

Diction ⑨

NAME: _____

DATE: / /

WEEK: :

PERIOD: #

Consider:

Doc awakened very slowly and clumsily like a fat man getting out of a swimming pool. His mind **broke the surface** and fell back several times.

— John Steinbeck, *Cannery Row*

Discuss:

1. What is the subject of the verb *broke*? What does this tell you about Doc's ability to control his thinking at this point in the story?

2. To what does *surface* refer? Remember that good writers often strive for complexity rather than simplicity.

Apply:

3. List three active verbs that could be used to complete the sentence below. Act out one of these verbs for the class, demonstrating the verb's connotation.

He _____ into the crowded auditorium.

Diction (10)

NAME: _____
DATE: ____/____/____
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Consider:

Pots rattled in the kitchen where Momma was frying corn cakes to go with vegetable soup for supper, and the homey sounds and scents **cushioned** me as I read of Jane Eyre in the **cold** English mansion of a **colder** English gentleman.

— Maya Angelou, *I know Why the Caged Bird Sings*

Discuss:

1. By using the word *cushioned*, what does Angelou imply about her life and Jane Eyre's life?
2. What is the difference between the *cold* of the English mansion and the *cold* of the English gentleman? What does Angelou's diction convey about her attitude toward Jane's life?

Apply:

3. Write a sentence using a strong verb to connect one part of your life with another. For example, you could connect a book you are reading and your mother's dinner preparations, as Maya Angelou does; or you could connect a classroom lecture with sounds outside. Be creative. Use an exact verb (like *cushioned*), one which connotes the attitude you want to convey. Share your sentence with the class.