

Name _____

Period _____

Standards Focus: Tone and Mood

Tone is the emotional quality of the words that the author has chosen. It is also the author's attitude and point of view toward a subject; it reflects the feelings of the writer, and can affect the emotional response of the reader to the piece. While we have all heard, "Don't use that tone of voice with me!" a writer does not have the advantage of the sound of his voice to reveal the tone of the piece. As we read the words on the page, the author hopes that the words he or she has chosen and the way he or she has arranged those words will help us hear a voice in our heads, supplying the emotional appeal. Tone can be nostalgic, sentimental, moralizing, humorous or serious, personal or impersonal, subjective or objective, casual or passionate, and more.

When learning to recognize tone, it is also important to understand **mood**, a general feeling that is created by the tone. In literature, writers carefully choose their words, wanting the reader to feel love and hate, joy and sadness. etc. **Mood** is *usually* described in expressions of feeling and emotions, such as fear, surprise, anger, hatred, contentment, or jealousy, to name a few.

In short, tone is how the author says something, and mood is how it affects you, the reader. For example, an author writes, "Jennie turned quickly, exclaiming, 'What a great idea!'" By the choice of the author's words (diction), he created a tone which is enthusiastic, eager, and optimistic. By just reading this sentence, however, did you guess that the next sentences are: "Drop out of school, get a minimum wage job, and that will, of course, solve all my problems? Thanks, Jessica, but no thanks"? Once the tone of the words change to cynical, pessimistic, and ironic, the mood changes to that of gloom, dejection, and frustration.

Directions: For the following excerpts, underline the words that contribute to the mood: adjectives, adverbs, or other strong sensory words. Identify the tone that Golding is using (see above), and how it affects you (mood). Finally, write your analysis of the excerpt, or how the mood and tone work or don't work in the excerpt. An example has been done to help you.

Example: "The first rhythm that they became used to was the slow swing from dawn to quick dusk. They accepted the pleasures of morning, the bright sun, the whelming sea and sweet air, as a time when play was good and life so full that hope was not necessary and therefore forgotten." (58)

- a. Tone: calming, restful, relaxing
- b. Mood: optimistic, hopeful, tranquil, peaceful, carefree
- c. Analysis: There is no denying the automatic, repetitive rhythm the boys experience each day. The words that best illustrate this are "slow swing," and "whelming." The reader begins to understand that life for the boys is taking on a regular routine of its own in some ways. We, the readers, want to find out more about the beauty and tranquility of the island, and to experience the feeling of hopefulness that is created by the writer.

1. "At midday the illusions merged into the sky and there the sun gazed down like an angry eye. Then, at the end of the afternoon, the mirage subsided and the horizon became level and blue and clipped as the sun declined. That was another time of comparative coolness but menaced by the coming of the dark. When the sun sank, darkness dropped on the island like an extinguisher and soon the shelters were full of restlessness, under the remote stars." (58)

- a. Tone: _____
- b. Mood: _____
- c. Analysis: _____

2. "There were creatures that lived in this last fling of the sea, tiny transparencies that came questing in with the water over the hot, dry sand... This was fascinating to Henry. He poked about with a bit of stick, that itself was wave-worn and whitened and a vagrant, and tried to control the motions of the scavengers. He made little runnels that the tide filled and tried to crowd them with creatures. He became absorbed beyond mere happiness as he felt himself exercising control over living things. He talked to them, urging them, ordering them. Driven

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back by the tide, his footprints became bays in which they were trapped and gave him the illusion of mastery." (61)

- a. Tone: _____
- b. Mood: _____
- c. Analysis: _____

3. "Jack planned his new face. He made one cheek and one eye-socket white, then he rubbed red over the other half of his face and slashed a black bar of charcoal across from right ear to left jaw. He looked in the pool for his reflection, but his breathing troubled the mirror. 'Samneric. Get me a coconut. An empty one.' He knelt, holding the shell of water. A rounded patch of sunlight fell on his face and a brightness appeared in the depths of the water. He looked in astonishment, no longer at himself but at an awesome stranger. He... leapt to his feet laughing excitedly." (63)

- a. Tone: _____
- b. Mood: _____
- c. Analysis: _____

4. "Ralph turned to the sea. The horizon stretched, impersonal once more, barren of all but the faintest trace of smoke. Ralph ran stumbling along the rocks, saved himself on the edge of the pink cliff, and screamed at the ship. 'Come back! Come back!' He ran backwards and forwards along the cliff, his face always to the sea, and his voice rose insanely. 'Come back! Come back!' Simon and Maurice arrived. Ralph looked at them with unwinking eyes. Simon turned away, smearing the water from his cheeks. Ralph reached inside himself for the worst word he knew. 'They let the bloody fire go out.'" (68)

- a. Tone: _____
- b. Mood: _____
- c. Analysis: _____

5. "He looked down the unfriendly side of the mountain. Piggy arrived, out of breath and whimpering like a littlun. Ralph clenched his fist and went very red. The intentness of his gaze, the bitterness of his voice, pointed for him." (68)

- a. Tone: _____
- b. Mood: _____
- c. Analysis: _____

6. "Then Maurice pretended to be the pig and ran squealing into the center, and the hunters, circling still, pretended to beat him. As they danced, they sang. 'Kill the pig. Cut her throat. Bash her in.'" (75)

- a. Tone: _____
- b. Mood: _____
- c. Analysis: _____