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Chapter Ten:

Analyzing the Author's Tone

What Is Tone?

- Tone can be defined as the author's emotional attitude toward the subject.

- Words like happy, sad, antagonistic, joyous, depressing, or horrifying describe tone.

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Why Is Tone Important?

- Figuring out the tone is somewhat complicated, but it's worth the effort.

- You can't evaluate what an author is saying unless you can grasp whether the piece is playful or serious, arrogant or humble, optimistic or cynical.

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Clues to Detect Tone

You can determine tone by examining

– An author's purpose

– Words that have certain denotations and connotations

– The author's point of view

– Figures of speech that an author uses.

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Remember PIE?

Readings have three general purposes:

- Persuade

- Inform

- Entertain

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1. Quickly find a partner.

2. For each reading purpose below, think of one type of reading material that fits the purpose and share it with your partner.

   – Persuade
   – Inform
   – Entertain
   – For example, **encyclopedias** are **informative**.

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Persuade's Tone

- Subjective and personal. Tries to talk you into believing or doing something.

Example: You should get annual physicals to help detect medical problems while they're still easy to correct.

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Inform's Tone

- Objective. Focusing on facts and not on the author's feelings about the facts, matter-of-fact, impersonal.

Example: Studies show talking on cell phones while driving leads to as many accidents as driving while intoxicated.

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Entertain's Tone

- Subjective. Emotional (sad, happy, funny, exciting, and every other possible emotion), personal.

Example: Her sharp stare made me feel weak and insignificant.

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- Helps establish tone.

- Informal or formal.

- Personal or impersonal.

- First-, second- or third-person

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First-Person Point of View

- Authors talk about their own experiences

- Authors use the words **I** or **we**

- Feels very personal
  - EXAMPLE: I love ketchup with fries.
  - EXAMPLE: We love ketchup with fries.

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Second-Person Point of View

- Author directly addresses readers.

- Authors use the word **you**

  – EXAMPLE: You should try ketchup with fries.

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Third-Person Point of View

- Author discusses other people.

- Feels impersonal.

- Author uses words **he, she, it, they**
  - EXAMPLE: She doesn't like ketchup with fries.
  - EXAMPLE: They like ranch dressing with fries.

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POV Chart

A simple chart like this one will allow you to circle terms related to the author's point of view.

first person	or	second person	or	third person
personal	or	impersonal		
informal	or	formal		

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1. Find a new partner.

2. Working with your partner, determine what point of view – first, second, or third – the quotes on the following slides use.

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All life is an experiment. The more experiments you make the better.

-- Ralph Waldo Emerson

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It isn't the mountain ahead that wears you out; it's the grain of sand in your shoe.

-- Robert W. Service

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POV Partners

I've missed more than 9000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I've been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.

-- Michael Jordan

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No matter how happily a woman may be married, it always pleases her to discover that there is a nice man who wishes that she were not.

-- H. L. Mencken

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POV Partners

Humor is the most engaging cowardice.

-- Robert Frost

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I'd rather be hated for who I am, than loved for who I am not.

-- Kurt Cobain

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It is not a fragrant world.

-- Raymond Chandler

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Connotation

- Understanding connotation helps you describe tone.

- Earlier, you discovered that connotations can be
  - Positive
  - Negative
  - Or neutral

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Tone Vocabulary

- Many words can be used to describe an author's tone.

- The chart on page 487 has several words you may wish to use to describe tone.

- As you add to your vocabulary you'll learn new words that you might be able to use to describe tone.

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Figurative v. Literal

- Figurative language is like connotation: it reveals the author's emotions about whatever he or she is describing.

- Literal language is linked to denotation. Literal language often appears in the form of facts, and it has a matter-of-fact tone.

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Figurative Language

- Four common figures of speech include

  – Simile

  – Metaphor

  – Personification

  – Hyperbole

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Simile

A comparison using the words like or as

- She's as thin as a shadow.

- He's like a bear with a pot of honey.

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Metaphor

- Almost identical to a simile.

- A comparison that DOES NOT use like or as.

  – She is a thin shadow.

  – He is a bear with a pot of honey.

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- Quickly choose a new partner.

- Working together, create one simile and one metaphor for each of the following topics:

  – Love

  – Sports

  – Cooking

- When finished, share your metaphors and similes with another group.

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Personification

The act of giving an inanimate object characteristics of an animate being.

- The car chuckled as it drove down the highway.

- The humid night sweated, tensely waiting for the thunderstorm.

- The candle flame jumped and danced.

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Hyperbole

- Hyperbole is intentional exaggeration to make or emphasize a point.

- Hyperbole is not meant to be taken literally but figuratively.

  - She sent so many text messages, her thumbs fell off.

  - He watched so much television that you could see "Lost" reruns when you looked into his eyes.

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Descriptive Duo Part Deux

1. Quickly choose a new partner.

2. Working together, create sentences that uses personification to describe each of the following:
   - Caffeine
   - Jump ropes
   - Computer networks

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Next, create sentences that use hyperbole to describe each of the following:

- – A young teenager with a crush

- – A turtle in its shell

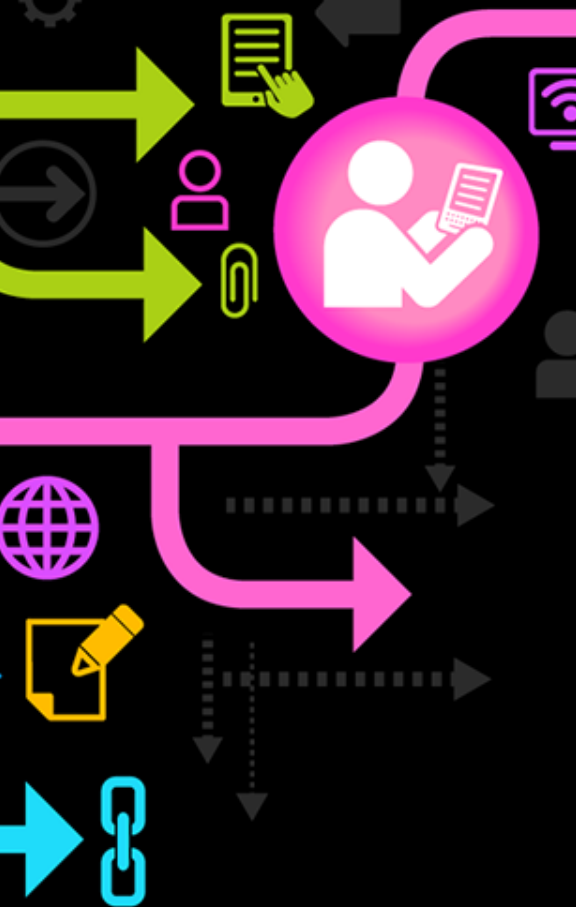- – An overprotective karate instructor

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Understanding Irony

Irony is the use of words or images to express the opposite of what is said.

– "Happy Hunger Games!"

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Iconic Irony

1. Create groups of four.

2. Identify movies, books or songs which use irony.

3. Once your group can describe two instances of irony, share these instances with another group.

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We often refuse to accept an idea merely because the tone of voice in which it has been expressed is unsympathetic to us.

- Friedrich Nietzsche