

Tone is more than merely an author's attitude toward his or her subject, audience, and/or characters; it is the stylistic means by which an author conveys his or 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.

Tonal Scale of Author/Speaker's Attitude

reverence	love	happiness	calm	hope	irony	fear	sadness	anger	hate
admiring	affectionate	blissful	content	anticipatory	absurd	agitated	bleak	acrimonious	abhorrent
adoring	ardent	buoyant	composed	assured	acerbic	alarmed	dejected	aggravated	averse
amazed	compassionate	ecstatic	mellow	confident	biting	angst-ridden	depressed	antipathetic	contemptuous
awed	enamored	elated	mild	eager	caustic	anguished	despairing	bitter	despising
deferential	fond	exalting	passive	expectant	cynical	anxious	despondent	bristling	detesting
elegiac	impassioned	exultant	peaceful	halcyon	derisive	appalled	disconsolate	choleric	disdainful
fawning	infatuated	fervent	placid	idealistic	flippant	apprehensive	dismal	consternated	disgusted
flattering	lustful	jubilant	satisfied	intrepid	humorous	averse	empty	enraged	jealous
honoring	narcissistic	thrilled	sedate	naïve	icy	dismayed	forlorn	exasperated	loathing
humbled	passionate	carefree	serene	optimistic	inconsistent	disquieted	funereal	frustrated	malevolent
nostalgic	Platonic	cheerful	submissive	Pollyannaish	jeering	distressed	gloomy	furios	malicious
obsequious	rapturous	delightful	tranquil	positive	mocking	dreading	grave	futile	misanthropic
respectful	romantic	gay	undisturbed	rose-colored	paradoxical	horrified	grievous	galled	misogynistic
submissive	sentimental	gleeful	unruffled	sanguine	playful	intimidated	hopeless	hostile	piqued
venerating	tender	jovial		trusting	sarcastic	pessimistic	lamenting	incensed	rancorous
worshipful	wistful	joyful			sardonic	sinister	lugubrious	indignant	repugnant
	zealous	merry			scornful	spooky	melancholic	irascible	repulsed
		mirthful			smirking	startled	miserable	irate	resentful
		pleased			sneering	terrified	morose	irritated	spiteful
					witty	timid	pitiful	miffed	vengeful
					wry	timorous	regretful	outraged	
						trepid	remorseful	perturbed	
						troubled	solemn	petulant	
						uneasy	somber	riled	
							sorrowful	vexed	
							sullen	wrathful	
							woeful		

Reader's Perception of Speaker or Character

affable	compassionate	foolish	insightful	perceptive	sincere
aloof	condescending	gullible	insipid	pernicious	subservient
arrogant	confident	haughty	insolent	pedantic	triumphant
audacious	credulous	humble	judgmental	petulant	unreliable
austere	demoralized	imperious	keen	proud	unsophisticated
benevolent	detached	inane	loathsome	querulous	vain
bold	didactic	incredulous	naïve	rational	vapid
cerebral	fatuous	insecure	pathetic	shallow	vivacious