

# Tone



-The PowerPoint

**What is tone?**




- Tone is the writer's/speaker's attitude (emotion) toward his/her subject.

**Why does it matter?**



- Tone helps to establish the mood, and mood is what makes us engage in the text or song or movie or TV show...
- Tone determines writer's diction, syntax, and use of language.
  - Therefore, you can determine the author's tone by examining the writer's diction, syntax, and use of language.

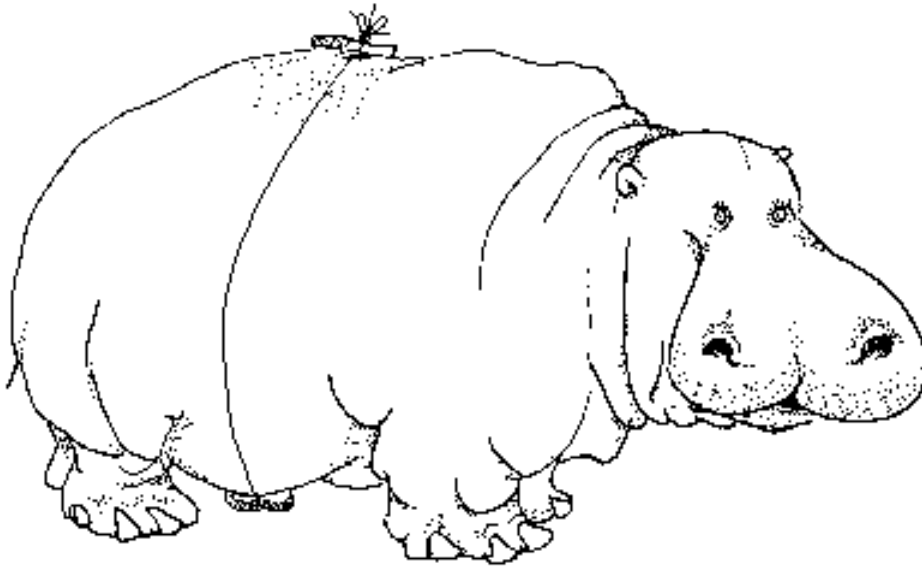
- **To understand tone:**  You must examine
  - Figurative language
  - Diction
  - Denotative & Connotative meaning

# Understanding tone

- Tone is deciphered through:
  - 1. Figurative Language:
    - a tool that an author uses to help a reader visualize what is happening in his or her literary work
  - 2. Diction:
    - an author's choice of words.
  - 3. Denotative/Connotative Language:
    - denotation is the literal meaning of a word.
    - Connotation involves a cultural or emotional feeling associated with a word.

# 1. Figurative Language

- a tool that an author uses to help a reader visualize what is happening in his or her literary work



- A hippo sandwich is easy to make.

All you do is simply take

One slice of bread,

One slice of cake,

Some mayonnaise,

One onion ring,

One hippopotamus,

One piece of string,

A dash of pepper--

That ought to do it.

And now comes the problem...

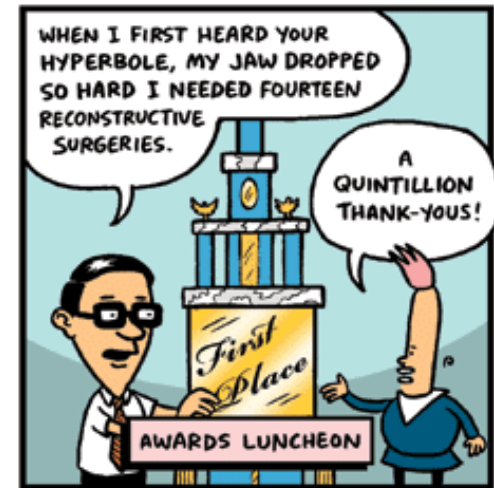
Biting into it!

# Types of figurative language

- Simile
- Metaphor
- Personification
- Pun
- Allusion
- Symbolism
- Imagery
- Hyperbole
- Understatement

**slow poke**

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# Simile & Metaphor

- A simile is a comparison of two unlike things using the words *like* or *as*
- A metaphor is a *direct* comparison of two seemingly unlike things

Example:

*The dewdrops  
twinkle like  
diamonds as  
the sun rose.*



Example:

*The dewdrops,  
exquisite  
diamonds,  
sparkle on the  
leaf.*

# Personification & Pun

- Personification

- A figure of speech in which the characteristics of humans are assigned to inanimate things or animals.

- Pun

- The usually humorous use of a word in such a way as to suggest two or more of its meanings or the meaning of another word similar in sound; a play on words.





# Allusion



- Allusion

- a reference in a literary work to a person, place, or thing in history or in another work of literature. Allusions are often indirect and can be brief references to well-known characters or events.
- The humor is found from understanding the creator's references to music typical of heroes and villains.

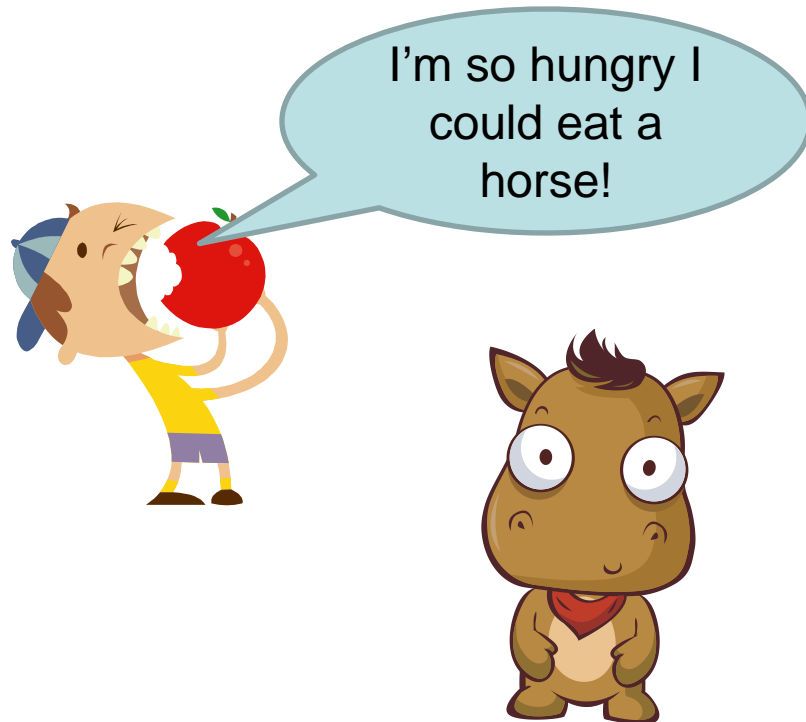
# Symbolism & Imagery



- Symbolism: the use of recurrent symbols or images in a work to create an added level of meaning.
- Imagery: the use of language to evoke a sensory impression or vivid picture in the reader's mind
- *Example:*  
*In the world there is nothing more submissive and weak than water. Yet for attacking that which is hard and strong, nothing can surpass it.*  
~ Lao Tse

# Hyperbole & Understatement

- An exaggeration for humor or emphasis.



- Downplaying the severity or extremity of a situation.

"It's just a flesh wound."  
(Black Knight, in *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*)



## 2. Diction—word choice

- Formal

- Formal diction consists of a dignified, impersonal, and elevated use of language; it follows the rules of syntax exactly and is often characterized by complex words and lofty tone.

Examples: superb, excellent, wonderful, exceptional

- Informal

- Informal diction represents the plain language of everyday use (slang), and often includes idiomatic expressions, slang, contractions, and many simple, common words.

Examples: sweet, tight, sick, cool, hot

# Diction impacts your intention

- The meek shall inherit my wrath.

versus

- I'm about to beat you down little man.



- One is clearly more intimidating, or evil sounding, than the other.

- Depending on the message you want to convey, you should consider whether formal or informal diction will fit best.

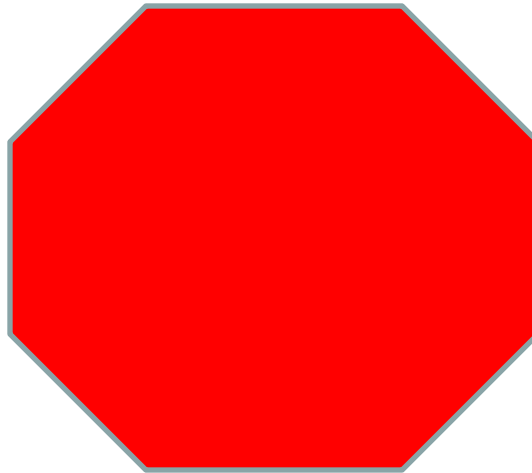
# 3. Denotation & Connotation

- Denotation is the literal meaning of a word; there are no emotions, values or images associated with denotative meanings
- Connotation involves emotions, values, or images associated with a word. The intensity of emotions or the power of the values and images associated with a word varies.

# Denotation & Connotation

- Denotative meaning:

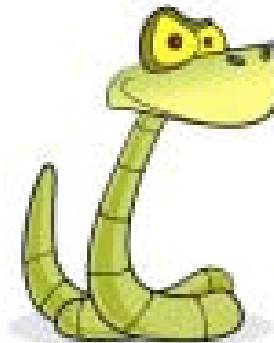
- A red octagon



- Connotative meaning:

- A sign that indicates potential danger ahead.

- 
- **snake:** any of numerous scaly, legless, sometimes venomous reptiles having a long, tapering, cylindrical body.



- **Snake:** Something evil or untrustworthy. Perhaps an omen of bad things to come.

# Tone Words

- Afraid
- Allusive
- Angry
- Apologetic
- Audacious
- Benevolent
- Bitter
- Boring
- Candid
- Childish
- Cold
- Complimentary
- Condescending
- Confused
- Contemptuous
- Detached
- Didactic
- Dramatic
- Dreamy
- Fanciful
- Frivolous
- Giddy
- Happy
- Hollow
- Horrific
- Humorous
- Irrelevant
- Joking
- Joyful
- Lugubrious
- Mocking
- Nostalgic
- Objective
- Peaceful
- Pitiful
- Poignant
- Proud
- Provocative
- Restrained
- Sad
- Sarcastic
- Seductive
- Sentimental
- Sharp
- Shocking
- Silly
- Somber
- Sweet
- Sympathetic
- Tired
- Upset
- Urgent
- Vexed
- Vibrant
- Zealous



# Activities

And other tone teaching techniques.

# DIDLS

- DIDLS—the basic elements of tone broken down.
  - In analyzing tone and style, certain components of the selection of literature should be considered.
  - DIDLS is an acronym which may prove useful to students to remind themselves of critical elements which contribute to the analysis of style.
    - Five parts
      - Diction
      - Imagery
      - Details
      - Language
      - Syntax

# DIDLS

- Diction

- Word Choice
- denotation
- connotation
- repetition specificity or abstraction
- register
- length
- sound quality

- Imagery

- Vivid appeals to understanding through the senses

- Details

- Facts which are included - or omitted specific information description action

- Language

- Words that describe the entire body of words in a text - not isolated bits of diction
  - Artificial, bombastic, colloquial, exact, homespun, jargon, literal, moralistic...
- Rhetorical Devices -- The use of language that creates a literary effect - enhance and support

- Syntax

- sentence length
- punctuation
- sentence pattern

# Tone Activities—Acting

- Acting:
  - Create a skit
    - You have 20 minutes to create a skit about any topic.
    - No more than 4 people per group
    - Your skit must be about 1 minute long
    - Each member of the group must have a speaking part and each “character” in your skit must embody a different tone from the list of tone words.

# Tone Activities—Quick sentence

- Sentence Read:
  - All students will read the following neutral sentence
    - “I am an student at Granada Hills Charter High School.”
  - Students will read the sentence with emotion that accompanies one of the tones from the list of tone words.

# Tone Activities—Re-write a passage

- Rewrite a passage from a story to reflect a different tone:
  - The devils were eight or nine feet tall, with wild and tangled hair. Their horrific bodies were blackish and hairless, and their eyes as round as monkey's eyes and as fierce as the bluest point of a flame. Apart from some seaweed they had encased around their waists they were naked, but all sorts of pictures were etched onto their skin, with a sort of glowing outline, like the embers of a flame, framing each picture. Each devil carried a long, jagged staff.
- What tone best describes the author's feelings/attitude toward the sea creatures?

# Tone Activities—Re-write a passage

- Re-Write the previous passage to reflect a new tone:
- Example:
  - The angels were elegant and soaring, with tresses that sparkled and floated in the sunlight. Their graceful figures were ethereal and their eyes as gentle as the kiss of Spring. Apart from thin layers of silk that floated like capes around them, they were nude. Their clothing was airy—as if they were clothed in clouds. Light emanated from their skin as if sunrays escaped from each pore. Like seraphs coexisting with sea life, they brought a healing touch to their surroundings. Each angel carried with them a shimmering staff of gold.

# Tone Activity—Re-write a poem

## Dust of Snow by Robert Frost

The way a crow  
Shook down on me  
The dust of snow  
From a hemlock tree  
Has given my heart  
A change of mood  
And saved some part  
Of a day I had rued.

## Sprinkle of Lunchtime by Period 4

The way a seagull's climb  
Shook upon me  
The sprinkle of lunchtime  
Through a blooming tree  
Has forced upon my heart  
A change of mind  
And muted some part  
Of a day that should shine.



# Tone Activity—Comic Analysis:



What is the tone of this comic?

How do you know?

What images, words, ideas help to reinforce that idea?

What would enhance or exaggerate the tone to make it more specific?

Create your own 3 box comic with picture and dialogue that illustrates one of the tones from the list of tone words.

# Just for fun

