corner of the usable board space, the teacher will write the following three words using the following colors:

NEUTRAL
POSITIVE
NEGATIVE

Direct Instruction:

Begin by **checking for understanding**. Here is one way this could be done. The teacher will draw your students’ attention to the definitions on the board and say:

Teacher Talk: “Today, we will be exploring the concepts of Denotation and Connotation. If you have heard of these terms before, whether or not you remember what they mean, give me a Thumbs Up. OK, now if you have NEVER heard of these terms before, give me a Thumbs Down. Great! All you folks who gave me a Thumbs Up: if you understand these terms so well that you could teach the concepts to others if I asked you, give me a Thumbs Up again. OK. Now, if you’ve heard of these terms BUT you feel like your

understanding could use a little improvement, give me a Thumbs Sideways. Last question: Do you remember studying Shades of Meaning in 6th Grade? Give me a Thumbs Up for Yes, and a Thumbs Down for No.”

The students’ responses will be a good indicator of their academic prior knowledge with respect to these concepts. Now, the teacher will go over the definitions with the students and provide an example. This is how I do it.

Teacher Talk: “If I told all of you that my great grandmother passed away last week, what do I mean?”

Student Talk: Many will say “She died.”

Teacher Talk: “OK. I mean that she died. So, the Denotation of the phrase “passed away” is “died.” Since the denotation of a word or phrase is its Neutral Meaning, I will write the word “Died” in Black, which is a Neutral color.”

Teacher writes the following in the middle of the board in black:

DENOTATION: DIED

Teacher Talk: “Now class, what if instead, I told you that last year, my great grandmother was slaughtered? What does the word “slaughter” make you think or feel?”

Student Talk: Responses will vary. Many will respond using words like “murder,” “blood,” “scary,” “violent,” “something really bad happened,” “police,” “ambulance,” etc.

Teacher writes the following under the denotation, to the LEFT side, in **RED**:

**SLAUGHTER:
Murder, Blood, Scary, Violent, Something
Really Bad Happened, Police, Ambulance**

Teacher Talk: “So we can say that the word “Slaughter” carries a Negative Connotation because it makes us think of blood, violence, emergency vehicles, and murder, and it makes us feel scared. Now let’s go back to the phrase “passed away.” What does that word make people think or feel when they hear or read it?”

Student Talk: Responses will vary. Many students will respond using words like “old age,” “died peacefully,” “maybe she was sick,” “going to a better place,” “sad, but it wasn’t violent,” etc.

Teacher writes the following under the denotation, to the RIGHT side, in **PURPLE**:

PASSED AWAY:
Old Age, Died Peacefully, Sickness,
Going to a Better Place, Sad but Not
Violent

Teacher Talk: “So we can say that the phrase “Passed Away,” which also means, or denotes that a death occurred, has a more positive connotation than “Slaughtered” because it makes us think of age, a better place, an escape from sickness and suffering, and while it makes us feel sad, it does not make us feel scared or horrified the way the term “slaughtered” does. Now let’s move on to a second example.”

Activating Prior Knowledge:

The teacher erases everything from the first example and writes the following in the center of the board:

GANG

Teacher Talk: “Since connotation, as we learned, it what an audience thinks and feels when they read or hear a word or phrase, it is important to remember that different people with different backgrounds may react in different ways to a particular word. Let’s consider the word “gang.” Whether you personally think this word has negative or positive connotations, what does this word actually mean?”

Student Talk: One or more students will usually say “group.”

Above the word, teacher will write denotation, in black. Under the word, the teacher will draw a T-Graph, as follows:

DENOTATION: GROUP
GANG

POSITIVE CONNOTATIONS	NEGATIVE CONNOTATIONS

Teacher Talk: “So, now, let’s imagine that all of you folks think gangs are a bad thing. If an audience reacted in a negative way to that word, what are some of the things that word would make them think or feel?”

Student Talk: Student responses will vary, but might include: violence, drugs, killing, dropping out of school, weapons, jail, prison, guns, etc.

Teacher Talk: “OK, so let’s imagine, on the flipside, that someone has a positive reaction to the term “gang.” What might the term make a person think or feel if they saw gangs as positive?”

Student Talk: Student responses will vary, but might include: friends, team, support, “got your back,” etc.

Teacher will then record these responses on the T-Graph, as follows:

DENOTATION: GROUP
GANG

POSITIVE CONNOTATIONS	NEGATIVE CONNOTATIONS
Friends Team Support “Got Your Back”	Violence Drugs Killing Dropping Out Weapons Jail Prison

Modeling (Teacher Does It):

Teacher will begin by stopping to **check for understanding**:

Teacher Talk: “Now that we’ve done all that, before we move on, let check again – if you feel you have a good understanding of the terms Denotation and Connotation, give me a Thumbs Up. If you feel like you are still a bit confused, but you kind of get it, give me a Thumbs Sideways.”

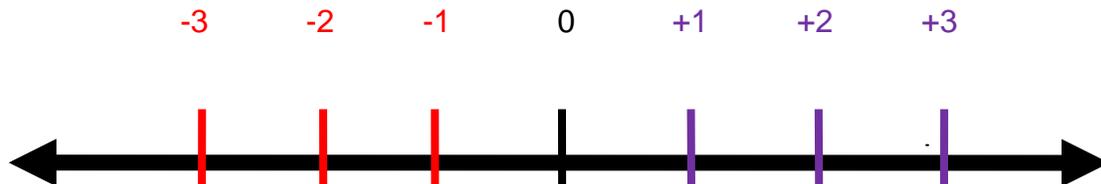
Based on the student responses, the teacher can modify their instruction accordingly.

Teacher Talk: “Now, I will demonstrate how to do the activity you will be doing in your groups today. What you will be doing is called a Connotation Continuum. A continuum is something that extends infinitely in either direction, and can be used as a graphic organizer to rank degrees. The continuum that almost everyone is familiar with is called a number line. Give me a Thumbs Up if you know what that is. You will take a list of words that all have a similar denotation – they all essentially mean the same thing – and you will rank them along a number line, from the most negative in connotation to the most positive. Then, you will justify your answers using sentence frames which I will teach you how to use now.

Teacher will erase the previous examples and list the following on the right, in color:

GANG
GROUP
TEAM
CROWD
MOB
CLUB

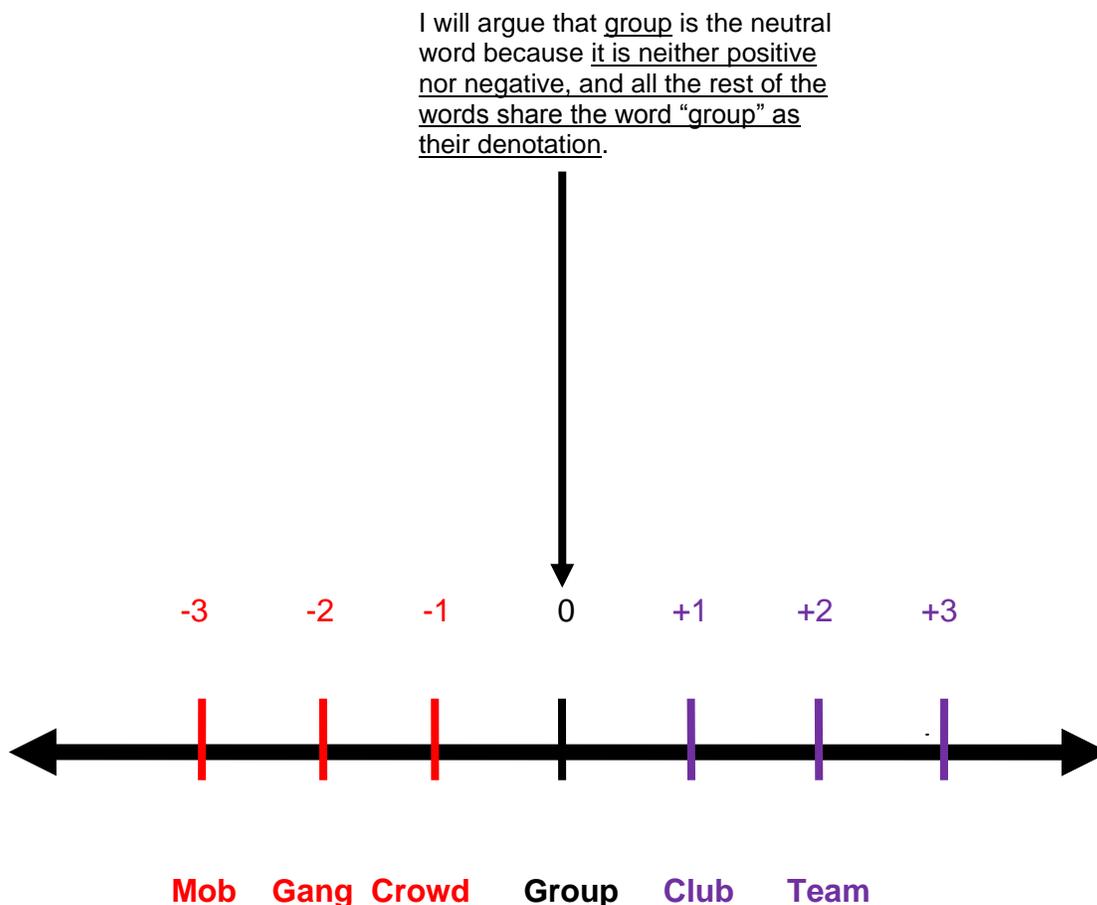
Then, the teacher will draw the following on the board, in color:



Then, while doing a think-aloud, teacher will assign the words to the number line.

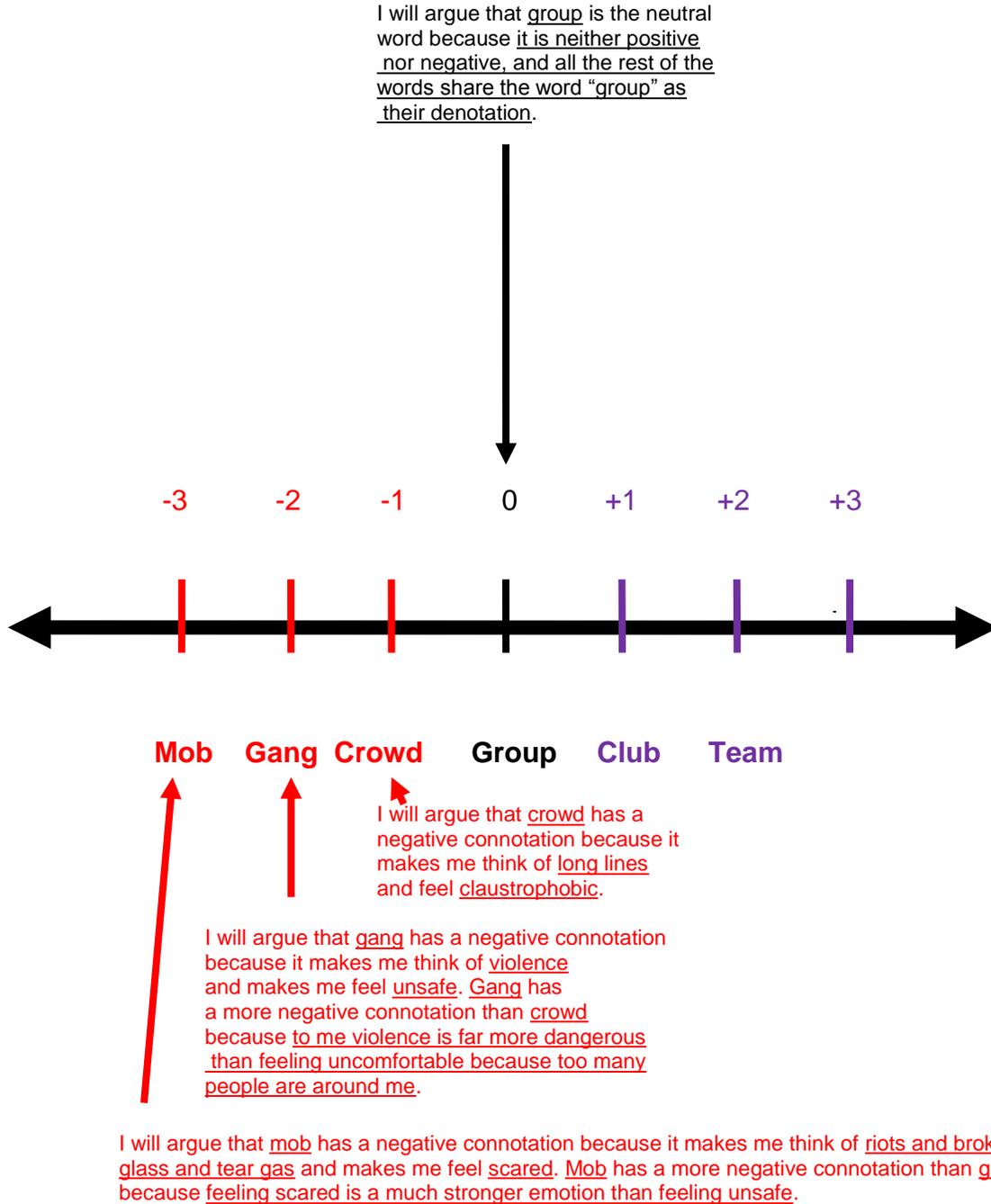
Teacher Talk: “This is how I am going to rank the words. Since all of these words mean “group,” and “group” is neither a positive, nor a negative word, but is in fact neutral, and since all the rest of the words share the word “group” as their denotation, I will assign it to the “0” on the number line, and write it in black. The words that make me think negative thoughts and feel negative emotions are “gang,” “crowd,” and “mob.” Hmm, I know I’m going to put them on the red side, since they’re negative, but let me see which ones I think are worse than the others. I think I’m going to put “crowd” on negative one,

Now, the chart will look like this:



Teacher Talk: “Now for the Negative words. Again, I will use “I” and “me” instead of “we” and “us,” and again, as you will see, I already gave my reasons out loud – now I am merely using our sentence frames as a structure for writing them down. Everybody have a look at sentence frame # 2 (pause to make sure the students do so). Now, watch me fill it out for “crowd” and “gang” (teacher does so). Now, everybody look at sentence frame # 3. Since I thought “gang” was more negative than “crowd,” I now have to justify that choice using sentence frame 3#, like this (teacher does so). Finally, I will justify why use sentence frames #2 and #3 to explain my reasoning behind placing “mob” at the -3 position on the continuum (teacher does so).”

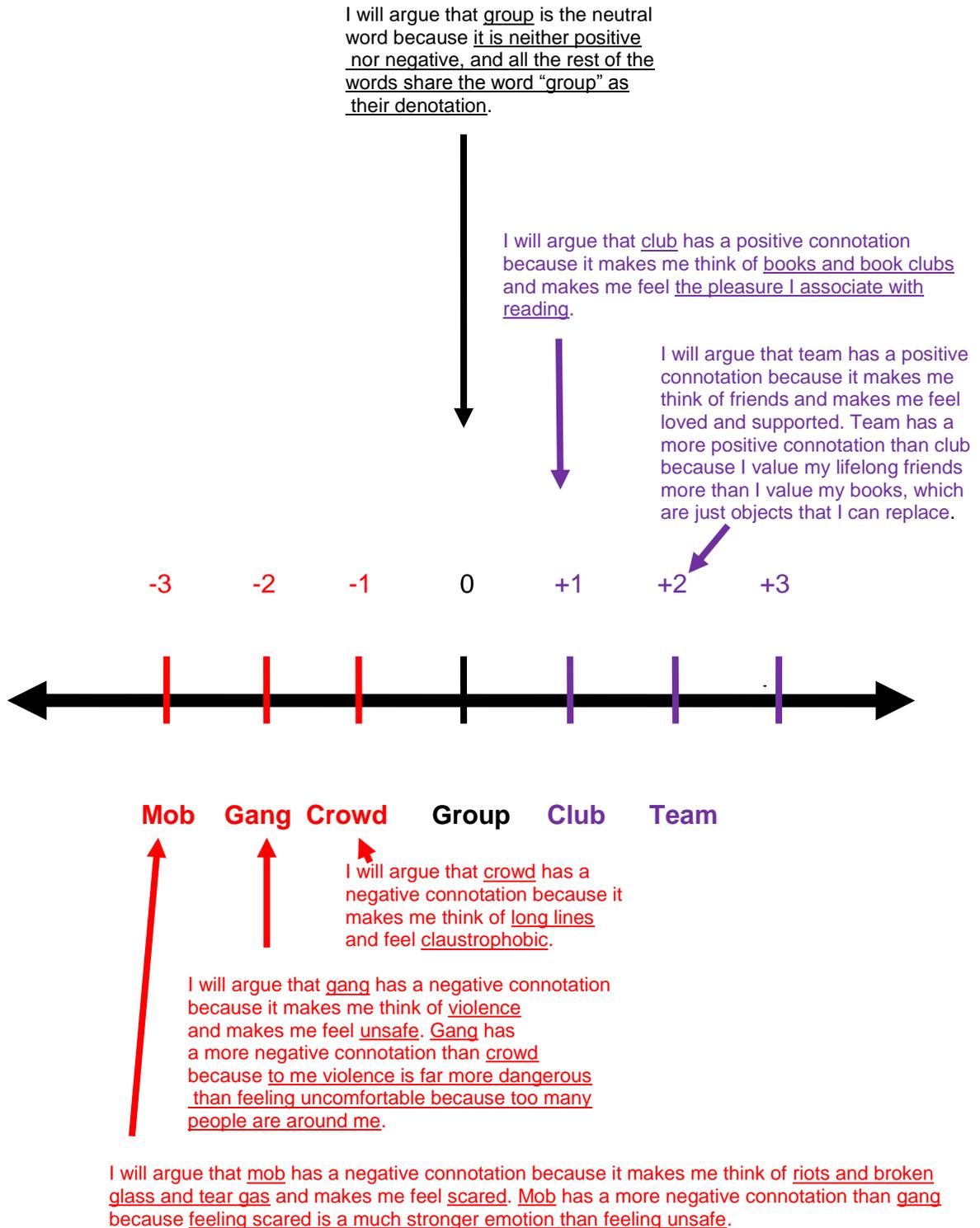
The chart will now look like this:



Teacher Talk: “Finally, I will write out my justifications for “club” and “team,” which I placed on the positive side of the continuum. Could everyone please have a look at sentence frames numbers 5 and 6 (teacher

pauses)? Everybody ready? Now, I will write my last set of justifications (teacher does so).

The chart will now look like this:



Co-Modeling (Teacher Does It With the Students):

Teacher will begin by stopping to **check for understanding**.

Teacher Talk: “Alright, everyone, based on the example of the activity that I just modeled for you, how many people feel like they could do this without my help using a different set of words with your group? Give me a Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down, or Thumbs Sideways. OK, then how many people feel they would do a better job with their groups if we did another set of synonyms together? Give me a Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down, or Thumbs Sideways. Alright, then we will do a second example before you start your group activity. Also, on this go-around, we might mix things up a bit and use some of the “less than” sentence frames, in addition to the “more than” sentence frames, so everyone knows what to do with those. Everybody ready?”

The teacher will erase everything, and write the next set of words on the left side of the board (this time, the teacher will write all the words in black, so that the students, as a class, can assign colors themselves). Teacher will clarify meanings if needed.

ANOREXIC
SLENDER
SCRAWNY
THIN
SKELETAL

Teacher Talk: “Alright, everyone, it’s time to rewrite these words in color, but all of you need to decide which word will remain black, which words will need to be written in red, and which ones should be written in purple. Let’s start at the top. Anorexic. Should it be Black because it’s a neutral word, Red because it has a negative connotation, or Purple because the connotation is positive?”

The teacher will rewrite the word in the color the students decide upon – remember, connotation is relative, and what will matter eventually is how they justify their ranking. Then, the teacher will do the same for all remaining words. After the students have decided on color, the teacher will draw the number line on the board.

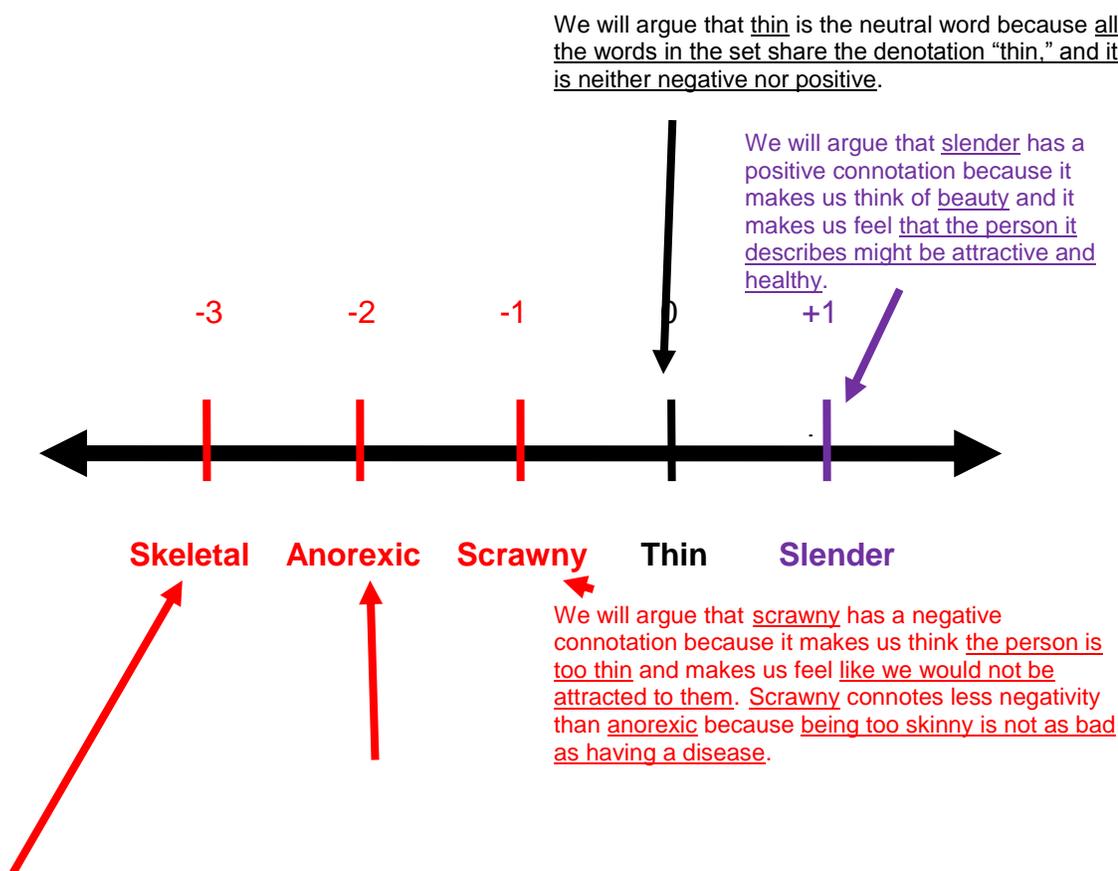
Teacher Talk: “Alright, everyone. You all decided that “thin” was the most neutral word of all, and that you thought it represented the denotation that

all the words in the set shared, so let's assign "thin" to the "0" position. Where should I put our purple and red words?"

The teacher will place the words on the line according to the majority votes of the students, keeping in mind that there will be disagreements, because connotation is relative to perspective. If there is a massive disagreement, the teacher will model the role of a mediator, ask the students to hold off until the justification phase, and put more than one option (with more than one justification) on the co-constructed number line so that the students see that more than one answer is possible if the justifications for those answers are reasonable. It is important to model this, because when they do this with new sets of words in their groups, there may very well be disagreements, and they need to be shown in advance that that is alright provided that they handle it properly.

Teacher Talk: "Alright, everyone. Now we will justify our choices together using the sentence frames just like I did when I did it myself. Is everyone ready? So above the word thin, I will write out our sentence frame (teacher does so). Now that we are doing this collectively, let's change the "I" back to a "we." We will argue that thin is the neutral word because _____ .
Hmm. What should we put in the blank?"

The teacher will repeat this step for all the words on the continuum until the co-constructed number line is complete. The final product, depending upon student choices and how they justify those choices, may end up looking like this:



We will argue that anorexic has a negative connotation because it makes us think of disease and it makes us feel like telling the counselor. Anorexic is more negative than scrawny because being sick is worse than just looking too thin.

We will argue that skeletal has a negative connotation because it makes us think of dying and feel sorry for the person. Skeletal is more negative than anorexic because you could be anorexic but not yet be about to die, and if you're skeletal, you can't be saved.

Collaborative Charts (Students Do It Together):

At this point in the lesson, the students will do the exact same thing in groups of three on their own charts using the following set of words/phrases:

EMBARRASSED
HUMILIATED
BASHFUL
PUT ON THE SPOT
UNCOMFORTABLE
ASHAMED

Group Roles:

There are three markers for a reason, so that everyone can write. **Everyone has a recorder role.** The teacher will stress to them that one person is in charge of the red marker, one member in charge of purple, and one member in charge of black (the neutral word and justification, plus the line itself, plus recording group member names). If they do not all write **simultaneously**, they will not finish in a timely manner (neatness is not as much of an issue as substance – if people need to write upside down or stand up and lean over the desk or move to the floor or a countertop to get the task accomplished, the teacher should let them). **Additionally, everyone is a negotiator: If they are doing the work silently, they are not doing it correctly and are not getting the practice they need in the Speaking and Listening Domains.** They need to practice engaging in intellectual discussions using the discipline-specific academic vocabulary that is appropriate to their grade level, which is why they have their sentence frames. If they are not talking, the teacher will continue to remind them that they must speak to one another to perform the task correctly. As the teacher circulates, they will ask each group as they check in with them to choose a **Reporter**. When it is Share-Out time, the other two members can stand up and hold the chart.

The teacher will remind them that there may not necessarily be an equal number of negative and positive words on their number line. If anyone asks whether all words could be negative, the teacher will say yes, but still ask them to pick the most neutral word for the “0” spot. The teacher will give them a 15 minute time limit, and circulate through the room to give individualized assistance to particular pods, ensure that all groups are on task, and ensure that the students do not forget that they must justify all their choices. As the teacher circulates, they will count down the minutes remaining after every three minutes. If students are working diligently, and 15 minutes turns out to not be sufficient, the teacher will give them extensions as necessary.

Note: I use this list because it becomes relevant to a text I use in a larger rhetoric unit. Please feel free to substitute a set of synonyms that is more relevant to issues of word choice in a text you will analyze with your students. If you use this list, and you use it with English Learners whose first language is Spanish, “Put on the Spot” is something that you will have to go over with the class, as it may be an unfamiliar idiom. Also, the word “embarrassed” is a false cognate that may confuse students, as “embarazada” means “pregnant” in Spanish, but the meaning does not translate into English. To avoid being embarrassed yourself while explaining it, Primary Language support can be given as follows – simply say (and note on the board) that the word “embarrassed” translates to the Spanish phrase “me da verguenza,” which literally means “it gives me shame.”

Group Share Out/Teacher Assessment & Feedback:

Groups will now share out their charts. This is yet another opportunity for the teacher to **check for understanding**. There are various ways to manage this. The teacher may start with volunteers, and only start calling groups out when the volunteers dry up; they may have the groups who finished first go first, to buy the groups that are not as speedy some extra time to write their last thoughts quietly; they may choose to draw popsicle sticks with student names randomly out of a cup. However, I do have some tips:

- 1) For management purposes, the teacher should stress that groups that “disturb” the presentations of others may not get full points.
- 2) The teacher should give each group positive feedback, perhaps phrased as “Your group’s best justification was _____ because _____.” First of all, this will model what they will do later on during the lesson. Secondly, this is a way to check their work, to know who gets it and who doesn’t – they will glean from positive comments about other charts how they might have improved theirs. If a particular group does not get it, that will be a big clue which group will require the most help as the teacher circulates during their second collaborative chart activity with a different set of words.

Collaborative Charts Part II (Students Do It Together - AGAIN):

The students will do the exact same thing in groups of three on their own charts using the following set of words/phrases:

**MERCHANT
BUSINESSMAN
DEALER
HAWKER
SALESPERSON
PEDDLER
TYCOON
VENDOR**

Group Roles:

The group roles will remain unchanged, with one exception: there will be no reporter, as this time, the share out will be in the form of a Gallery Walk. As they circulate, the teacher will pay particular attention to the groups whose first charts from the Share-Out indicated that they needed more practice, or did not get it at all.

Gallery Walk/Intergroup Assessment & Feedback:

After the groups have finished their second chart, the teacher will give each group two pieces of tape (or pushpins if your classroom has sufficient bulletin board space on multiple walls) and ask them to tape their charts up at locations around the room that the teacher specifies.

Once, the group designees to tape the charts up sit down, the teacher will give each group twice the number of post-its as there are charts (if there are 9 charts, each group will receive 18 post-its).

On half the post-its, the teacher will instruct the groups to write the following sentence frame:

This is the group's best justification for their continuum ranking because _____
_____.

Students should split up the work to get it done more quickly. If there are 9 charts, each group should have 9 pre-prepared post-its with the first sentence frame.

On the remaining post-its, the teacher will instruct the groups to write the following sentence frame:

This group could improve their justification for this continuum ranking by _____
_____.

Again, students should split up the work to get it done more quickly. If there are 9 charts, and the groups used their first 9 post-its for the first sentence frame, they should have 9 remaining pre-prepared post-its with the second sentence frame prior to beginning the Gallery Walk. Then, the teacher will do Mini-modeling:

Teacher Talk: "Now, we are about to do an activity called a Gallery Walk. Once we are ready to begin, the entire class will get up and everyone will stand at their first station: your own group's chart. Then, when I give the signal, you will move clockwise to the second chart, once you get there, you will evaluate the next group's chart, and leave two post-its which you will stick next to words that they analyzed on their continuum. The post-it with the first sentence frame, once you fill it out as a group, will go by what your group decides is the other

group's BEST justification sentence. Let's use an example from of co-constructed number line to see how to do it. This is how I might write one (teacher writes the sentence on the board): The justification for SKELETAL is the group's best justification for their continuum ranking because they make it very clear how someone could be anorexic, but not yet be at death's door, showing that skeletal is worse because it implies being on the edge of death. Then, I would stick this sentence next to their analysis of the word "skeletal." After that, I will decide which justification I think needs the most improvement, and from our example chart, I am going to pick the word "slender." This is how I would fill out my second post-it (teacher writes the sentence on the board). This group could improve their justification for this continuum ranking by adding a sentence explaining how slender was more positive than the neutral word, thin. Then, I would stick my second post-it next to their analysis of the connotation of "slender." Now, is everybody ready? Everybody stand up, and go to your own charts (teacher pauses until everyone is at their station). Now, everybody switch and go clockwise – NOW. You have 3 minutes at this station to fill out and stick on both post-its. GO!

The teacher times three minutes, gives warnings every 30 seconds, and counts down from 10 to zero. Depending on the needs of the student, the teacher may decide that three minutes is insufficient, and that the students might need four or five. Then, maintaining a counterclockwise direction, the students switch again, and have three minutes to fill out and stick their post-its at the next station. They continue until they are back at their own poster.

When they arrive back at their own poster, they have one last task – they now need to decide which comment they agree with the most, and which comment they agree with the least.

Teacher Talk: "Now that everyone is back at their original chart, there is one last task for our Gallery Walk. I need you to take 3 minutes to decide which post-it you agree with the most, and which post-it you agree with the least. Take those post-its down, then bring them back to your table and have a seat. You may leave your charts on the wall. GO."

When the students have chosen their post-its and taken their seats, the teacher will give them time for a quick Group Talk to decide what to say, and then in a quick Whip-Around, ask the groups to share the comments that they agreed with the most, the comments they agreed with the least, and have them share why they thought so. If, in the teacher's estimation, the students will need sentence frames for this task as well, they can use the following:

- 1) (Read the Comment): This comment was the most helpful because _____ .
- 2) (Read the Comment): This comment was not as helpful because _____ .

If necessary, the teacher can model how to fill these out as with prior frames used.

Individual Graphic Organizers (Students Do It Alone):

On individual sheets of paper, the teacher will now ask the students to do an individual Connotation Continuum. The teacher can use this assignment to assess the extent to which each student is able to do the task without help. If classroom or student supplies allow, the students may complete their assignment using the same color coding used previously, or they may choose to not use color coding. Students may still refer to the sentence frames posted in the classroom, as well as to examples on the board. The following word list (or any other relevant to the texts the class is working with) may be used:

ENTHUSIASTIC
INTERESTED
FANATICAL
EAGER
OBSESSED

Next Steps:

Although this can be used as a stand-alone concept/review lesson, it is preferable to embed this lesson in a unit in focusing on the part word choice plays in rhetoric. In such a unit, it would be preferable to substitute synonym lists including vocabulary words from written texts/speeches which the author/speaker chose specifically for connotative effect. In this case, the teacher might consider saving their class group charts, so that after analyzing the source texts/speeches, the students might then incorporate additional sentence frames into their charts (which can be done on the back, using the specific word from the text included in the set, since the fronts of the charts would have gotten too busy). Here are some possible examples which would take the students even further towards mastery of the Common Core State Standards:

The audience of the text in which the word _____ appears is _____ .

The author's/speaker's purpose in this text/speech is to convince the audience that/to _____ .

The author/speaker chose to use the word _____ because it has a negative/positive connotation for the audience. It would make the audience think of _____ and feel _____ because _____ .

The connotation of the word _____ helps the author/speaker achieve his/her purpose in the text/speech by _____ .

If the author/speaker had used the word _____ instead of the word _____,
the effect on the audience of the text/speech might have been _____
instead of _____ because _____.

