Name _____ Date _____

Positive, Negative and Neutral Connotation: Word Choice and a Speaker's Attitude

Directions: A word's denotation is its dictionary meaning. Its connotation is the feeling the word carries, which can be positive, negative or neutral. Use each speaker's attitude to decide which word fits.

1. Maya calls the place where she lives her *home*. A visitor calls the same place a *house*. What changes when they use different words for the same place?

A. The feelings each word brings to mind

B. Whether the place is in a city or the country

C. The number of people who live in each one

D. The kind of building each word names

2. All four words name something you notice with your nose. Which word is neutral, neither positive nor negative?

A. stench B. smell C. stink D. fragrance

3. Read the two sentences.

"The tent felt *snug* after the long hike."

"The tent felt *cramped* after the long hike."

Which statement about *snug* and *cramped* is true?

A. Both describe a huge space, but *cramped* sounds more exciting.

B. The two words give exactly the same feeling.

C. *Snug* describes a cold tent, and *cramped* describes a warm one.

D. Both describe a tight space, but *snug* sounds comfortable and *cramped* sounds uncomfortable.

4. When the fireworks began, Grandpa's eyes lit up, and everyone smiled at his joy. Which word usually sounds admiring when it describes a grown-up's sense of wonder?

A. childlike B. bratty C. childish D. immature

5. Ms. Chen was delighted that her students asked question after question about the fossils. Which word describes the students the way Ms. Chen would?

A. meddling B. prying C. nosy D. curious

6. Derek kept bragging that no one on Earth could ever beat him, and his teammates were fed up. Which word shows the teammates' fed-up attitude toward Derek?

A. talented B. arrogant C. self-assured D. confident

7. Two reporters wrote about the same chef. One called her *famous*, and the other called her *notorious*. What does the second reporter's word choice suggest?

A. The second reporter has never heard of the chef.
B. The second reporter thinks the chef is the best in town.
C. The second reporter thinks the chef is known for something bad.
D. The second reporter thinks the chef just opened her restaurant.

8. Which sentence uses a word with a negative connotation to describe a dog?

A. The *playful* dog chased its tail in circles.
B. The *large* dog dozed on the porch.
C. The *loyal* dog waited by the door every evening.
D. The *mangy* dog nosed through the overturned trash.

9. Kai was angry that someone had borrowed his markers without asking.

"Stop touching those markers!" Kai said.

Which word could replace *said* to show Kai's anger?

A. explained B. suggested C. snapped D. remarked

10. Match each word in italics to a word with a similar meaning but a negative connotation. Two words in the list will not be used.

Write the letter of the matching answer on each line.

1. _____ a *thrifty* shopper
2. _____ a quick *smile*
3. _____ an *assertive* speaker
4. _____ a *crowd* outside the stadium
5. _____ a *cottage* by the lake

A. mob
B. generous
C. smirk
D. pushy
E. stingy
F. shack
G. mansion