De and Con Notations

Students work collaboratively to create the denotations and connotations of words.

Grade Level: 7 - 9th
Subject: English/Language Arts
Length of Time: About 45 - 60 Minutes

Common Core Alignment

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L8.5B - Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.

Objectives & Outcomes

The learners will be able to define denotation and connotation, understand the difference, and use the knowledge to create connotations of words used every day and in literature.

Materials Needed

- Dictionary with thesaurus (paper version or on-line), large index cards, pen/pencil, sample pieces of grade-level literature
- Prepare ahead of time: Write one word on the front of each index card leaving room for denotations (literal definition), and the back will be used for connotations. Enough for at least one per student. Make extras depending on dynamic of class. Sample pieces of grade-appropriate literature, one paragraph in length, enough for half the class size.

Procedure

Opening to Lesson

- As students begin sitting at their desks/tables, welcome the students to school/classroom in as many different ways as possible. (Be sure everyone hears you.) Examples: “Welcome to...school, prison, the learning room, the road to college, walls of learning, etc. Feel free to repeat some of the examples since some may not hear or recognize the different terms.
- Ask students for a term they use to describe their school.

Body of Lesson

Modeling

- Display the words denotation and connotation for students to see. Ask them if they know the difference between the two.
Display a word for all students to see. This word will be the example to use for understanding the difference between denotation/connotation. (Use a word students could easily expand.)

- Ask for specific or literal meanings of the chosen word. The actual definition or denotation.
- List their responses.
- Ask students for some emotional or cultural meanings related to the word or connotation.
- List their responses.
- Ask students if there are questions or if they need further explanation.

**Guided Practice**

- Distribute prepared index cards. One to each student.
- Explain the directions to them. They will write the denotation of the word on the index card. List all the definitions for the word either from a paper or on-line dictionary.
- Next, give 3 minutes to list connotations of the word on the reverse side of the index card.
- After time is up, have students pass the card to another student. Give 3 more minutes to list their connotations of the word on the reverse side of the index card.
- Continue this process until all of the cards have been passed to each student in the room.
- Review the difference between denotations and connotations.
- Place students in groups of three or four.
- Distribute a sample paragraph to each group. Explain to the students they will work together to rewrite the paragraph using connotations of some of the words to change its meaning.
- Have one student in each group read the paragraph aloud to the others.
- One student will be the “secretary” and record the new paragraph.
- Students from each group will share the “before” and “after” paragraph to the class.

**Independent Practice**

- The teacher will give each student a worksheet with a list of words to define and to list some connotations of each. Include some multiple choice to help students get started.
- Assign a paragraph from a current reading selection and have each student rewrite the paragraph using connotations of some of the words to change its original “feeling”.
- The teacher will collect the completed pages. These will be used as assessments.

**Closing**

Remind students the importance of words, including how they are spoken aloud to others.

Ask students to create a connotation for “good-bye” and use it as they exit the classroom. Examples may be “See you later.” “Have a nice day, sir.” “Thank you, miss.” “Good day.”

**Assessment & Evaluation**

Teacher-created or commercial worksheet with list of words for students to find the denotation and connotations for each. Reading-selection paragraphs to edit with...
connotations.

**Modification & Differentiation**

Work in pairs, adjust group sizes for paragraphs. Have students create the words to be used. Use vocabulary from a current assignment or curriculum reading selection.

**Related Lesson Plans**

**Reducing Every Day Plastic Use**

Students will research and write a persuasive essay about the effects of plastic in every day use. They will be encouraged to send these letters to officials who could make a difference.

**Stories Galore**

Following the Common Core Standards for writing a narrative the students will collaborate and write six stories.

**Analogy Creation**

Students will create analogies using randomly chosen grade-appropriate words.

**The Classroom Lottery**

Based on the short story, *The Lottery*, by Shirley Jackson, the students will be participate in a similar mock classroom drama using a different scenario for the “choosing”, while writing answers to thought-provoking questions.