

Critical Concepts 6.4B Literary Lesson Plans

Skill Focus: CC 6.4B – Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings.

Vocabulary Focus: Figurative, connotative, Context clues, Domain-specific, General academic

December Lesson Objectives

Students will:

- Determine the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases in literary texts.
- Use context clues to infer the meaning of figurative or connotative language.
- Classify vocabulary as figurative or connotative.
- Use academic vocabulary when discussing word meanings in context.

Texts:

- Bigfoot Wallace and the Gray Bean by S. E. Schutlzler
- Anne of Green Gables (excerpt) by Lucy Maud Montgomery
- Treasure Island (excerpt) by Robert Louis Stevenson

Graphic Organizer: Refer to your Educational Epiphany Critical Concepts Binder: Graphic Organizers Tab: CC 6.4A pages 49-53

****This Critical Concept has 4 different types of graphic organizers, pages 45-61, that can be used, you can choose to differentiate from the lesson plan and use any of the 3 organizers.**

I Do (15 minutes – Teacher Model)

Text: *Bigfoot Wallace and the Gray Bean*

Word to Model: “swelled” (as in “his pride swelled as he...”)

Steps:

1. Project or distribute the passage.
2. Model completing the 6.4B graphic organizer.
3. Think aloud how to use the sentence and surrounding text to determine the meaning and type of word.

Teacher Think-Alouds for Graphic Organizer Completion:

Box 1 – Type of Word (General/Academic/Domain-Specific):

“Hmm, the word ‘swelled’ isn’t something super academic or domain-specific like in science or history. It’s more of a general word—something you might see in lots of different kinds of writing. So I’m going to write **general** in the first box.”

Box 2 – Context Clues:

"Now let me look around the word to find clues. It says 'his chest swelled with pride' and people are **cheering**. That tells me this is a happy or proud moment. There's no mention of an injury or actual swelling, so this must be about how he's feeling, not a medical thing."
 "Also, 'chest swelled' is probably not literal—he didn't blow up like a balloon. This sounds like a way of showing that he's proud or excited. That's a big clue that this is **figurative** language."

Box 3 – Determined Meaning:

"I think in this sentence, 'swelled' means his emotions were growing—specifically, pride. So I'll write something like: **'grew larger with emotion—feeling proud.'**"

Box 4 – Type of Word Under Study (Figurative or Connotative):

"Now I have to decide—is this figurative or connotative? Connotative words have a feeling attached, like how 'cheap' can feel negative. But figurative means it's not literal—it's more like a picture or metaphor. Since his chest didn't actually swell up, this must be **figurative**."

Sample Teacher Model Response:

Word	Context Clues	= Meaning	Type
swelled (General)	"his chest puffed out, and he smiled ear to ear"	grew larger with emotion (pride)	Figurative ✓

Explain how "swelled" doesn't literally mean inflating but shows exaggerated pride—figurative meaning.

We Do (20 minutes – Guided Practice)

Text: *Anne of Green Gables*

Word to Analyze Together: "kindred spirit"

Steps:

1. Read or project a short paragraph where Anne uses the phrase "kindred spirit."
2. Ask students guiding questions:
 - What does Anne say about kindred spirits?
 - How does she describe or feel about them?
3. Work together to complete the organizer on chart paper or under a doc camera.

Sample Class Response:

Word	Context Clues	= Meaning	Type
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kindred spirit (Academic)	"someone who understands me...who thinks the same..."	a person with similar values or feelings	Connotative ✓
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You Do with Partner (30 minutes – Collaborative Practice)

Text: *Treasure Island*

Word Choices: "buccaneer," "quivered," or "shivered timbers"

Steps:

1. In pairs, students choose one word or phrase from a shared passage.
2. Partners complete the 6.4B organizer together.
3. Circulate to prompt, clarify, and push thinking.

Sample Pair Response:

Word	Context Clues	= Meaning	Type
buccaneer (Domain-specific)	"he had a pistol tucked in his belt...a rough pirate"	pirate or robber at sea	Connotative ✓

You Do Independently (15-20 minutes)

Any of the three texts (teacher's choice or student choice)

Task:

- Choose one figurative or connotative word/phrase.
- Complete the 6.4B graphic organizer.
- Underneath the organizer, write 2–3 sentences explaining how that word choice impacts the tone or meaning of the text.

Writing Prompt (Wrap-up or Homework)

Choose one figurative or connotative word used in *Anne of Green Gables*, *Treasure Island*, or *Bigfoot Wallace and the Gray Bean*. In a paragraph, explain how the author's use of this word helps the reader understand a character or setting. Be sure to use context clues and explain your reasoning.

Writing Prompt: *The Watsons Go to Birmingham – 1963*

In *The Watsons Go to Birmingham – 1963*, Kenny and his family experience events that deeply affect how they view the world and themselves. Choose **one key moment from Chapters 1–8** that helps move the plot forward and causes **Kenny or Byron** to respond or begin to change. In a well-developed paragraph:

- **Explain the event and how it impacts the character**
- **Use at least one quote from the text as evidence**
- **Include a figurative or connotative word or phrase** to describe the character's feelings or actions (for example, "Kenny's pride shattered like glass" or "Byron started to melt, just a little, from tough guy to big brother")