

Words often carry positive or negative connotations (associated emotions and meanings). For example, if you describe someone as 'skinny' it has negative associations; however, if you call someone 'slender' it has more positive connotations.

# POSITIVE, NEGATIVE & NEUTRAL *connotations*

**1** For each set of words, identify which has positive, negative & neutral connotations.

thrifty	
cheap	
economical	

communicative	
talkative	
chatty	

proud	
self-assured	
arrogant	

obsessed	
preoccupied	
focused	

elderly	
old	
mature	

smell	
stench	
aroma	

descriptive	
detailed	
long-winded	

inquisitive	
nosy	
curious	

cunning	
intelligent	
clever	

creative	
resourceful	
crafty	

**2** See the words below: underline neutral words; put a tick ✓ next to words with positive connotations; place a cross ✗ next to ones with negative connotations.

noise	delicate	hardworking	cunning
traffic	inquisitive	gossip	witty
sly	pest	detailed	fearless
progress	enthusiastic	beautiful	detailed
exotic	debt	intrusive	clumsy
beast	dynamic	glare	sunny
sound	casual	crafty	upbeat
feast	easygoing	observed	flimsy
animal	quiet	juvenile	young
reckless	valuable	vintage	aged
cautious	fussy	handmade	mutant

**3** Identify whether the following bold words carry positive or negative connotations, and then rewrite the sentence making it the opposite (but retaining the same denotative meaning).

1. James was an extremely **nerdy** child. - \_\_\_\_\_

2. There was an unusual **fragrance** in the room. - \_\_\_\_\_

3. Adele certainly was a **stubborn** little girl. - \_\_\_\_\_

4. Mr. Balder is really **bossy** today. - \_\_\_\_\_

5. He **stormed** into the room **aggressively**. - \_\_\_\_\_

6. The construction was **delicate**. - \_\_\_\_\_

7. It was an **overwhelming** amount of money - \_\_\_\_\_

8. The **rebels** **fiercely** demanded action. - \_\_\_\_\_

Words often carry positive or negative connotations (associated emotions and meanings). For example, if you describe someone as 'skinny' it has negative associations; however, if you call someone 'slender' it has more positive connotations.

# POSITIVE, NEGATIVE & NEUTRAL connotations

## ANSWERS

**1** For each set of words, identify which has positive, negative & neutral connotations.

thrifty	Positive
cheap	Negative
economical	Neutral
communicative	Neutral
talkative	Negative
chatty	Positive
proud	Neutral
self-assured	Positive
arrogant	Negative
obsessed	Negative
preoccupied	Neutral
focused	Positive
elderly	Neutral
old	Negative
mature	Positive
smell	Neutral
stench	Negative
aroma	Positive
descriptive	Positive
detailed	Neutral
long-winded	Negative
inquisitive	Positive
nosy	Negative
curious	Neutral
cunning	Negative
intelligent	Neutral
clever	Positive
creative	Positive
resourceful	Neutral
crafty	Negative

**2** See the words below: underline neutral words; put a tick ✓ next to words with positive connotations; place a cross ✗ next to ones with negative connotations.

noise ✗	delicate ✓	hardworking ✓	cunning ✗
<u>traffic</u>	inquisitive ✓	gossip ✗	witty ✓
sly ✗	pest ✗	<u>detailed</u>	fearless ✓
progress ✓	enthusiastic ✓	beautiful ✓	detailed
exotic ✓	debt ✗	intrusive ✗	clumsy ✗
beast ✗	dynamic ✓	glare ✗	sunny ✓
<u>sound</u>	<u>casual</u>	crafty ✗	upbeat ✓
feast ✓	easygoing ✓	<u>observed</u>	flimsy ✗
<u>animal</u>	<u>quiet</u>	juvenile ✗	<u>young</u>
reckless ✗	valuable ✓	vintage ✓	aged ✗
cautious ✓	fussy ✗	handmade ✓	mutant ✗

**3** Identify whether the following bold words carry positive or negative connotations, and then rewrite the sentence making it the opposite (but retaining the same denotative meaning).

1. James was an extremely **nerdy** child. - Negative

James was an extremely clever child.

2. There was an unusual **fragrance** in the room. - Positive

There was an unusual odor in the room.

3. Adele certainly was a **stubborn** little girl. - Negative

Adele certainly was a resilient little girl.

4. Mr. Balder is really **bossy** today. - Negative

Mr. Balder is really assertive today.

5. He **stormed** into the room **aggressively**. - Negative

He stode into the room confidently.

6. The construction was **delicate**. - Positive

The construction was flimsy.

7. It was an **overwhelming** amount of money - Negative

It was an abundant amount of money.

8. The **rebels fiercely** demanded action. - Negative

The freedom-fighters passionately requested action.