

Advanced Placement English Language and Composition:

Vocabulary Words for Describing Tone and Diction:

Words for describing Tone:

- admiring--complimentary, favorable
- alarmed--excited
- allusive--suggestive, hinting
- aloof--haughty, distant
- ambivalent--indecisive, having mixed emotions
- angry--irate
- anxious--uneasy, brooding
- apathetic--uncaring, uninvolved
- apologetic--regretful
- audacious--bold, insolent
- belligerent--contentious
- benevolent--kindly
- bitter--hating, malicious, resentful, rancorous
- candid--frank, truthful
- captious--ready to detect trivial faults
- censorious--severely critical, condemnatory
- clinical--detached, coolly dispassionate
- cold--unemotional
- complacent--self-satisfied, smug
- condescending--showing superiority, patronizing
- confident--certain, full of conviction
- confused--perplexed, disconcerted
- contemptuous--scornful, disdainful, disrespectful, irrelevant
- critical--judging harshly
- cynical--contemptuously distrustful of human nature and motives, misanthropic
- delirious--suggesting frenzied excitement
- depressed--dejected
- desperate--showing a loss of hope
- detached--unconcerned, aloof, distant, unbiased
- didactic--instructive
- dispassionate--unaffected by strong feeling; showing coolness of judgment
- dogmatic--authoritative, assertive, arrogant
- dreamy--vague, in a state of reverie, appearing tranquil
- effusive--excessively demonstrative, gushing
- elated--joyful; happy
- elegiac--expressing sorrow
- fanciful--whimsical
- flippant--lacking proper respect or seriousness
- forgiving--pardoning, excusing
- frivolous--lacking seriousness, playful, silly
- giddy--lightheartedly silly

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Vocabulary Words for Describing Tone and Diction:

- hesitant--reluctant
- impartial--unbiased, objective
- impassioned--ardent, fervent, fervid
- importunate--overly persistent in demand
- incredulous--not believing
- indignant--showing anger at injustice
- insolent--arrogant, overbearing, impudent
- ironic--expressing the opposite of literal meaning
- irreverent--disrespectful
- jocular--joking, humorous
- lugubrious--dismal, mournful
- matter-of-fact--concerned with fact only, not imaginative or fanciful; objective
- melancholy--depressed, dejected, sad
- optimistic--inclined to expect the best possible outcome
- pedantic--narrowly or unimaginatively academic; ostentatiously learned
- pessimistic--inclined to expect the worst possible outcome, fatalistic
- pompous--arrogant, self-important
- puerile--childish, juvenile
- pungent--caustic, stinging, biting
- restrained--reserved
- sardonic--disdainfully humorous, sarcastic
- satirical--ridiculing, ironic, mocking, taunting
- sentimental--affectedly emotional, maudlin
- skeptical--questioning, doubting
- somber--serious, solemn, gloomy, grave, melancholy
- supercilious--haughtily contemptuous
- sympathetic--favoring, pitying
- tongue-in-cheek--ironic, facetious, sarcastic
- threatening--menacing
- urgent--urging insistently, earnest
- vexed--annoyed, agitated
- vindictive--vengeful, spiteful, vicious
- zealous--eager, passionate, fervent

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Vocabulary Words for Describing Tone and Diction:

The language of a passage has control over tone. Language can be categorized as formal, colloquial, scientific, clinical, etc. We often need words to describe language--to describe the force or quality of the diction, images, and details. These words qualify how the work is written through the author's selection of words.

Words that can be used to describe diction:

artificial:
colloquial,
colorful,
concrete,
connotative,
cultured,
elevated
emotional,
esoteric,
euphemistic,
exact,
grotesque,
homespun,
idiomatic,
insipid,
jargon,
learned,
moralistic,
obscure,
pedantic,
picturesque,
plain,
poetic,
precise,
pretentious,
prosaic
scholarly,
sensuous,
simple,
slang,
symbolic,
vulgar,