

5.6 Using words and syntax for tone and style

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ **Total: 12 marks**

KEY WORDS tone 语气 • style 文体 • parallel structure 平行结构 • coherence 连贯

Objective

Build the skills to control **tone** 语气 and **style** 文体 in your own writing.

You must be able to:

- choose diction that matches the audience and purpose
- vary sentence length deliberately
- use parallelism where items really are equivalent
- avoid a tone that undercuts your own argument

1 Worked examples

Study these first. Each one shows the method for a task used later.

■ Diction for a reader

A committee expects restraint; a rally expects heat. The same claim will fail in either register if it wears the other’s clothes.

■ Deliberate variation

Vary length for emphasis, not for its own sake. Two long sentences and then a short one puts weight where you want it; unvaried length puts weight nowhere.

■ Parallelism used honestly

Parallel structure asserts equivalence. Using it for three items of unequal weight tells the reader something false about your own argument.

■ Tone that undercuts

Sarcasm about opponents tells a neutral reader you are not interested in persuading them. Overstatement invites a search for the exception. Both cost more than they gain.

2 Practice

2.1 State how the expected register differs between a committee and a rally. [2]

2.2 Explain what parallelism asserts and when it is dishonest. [2]

2.3 A student’s essay describes opponents as “obviously ridiculous”.

(a) State the cost. [1]

(b) Suggest a replacement. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Varying sentence length without purpose [1]

A	B
C	D

A creates emphasis everywhere

B creates emphasis nowhere

C improves coherence

D shortens the essay

3.2 Overstatement in an argument tends to [1]

A	B
C	D

A strengthen the claim

B invite a search for the exception

C improve tone

D signal concession

3.3 Rewrite this sentence for a formal committee: “Anyone can see this plan is a total disaster and always has been.” [4]
