

Libraryland is brought to you today by the literary term:

TONE

VS.

MOOD

What is Tone?

Tone is the author's attitude toward the writing (his characters, the situation) and the readers.

What is Tone?

A work of writing can have more than one tone. An example of tone could be both serious and humorous. Tone is set by the setting, choice of vocabulary and other details.

Words That Describe Tone

Amused	Humorous	Pessimistic
Angry	Informal	Playful
Cheerful	Ironic	Pompous
Horror	Light	Sad
Clear	Matter-of-fact	Serious
Formal	Resigned	Suspicious
Gloomy	Optimistic	Witty

What is Mood?

Mood is the general atmosphere created by the author's words. It is the feeling the reader gets from reading those words. It may be the same, or it may change from situation to situation.

Words That Describe Mood

Fanciful

Melancholy

Frightening

Mysterious

Frustrating

Romantic

Gloomy

Sentimental

Happy

Sorrowful

Joyful

Suspenseful

She huddled in the corner, clutching her tattered blanket and shaking convulsively, as she feverishly searched the room for the unknown dangers that awaited her.

What is the tone?

She huddled in the corner, clutching her tattered blanket and shaking convulsively, as she feverishly searched the room for the unknown dangers that awaited her.

What is the mood?

The Original 1964 Mary Poppins trailer

What is the tone?

What is the mood?

The Mary Poppins redo for the 21st Century

What is the mood?

What is the tone?

Works Cited:

- Darigan, Daniel L., James S. Jacobs, and Michael O. Tunnell. *Children's Literature: Engaging Teachers and Children in Good Books*. CD-Rom ed. Alexandria, VA: Prentice Hall, 2002. Print.
- "Homepage - ReadWriteThink." *Homepage - ReadWriteThink*. N.p., n.d. Web. 9 Oct. 2010. <<http://www.readwritethink.org/>>.
- "Printables: View the Latest Scholastic Classroom Printables." *Printables: View the Latest Scholastic Classroom Printables*. N.p., n.d. Web. 9 Oct. 2010. <http://printables.scholastic.com/printables/home/?ESP=PRT/ib/acq/printables_slimnav_Teachers//nav/txtl//>>.
- <http://www.brighthubeducation.com/middle-school-english-lessons/12268-four-steps-to-teach-tone-and-mood/>

Tone and Mood

You might think about the difference between mood and tone as follows: Mood as the attitude of the author toward the subject, and Tone as the attitude of the author toward the audience. Usually. Sometimes there is a fine line, and Tone can be an attitude toward the implied audience and subject both.

Tone - the writer's attitude toward the audience; a writer's tone can be serious, sarcastic, tongue-in-cheek, solemn, objective, satirical, solemn, wicked, etc.

- Tone is the author's (not necessarily your narrator's) overall outlook or attitude toward the given audience. Ironic, matter-of-fact, bemused, outraged, curiously respectful, disdainful - how does he/she feel about the fragment of life displayed in the story? The curious thing about tone is that it may *change*, but it must never *waver*.

Mood - is the feeling a piece of literature arouses in the reader: happy, sad, peaceful, etc. Mood is the overall feeling of the piece, or passage. It could be called the author's emotional-intellectual attitude toward the subject

-By choosing certain words rather than others and by weaving their connotations together, an author can give whole settings and scenes a kind of personality, or mood. Note the difference if he/she describes a tall, thin tree as "erect like a steeple", "spiked like a witch's hat", "a leafy spear", or "rather inclining toward the slim". However, no single image can work alone; mood can only arise from a steady pressure in the language toward one major atmospheric effect. That effect should support the main purpose of the story."

These lists might help to distinguish between the two.

Tone words

POSITIVE TONE WORDS

admiring	hilarious
adoring	hopeful
affectionate	humorous

NEUTRAL (+, -, or neutral)

commanding
direct
impartial

NEGATIVE TONE WORDS

abhorring	hostile
acerbic	impatient
ambiguous	incredulous

appreciative
approving
bemused
benevolent
blithe
calm
casual
celebratory
cheerful
comforting
comic
compassionate
complimentary
conciliatory
confident
contented
delightful
earnest
ebullient
ecstatic
effusive
elated
empathetic
encouraging
euphoric
excited
exhilarated
expectant
facetious
fervent
flippant
forthright
friendly
funny
gleeful
gushy
happy

interested
introspective
jovial
joyful
laudatory
light
lively
mirthful
modest
nostalgic
optimistic
passionate
placid
playful
poignant
proud
reassuring
reflective
relaxed
respectful
reverent
romantic
sanguine
scholarly
self-assured
sentimental
serene
silly
sprightly
straightforward
sympathetic
tender
tranquil
whimsical
wistful
worshipful
zealous

indirect
meditative
objective
questioning
speculative
unambiguous
unconcerned
understated

ambivalent
angry
annoyed
antagonistic
anxious
apathetic
apprehensive
belligerent
bewildered
biting
bitter
blunt
bossy
cold
conceited
condescending
confused
contemptuous
curt
cynical
demanding
depressed
derisive
derogatory
desolate
despairing
desperate
detached
diabolic
disappointed
disliking
disrespectful
doubtful
embarrassed
enraged
evasive
fatalistic
fearful
forceful
foreboding
frantic
frightened
frustrated
furious
gloomy
grave
greedy
grim
harsh
haughty
holier-than-thou
hopeless

indifferent
indignant
inflammatory
insecure
insolent
irreverent
lethargic
melancholy
mischievous
miserable
mocking
mournful
nervous
ominous
outraged
paranoid
pathetic
patronizing
pedantic
pensive
pessimistic
pretentious
psychotic
resigned
reticent
sarcastic
sardonic
scornful
self-deprecating
selfish
serious
severe
sinister
skeptical
sly
solemn
somber
stern
stolid
stressful
strident
suspicious
tense
threatening
tragic
uncertain
uneasy
unfriendly
unsympathetic
upset
violent
wry

Mood words

POSITIVE MOOD WORDS

amused	jubilant
awed	liberating
bouncy	light-hearted
calm	loving
cheerful	mellow
chipper	nostalgic
confident	optimistic
contemplative	passionate
content	peaceful
determined	playful
dignified	pleased
dreamy	refreshed
ecstatic	rejuvenated
empowered	relaxed
energetic	relieved
enlightened	satiated
enthralled	satisfied
excited	sentimental
exhilarated	silly
flirty	surprised
giddy	sympathetic
grateful	thankful
harmonious	thoughtful
hopeful	touched
hyper	trustful
idyllic	vivacious
joyous	warm
	welcoming

NEGATIVE MOOD WORDS

aggravated	insidious
annoyed	intimidated
anxious	irate
apathetic	irritated
apprehensive	jealous
barren	lethargic
brooding	lonely
cold	melancholic
confining	merciless
confused	moody
cranky	morose
crushed	nauseated
cynical	nervous
depressed	nightmarish
desolate	numb
disappointed	overwhelmed
discontented	painful
distressed	pensive
drained	pessimistic
dreary	predatory
embarrassed	rejected
enraged	restless
envious	scared
exhausted	serious
fatalistic	sick
foreboding	somber
frustrated	stressed
futile	suspenseful
gloomy	tense
grumpy	terrifying
haunting	threatening
heartbroken	uncomfortable
hopeless	vengeful
hostile	violent
indifferent	worried
infuriated	

Name

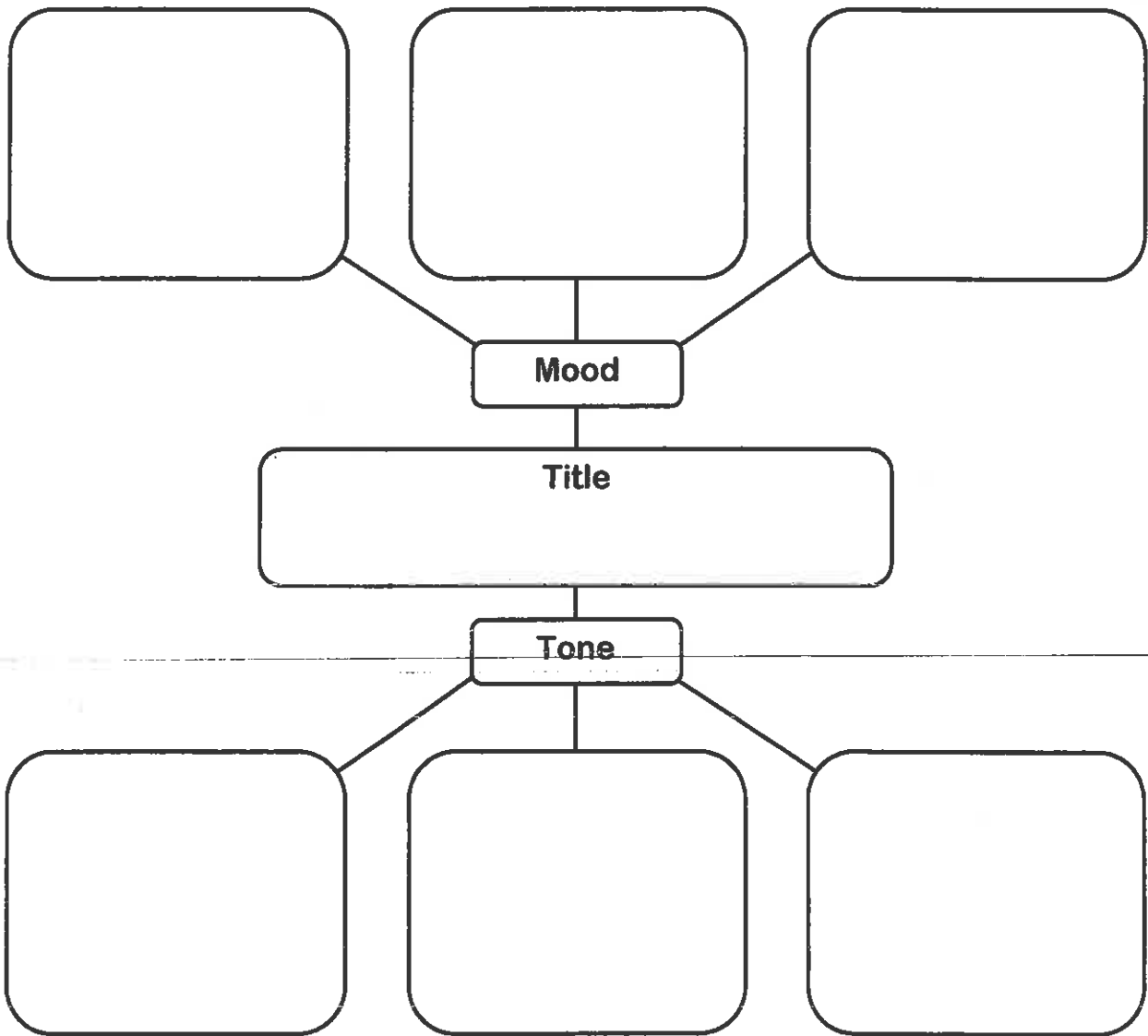
Date

Period

Mood and Tone

Directions: Provide examples of mood and tone. **Mood** is the feeling of a literary work. It is synonymous with atmosphere and ambiance. The mood is set by the author's use of diction, description, setting, and characterization. **Tone** is the author's attitude about the subject matter and characters. The tone might be sarcastic, straight-forward, pessimistic, optimistic, etc. Readers understand an author's tone through the use of style and diction.

In short, mood is what the reader feels about the story and tone is what the author feels about it.



Tone and Mood

Watch out! Tone and mood are similar!!

Tone is the author's attitude toward the writing (his characters, the situation) and the readers. A work of writing can have more than one tone. An example of tone could be both serious and humorous. Tone is set by the setting, choice of vocabulary and other details.

Mood is the general atmosphere created by the author's words. It is the feeling the reader gets from reading those words. It may be the same, or it may change from situation to situation.

Words That Describe Tone

Amused	Humorous	Pessimistic
Angry	Informal	Playful
Cheerful	Ironic	Pompous
Horror	Light	Sad
Clear	Matter-of-fact	Serious
Formal	Resigned	Suspicious
Gloomy	Optimistic	Witty

Words That Describe Mood

Fanciful	Melancholy
Frightening	Mysterious
Frustrating	Romantic
Gloomy	Sentimental
Happy	Sorrowful
Joyful	Suspenseful

Read more about it!

Authors set a **TONE** or **MOOD** in literature by conveying an emotion or emotions through words. The way a person feels about an idea, event, or another person can be quickly determined through facial expressions, gestures and in the tone of voice used.

MOOD: (sometimes called atmosphere) the overall feeling of the work

Mood is the emotions that you (the reader) feel while you are reading. Some literature makes you feel sad, others joyful, still others, angry. The main purpose for some poems is to set a mood.

Writers use many devices to create mood, including images, dialogue, setting, and plot. Often a writer creates a mood at the beginning of the story and continues it to the end. However, sometimes the mood changes because of the plot or changes in characters.

Examples of MOODS include: suspenseful, joyful, depressing, excited, anxious, angry, sad, tense, lonely, suspicious, frightened, disgusted

TONE: the way feelings are expressed

Tone is the attitude that an author takes toward the audience, the subject, or the character. Tone is conveyed through the author's words and details. Use context clues to help determine the tone.

In literature an author sets the tone through words. The possible tones are as boundless as the number of possible emotions a human being can have. Has anyone ever said to you, "Don't use that tone of voice with me?" Your tone can change the meaning of what you say. Tone can turn a statement like, "You're a big help!" into a genuine compliment or a cruel sarcastic remark. It depends on the context of the story.

IDENTIFYING TONE & MOOD

For each example identify the tone, what context clues are used to convey the tone, and the overall mood of the sentence.

1. Bouncing into the room, she lit up the vicinity with a joyous glow on her face as she told about her fiancé and their wedding plans.

Tone _____

Context Clues _____

Mood _____

2. She huddled in the corner, clutching her tattered blanket and shaking convulsively, as she feverishly searched the room for the unknown dangers that awaited her.

Tone _____

Context Clues _____

Mood _____

3. Bursting through the door, the flustered mother screamed uncontrollably at the innocent teacher who gave her child an F.

Tone _____

Context Clues _____

Mood _____

4. Drawing the attention of his classmates as well as his teacher, the student dared to experiment with his professor's intelligence by interrogating him about the Bible.

Tone _____

Context Clues _____

Mood _____

5. He furtively glanced behind him, for fear of his imagined pursuers, then hurriedly walked on, jumping at the slightest sound even of a leaf crackling under his own foot.

Tone _____

Context Clues _____

Mood _____

6. Gently smiling, the mother tenderly tucked the covers up around the child's neck, and carefully, quietly, left the room making sure to leave a comforting ray of light shining through the opened door should the child wake.

Tone _____

Context Clues _____

Mood _____

7. The laughing wind skipped through the village, teasing trees until they danced with anger and cajoling the grass into fighting itself, blade slapping blade, as the silly dog with golfball eyes and flopping, slobbery tongue bounded across the lawn.

Tone _____

Context Clues _____

Mood _____



Reading and Writer's Tone Practice

by LearningExpress Editors

Review for these concepts can be found at [Reading and Writer's Tone Help](#).

Reading and Writer's Tone Practice

Look at several sentences and paragraphs to see if you can correctly identify their tone. As you read them, think of how the paragraphs sound. You may even want to read them out loud. With what kind of voice do you read? What's your tone? Use your instincts, as well as your observations, to choose the correct tone for each paragraph. Answers and explanations come immediately after the practice paragraphs.

Practice

1. Mr. Jones, since you obviously appear to know everything, would you like to come up here and teach this class for me?
 - a. sarcastic
 - b. critical
 - c. disrespectful
2. Did you see what he just did? My goodness!
 - a. insecure
 - b. humorous
 - c. surprised
3. Your essay? Oh, it was just fabulous. Really, I've never seen anything like it.
 - a. insincere
 - b. critical
 - c. disrespectful
4. This is one of the best essays I've ever seen. It's clear, concise, and convincing.
 - a. complimentary
 - b. wistful
 - c. hopeful
5. Bill had stayed up all night preparing for this presentation. He had everything ready: charts, graphs, lists, statistics. This was the biggest meeting of his career. He was ready. He smiled as the cab pulled up to 505 Park Avenue, and he gave the taxi driver an extra large tip. He entered the building confidently and pushed #11 on the elevator. Suddenly, as the doors of the elevator closed, he realized that he had left his briefcase in the cab.

- a. cheerful
- b. ironic
- c. critical

Answers

1. **a.** Since it is generally understood that students don't "know everything," it is clear that the teacher doesn't mean what she says in a literal sense. Teachers are there to instruct students because the students need to learn from their teacher. Therefore, the teacher is using sarcasm to point out that the student isn't listening to instruction because he or she feels they have nothing to learn from the teacher.
2. **c.** The exclamation mark that follows the question is a clue revealing that the observer is surprised. Exclamation points are often used to denote surprise.
3. **a.** Because of the opening question and because the next sentences are so vague, a reader can assume that the writer either hasn't read the essay or didn't like it. Also, *really* indicates that the writer is afraid the reader won't be convinced by the statement, so he tries to emphasize it. Furthermore, "I've never seen anything like it" isn't necessarily a compliment—it could really mean many different things, not all of them good.
4. **a.** Unlike question 5, this paragraph really is complimentary. The writer specifies three things that make the reader's essay exceptional: It's "clear, concise and convincing." The use of more specific adjectives makes this writer's praise seem sincere.
5. **b.** *Irony* is the mood created when things happen in a manner that is opposite of what was expected to happen. Here, Bill had prepared diligently for the big meeting and had everything ready. But contrary to his expectations of having a very successful presentation, he had no presentation at all because he left his materials in the cab. The irony is heightened by his confidence.

More practice exercises for this concept can be found at [Reading Language and Style Practice Test](#).

Test your knowledge at [Reading Comprehension Final Practice Test](#).

Related Books



[Reading Comprehension Success in 20 Minutes A Day](#)

[Buy this book »](#)
[amazon.com](#)