

DICTION

Part 1

Compose three sentences in which you use **both** of the following words in each of the sentences:

- good
- bad

Part 2

View Marlee Neel's short film, "The Case Against Good and Bad", at <http://ed.ted.com/lessons/the-case-against-good-and-bad> and then complete the following exercise.

- 1) The primary reason for replacing the terms GOOD and BAD in writing and speaking is?
 - A) To appease the audience with fervor.
 - B) To add smugness and satisfaction to phrases.
 - C) To produce more precise and true descriptions.
 - D) To decrease hostility and encourage acceptance.
- 2) Why does Neel suppose we rely on GOOD and BAD as go to words to express our thoughts?
 - A) We are too afraid to use other words.
 - B) We are too languid to use other words.
 - C) We aren't smart enough to use other words.
 - D) All of the above
 - E) Both A and B
- 3) Neel asks us to imagine a world where GOOD and BAD do not exist. What would this world be like?
 - A) Real description would be required.
 - B) We wouldn't know how to describe our feelings.
 - C) People would only give thumbs up and thumbs down when expressing positive or negative opinions.
 - D) Nobody would be happy.

4) Instead of "I feel bad," what does Neel suggest one say to the doctor to describe exactly how he/she feels?

- A) I feel like crap.
- B) The nerves in my biological systems are sending signals to my brain which are being interpreted as a negative feeling.
- C) I feel like a herd of wombats have taken up in my chest.
- D) You're the doctor -- figure out what's wrong with me.

5) Where have all the grittier, exact terms been?

- A) In the United Kingdom.
- B) Buried in our lexis, waiting to see daylight.
- C) In academia.
- D) They haven't been invented yet.

Part 3

1) The English language has an abundant number of illustrative words. There are also many words that fail to interpret the true circumstances of the situation. Identify five terms from the English language that produce similarly banal effects to good and bad. List these terms in one column. In the next column, produce two superior replacements of your own. Share and discuss these with the class to develop a larger list of terms to avoid in your own written and oral projects.

| Dull Words | Exciting Words |
|------------|----------------|
| 1. | 1. |
| 2. | 2. |
| 3. | 3. |
| 4. | 4. |
| 5. | 5. |

2.) Using the words above, generate a list of more powerful words. Make a Connotation Spectrum like the one below. Use a minimum of 15 words!

Example:

Most Negative

Least Negative

Corpulent

Obese

Fat

Heavy

Chubby

Now students can discuss their list and create/defend their own "Connotation Spectrum" to share with the class.

Task 1 Assessment: Revise and rewrite the following passage by utilizing superior replacements for the terms good and bad. Create a final draft on separate paper.

It was a good day. The sunlight felt good on her legs that had been sheltered under jeans all year. The beach and the ocean smelled good. She let all the good sounds soak into her soul. She was determined to make this as good a vacation as her grandmother had ever had.

Answers to multiple choice questions:

Part 2

1) The primary reason for replacing the terms GOOD and BAD in writing and speaking is?

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Part 3

2) The English language has an abundant amount of illustrative words. There are also many words that fail to interpret the true circumstances of the situation. Identify five terms from the English language that produce similarly banal effects to good and bad. List these terms in one

column. In the next column, produce two superior replacements of your own. Share and discuss these with the class to develop a larger list of terms to avoid in your own written and oral projects.

Some dull words: happy, interesting, beautiful, smart, boring, house

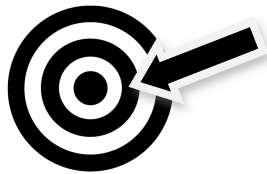
Diction Analysis and Paragraph Revision Rubric

Priority Standard(s): W.9-10.5



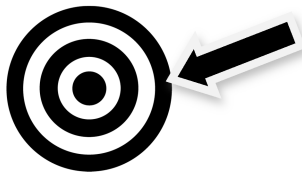
Level 4—Advanced

- I can create revisions that demonstrate **exceptional** diction and clarity.
- I can revise sentences that are complex and achieve greater depth.



Level 3—Proficient

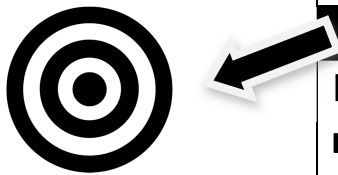
- I can create revisions that demonstrate **proficient** diction and clarity.
- I can write clear sentences with few errors.



Level 2—Basic

I can create revisions and a word continuum, but they have **ONE** of the following characteristics:

- Did not include all elements of the assignment.
- **Obvious** or **generic** word choice



Level 1—Below Basic

I can write a paragraph, but it has **TWO or more** of the following characteristics:

- Did not include all elements of the assignment.
- **Obvious** or **generic** word choice