

Tone Vocabulary

Positive tone/attitude words

| | | | | |
|--------------|---------|-------------|---------------|---------------|
| lighthearted | hopeful | exuberant | enthusiastic | complimentary |
| confident | cheery | optimistic | loving | passionate |
| amused | elated | sympathetic | compassionate | proud |

Negative tone/attitude words

Anger:

| | | | |
|-----------|-------------|----------|--------------|
| angry | disgusted | outraged | inflammatory |
| furious | wrathful | bitter | condemnatory |
| indignant | threatening | accusing | irritated |

Humor/Irony/Sarcasm:

| | | | | |
|-----------|-------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| scornful | disdainful | contemptuous | satiric | mock-serious |
| critical | facetious | patronizing | irreverent | flippant |
| sardonic | mock-heroic | bantering | ironic | |
| taunting | insolent | pompous | cynical | |
| whimsical | amused | sarcastic | condescending | |

Sorrow/Fear/Worry:

| | | | | |
|----------|------------|-------------|--------------|------------|
| somber | elegiac | melancholic | sad | concerned |
| mournful | solemn | serious | apprehensive | foreboding |
| fearful | despairing | gloomy | sober | |
| hopeless | staid | resigned | disturbed | |

Neutral tone/attitude words

| | | | | |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|---------------|
| formal | objective | incredulous | nostalgic | clinical |
| candid | shocked | reminiscent | restrained | disbelieving |
| baffled | sentimental | detached | matter-of-fact | admonitory |
| questioning | urgent | instructive | informative | authoritative |
| learned | factual | didactic | ceremonial | |

Distinguish between Tone and Attitude

Details create tone that shows the writer's attitude.

Kennedy (406)

"Strictly speaking, tone isn't an attitude; it is whatever in the poem makes an attitude clear to us: the choice of certain words instead of others, the picking out of certain details."

Roberts (138)

"Tone refers to the means by which a writer conveys attitudes."

"...Tone refers not to attitudes but to that quality of a writer's style that reveals or creates these attitudes."

Martin and Kroiter (279)

"Tone consists of those qualities in a work through which a writer hopes to get a specific response in his reader."