

4 Tone, distance, and the words that carry them – Part 2

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Vocabulary

Write each word three times.

English

Write it 3 times (English)

Tone

Narrative distance

Recall

- You have heard a compliment delivered as an insult.
- You know 'adequate' is not praise.
- You have read a narrator who seemed very close to events, and one very far.

New ideas

Read these first. Each idea has a short worked example. Then do the Practice below.

■ 1 Tone

Tone is the attitude a narrator or speaker conveys toward a subject, emerging from their perspective. Adjectives and adverbs do not only modify - they judge.

Worked example. Calling a gift 'adequate' states that a minimum was met and implies more was expected.

■ 2 Narrative distance

Narrative distance has four components - physical, chronological, relational and emotional - and they vary independently. 'Chronologically distant but emotionally invested' is precise; 'distant' is not.

Worked example. A narrator writing fifty years later about a brother she loved has hindsight and warmth at once.

■ 3 Finding tone

Underline the adjectives and adverbs in a passage and ask what attitude they share. Small words - 'merely', 'finally', 'a little' - are as revealing as any noun.

Worked example. Three dismissive adverbs in a paragraph establish a tone no single word states.

Watch out: Naming a tone is not analysis until you show the words producing it. 'The tone is bitter' is a conclusion; the adjectives are the evidence.

Practice

2.1 Define tone and state what it emerges from. [2]

2.2 State what adjectives and adverbs do besides modifying. [2]

2.3 Name the four components of narrative distance. [2]

2.4 Explain why 'distant' is an imprecise description. [2]

2.5 State a practical method for finding a passage's tone. [2]
