

T O N E

Some words to describe the tone of a work or passage

accusing	depraved	furious	mock-heroic	scared
admonitory	depressed	gleeful	mocking	scornful
affectionate	derisive	gloomy	mock-serious	selfish
allusive	derogatory	grave	moralistic	sentimental
ambivalent	desolate	greedy	mournful	serene
amused	despairing	grim	mysterious	serious
angry	desperate	gushy	nervous	shocked
annoyed	detached	haughty	nostalgic	silly
anxious	diabolic	hilarious	objective	simpering
apprehensive	didactic	holier-than-thou	ominous	sinister
audacious	diffident	hopeful	optimistic	skeptical
authoritative	disappointed	hopeless	outraged	sneering
baffled	disbelieving	horrific	outspoken	sober
bantering	disdainful	humorous	paranoid	solemn
benevolent	disgusted	impartial	passionate	somber
bewildered	disinterested	impatient	pathetic	staid
bitter	dispassionate	incisive	patronizing	stirring
blunt	distressed	incredulous	pedantic	stoic
bossy	disturbed	indifferent	pensive	straightforward
brusque	doubtful	indignant	persuasive	strident
burlesque	dramatic	inflammatory	pessimistic	suspenseful
candid	ebullient	informative	petty	suspicious
caring	effusive	insipid	pithy	sympathetic
casual	elated	insolent	playful	taunting
ceremonial	elegiac	instructive	pompous	tender
cheerful	empathetic	intimate	pretentious	tense
cheery	encouraging	introspective	proud	terse
choleric	enraged	ironic	provocative	thoughtful
clinical	enthusiastic	irreverent	psychotic	threatening
cold	euphoric	irritated	questioning	timorous
colloquial	excited	jocund	reflective	turgid
compassionate	expectant	joyful	regretful	uncaring
complimentary	exuberant	laidback	relaxed	unconcerned
conceited	facetious	learned	reminiscent	uneasy
concerned	factual	lethargic	remorseful	unhappy
conciliatory	fanciful	lighthearted	resigned	unsympathetic
condemnatory	fatalistic	loving	restrained	urgent
condescending	fearful	lugubrious	reticent	vibrant
confident	fervent	matter-of-fact	reverent	vitriolic
confused	flippant	measured	romantic	whimsical
contemptuous	foreboding	meditative	rousing	wistful
contentious	formal	melancholic	sanguine	worried
critical	frantic	melancholy	sarcastic	wrathful
cynical	frightened	mirthful	sardonic	wry
delightful	frustrated	miserable	satiric	zealous

Words to Describe Tone

Positive

lighthearted	confident	amused	complimentary	amiable
relaxed	soothing	jubilant	encouraging	reverent
hopeful	cheery	elated	passionate	whimsical
romantic	calm	enthusiastic	elevated	exuberant
optimistic	sympathetic	proud	fanciful	appreciative
consoling	ecstatic	jovial	loving	compassionate
friendly	pleasant	brave	joyful	energetic

Negative

angry	wrathful	threatening	agitated	obnoxious
insulting	choleric	disgusted	bitter	accusing
arrogant	quarrelsome	surly	outraged	irritated
condemnatory	belligerent	disgruntled	furious	indignant
inflammatory	aggravated	brash	testy	

Humor/Irony/Sarcasm

scornful	bantering	disdainful	irreverent	condescending
pompous	mocking	ridiculing	wry	sarcastic
taunting	cynical	insolent	patronizing	whimsical
malicious	droll	critical	ironic	facetious
flippant	mock-heroic	teasing	quizzical	comical
satiric	amused	sardonic	contemptuous	caustic
ribald	irreverent			

Sorrow/Fear/Worry

somber	mournful	concerned	morose	hopeless
remorseful	poignant	melancholy	solemn	fearful
pessimistic	grave	staid	ominous	sad
serious	despairing	sober	solemn	resigned
horror	disturbed	apprehensive	gloomy	foreboding
regretful				

Neutral

formal	objective	questioning	learned	authoritative
disbelieving	sentimental	pretentious	apathetic	conventional
judgmental	reflective	ceremonial	candid	instructive
factual	incredulous	urgent	fervent	histrionic
callous	forthright	lyrical	sincere	restrained
clinical	matter-of-fact	didactic	shocked	nostalgic
earnest	resigned	contemplative	haughty	objective
detached	admonitory	informative	baffled	reminiscent
patriotic	meditative	intimate	obsequious	