

## WORDS TO KNOW

technical  
connotations  
figurative

## Lesson 27

DETERMINE FIGURATIVE, CONNOTATIVE,  
AND TECHNICAL MEANINGS 6.RI.CS.4

## INTRODUCTION

## Real-World Connection

## MUSIC CONNECTION

Maya, reporter for the school's newspaper, is writing a review of a classmate's drum solo for the next school paper. Maya writes, "As the drummer hit the metal disc, a screeching sound arose that sounded like a beautiful melody to my ears." Maya's editor returns the article with many notes. She is using words with negative associations to describe a pleasant experience. She does not use specific words that relate to drumming. How can Maya revise her writing so that it is clearer? We'll practice the skills in the **Guided Instruction** and **Independent Practice** and revisit Maya and her drums at the end of the lesson!

## What I Am Going to Learn

- How understanding words that relate to a specific subject can help you understand that subject better
- How some words have associations beyond their dictionary definition and how these associations can help us understand the context of the text better
- How words can be used in a certain way to create mental pictures for readers

## What I May Already Know 5.RI.CS.4

- I know words that have special meanings in different subject areas.
- I know words that generally improve my vocabulary.
- I know figurative meanings of words, including similes and metaphors.

## Vocabulary in Action

As you read, you will come across words that are used in a variety of ways:

- **Technical** words are words that relate to a specific subject. Knowing the meaning of technical words may help you understand a particular subject better.
- **Connotations** are added associations beyond the dictionary definition of a word. A connotation can be positive, negative, or neutral.
- **Figurative** meanings of words and phrases create mental pictures for readers. Examples:
  - Similes compare things using the words *like* or *as*.
  - Metaphors also compare things, but without using *like* or *as*.
  - Hyperbole is an exaggeration.
  - Personification is when the writer gives human characteristics to nonhuman things.

## GUIDED INSTRUCTION

Maya researched to learn about more terms related to drumming and found an article about the history of drums. Underline technical words, circle words with positive or negative connotations, and highlight figurative language.

## Where Did the Drum Set Come From?

Before the invention of the drum set, the process of creating a full, rich sound was inefficient. Bands had to use multiple drummers to get the sound it craved. Each drummer played a different type of drum. For example, one would play the snare drum, while another would play the bass. The drummers combined to create rhythms as steady as a heartbeat.

In the early 20th century, the invention of the drum set transformed this, allowing drummers to play multiple instruments at the same time. First, a stand was invented to hold the drums, and a bass drum pedal was created to allow drummers to play a drum rhythm using their feet. Later, cymbals were added, which could also be played by tapping the feet on a pedal. Over the 20th century, drum sets were improved and changed. Instead of just using drumsticks, wire brushes could also be used to play the drums and cymbals.

Today, with the combination of instruments available in a drum set, a single drummer can create a wide variety of sounds and rhythms.

## THINK ABOUT IT

The author says drumming before the drum set invention was *inefficient*. Does *inefficient* have a positive or negative connotation? Look at the clues in the text. Is the process before the drum set easy or difficult?



Complete the chart by listing the words and phrases you found in the passage, the type of meaning, and the meaning or connotation.

MEANING OR CONNOTATION	TYPE OF MEANING	WORD OR PHRASE
negative	connotative	inefficient

▶ **THINK ABOUT IT**

Ask yourself, "How does the content of the text help you figure out the word's technical meaning?"

**Part A**

What is the technical meaning of bass as it is used in paragraph 1?

- Ⓐ a type of fish that drummers like to eat
- Ⓑ the lowest note that a drummer can play
- Ⓒ the very low singing voice of a drummer
- Ⓓ a type of drum that is played with the feet

**Part B**

Underline the sentence in paragraph 2 that **best** supports the answer to Part A.

▶ **HINT, HINT**

Which sentence talks about the bass drum?

**How Am I Doing?**

What questions do you have?

Can you write an example of something you learned?

How do you and your friends use figurative meanings, technical words, or connotations in your everyday conversations?

◀ **SKETCH IT**

In the margin below, draw an example of something you learned.

Color in the traffic signal that shows how you are doing with the skill.





1. Part A

Which best describes the burru music’s function in the African culture?

- (A) method of entertainment
- (B) communication device
- (C) form of protest
- (D) religious expression

Part B

Cite evidence from the text that supports your response about the function of burru music in African culture in Part A.

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2. Part A

What is the connotative meaning of the word backbreaking in paragraph 2?

- (A) harmful
- (B) boring
- (C) distracting
- (D) difficult

Part B

Which sentence from paragraph 2 **best** supports the answer to Part A?

- (A) “Jamaican music has its roots in the folk music brought by African slaves in the 1700s.”
- (B) “Although slave owners tried hard to stamp out the African culture, traditional music survived.”
- (C) “The burru, or ‘talking drums,’ passed information from one plantation to the next, just as they had passed information from village to village in Africa.”
- (D) “The songs described how hard life and working conditions were for the Africans in their new land.”

3. Which example of figurative language should the writer use to **best** describe the unique sounds discussed in paragraph 3?

- (A) as new as a baby
- (B) as angry as a hornet
- (C) as loud as a thunderstorm
- (D) as individual as a snowflake

4. Part A

What is the meaning of the technical word quadrille as it is used in paragraph 5?

- (A) a type of song
- (B) a type of dance
- (C) a type of drum
- (D) a type of guitar

