

4.10 Details, diction, and syntax reveal perspective

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 18 marks

KEY WORDS tone 语气

Objective

Build the skills to explain **tone** 语气.

You must be able to:

- state what shapes the tone a narrator conveys
- state what descriptive words do beyond modifying
- define tone in the CED's terms
- identify tone from adjectives and adverbs

1 Worked examples

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

■ What shapes tone

The narrators', characters', or speakers' backgrounds and perspectives shape the tone they convey about subjects or events in the text. Tone comes from perspective.

■ Descriptive words

Descriptive words, such as adjectives and adverbs, not only qualify or modify the things they describe but also convey a perspective toward those things. Every adjective is a small judgment.

■ Tone

The attitude of narrators, characters or speakers toward an idea, character or situation emerges from their perspective and may be referred to as tone. Tone is attitude made audible.

■ How to find it

Underline the adjectives and adverbs in a passage and ask what attitude they share. "Merely", "a little", "finally" are as revealing as any noun.

2 Practice

2.1 State what shapes the tone a narrator conveys. [2]

2.2 State what descriptive words do beyond modifying. [2]

2.3 Define tone in the CED's terms.

(a) State the definition. [2]

(b) State a practical method for finding it. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Tone emerges from [1]

A	B
C	D

A perspective

B page count

C genre

D publication date

3.2 Every adjective is [1]

A	B
C	D

A a small judgment

B neutral

C decorative only

D grammatically required

3.3 A narrator describes a gift as “adequate”.

- (a) State the attitude conveyed. [1]
- (b) Explain how a single word carries it. [2]

3.4 Full free-response task. In a short story, a narrator describes clearing out her late mother’s flat. She catalogues the contents precisely — twelve teaspoons, a coat with a missing button, a receipt for milk dated the previous Tuesday — and comments on none of them. Only once, mid-list, does she write “*the good scissors*”.

Write an essay that analyses how the narrator's tone is conveyed and what it reveals about her.

Marked on the AP 6-point rubric: **Row A — Thesis (1), Row B — Evidence and Commentary (4), Row C — Sophistication (1).**

[6]
