

Diction

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:

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.