

**Word choices** are used to impact **tone** and **meaning**.

- ▶ **Tone** is the speaker's **attitude** toward the subject.
- ▶ **Meaning** is the author's **message** suggested by the **word choices**.

adapted from **Frankenstein** by Mary Shelley

Background: *Dr. Frankenstein created the monster.*

<sup>1</sup>It was on a **dark, dreary night** of November when I saw the **dull, yellow eye** of the **creature** open.

<sup>2</sup>Oh! No mortal could support the **horror** of that **countenance**.

<sup>3</sup>A mummy again endued with animation **could not be so hideous as that wretch**. <sup>4</sup>I had gazed on him while unfinished; he was **ugly** then; but when those muscles and joints were **rendered capable** of motion, it became a **thing such as even Dante could not have conceived**.

TONE	MEANING
<p><b>The word choices</b> used by the <u>speaker</u> suggest a <b>frightened and scared attitude towards the creature</b>.</p>	<p><b>The word choices</b> used by the <u>author</u> suggest that <b>Dr. Frankenstein is horrified because he created a dreadful and scary monster/creature</b>.</p>

### CFU

Which word choices suggest a tone of admiration? Explain.

**A** "The captive princess was in great distress. She was angry about being locked up."

**B** "The captive princess was not only beautiful but resourceful. While locked up, she planted a garden."

In your own words, how do word choice impact tone and meaning?

- 1 Read the text.
- 2 Identify word choices that impact tone and meaning. (underline)
- 3 Determine the tone. (circle)
- 4 Analyze the meaning of the author's word choices. (write).

**Background:** *Frankenstein the monster is telling Dr. Frankenstein about his encounters with mankind.*

<sup>1</sup>Monster: "I am alone and miserable; man will not associate with me; <sup>2</sup>I am shunned and hated by all mankind; but one as deformed and horrible as myself would not deny herself to me. <sup>3</sup>My companion must be of the same species and have the same defects. <sup>4</sup>This being you must create."

**1 What is the speaker's tone?**

- A. peaceful and happy
- B. empathic and understanding
- C. lonely and frustrated
- D. angry and sad

**2 How do the author's word choices impact the meaning?**

**Background:** *Dr. Frankenstein has been working on creating the female companion for the monster.*

<sup>1</sup>Dr. Frankenstein: "As I looked on him, his countenance expressed the utmost extent of malice and treachery. <sup>2</sup>I thought with madness on my promise of creating another like to him, and trembling with passion, tore to pieces the thing on which I was engaged. <sup>3</sup>The wretch saw me destroy the creature on which he depended for happiness.

**3 What is the speaker's tone?**

- A. playful and earnest
- B. gloomy and regretful
- C. angry and obsessed
- D. boring and detached

**4 How do the author's word choices impact the meaning?**

- 1 Read the text.
- 2 Identify word choices that impact tone and meaning. (underline)
- 3 Determine the tone. (circle)
- 4 Analyze the meaning of the author's word choices. (write).

**Background:** *The monster killed Dr. Frankenstein's wife, Elizabeth, shortly after their wedding.*

<sup>1</sup>Dr. Frankenstein: "While I still hung over her in the agony of despair, I happened to look up. <sup>2</sup>The windows of the room had before been darkened, and I felt a kind of panic on seeing the pale, yellow light of the moon brighten the chamber. <sup>3</sup>With a sensation of horror not to be described, I saw at the open window a figure the most hideous and abhorred.

**5 What is the speaker's tone?**

- A.** fear and loneliness      **B.** indifferent and scared  
**C.** misery and repulsion      **D.** upset and vengeful

**6 How do the author's word choices impact the meaning?**

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## Skill Closure

- 1 Read the text.
- 2 Identify word choices that impact tone and meaning. (underline)
- 3 Determine the tone. (circle)
- 4 Analyze the meaning of the author's word choices. (write).

Adapted from **Frankenstein** by Mary Shelley

Here the monster tells Dr. Frankenstein that he read the papers describing his creation.

The Monster: I discovered some papers in the pocket of the coat which I had taken from your lab. It was your journal of the four months that preceded my creation. You described every step you took in your work. Everything is related which refers to my accursed origin; the details of that series of disgusting circumstances; the description of my odious<sub>7</sub> and loathsome<sub>8</sub> person is given, in language which painted your own horrors and rendered mine indelible<sub>9</sub>. I sickened as I read. 'Hateful day when I received life!' I exclaimed in agony. 'Accursed creator! Why did you form a monster so hideous that even you turned from me in disgust?'

**1 What is the speaker's tone?**

**A.** anger      **B.** disgust      **C.** sadness

**2 How do the author's word choices convey the meaning?**

## Concept Closure

**Read the text and explain the tone and meaning.**

From **Huckleberry Finn** by Mark Twain:

Background: Tom and Sid have returned home from being gone all night. Aunt Sally is waiting for them.

Aunt Sally: "Well, I never heard the likes of it in all my born days! So, it was YOU, you little rascallions, that's been making all this trouble, and turned everybody's wits clean inside out and scared us all most to death. I've as good a notion as ever I had in my life to take it out o' you this very minute. To think, here I've been, night after night, a – YOU just get well once, you young scamp, and I lay I'll tan the Old Harry out o' both o' ye!"

**Aunt Sally's tone is** \_\_\_\_\_

**Word choices convey meaning by suggesting that** \_\_\_\_\_

## Summary Closure

**What did you learn today about analyzing the impact of word choices on tone and meaning?**

## Word Bank

word choices  
tone  
attitude  
meaning

**Read the text. Determine the tone and analyze the meaning of the text.**

*Excerpt from The Kabuliwallah by Rabindranath Tagore*

*Background: This story follows the bond between a young girl, Mini, and a Kabuliwala (a fruit seller from Afghanistan) who visits her home in Calcutta. The story captures their innocent friendship, the Kabuliwala's deep affection for Mini, and the heartache of separation when he is imprisoned for years.*

"One morning, as I was in my little study, I was startled by Mini's voice calling, 'Kabuliwala! Kabuliwala!' A tall, turbaned Afghan was passing by, and she insisted that he stop. As he smiled and held out his bag of dry fruits, I felt an unusual warmth in his gaze—a silent understanding between two souls from different worlds."

"Years later, on Mini's wedding day, a ragged Kabuliwala stood at our door. His once-sturdy hands trembled as he pulled out a faded scrap of paper. On it was a childish handprint—Mini's, from long ago. 'She had a little hand,' he whispered, his voice breaking. But Mini, adorned as a bride, did not recognize him anymore."

**1. What is the speaker's tone?**

- A. Joyful and celebratory
- B. Nostalgic and sorrowful
- C. Angry and resentful
- D. Indifferent and cold

**2. How do the author's word choices impact the meaning?**

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**Listening**

**Listen carefully to each stanza. What is the tone for each stanza in Robert Frost's poem? Explain.**

**Stanza 1**

**How do the author's word choices impact the meaning?**

**A** annoyance

**B** isolation

**C** exhaustion

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**Stanza 2**

**How do the author's word choices impact the meaning?**

**A** indifference

**B** peaceful

**C** hurriedly

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**Stanza 3**

**How do the author's word choices impact the meaning?**

**A** apathetic

**B** disengaged

**C** afraid

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**Stanza 4**

**How do the author's word choices impact the meaning?**

**A** vengeful

**B** hopeless

**C** irritated

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## Reading

**Read** the passage. Answer questions about the tone and meaning. Explain.

Excerpt from *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe

**Background:** Okonkwo, once a great warrior and leader, is struggling with the changes in his society. He feels disconnected from the younger generation and the influence of colonial rule.

*"He had been cast out of his clan like a fish on to a dry, sandy beach, panting. He had watched the younger men embrace the new religion, abandoning the ways of their fathers. The fire that burned within him in his youth had turned to ashes. He mourned for the clan he knew, for the man he used to be, and for the world that no longer felt like his own."*

<b>A</b>	The metaphor of being "cast out like a fish on to a dry, sandy beach, panting" gives the start of the passage an optimistic tone.	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
<b>B</b>	The metaphor of "the fire had turned to ashes" conveys the meaning that Okonkwo has lost his passion and feels powerless	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
<b>C</b>	The phrase "for the man he used to be" suggest that Okonkwo regrets his past actions and wishes he had made different choices.	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
<b>D</b>	The word "mourning" in the last sentence impact the tone of the passage by emphasizing Okonkwo's deep sorrow and sense of irreparable loss.	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No

**Read the text. Determine the tone and analyze the meaning of the text.**

*In this short story by Edgar Allan Poe, the narrator has been sentenced to death during the Spanish Inquisition for an unnamed crime. He is tied to the floor and a large, sharp blade (the pendulum) is swinging back and forth towards his body.*

excerpt from ***The Pit and the Pendulum*** by Edgar Allan Poe

The vibration of the pendulum was at right angles to my length. I saw that the crescent was designed to cross the region of the heart. It would fray the serge of my robe—it would return and repeat its operations— again—and again. Notwithstanding terrifically wide sweep (some thirty feet or more) and its hissing vigor of its descent, sufficient to split these very walls of iron, still the fraying of my robe would be all that, for several minutes, it would accomplish. And at this thought I paused. I dared not go farther than this reflection. I dwelt upon it with a pertinacity of attention—as if, in so dwelling, I could arrest here the descent of the steel. I forced myself to ponder upon the sound of the crescent as it should pass across the garment—upon the odd thrilling sensation which the friction of cloth produces on the nerves. I pondered upon all this frivolity until my teeth were on edge.

**1. What is the tone of the passage? Provide textual evidence.**

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**2. How does the choice of words impact the meaning of the text?**

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