

# Diction (20)

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
WEEK: \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_ PERIOD: # \_\_\_\_

## Consider:

Twenty **bodies** were thrown out of our wagon. Then the train resumed its journey, leaving behind it a few hundred naked **dead**, deprived of burial, in the deep snow of a field in Poland.

— Elie Wiesel, *Night*

## Discuss:

1. This scene describes the transporting of Jews from Auschwitz to Buchenwald, both concentration camps in World War II. In this selection, Wiesel never refers to the men who die on the journey as men. Instead, he refers to them as *bodies* or simply *dead*. How does his diction shape the reader's understanding of the horror?
2. How would the meaning change if we substituted *dead people* for *bodies*?

## Apply:

3. Change the italicized word below to a word that disassociates the reader from the true action of the sentence.

Fifteen chickens were *slaughtered* for the feast.

Share your new sentence with the class and explain its effect.

REMEMBER! →

**Diction** (word choice) is the foundation of voice and contributes to all of its elements.

## Diction (19)

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE:   /  /  

WEEK:   

PERIOD:   #  

### Consider:

This is earthquake  
\* Weather!  
Honor and Hunger  
Walk **lean**  
Together.

— Langston Hughes, "Today"

### Discuss:

1. What does *lean* mean in this context?
2. Is *lean* a verb, an adjective, or both? How does this uncertainty and complexity contribute to the impact of the lines?

### Apply:

3. With a partner, read the poem aloud several times, changing the meaning of *lean* with your voice. Discuss how you controlled your voice to make the changes.