

Everywhere we turn we see words at work (and play). Learning to find just the right word to express what we see, think, or feel is something we pay attention to as we write. One of the areas we consider is the word's **connotation**—not just what it means according to the dictionary (denotation), but also what the word suggests, what it's associated with (connotation), how it sounds, even how it looks on the page. Here are some experiments with word connotation:

Soft Soft Loud

Whispers
The silent dark
My dog's shrill bark

Stars
The quiet country
The zoo's rambunctious monkeys

Pin drop
Vacant house
A squeaky mouse

Radio at night
Dead doorbell ringing
A choir singing

Creeks
A fish's chomp
The 120-decibel Swamp*

Animals stalking prey
Asteroids gliding in space
A turtle race

The keyboard that I am typing on
My mind, which is now bare
This poem is done, so I don't care

~Greg Dana 7th grade
(*the nick name of the Gator football stadium)

Silence

Fairy wings flutter by
Twinkling stars light the sky
Glowing dreams fill my head
Whispering leaves-- a silent red
Delicate fantasies sparkle in the light
The gentle night sky is perfectly right.

~Julia Neal 8th grade

Dewdrop

Delicate and frail
Pristine and pale
Sparkles like a diamond in the light

Impeccable and tiny
Picayune and shiny
Pleasing to the eye when in sight.

Rests on the tip of a petal or thorn
Perfection that lies in the simplest form
Miniscule, petite
Is wet on my feet
Nature it shall adorn.

~Natalie Jones 7th grade

Weak

Paper thin
Transparent skin
Bony nubs
Stick straight
Decrepit body
Fragile flesh
Flimsy limbs
Constantly chilled
"No meat on them bones."

~Billy Silva 8th grade

Ocean

Commodious waters
Infinite creatures
Endless blue
Everlasting expanse
Colossal whales and dolphins
Swim against formidable currents.

~Toni Feely 8th grade

Calm vs Crazy

Lying low

Tai Kwon Do

Backing down

Wacko clown

Perfect child

Kids gone wild

No thriving

Cliff driving

Playing chess

Humongous mess

Scottish terrier

Kills the carrier

Peaceful stars

Speeding cars

Floating balloon

Full moon

Silent night

Food fight

~Nick Cattafesta 7th grade

Weak vs Strong

Decrepit boys

Feeble toys

Puny pebbles

Infirm rebels

Flimsy toast

Thin roast

Frail molding

Weak holding

Arbitrary hunch

Dynamic bunch

Formidable force

Stout horse

Robust house

Mighty Mouse

Sturdy hip

Firm grip

Bulwark mall

I think strong wins, ya'll

~Kayla Waldorff 7th grade