

Some Tips on Tone

Tone: the unifying emotional content of a piece of writing.

Tone is one of the most common terms used in rhetorical analysis.

Here is a list of words which essayists can use to describe various types and shades of tone or to replace “says” or “uses.” Try to incorporate them into your own essays:

The author or narrator:

evokes	depicts	clarifies	explores
uses (weak)	conveys	repudiates	masters
utilizes (weak)	juxtaposes	refutes	transcends
elicits	portrays	tackles	enhances
manipulates	differentiates	compares	reveals
consoles	maintains	shifts	asserts
alludes to	shows (weak)	changes	inspires
twists	implies	invokes	dispels
ignites	connotes	alters	constrains
suggests	explains	describes	construes
encourages	elucidates	paints	solidifies
hints at	emphasizes	delineates	stirs
creates	enunciates	produces	employs (for “uses”)

Some common types of tone:

playful	cynical	humorous	educated
solemn	informative	witty	scientific
sincere	didactic	pedantic	
ironic	sarcastic		
satiric			

Some Tools Writers Use to Achieve Tone:

imagery
syntax
diction
comic details
facts
symbols
irony
foreshadowing
narration
description