

## Critical Concepts7.4A Non Fiction Lesson Plans

**Skill Focus:** CC.7.4A – Determine the meaning of words or phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings, and analyze the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone.

**Vocabulary Word Bank:** analyze, base word, comma, connotative, figurative, prefix, root, suffix, technical, tone

### December Lesson Objectives

- SWBAT determine the meaning of unfamiliar words using context clues, prefixes, roots, and suffixes.
- SWBAT analyze how figurative, connotative, and technical word choices impact meaning and tone in a text.
- SWBAT use academic vocabulary (analyze, prefix, root, suffix, figurative, connotative, technical, tone) accurately in written and spoken responses.

**Non-Fiction Texts Suggestions for December**(Selections are suggested; teachers may adapt but should draw from the Educational Epiphany Binder)

- *Travels with Charley in Search of America* by John Steinbeck
- *Third Annual Message* by Abraham Lincoln, December 8, 1863
- *Free Culture* (Excerpt) by Lawrence Lessig
- *A Time to Break Silence* by Martin Luther King, Jr.

**Graphic Organizer:** Citing Evidence Refer to your Educational Epiphany Critical Concepts Binder: Graphic Organizers Tab: CC 7.4A-1-2 (pages 65-72 in the Graphic Organizers Tab)

### I Do (Teacher Model – 15 mins)

**Text:** *Travels with Charley in Search of America* by John Steinbeck

#### Steps:

1. Distribute **Prefix–Root–Suffix organizer**.
2. Teacher reads aloud the passage where Steinbeck uses the word *uncomfortable*.
3. Review word bank definitions:
  - Prefix = added part at the beginning (changes meaning)
  - Root/Base = core meaning of the word
  - Suffix = added ending (changes form or meaning)
  - Connotative = suggested meaning beyond dictionary definition

- Tone = author's attitude

**Teacher Think-Aloud:**

"I see the word *uncomfortable*. I'm going to break it apart: prefix = 'un-' which means 'not,' root = 'comfort' which means 'ease or relief,' and suffix = '-able' which means 'capable of.' When I combine them, the determined meaning is 'not capable of ease.' In this passage, Steinbeck is describing his feelings about staying in a stranger's home, so the word choice shows his unease. The connotative meaning here adds to the tone of tension."

**Sample Student Organizer Response:**

- Word: uncomfortable
- Prefix: un- = not
- Root/Base: comfort = ease
- Suffix: -able = capable of
- Determined Meaning: not capable of ease
- Tone Impact: Word choice shows Steinbeck's unease → tone is awkward/unsettled

**We Do (Guided Practice – 20 mins)**

**Text:** *Third Annual Message* by Abraham Lincoln (1863)

**Steps:**

1. Distribute **Context Clues + Word Type organizer**.
2. Teacher and class read aloud first two paragraphs.
3. Identify the word *emancipation*.

**Teacher Think-Aloud:**

"The word is *emancipation*. Let's use context clues. Lincoln is talking about freeing enslaved people. The base word 'man' is linked to people, and the prefix 'e-' means 'out of.' From the context, emancipation means being set free. This is a domain-specific, technical term because it's connected to law and government. Notice how Lincoln's use of this word makes the tone hopeful and powerful."

**Sample Class Organizer Response:**

- Word: emancipation
- Context Clues: discussion of freeing enslaved people
- Determined Meaning: act of being set free
- Word Type: Technical
- Tone Impact: Word choice makes the tone inspiring and authoritative

**You Do with Partner (Collaborative Practice – 30 mins)**

**Text:** *Free Culture* by Lawrence Lessig

**Steps:**

1. Partners choose either organizer based on the word they encounter.
2. Partners identify the word *innovation*.

**Teacher Think-Aloud (circulating):**

"I see the word *innovation*. Think about the base word 'nova,' meaning 'new.' Context clues show the author is discussing creativity and change in technology. That means innovation = creating something new. The connotation of innovation is positive, suggesting progress. How does this word affect the tone? It makes the tone encouraging and forward-thinking."

**Sample Partner Response:**

- Word: innovation
- Context Clues: creativity, change in technology
- Determined Meaning: creation of something new
- Word Type: Academic/Connotative
- Tone Impact: Word choice makes tone encouraging and forward-looking

**You Do Independently**

**Text:** *A Time to Break Silence* by Martin Luther King, Jr.

**Steps:**

1. Students choose a word to analyze (e.g., *injustice*).
2. Students complete either organizer.

**Teacher Think-Aloud (for scaffolding):**

"I see the word *injustice*. The prefix 'in-' means 'not,' the root 'justice' means fairness. So injustice = not fair. King uses this word to describe racial inequality. The connotation is strong and negative, which builds a passionate and urgent tone."

**Sample Independent Response:**

- Word: injustice
- Prefix: in- = not
- Root: justice = fairness
- Determined Meaning: not fair
- Word Type: Connotative
- Tone Impact: Word choice creates a passionate, urgent tone