Homework Activities: Using AntConc

## 1. Take A Look

Below is a table with adjectives (sorted 1R) associated with *big*, *large*, and *great* in academic writing (top half of the table) and fiction (bottom half of the table). Looking at the associated words, what are some meaning differences between *big*, *large*, and *great*? How do the associated adjectives of these three words change between academic writing and fiction, and what does that tell you about the meaning of *big*, *large*, and *great*? Write your response in the space below:

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| **ACADEMIC WRITING** |
| **big** | **large** | **great** |
| **1R** | **freq/mio** | **1R** | **freq/mio** | **1R** | **freq/mio** |
| enough | 2.2 | number | 48.3 | deal | 44.6 |
| traders | 1.1 | numbers | 31.3 | importance | 12.5 |
|  |  | scale | 29.4 | number | 8.9 |
|  |  | and | 28 | majority | 8.1 |
|  |  | enough | 15.9 | variety | 7 |
|  |  | proportion | 11.8 | extent | 7 |
|  |  | amounts | 10.7 | part | 4.1 |
|  |  | quantities | 10.3 | care | 3.3 |
|  |  | part | 10 | advantage | 2.6 |
|  |  | extent | 8.9 | detail | 2.6 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| FICTION WRITING |
| big | **large** | **great** |
| 1R | **freq/mio** | **1R** | **freq/mio** | **1R** | **freq/mio** |
| man | 9.6 | and | 15.2 | deal | 40.4 |
| enough | 8.9 | black | 4.3 | man | 6.6 |
| and | 8.3 | enough | 3.6 | burrow | 5.6 |
| black | 8.3 | house | 3 | big | 4.6 |
| house | 7.6 | room | 2.7 | aunt | 4.3 |
| one | 7 | white | 2.7 | care | 4 |
| toe | 5 | number | 2.3 | pleasure | 4 |
| old | 4.6 | for | 2.3 | and | 3 |
| red | 4.3 | man | 2 | relief | 3 |
| boy | 3.6 | one | 2 | black | 2.7 |

[Data from: Biber, Douglas, Susan Conrad and Randi Reppen. 1998. *Corpus linguistics: investigating language structure and use.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 46]

## 2. Data Digging

Load the **Professional Writing** data set in AntConc. Answer the following questions:

1. Run a concordance for the word *significance*
How many hits do you retrieve? \_\_\_\_
2. Sort the concordance by 1L/2L/3L.
What adjectives tend to precede *significance*? \_\_\_\_
3. Run another concordance for *importance*.
How many hits do you retrieve? \_\_\_\_
4. Sort the concordance by 1L/2L/3L.
What adjectives precede *importance*? \_\_\_\_
5. How would you describe the difference in meaning between *significance* and *importance* based on the adjectives that occur with these two words?
6. How could you use the \* to find all occurrences of *significance* and *significant* at the same time? Note down your search term, and how many hits you retrieve.