

Critical Concepts 7.4A Non-Fiction Writing Lesson Plans

Turning Graphic Organizers into Writing Responses

After students complete their organizers, model how to turn it into a short paragraph.

Prompt:

Choose one word or phrase from the text. Break it down using prefixes, roots, and suffixes or by analyzing context clues. Explain its determined meaning and describe how the author's word choice impacts the overall meaning and tone of the passage.

Word & Word Structure (prefix, root, suffix, or context clues)

Determined Meaning of the word

Connotation / Type of Word (figurative, connotative, technical, academic, general)

Impact on Tone or Meaning

I Do Writing Response (*Travels with Charley*)

The text uses the word *uncomfortable*, which is built from the prefix "un-" meaning "not," the root "comfort" meaning "ease," and the suffix "-able" meaning "capable of." Together, this creates the determined meaning "not capable of ease." In Steinbeck's passage, this word describes his feelings about staying in a stranger's home. The connotative meaning emphasizes unease, which contributes to the awkward and unsettled tone of the passage.

We Do Writing Response (*Lincoln's Third Annual Message*)

Lincoln uses the word *emancipation*. Using the root "man" (people) and the prefix "e-" (out of), plus context clues, we determine emancipation means "to be set free." In this passage, Lincoln applies the word specifically to enslaved people. The technical, domain-specific use of this word highlights its connection to law and government. This choice of wording creates an inspiring and authoritative tone, emphasizing the hope and justice behind his message.

You Do with Partner Writing Response (*Free Culture*)

The author uses the word *innovation*, which comes from the root "nova," meaning "new." Using context clues about creativity and technology, we see that innovation means "the creation of something new." The academic and connotative use of this word suggests a positive meaning, linked to progress and creativity. This word choice helps set an encouraging, forward-looking tone in the text.

You Do Independently Writing Response (*A Time to Break Silence*)

King uses the word *injustice*, which is made of the prefix "in-" meaning "not" and the root "justice" meaning fairness. Combined, the word means "not fair." King applies this word to

describe racial inequality in America. The strong connotative meaning of *injustice* makes it a powerful and emotional word. This choice builds a passionate and urgent tone, urging readers to respond to unfairness with action.