

Exercise walk-through

Word choice, comparisons, and syntax ■ 5.5

eXercise

You must be able to

- describe the connotation of a word choice, not only its meaning
- explain what a metaphor or analogy asks the reader to accept
- describe a syntactic pattern and its effect
- link any of these to purpose

Method — Connotation

“Firm” and “stubborn” describe the same behaviour and evaluate it oppositely. Naming the connotation, and what it does for the writer’s purpose, is the analysis; naming the word is not.

Method — What a comparison claims

Every metaphor imports a structure. Calling a debate a “battle” makes opponents enemies and compromise a defeat. Ask what the comparison licenses the reader to think.

Method — Syntax

Short sentences after long ones create emphasis. A long periodic sentence that delays its main verb builds suspense. Repetition of a structure — parallelism — makes items feel equivalent and complete.

Practice 2.1 ■ 2 marks

State the difference between a word's meaning and its connotation.

Solution 2.1

Method: Connotation

Worked steps

meaning is what the word refers to **B1**; connotation is the evaluation or association it carries **B1**.

Practice 2.2 ■ 2 marks

Explain what calling a debate a “battle” asks the reader to accept.

Solution 2.2

Method: What a comparison claims

Worked steps

that the parties are enemies rather than participants **B1**, and that compromise would be a defeat rather than an outcome **B1**.

Practice 2.3 ■ 1 mark

A paragraph of long sentences ends with a three-word sentence.

- (a) State the effect.
- (b) State how you would link it to purpose.

Solution 2.3

Method: Syntax

Worked steps

(a) emphasis — the short sentence lands hard after the long ones **B1**. (b) state what is emphasised and why the writer wants that point to land **B1**.

Exam-style 3.1 ■ 1 mark

Choosing “stubborn” rather than “firm” mainly changes

- A** the denotation
- B** the evaluation carried by the word
- C** the sentence length
- D** the audience

Solution 3.1

Method: Connotation

- A the denotation
- B the evaluation carried by the word**
- C the sentence length
- D the audience



Worked steps

- B. the denotation is the same; the evaluation is not.**

Exam-style 3.2 ■ 1 mark

Parallel structure across three clauses tends to make the items feel

- A** unrelated
- B** equivalent and complete
- C** contradictory
- D** hypothetical

Solution 3.2

Method: Syntax

- A unrelated
- B equivalent and complete 
- C contradictory
- D hypothetical

Worked steps

B. parallelism suggests equivalence and closure.

Exam-style 3.3 ■ 1 mark

A writer describes a policy as “a lifeline”.

- (a) State what the metaphor imports.
- (b) Explain what it forecloses.

Solution 3.3

Method: What a comparison claims

Worked steps

(a) rescue from drowning — urgency and the absence of alternatives **B1**. (b) it forecloses debate about whether the policy is the right remedy **B1**, since refusing a lifeline is not a position anyone can defend **B1**.