

## Teacher Notes



# Elements of Denotation and Connotation

## Activity 2 Collaborating with Denotations and Connotations

### *Activity Overview*

Students work in groups of four to determine basic definitions and examples of connotative and denotative meaning. They will then move on, examining a photograph of Marilyn Monroe and reading a description of its denotative and connotative meanings before choosing images of their own to analyze for layers of meaning.

### *Tip*

Using images to teach connotation and denotation broadens students' understanding of the terms. By asking students to analyze images of well-known celebrities and of advertisements, they become more aware of underlying meanings and better able to think critically about images and words that they encounter in school and society.

## Activity at a Glance

- ◆ **Subject:** English
- ◆ **Subject Area:** English/Language Arts
- ◆ **Category:** Literary Devices
- ◆ **Topic:** Denotation and Connotation
- ◆ **Grade Level:** 10 – 12
- ◆ **Prerequisites:** None
- ◆ **Total Teaching Time:** 60 minutes

## Materials

- ◆ Voyage™ 200 Personal Learning Tool (PLT), TI-92 Plus, or TI-83 Plus
- ◆ **Elements of Connotation and Denotation** edc resource file: Connotation in Images 1 – 5 files
- ◆ TI-GRAPH LINK™ Cable, USB Cable, or TI-Navigator™
- ◆ Internet access

**Directions**

In this collaborative activity, students will research definitions and examples of connotation and denotation. They will extend their understanding of denotation and connotation beyond words to include images.

**Before the Activity Begins**

Divide students into groups of four. Explain lesson objectives, which are outlined in the second set of instructions listed on the Item Menu. Ensure that students have access to the appropriate edc resource files and Internet access.

**During the Activity**

Students should visit various websites to explore different (but quite similar) definitions of denotation and connotation, noting their examples. Possible websites to visit are listed as follows:

- ◆ <http://www.cnr.edu/home/bmcmanus/style.html>
- ◆ <http://depts.gallaudet.edu/englishworks/literature/poetry.html#diction>

Students should then visit the following website, which is devoted to semiotics:

- ◆ <http://jcomm.uoregon.edu/~cbybee/j388/semiotics.html>

While students might be interested in other aspects of the site, they should be instructed to scroll down to the picture of Marilyn Monroe (near the bottom of the site) and read the explanations of denotative and connotative meanings of the picture.

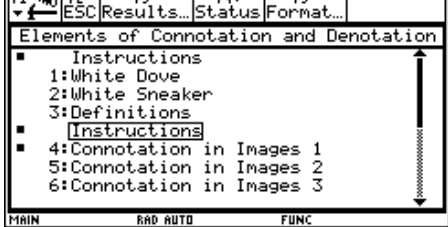
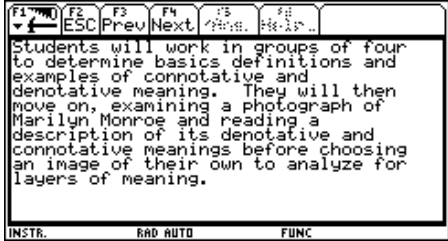
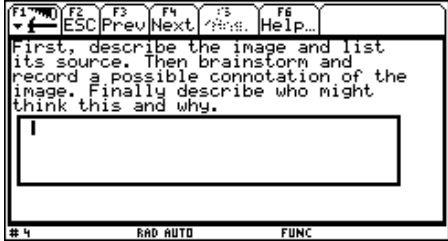
Students should copy these meanings into the **Connotation in Images 1** file, serving as an example to them of the way that pictures, in addition to words, can have meanings on multiple levels.

Students should then visit other websites, analyzing a picture of their choice for denotative and connotative significance and explaining their analysis in the **Connotation in Images 2 – 5** files. The following sites can be used as starting points; however, any images will work for this activity:

- ◆ Marion Jones milk ad:  
<http://www.whymilk.com/celebrities/mjones.htm>
- ◆ Jennifer Aniston poster:  
<http://www.postershop.com/Aniston-Jennifer/Aniston-Jennifer-Necklace-4900019.html>
- ◆ Frankie Muniz milk ad:  
<http://mitmgurly.tripod.com/FrankieMunizOnline/id6.html>

Use the following instructions to access and use the **Elements of Connotation and Denotation** files on the devices. Each step indicates the action students need to perform to obtain the files and use the exercises on their devices. Additional information for the teacher appears in shaded boxes, where necessary.

### Voyage™ 200 PLT (or TI-92 Plus)

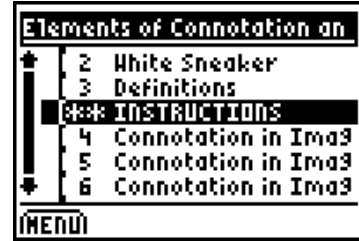
- If necessary, press **F2, ESC** to exit the previous file. Use  $\leftarrow$   $\rightarrow$  to highlight the second **Instructions** file.
- 
- Press **ENTER**. Review the instructions prior to beginning the assignment. Select one person for each group to be the recorder. Press **F4: Next** to access the **Connotation in Images 1** file.
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- Using the Internet, review the explanations of denotative and connotative meanings as they apply to a picture of Marilyn Monroe. Enter the meanings of the terms as described on the website. Press **F4: Next** to access the next exercise, **Connotation in Images 2**.
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- Continue to view additional websites and discuss the denotative and connotative significance of other pictures. Capture the group's analysis of the pictures being reviewed. Repeat this process for **Connotation in Images 3** through **Connotation in Images 5**.

### TI-83 Plus

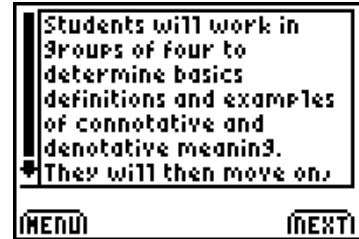
- If necessary, press **MENU** to exit the previous file. An options list displays. Use  $\uparrow$   $\downarrow$  to highlight **3: ► ITEM LIST**.



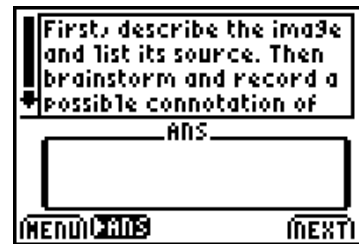
2. Press **ENTER**. The Item Menu displays. Use **↓** to highlight the second set of **Instructions**.



3. Press **ENTER**. Review the instructions prior to beginning the assignment. Select one person for each group to be the recorder. Press **Next** to access the **Connotation in Images 1** file.



4. Using the Internet, review the explanations of denotative and connotative meanings as they apply to a picture of Marilyn Monroe. Enter the meanings of the terms as described on the website. Press **Next** to access the next exercise, **Connotation in Images 2**.



5. Continue to view additional websites and discuss the denotative and connotative significance of other pictures. Capture the group’s analysis of the pictures being reviewed. Repeat this process for **Connotation in Images 3** through **Connotation in Images 5**.

***After the Activity***

Have student groups who chose the same images discuss their findings with one another. Lead a brief discussion of denotation and connotation, and how understanding of these concepts can enhance critical thinking skills and understanding of images, words, and advertisements that surround them.