

words
have
power

Name:

After reading the poem *Feelings About Words* by Mary O'Neill, answer the following questions.

Recalling:

1. O'Neill calls some words "squat" and others "light." What examples does she give of each kind of word?
2. Name three other adjectives she uses to describe words. What examples does she give of each of these types of words?

Interpreting:

3. Why is *flick* a good example of a quick word?
4. Why is *goodbye* a word that cries?
5. Why does O'Neill call this poem, "Feelings About Words"? Based on this, what are her feelings about words?

Critical Thinking and Reading:

Connotation refers to the feelings and associations words stir up in us. O'Neill explores the connotations of different words. For example, she says that *saunter* gives her a lazy feeling. When you read *saunter*, you like her, may picture someone who moves in a lazy fashion.

When people use words to persuade you to buy or do things, they often rely on connotation. A company selling a new kind of soap, for instance, will choose a name that suggests cleanliness, like Rainwater or Springtime.

1. O'Neill lists words that suggest *grace* to her. List four words that suggest grace to you.

2. List four words that suggest *sadness* to you.

3. List four words that suggest *happiness* to you.

4. Car manufacturers or companies like Nike or Under Armour will often hire people with English/poetry backgrounds to work in their marketing/advertising departments. Why would a company do this? How might they be helpful in naming car models, for instance? Or naming new workout products?

Feelings About Words

by Mary O'Neill

Some words clink
As ice in drink.
Some move with grace
A dance, a lace.
Some sound thin;
Wail, scream and pin.
Some words are squat;
A mug, a pot,
And some are plump,
Fat, round, and dump.
Some words are light;
Drift, lift and bright.
A few are small;
A, is and all.
And some are thick,
Glue, paste, and brick.
Some words are said;
"I never had . . ."
And others are gay;
Joy, spin and play.
Some words are sick;
Stab, scratch and nick.

Some words are hot;
Fire, flame and shot.
Some words are sharp,
Sword, point and carp.
And some alert;
Glint, glance and flirt.
Some words are lazy;
Saunter, hazy.
And some words preen;
Pride, pomp and queen.
Some words are quick,
A jerk, a flick.
Some words are slow;
Lag, stop and grow,
While others poke
As ox with yoke.
Some words can fly ---
There's wind, there's high;
And some words cry;
"Goodbye . . ."
Goodbye . . ."

Lyric