

Playing with Tone

Vocabulary words have connotations, which are emotional attitudes and values that are attached to the dictionary meanings of words. Skilled writers control tone to better persuade their audiences.

Look at each of the three sentences below and consider the mood or opinion of the author:

1. Ninety percent of teenagers actively use a social media account.

This sentence uses a neutral tone. Neutral words are used in this sentence.

2. Legions of teens swarm to social media content like mosquitoes to malaria.

This sentence uses a negative tone. Words like legions and malaria convey the writer's negative stance towards the topic.

3. Facebook, Snapchat, and Twitter provide engaging and popular content to modern teens.

This sentence uses a positive tone. Words like engaging and popular convey the writer's approval of the topic.

Much like a notable font, word choices convey emotional undertones to writing such as neutrality, disapproval, and enthusiasm among other tones.

A writer can use tone to his/her/their advantage using the following methods:

- neutral or emotional word choices.
- word placement in a sentence (beginnings and endings add emphasis)
- punctuation marks

Here are some Helpful Links on the Internet:

- [thesaurus.com](https://www.thesaurus.com) (this website lists synonyms)
- [OWL Purdue](https://www.owlpurdue.edu) (this website discusses stance and language)
- <https://yourbias.is> (this website explains what is biased language)
- <https://yourlogicalfallacyis.com> (this website explains how to use critical thinking)