



# AP Tone Vocabulary

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Period: \_\_\_\_ Mr. Williams' AP English Language Class 2015

Like the tone of a speaker's voice, the tone of a work of literature expresses the writer's feelings. To determine the tone of a passage, ask yourself the following questions:

- **What is the subject of the passage? Who is the intended audience?**
- What are the most important words in the passage? What connotations do these words have?
- **What feelings are generated by the images of the passage?**
- Are there any hints that the speaker or narrator does not really mean everything he/she says? If any jokes are made, are they lighthearted or bitter?
- **If the narrator were speaking aloud, what would the tone of his/her voice be?**

## Positive Tone or Attitude Words:

- \_\_\_ Amiable - friendly; pleasant
- \_\_\_ Amused - pleurably entertained
- \_\_\_ Appreciative - showing gratitude; feeling grateful
- \_\_\_ Authoritative - dictatorial; exercising dominance or expertise
- \_\_\_ Awe - Inspiring - wonderment; reverence
- \_\_\_ **Benevolent - goodwill; kindly feelings**
- \_\_\_ **Brave - exhibiting courage**
- \_\_\_ Calm - free of excitement or passion
- \_\_\_ Cheerful - in good spirits; pleasant
- \_\_\_ Cheery - in good spirits; pleasant; happy
- \_\_\_ **Compassionate - showing deep sympathy and sorrow**
- \_\_\_ Complimentary - politely flattering
- \_\_\_ Confident - having no uncertainty; very sure
- \_\_\_ Consoling - to lessen in grief or sorrow
- \_\_\_ Content - satisfied
- \_\_\_ **Dreamy- soothing and restful**
- \_\_\_ Ecstatic - rapturous; intense happiness
- \_\_\_ Elated - very happy or proud
- \_\_\_ Elevated - exalted; noble; lofty
- \_\_\_ Encouraging - inspiring in spirit
- \_\_\_ **Energetic - lively and vigorous**
- \_\_\_ Enthusiastic - full of lively interest; overtly willing
- \_\_\_ Excited- overly eager; stirred emotionally
- \_\_\_ Exuberant - uninhibitantly enthusiastic
- \_\_\_ **Fanciful - imaginary; fancy; whimsical**
- \_\_\_ **Friendly- favorably amiable**
- \_\_\_ Happy - glad; delighted
- \_\_\_ Hopeful - inspired; promising
- \_\_\_ **Impassioned - intense feeling or passion; ardent**
- \_\_\_ Jovial - merry; light-hearted; joyful
- \_\_\_ Joyful- merry; light-hearted; jovial
- \_\_\_ Jubilant - showing great joy, satisfaction or triumph
- \_\_\_ **Lighthearted - carefree; gay**
- \_\_\_ **Loving - warmly affectionate; fond**
- \_\_\_ Optimistic - taking the favorable view of events; positive
- \_\_\_ Pious - Godly; overly devout
- \_\_\_ **Passionate - being ruled by intense emotion**
- \_\_\_ **Peaceful - free of strife or disorder**
- \_\_\_ **Playful - full of play; pleasantly humorous or jesting**
- \_\_\_ **Pleasant - agreeable; enjoyable**
- \_\_\_ **Proud - satisfaction from one's own importance; dignity**
- \_\_\_ Relaxed - being free from anxiety and tension
- \_\_\_ Revered - to regard with respect; veneration; worshiped in awe
- \_\_\_ Reverent - deeply respectful; dutiful;
- \_\_\_ Romantic - idealistic; impractical; unrealistic
- \_\_\_ **Soothing - assuages pain**
- \_\_\_ **Surprised - unexpected; feeling of astonishment; wonder**
- \_\_\_ **Sweet - lovable; pleasurable; agreeable**
- \_\_\_ **Sympathetic - kind; commiserating; with compassion**
- \_\_\_ Vibrant -vigor; lively activity; thrilled
- \_\_\_ **Whimsical - capricious; erratic; unpredictable; irrational**

## Negative Tone or Attitude Words:

- \_\_\_ **Accusing – find fault; blame**
- \_\_\_ **Aggravated – intensify; make worse; troublesome**
- \_\_\_ **Agitated – angered; provoked**
- \_\_\_ **Angry – wrathful; strong resentment**
- \_\_\_ **Apathetic – showing little or no emotion; not interested**
- \_\_\_ **Arrogant – overbearing; insolently proud**
- \_\_\_ **Artificial – forced; contrived; lacking spontaneity**
- \_\_\_ **Audacious – extremely daring; insolent; defying convention**
- \_\_\_ Belligerent – aggressively hostile; warlike
- \_\_\_ Bitter – grievous; hard to bear; angry
- \_\_\_ Boring – dull, tedious
- \_\_\_ Boorish – rude; unpolished
- \_\_\_ Brusque – blunt; abrupt; snippy
- \_\_\_ Brash- impertinent; tactless; irreverently energetic
- \_\_\_ **Childish – silly; innocent; immature; puerile**
- \_\_\_ **Choleric – extremely irritable; touchy; easily irritated**
- \_\_\_ **Coarse – harsh; grating; caustic**
- \_\_\_ **Cold – apathetic; formal; unfriendly; heartless; reserved**
- \_\_\_ **Condemnatory – expressing strong disapproval or censure**
- \_\_\_ **Condescending – patronizing; look down upon**
- \_\_\_ **Contradictory – asserting the opposite; paradoxical**
- \_\_\_ **Critical – finding fault or judge severely**
- \_\_\_ **Curt – Brash; harsh; brutally honest**
- \_\_\_ Desperate- reckless or dangerous because of despair; urgency
- \_\_\_ Disappointed – depressed or discouraged by failure
- \_\_\_ Disgruntled – displeased and discontented
- \_\_\_ Disgusted – strong dislike; to be offended by
- \_\_\_ Disinterested – not interested; indifferent
- \_\_\_ **Facetious – not to be taken seriously; amusing; humorous**
- \_\_\_ **Furious – violent rage**
- \_\_\_ Harsh –grim; unpleasantly cruel
- \_\_\_ Haughty – disdainfully proud; snobbish
- \_\_\_ Hateful – malevolent; unpleasant
- \_\_\_ Hurtful – destructive; pernicious
- \_\_\_ **Indignant – offensive; insulting; mad**
- \_\_\_ **Inflammatory – arousing hostility, anger; instigating**
- \_\_\_ **Insulting – affronting rudeness**
- \_\_\_ **Irritated – provoked; annoyed**
- \_\_\_ Manipulative- maliciously influencing
- \_\_\_ **Obnoxious – annoying; offensive; odious**
- \_\_\_ **Outraged - angered**
- \_\_\_ Passive – inactive; not reacting visibly
- \_\_\_ **Quarrelsome – argumentative; contentious**
- \_\_\_ Shameful – disgraceful; scandalous
- \_\_\_ Snooty – aloof; snobbish; supercilious
- \_\_\_ Superficial – lacking thoroughness; only external evaluation
- \_\_\_ Surly- bad-tempered; rude; unfriendly
- \_\_\_ Sullen – somber; pouty; bad-tempered
- \_\_\_ **Testy- irritably impatient; touchy**
- \_\_\_ **Threatening – menacing; mean;**
- \_\_\_ **Tired – hackneyed; weary; bored**
- \_\_\_ Uninterested – indifferent; no feeling of interest
- \_\_\_ Uncivil – not cultured; uncouth

## \_\_\_ Wrathful – very angry; ireful

## Humor-Irony-Sarcasm Tone or Attitude Words:

- \_\_\_ Amused – pleurably entertained
- \_\_\_ **Bantering – an exchange of light, playful remarks**
- \_\_\_ **Bitter - grievous; hard to bear; angry**
- \_\_\_ **Biting – bleak; bitter; snappy; brutal**
- \_\_\_ Caustic – severely critical or sarcastic
- \_\_\_ Comical – amusing; producing laughter
- \_\_\_ Condescending - patronizing ; look down upon
- \_\_\_ Contemptuous – scornful; expressing disdain
- \_\_\_ Critical - finding fault or judge severely
- \_\_\_ Cynical – bitterly or sneeringly distrustful
- \_\_\_ **Disdainful – scornful**
- \_\_\_ **Derisive – cheeky; sarcastic; jeering**
- \_\_\_ **Droll - waggish; humorous in a weird way; awkward humor**
- \_\_\_ Facetious - not to be taken seriously; amusing; humorous
- \_\_\_ Flippant – frivolously disrespectful
- \_\_\_ **Giddy- impulsive; light-hearted**
- \_\_\_ Humorous – funny; comical
- \_\_\_ **Insolent – boldly rude and disrespectful**
- \_\_\_ **Irreverent- deficient in veneration or respect**
- \_\_\_ **Ironic – Arrogant; incongruous; chaffing**
- \_\_\_ **Icy – Frigid; biting; cold**
- \_\_\_ Joking - funny
- \_\_\_ **Malicious – spiteful; malevolent**
- \_\_\_ **Mock-Heroic- imitation or burlesque of heroic**
- \_\_\_ **Mocking – imitating; ridiculing**
- \_\_\_ Patronizing – condescending
- \_\_\_ Playful - full of play; pleasantly humorous or jesting
- \_\_\_ Pompous – snotty; lofty
- \_\_\_ **Quizzical – odd; questioning; comical**
- \_\_\_ Ribald – vulgar mocking
- \_\_\_ Ridiculing – making fun of
- \_\_\_ **Sad- not joyful**
- \_\_\_ **Sarcastic- derisive; bitter; sardonic**
- \_\_\_ **Sardonic – scornful; cynical**
- \_\_\_ **Satiric – ironic; caustic wit**
- \_\_\_ **Scornful- contemptuous; derisive**
- \_\_\_ **Sharp – witty**
- \_\_\_ **Silly – absurd; irrational**
- \_\_\_ Taunting – insulting; jeering; mock
- \_\_\_ Teasing – mock; jeering
- \_\_\_ Witty – Piquant; facetious; waggish
- \_\_\_ **Whimsical- fanciful; unrealistic; flighty**
- \_\_\_ **Wry – devious in purpose**

## Sorrow-Fear-Worry Tone or Attitude Words:

- \_\_\_ Agonized – harrowing; distressed; tortured
- \_\_\_ Aggravated - **intensify; make worse; troublesome**
- \_\_\_ Agitated - **angered; provoked**
- \_\_\_ Anxious – mental distress or uneasiness
- \_\_\_ Apologetic – defending an idea (apologizing)
- \_\_\_ Apprehensive – uneasy or fearful
- \_\_\_ **Concerned – interested or affected**
- \_\_\_ **Confused – perplexed or bewildered**
- \_\_\_ Dejected – disheartened; depressed in spirits
- \_\_\_ Depressed- sad and downcast
- \_\_\_ Dejected – crest-fallen; moody; disheartened
- \_\_\_ Despairing – indicating hopelessness
- \_\_\_ Disturbed – agitated; distressed
- \_\_\_ Embarrassed – make uncomfortable
- \_\_\_ Fearful – lacking confidence;
- \_\_\_ **Foreboding – prediction; portend; foreshadowing**
- \_\_\_ **Forlorn – alone; depressed; oppressed**
- \_\_\_ **Gloomy – sad; morose**
- \_\_\_ **Grave – serious and solemn**
- \_\_\_ Hollow – cynical and insincere
- \_\_\_ Hopeless – desperate; despairing
- \_\_\_ Horrific – inspiring horror and terror
- \_\_\_ Horror – overwhelming fear or pain caused by something frightful
- \_\_\_ **Melancholy – pensive sadness; gloomy state of mind**
- \_\_\_ Miserable – wretchedly unhappy or uncomfortable; needy
- \_\_\_ **Morose – gloomy; sulky**
- \_\_\_ **Mournful – feeling or expressing sorrow or grief**
- \_\_\_ **Nervous – very excitable or sensitive**
- \_\_\_ Numb – not feeling emotion or sensation
- \_\_\_ Ominous – threatening; foreboding
- \_\_\_ Paranoid – showing unfounded suspicion; fear of persecution
- \_\_\_ Pessimistic – tendency to expect the worst; cynical
- \_\_\_ **Pitiful – pathetic; deserving or evoking contempt**
- \_\_\_ **Poignant – intense; sharp; vitally distressing**
- \_\_\_ Regretful – apologetic; remorseful
- \_\_\_ Remorseful – regretful; apologetic
- \_\_\_ **Resigned – submissive; come to terms with; at peace**
- \_\_\_ **Sad – not joyful**
- \_\_\_ **Saturnine – dispirited; unhappy; desolate**
- \_\_\_ Serious – sincere; showing deep thought; being earnest
- \_\_\_ Sober – contemplative; quiet and sedate in demeanor
- \_\_\_ Solemn – sober; grave; serious
- \_\_\_ **Somber – depressing; gloomy**
- \_\_\_ **Staid – settled; not flighty or capricious**
- \_\_\_ Upset – disturb mentally or emotionally; perturb
- \_\_\_ Woeful – anguished; paltry; disastrous

## Neutral Tone or Attitude Words:

- \_\_\_ Admonitory – to reprove firmly; warn
- \_\_\_ Allusive – referencing; implied to something familiar
- \_\_\_ **Apathetic – having or showing no emotion**
- \_\_\_ **Authoritative – commanding; influencing; official**
- \_\_\_ Baffled – confused; bewildered; unclear
- \_\_\_ Callous – cold and uncaring; apathetic
- \_\_\_ Candid – to the point; frank and outspoken
- \_\_\_ Ceremonial – formal; conventional; solemn
- \_\_\_ **Clinical – cold and uncaring; formal**
- \_\_\_ Consoling – give solace and comfort
- \_\_\_ Contemplative – thoughtful ; reflective; introspective
- \_\_\_ Conventional – formal; solemn; official
- \_\_\_ **Detached – showing no emotion; distant**
- \_\_\_ **Didactic – academic; intended to teach**
- \_\_\_ **Disbelieving – to reject; no belief in**
- \_\_\_ **Dramatic – highly effective; striking**
- \_\_\_ Earnest – sincere; honest
- \_\_\_ Expectant – hopeful; anxious
- \_\_\_ Factual – realistic; provable
- \_\_\_ **Fervent – passionate**
- \_\_\_ **Formal – systematic; conventional**
- \_\_\_ Forthright – straight to the point; frank; outspoken
- \_\_\_ Frivolous – lack of seriousness; carefree
- \_\_\_ Haughty – snobbish; arrogant
- \_\_\_ Histrionic – overly sentimental or dramatic
- \_\_\_ Humble – modest
- \_\_\_ Incredulous - skeptical
- \_\_\_ **Informative - instructive**
- \_\_\_ **Inquisitive – overly curious; prying**
- \_\_\_ Instructive - informative
- \_\_\_ Intimate – thorough and secretive
- \_\_\_ Judgmental - unreasonable
- \_\_\_ **Learned – erudite; scholarly**
- \_\_\_ Loud - clamorous
- \_\_\_ Lyrical – melodious; pleasing; emotional
- \_\_\_ Matter-of-Fact – direct or unemotional; unimaginative
- \_\_\_ Meditative – contemplative; thoughtful
- \_\_\_ Nostalgic - reminiscent
- \_\_\_ Objective – unbiased; not swayed to one side or another
- \_\_\_ **Obsequious – submissive; flattering**
- \_\_\_ **Patriotic – loyal; zealous**
- \_\_\_ Persuasive – stimulating; compelling
- \_\_\_ Pleading – begging; desirous
- \_\_\_ Pretentious – ostentatious; showy
- \_\_\_ Provocative – inciting; stimulating; irritating
- \_\_\_ **Questioning – needing answers**
- \_\_\_ Reflective – contemplative; thoughtful
- \_\_\_ **Reminiscent - nostalgic**
- \_\_\_ **Resigned – compliant; acquiescent**
- \_\_\_ **Restrained - reserved**
- \_\_\_ Seductive – enticing; captivating
- \_\_\_ Sentimental – affectionate; passionate

- \_\_\_ Serious – sincere; significant
- \_\_\_ Shocking – astounding; startling
- \_\_\_ **Sincere – pure; free of falsehood**
- \_\_\_ **Unemotional – detached; sterile**
- \_\_\_ Urgent – compelling; insistent
- \_\_\_ Vexed – irritated; annoyed
- \_\_\_ Wistful – sadly reflective
- \_\_\_ **Zealous – fanatical; impassioned**

### Language Words :

These words are used to describe the force or quality of the entire piece. Like word choice, the language of a passage has control over tone. Consider language to be the entire body of words in a text, not simply isolated bits of diction, imagery, or detail. For example, an invitation to a graduation might use formal language, whereas a biology text would use scientific and clinical language.

Different from tone, these words describe the force or quality of the diction, images, and details AS A WHOLE. **These words qualify HOW the work is written.**

- \_\_\_ Artificial – contrived; fake
- \_\_\_ Bombastic - exaggerated
- \_\_\_ **Colloquial – down-to-earth; common**
- \_\_\_ **Concrete – substantial; unyielding**
- \_\_\_ Connotative – implied; undertone
- \_\_\_ Cultured – enlightened; refined
- \_\_\_ Detached – unemotional; indifferent
- \_\_\_ **Emotional – temperamental; overwrought**
- \_\_\_ **Esoteric – understood by a few; cryptic**
- \_\_\_ Euphemistic – delicate; indirect
- \_\_\_ Exact – direct; to the point; methodical
- \_\_\_ Figurative – ornamental; florid
- \_\_\_ Formal – systematic; conventional
- \_\_\_ **Grotesque – outlandish; extravagant**
- \_\_\_ **Homespun – plain; unsophisticated**
- \_\_\_ **Idiomatic – natural; local**
- \_\_\_ Informal – colloquial; local
- \_\_\_ Insidious – distasteful; commonplace
- \_\_\_ Jargon- bombast; nonsense
- \_\_\_ **Learned – erudite; scholarly**
- \_\_\_ **Literal- authentic; methodical**
- \_\_\_ Moralistic – condescending; pretentious
- \_\_\_ **Obscure – inexplicable; incomprehensible**
- \_\_\_ Obtuse – unintelligent; insensitive
- \_\_\_ Ordinary - plain
- \_\_\_ Pedantic – pretentious; ostentatious
- \_\_\_ Picturesque – beautiful; striking
- \_\_\_ **Plain - ordinary**
- \_\_\_ **Poetic – melodious; idyllic; imaginative**
- \_\_\_ Precise – particular; restricted
- \_\_\_ **Pretentious – ostentatious; florid**
- \_\_\_ Provincial – unsophisticated; pastoral; rural
- \_\_\_ Scholarly – erudite; technical
- \_\_\_ Sensuous – passionate; pleasurable
- \_\_\_ Simple – plain

- \_\_\_ **Slang – colloquial; vernacular; common**
- \_\_\_ **Symbolic – figurative; suggestive; indicative**
- \_\_\_ **Trite – ordinary; common**
- \_\_\_ Vulgar – unrefined; repulsive



### Miscellaneous Categories for Tone Language

These words give you an idea of where you want to go. They are just to spring board your ideas. Use them, and branch off from there!

Love	Hope	Fear	Hate
Confusion	Joy	Anger	Calm
Strength	Youth	Weakness	Mystery
Sexist	Academic	Revolutionary	Homespun