

GUIDE TO TONE WORDS

Tone is more than merely an author's attitude toward his/her audience and characters; it is the stylistic means by which an author conveys his/her attitude(s) in a work of literature. Tone is an integral part of a work's **meaning** because it controls the reader's response which is essential to fully experiencing literature. In order to recognize **tonal shift** and to interpret **complexities of tone**, the reader must be able to make inferences based on an active reading of the work.

***Directions:** Familiarize yourself with the denotations and connotations of the following **tone words**. This is by no means a comprehensive list! Your job will be to add to this list throughout the year, placing new tone words in their appropriate categories. You should also practice utilizing adjective and adverb forms of each word:*

adjective: Leo uses a mocking tone when he describes Mr. Graham as a literary genius.

adverb: Leo mockingly describes Mr. Graham as a literary genius.

For more tone words and their meanings, consult a thesaurus!

- simple, straightforward, direct, unambiguous, candid
- indirect, understated, evasive, allusive
- complicated, complex, difficult
- admiring, worshiping, approving
- complimentary, proud, effusive
- disliking, abhorring, contemptuous
- strident, harsh, acerbic, angry, outraged, violent
- forceful, powerful, confident
- energetic, vibrant
- ironic, sardonic, sarcastic, mocking, sly, wry
- satirical, critical
- sharp, biting
- bitter, grim, cynical
- interested, sympathetic, pitiful
- hollow, detached, cold, obdurate
- tired, boring, uninterested
- indifferent, unconcerned, disinterested, apathetic
- impartial, objective
- humorous, playful, joking, frivolous
- flippant, irreverent, facetious
- impish, silly, sophomoric, childish
- resigned, calm, tranquil, quiet, peaceful, reticent
- subdued, restrained
- sad, upset, depressed, melancholy, despairing
- afraid, fearful, horrific, terrified, panicked
- wistful, nostalgic, sentimental

- solemn, serious, somber
- apologetic, penitent, ignominious
- recalcitrant, stubborn, rebellious
- apprehensive, anxious, pensive
- thoughtful, dreamy, fanciful
- vexed, uncertain, confused, ambivalent
- excited, exhilarated, exuberant
- ardent, fervent, zealous
- happy, contented, ecstatic, joyful, giddy
- incredulous, questioning, skeptical, dubious
- insistent, urgent, pressing
- pertinent, pointed, incisive, poignant
- commanding, demanding
- exhortatory, admonishing, censorious, damning
- condescending, arrogant, haughty, dogmatic
- elevated, grand, lofty, bombastic, pretentious
- oratorical, dramatic, melodramatic
- scornful, disdainful, supercilious
- audacious, bold, impudent, insolent
- alluring, provocative, seductive
- shocking, offensive, reprehensible, lurid
- didactic, instructive

RESOURCE:

http://n-foster.tripod.com/index_files/page0128.htm