

Adjectives that describe TONE

(Adapted from: Pierce, Robert G. "AP Lit and JR. IB English." *boston.redsox.tripod.com*. Paxon SAS. 31 October, 2011. Web.)

Tone is **[the evidence of] the writer's or speaker's attitude toward the subject**. [The evidence is in the author's diction and syntax—that is, choice of words and how the words are arranged in the sentences.] Often a change or shift in tone will be signaled by key words such as *but, yet, nevertheless, however, although*; punctuation such as *dashes, periods, colons, semicolons*; paragraph divisions; or changes in paragraph or sentence length.

Positive

| | | | | | |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|------------|-------------|
| Amiable | Cheery | Elated | Friendly | Loving | Reverent |
| Amused | Compassionate | Elevated | Happy | Optimistic | Romantic |
| Appreciative | Complimentary | Encouraging | Hopeful | Passionate | Soothing |
| Authoritative | Confident | Energetic | Impassioned | Peaceful | Surprised |
| Benevolent | Consoling | Enthusiastic | Jovial | Playful | Sweet |
| Brave | Content | Excited | Joyful | Pleasant | Sympathetic |
| Calm | Dreamy | Exuberant | Jubilant | Proud | Vibrant |
| Cheerful | Ecstatic | Fanciful | Lighthearted | Relaxed | Whimsical |

Negative

| | | | | | |
|-------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| Accusing | Bitter | Contradictory | Harsh | Obnoxious | Testy |
| Aggravated | Bored | Critical | Hateful | Outraged | Threatening |
| Agitated | Brash | Desperate | Haughty | Passive | Tired |
| Angry | Childish | Disappointed | Hurtful | Quarrelsome | Uninterested |
| Apathetic | Choleric | Disgruntled | Indignant | Shameful | Wrathful |
| Arrogant | Coarse | Disgusted | Inflammatory | Smooth | |
| Artificial | Cold | Disinterested | Insulting | Snooty | |
| Audacious | Condemnatory | Facetious | Irritated | Superficial | |
| Belligerent | Condescending | Furious | Manipulative | Surly | |

Humor, Irony, Sarcasm

| | | | | | |
|---------------|------------|-------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|
| Amused | Critical | Humorous | Mocking | Sad | Taunting |
| Bantering | Cynical | Insolent | Mock-serious | Sarcastic | Teasing |
| Bitter | Disdainful | Ironic | Patronizing | Sardonic | Whimsical |
| Caustic | Droll | Irreverent | Pompous | Satiric | Wry |
| Comical | Facetious | Joking | Quizzical | Scornful | |
| Condescending | Flippant | Malicious | Ribald | Sharp | |
| Contemptuous | Giddy | Mock-heroic | Ridiculing | Silly | |

Sorrow, Fear, Worry

| | | | | | |
|--------------|-------------|------------|-----------|-------------|---------|
| Aggravated | Dejected | Gloomy | Miserable | Pessimistic | Serious |
| Agitated | Depressed | Grave | Morose | Pitiful | Sober |
| Anxious | Despairing | Hollow | Mournful | Poignant | Solemn |
| Apologetic | Disturbed | Hopeless | Nervous | Regretful | Somber |
| Apprehensive | Embarrassed | Horrific | Numb | Remorseful | Staid |
| Concerned | Fearful | Horror | Ominous | Resigned | Upset |
| Confused | Foreboding | Melancholy | Paranoid | Sad | |

Neutral

| | | | | | |
|---------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|
| Admonitory | Contemplative | Formal | Intimate | Patriotic | Seductive |
| Allusive | Conventional | Forthright | Judgmental | Persuasive | Sentimental |
| Apathetic | Detached | Frivolous | Learned | Pleading | Serious |
| Authoritative | Didactic | Haughty | Loud | Pretentious | Shocking |
| Baffled | Disbelieving | Histrionic | Lyrical | Provocative | Sincere |
| Callous | Dramatic | Humble | Matter-of-fact | Questioning | Unemotional |
| Candid | Earnest | Incredulous | Meditative | Reflective | Urgent |
| Ceremonial | Expectant | Informative | Nostalgic | Reminiscent | Vexed |
| Clinical | Factual | Inquisitive | Objective | Resigned | Wistful |
| Consoling | Fervent | Instructive | Obsequious | Restrained | Zealous |