Word Usage in Amy Tan’s The Joy Luck Club:
10th Grade World Literature

Standard

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.4
Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).

Learning Goal: Students can analyze Amy Tan’s use of words and phrases in The Joy Luck Club.

Objective 1.1. Students understand the meaning of literary terms about word usage.
Matching—15%

Objective 1.2: Students understand the meaning of words used in the novel.
Sentence Completion and Multiple Choice—25%

Objective 1.3 Students can analyze the figurative and/or connotative meaning of words and phrases in the novel.
Multiple Choice—15%
Short Answer—20%

Objective 1.4 Students can explain how the author uses these words and phrases to create tone in a passage.
Multiple Choice—10%
Short Answer—15%
**Part 1: Literary Terms**

Matching Directions: Match the words to the write definitions by writing the letter of the word in the space by the definition. Not all the words have matching definitions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definitions</th>
<th>Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.)___ Non-literal meaning of words and phrases.</td>
<td>A. Denotation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.)___ Basic meaning of words and phrases.</td>
<td>B. Tone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.)___ The emotional or associative meaning of words and phrases.</td>
<td>C. Personification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.)___ An author’s attitude toward the writing created by words and phrases.</td>
<td>D. Metonymy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.)___ When an object represents something else closely related to it.</td>
<td>E. Connotation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

/5pts \( x \cdot 15 = \) _____
Part 2: The Meaning of Words

Sentence Completion Directions: Use the words in the word bank to complete the following sentences. Not all words in the word bank are used.

Word Bank

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>admonish</th>
<th>careen</th>
<th>insolence</th>
<th>obscure</th>
<th>splay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>apparition</td>
<td>devour</td>
<td>lament</td>
<td>peril</td>
<td>tout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brittle</td>
<td>elude</td>
<td>morbid</td>
<td>shun</td>
<td>unravel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.) When the boy refused to make his bed, his mother scolded him for his ________

7.) The whole neighborhood could hear the little girl’s ________ over her lost dog.

8.) The teacher would always ___________ his students for not doing the reading.

9.) In the cold night, the fog came and went like a(n) ____________.

10.) As he got sleepy, the story she was reading became______________.

11.) The out of control car ______________ed off the cliff.

6 pts
Part 2 continued: The Meaning of Words

Multiple Choice Directions:

- Read the short passage.
- Then read the statement about the bolded word.
- Circle the best answer to the question.

12.)

This passage is about Rich, Waverly Jong’s American boyfriend eating Chinese food:
“When I offered Rich a fork, he insisted on using the slippery ivory chopsticks. He held them splayed like the knock-kneed legs of an ostrich while picking up a large chunk of sauce-coated eggplant.” (page 197)

Author Amy Tan uses splayed to ____________
A.) show the size of Rich’s hands compared to the chopsticks.
B.) show the slipperiness of the ivory chopsticks
C.) show the awkwardness of Rich’s use of the chopsticks.
D.) show Rich’s cultural insensitivity in using the chopsticks.

13.)

This passage is about something mean Jing-Mei Woo says to her mother:
“It was as if I had said the magic word. Alakazam!— and her face went blank...and she backed out of the room, stunned, as if she were blowing away like a small, brown leaf, thin, brittle, lifeless.” (page 153).

Author Amy Tan uses brittle to
A.) show how breakable the mother feels
B.) show how close to dying the mother feels
C.) show how cold the mother feels
D.) show how old the mother feels

2 pts

\( \frac{8}{8} \times 0.25 = _____ \)
Part 3: Figurative and Connotative Meaning

Multiple Choice Directions:
- Read the short passage.
- Then read the question about the bolded word.
- Circle the best answer to the question.

14.) In this passage, Rose Hsu Jordan remembers something her mother, An-Mei Hsu said about her:

“She said I was without wood. Born without wood so that I listened to too many people... ‘A girl is like a young tree... You must stand tall and listen to your mother standing next to you. That is the only way to grow strong and straight but if you bend to listen to other people, you will grow crooked and weak.”” (page 213)

The phrase **without wood** is a figure of speech meaning that An-Mei Hsu thinks her daughter is

A.) lacking in physical and moral strength

B.) not paying attention to her mother’s advice

C.) ignoring her own individuality

D.) forgetting about her cultural roots

15.) In this passage, Ying-ying St. Clair notices something about her daughter

“She become so thin now you cannot see her,” says my mother. “She like ghost, disappear.”” (pg. 177)

The phrase **She like ghost** connotes that Ying Ying is worried her daughter

A.) has a weight problem

B.) is avoiding her

C.) is losing herself

D.) is turning into a ghost

2 pts
Part 3 continued: Figurative and Connotative Meaning  15%

Multiple Choice Directions:
- Read the short passage.
- Then read the question about the **bolded** word.
- Circle the best answer to the question.

16.)

*This passage captures the thoughts of Ying-ying St. Claire on a visit to her daughter and her daughter’s husband’s house:*

“All around this house I see the signs. My daughter looks but does not see. **This is a house that will break into pieces.**” (pg. 275)

The phrase **This is a house that will break into pieces** means that Ying Ying thinks _________________.

A.) their house is poorly built  
B.) their health is in poor condition  
C.) their culture isn’t as good as Chinese culture  
D.) their marriage will not last.

17.)

*This passage captures the thoughts of Ying-ying about her daughter:*

“She and I have shared the same body. There is a part of her mind that is part of mine. But when she was born, she sprang from me like a slippery fish, and has been **swimming** away ever since.” (pg. 274)

The phrase **like a slippery fish** means that Ying-ying thinks her daughter is

A.) hard to hold onto  
B.) her own person  
C.) disobedient  
D.) ungrateful

2 pts

/4pts x .15 = ____.
In this passage, Waverly Jong describes coming home from a fight with her mother:

“About time you got home,” said my brother. “Boy, are you in trouble.”...
Standing there waiting for my punishment, I heard my mother speak in a dry voice.
“We’re not concerning this girl. This girl not have concerning for us.”
Nobody looked at me. Bone chopsticks clinked against the inside of bowls being emptied into hungry mouths.
I walked into my room, closed the door, and lay down on my bed. The room was dark, the ceiling filled with shadows from the dinnertime lights of neighboring flats.
In my head, I saw a chessboard with sixty-four black and white squares. Opposite me was my opponent, two angry black slits. She wore a triumphant smile.
“Strongest wind cannot be seen,” she said.
Her black men advanced across the plane, slowly marching to each successive level as a single unit. My white pieces screamed as they scurried and fell off the board one by one. As her men drew closer to my edge, I felt myself growing light. I rose up into the air and flew out the window. Higher and higher, above the alley, over the tops of tiled roofs, where I was gathered up by the wind and pushed up toward the night sky until everything below me disappeared and I was alone.
I closed my eyes and pondered my next move.
Part 3 continued: Figurative and Connotative Meaning 20%

18.

Short Answer Directions continued: Write 6-8 sentences about the figurative language Amy Tan is using in the passage on page 7.

Make sure you

- Define what is literally happening in the scene.
- Describe how the figurative language Tan uses adds meaning to the passage.
- Use literary terms from page 2 of this test and quotes from the passage.

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

/4 pts x .2 = ______
Part 4: Tone

True/False Directions:

- Read the short passage
- Read the statement
- Circle T (true) or F (false)

19.)
This passage is about Rich, Waverly Jong's American boyfriend eating Chinese food:

“When I offered Rich a fork, he insisted on using the slippery ivory chopsticks. He held them splayed like the knock-kneed legs of an ostrich while picking up a large chunk of sauce-coated eggplant.” (page 197)

T  F  In this passage, Amy Tan’s tone is somber.

20.)
This passage is a quote from Suyuan Woo:

“That cat gone! Disappear!” She threw her hands in the air and smiled, looking pleased for a moment before the scowl came back. “And that man, he raise his hand like this, show me his ugly fist and call me worst Fukien landlady. I not from Fukien. Hunh! He know nothing!” (page 224)

T  F  In this passage, Amy Tan’s tone is playful.

21.)
This passage captures the thoughts of Ying-ying St. Claire:

“I became like the ladies of the lake. I threw white clothes over the mirrors in my bedroom so I did not have to see my grief. I lost my strength, so I could not even lift my hands to place pins in my hair. And then I floated like a dead leaf on the water until I drifted out of my mother-in-law’s house and back to my family home.” (pg. 282)

T  F  In this passage, Amy Tan’s tone is ironic.

/3 pts x .1 = _______
Part 4 Continued: Tone

22.)

Short Answer Directions: Read the passage on page 7 again.
Write 5-7 sentences about what tone Amy Tan is using.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tone Word Bank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreboding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Make sure you
- state a tone or tones you think Tan is using (use the Tone Word Bank)
- mention specific words or phrases in the passage
- say how these words create the tone
- say why Tan uses this tone for this scene

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

/4 pts x .15 = ________
Part 5: Student Reflection

1.) In your own words, what was this test about?

_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

2.) Why are these things important to know as readers and communicators?

_____________________________________________________________________________________

3a.) What part(s) do you think you did well on? (Circle any that apply):

Matching
Multiple Choice on Word Meaning
Short Answer on Fig. Language
Sentence Completion
Multiple Choice on Fig. Language
True/ False
Short Answer on Tone

3b.) Why do you think you did well here?

_____________________________________________________________________________________

4a.) What part(s) did you struggle with? (Circle any that apply):

Matching
Multiple Choice on Word Meaning
Short Answer on Fig. Language
Sentence Completion
Multiple Choice on Fig. Language
True/ False
Short Answer on Tone

4b.) Why do you think you struggled here?

_____________________________________________________________________________________

4c.) What can you do to get stronger in these areas?

_____________________________________________________________________________________


ELL Short Answer Adaptation: Figurative Language

Instructions for the Teacher: ELL students have the option of a.) using this form to write or their response or b.) using a recorder to record their response verbally. The same scoring rules will be applied to either option.

This passage is about __________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

The writer uses figurative language to describe this.

For example, “_____________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________”.

This type of figurative language is called ____________________________.

This language is figurative because _________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

Another example is when the author writes “________________________
_________________________________________________________________”.

This type of figurative language is called ____________________________.

This is another example of figurative language because________________
__________________________________________________________________.
ELL Short Answer Adaptation: Tone.

Instructions for the Teacher: ELL students have the option of a.) using this form to write our their response or b.) using a recorder to record their response verbally. The same scoring rules will be applied to either option.

I think the writer’s tone is _________________________________.

The phrases ____________ and __________ make me think this.

Firstly, the phrase __________ makes me__________ (think/feel) that

__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________

Secondly, the phrase __________ makes me __________ (think/feel) that

__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________

I think the writer uses this tone because________________________

__________________________________________________________________
Word Usage in Amy Tan’s The Joy Luck Club:

10th Grade World Literature

Scoring Guide

Part 1:
1.) G
2.) A
3.) E
4.) B
5.) D

Part 2:
6.) insolence
7.) lament
8.) admonish
9.) apparition
10.) obscure
11.) careen

12.) C
13.) A

Part 3:
14.) B
15.) C
16.) D
17.) B
18. See Scoring Rubric

Part 4:
19.) F
20.) T
21.) F
22.) See Scoring Rubric
18. Figurative Language Short Answer Scoring Rubric:

4—The response defines the situation, accurately uses literary terms and gives multiple analyses of how figurative language adds meaning to the passage, using supporting quotes.

3—The response defines the situation, uses terms, gives an analysis of how figurative language is used, and uses a quote to support the analysis.

2—The response defines the situation but uses terms inaccurately. Analysis partially connects figurative language with meaning in the text.

1—The response defines the situation partially, doesn’t use literary terms and analysis doesn’t connect figurative language with meaning in the text.

0—The response defines the situation inaccurately, doesn’t use literary terms and isn’t connected to the text or there is no response.

Example Response

In this passage, Amy Tan uses the metaphor of a chess game to talk about the girl and the mother fighting. The mother’s pieces are “black men” that push the girl’s pieces back. This means the mother is winning. When the girl’s pieces fall they “scream” which is a personification. Tan uses this to show the girl’s frustration. The passage ends with the girl thinking about her next move. This means the girl is still thinking about her fight with her mother like a chess game.
22. Tone Short Answer Scoring Rubric:

4— The response identifies a tone or tones, defends this choice with a number of words and phrases from the passage, analyzing connotation and why Tan uses this tone.

3— The response identifies a tone and defends this choice with a word or phrase, defines a connotation that adds to tone and attempts at analyzing why Tan uses the tone.

2— The response identifies a tone and defends this choice with a word or phrase, but omits either word connotation or Tan’s reasons for this tone.

1— The response identifies a tone but doesn’t defend this choice with the text. Omits either connotation or reason for the tone.

0— No response is made or the response doesn’t show a connection between the concept of tone and the text.

Example Response

*I think Amy Tan’s tone in this passage is serious. The phrases “slowly marching” and “pondered” create this tone. The slowly marching chess pieces add to this serious attitude. Pondered also shows a seriousness, because pondered means ‘to think about something for a long time’. This serious tone makes sense because the girl and mom are fighting and Tan wants the reader to feel the seriousness of this.*