



3 Ways to Get in Front of Weak Commentary



Webinar Workbook



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Device Hunting

- The _____ is more important than the _____.
- The most important _____ is _____.
- In a conversation, voice and body language carry the tone. In a text, _____, _____, and _____ carry the tone. You use those _____ to look for the _____, but they are not the _____.
- TONE carries _____. If students can identify the tone, they are more likely to get _____.
- TONE divisions give students a framework for the _____ of their essays. It forces them to look at the _____.

Insights:

Device Hunting

Student A: You're late.

Student B: I know. I couldn't help it.

Student A: I understand.

Student B: I knew you would.

Student A: I have something for you.

Student B: Really? What?

Student A: This.

Scenario:

What is Student A's tone?

What is Student B's tone?

What does Student A do at the end? What is "This?"

Scenario Possibilities:

- Two spies are meeting.
- A man is waiting on his girlfriend at a restaurant.
- A football player is late for practice.
- A bride is left standing at the altar.
- A student is late for class.

Tone Words in Categories

Positive		Neutral	Negative			Other
Kindness/Love Affectionate Benevolent Compassionate Fond Infatuated Sentimental Sympathetic Tender Approval Complimentary Effusive Fawning Obsequious Honesty/ Humility Apologetic Ardent Candid Earnest Frank Gentle Gullible Humble Impressionable Modest Naïve Reflective Reticent Reverent Submissive Thoughtful Unassuming	Happiness Amused Awestruck Celebratory Cheerful Delighted Dreamy Expectant Fanciful Giddy Happy Joyous Merry Optimistic Peaceful Playful Pleased Reassured Relaxed Relieved Humor Comic Humorous Whimsical Witty Force Aggressive Assertive Forceful Impassioned Imploring Intense Passionate Persuasive Urgent	Neutrality/Lack of Emotion Ambivalent Agreeable Apathetic Callous Cold Compliant Conciliatory Factual Impartial Indifferent Insipid Detached Diplomatic Dispassionate Docile Flippant Hollow Informative Matter-of-fact Objective Resigned Restrained Serious Tolerant Unbiased	Anger Acerbic Angry Frustrated Fuming Hard-hearted Incensed Inflammatory Irritated Offended Outraged Resentful Vexed Sadness/ Fatigue Aggrieved Bored Depressed Disheartened Gloomy Grim Guilty Heartbroken Lugubrious Pitiful Regretful Remorseful Self-pitying Solemn Somber Sorrowful Sulking Tired Tragic Unhappy Upset	Criticism/ Disapproval Accusatory Argumentative Bitter Caustic Critical Cynical Disapproving Disparaging Hypercritical Farcical Faultfinding Malicious Mocking Nasty Pessimistic Sarcastic Sardonic Satirical Scathing Scornful Sharp Skeptical Suspicious Vindictive Rebellion Belligerent Contemptuous Defiant Disdainful Incredulous Insolent Irreverent	Fear Afraid Anxious Cautionary Embarrassed Distressed Threatened Pensive Uncertain Uneasy Worried Arrogance Condescending Demeaning Disdainful Egotistical Esoteric Facetious Indignant Narcissistic Mock-serious Moralistic Patronizing Pompous Pretentious Proud Righteous Taunting	Absurd Befuddled Childish Concerned Confused Diffident Dignified Evasive Formal Abstruse Frivolous Incisive Informal Inane Ironic Intimate Jaded Learned Nostalgic Philosophical Placating Pragmatic Supercilious Wretched

You may also describe an author's tone with more than one word:

Calculated indifference
 Amused boredom
 Unmitigated delight
 Mild condescension
 Apologetic embarrassment
 Detached sympathy
 Amused affection

admiring support
 veiled disdain
 growing anger
 veiled distaste
 cold objectivity
 satisfied curiosity
 concealed intolerance

excessive enthusiasm
 masked disdain
 reluctant approval
 clear distaste
 righteous indignation
 blatant intolerance
 vigorous denunciation

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Tone Words

Abstruse	Defiant	Gentle	Malicious	Sad
Absurd	Delighted	Giddy	Matter-of-fact	Sarcastic
Accusatory	Demeaning	Grim	Merry	Sardonic
Acerbic	Depressed	Gloomy	Mocking	Satirical
Affectionate	Detached	Guilty	Mock-serious	Scathing
Afraid	Diffident	Gullible	Modest	Scornful
Aggressive	Dignified		Moralistic	Sentimental
Aggrieved	Diplomatic	Happy		Self-pitying
Agreeable	Disapproving	Hard-hearted	Naïve	Serious
Ambivalent	Disdainful	Heartbroken	Narcissistic	Sharp
Amused	Disheartened	Hollow	Nasty	Skeptical
Angry	Disparaging	Honest	Nostalgic	Solemn
Apathetic	Dispassionate	Humble		Somber
Apologetic	Distressed	Humorous	Objective	Sorrowful
Anxious	Docile	Hypercritical	Obsequious	Sulking
Approval	Dreamy		Offended	Submissive
Ardent		Impartial	Optimistic	Supercilious
Argumentative	Earnest	Impassioned	Outraged	Suspicious
Arrogant	Effusive	Imploring		Sympathetic
Assertive	Egotistical	Impressionable	Passionate	
Awestruck	Embarrassed	Inane	Patronizing	Taunting
	Esoteric	Incensed	Peaceful	Tender
Befuddled	Evasive	Incisive	Pensive	Tired
Belligerent	Expectant	Incredulous	Persuasive	Tragic
Benevolent		Indifferent	Pessimistic	Tolerant
Bitter	Facetious	Indignant	Philosophical	Thoughtful
Bored	Factual	Infatuated	Pitiful	Threatened
	Farcical	Inflammatory	Placating	
Callous	Fanciful	Informal	Playful	Unassuming
Candid	Fatigued	Informative	Pleased	Unbiased
Caustic	Faultfinding	Inspid	Pompous	Uncertain
Cautionary	Fawning	Insolent	Pragmatic	Uneasy
Celebratory	Fearful	Intense	Pretentious	Unhappy
Cheerful	Flippant	Intimate	Proud	Upset
Childish	Fond	Ironic		Urgent
Cold	Forceful	Irreverent	Reassured	
Comic	Formal	Irritated	Reflective	Vexed
Compassionate	Frank		Regretful	Vindictive
Compliant	Frivolous	Jaded	Relaxed	
Complimentary	Frustrated	Joyous	Rebellious	Whimsical
Concerned	Fuming		Relieved	Witty
Conciliatory		Kind	Remorseful	Worried
Condescending			Resentful	Wretched
Confused		Learned	Resigned	
Contemptuous		Loving	Restrained	
Critical		Lugubrious	Reticent	
Cynical			Reverent	
			Righteous	

Counterfeit Commentary

- Train students as if they are _____
_____.
- The three commentary counterfeits are

_____.
- _____ often comes in the form of
_____.
- We want students to break down the _____
_____, not critique the _____
_____.
- _____ is the truncation of a text.

Insights:

The Brick Wall

The three reasons students hit the Commentary Brick Wall:

Insights:

Action Steps:

Which of these strategies will I apply in my classroom?

How will I apply it/them?

When will I apply it/them?

6 QUESTIONS TO BEAT RHETORICAL ANALYSIS PARALYSIS

Feeling stuck? Frozen? Your teacher keeps saying things like, "Go deeper," "Stop summarizing," "So what?," and "You're generalizing, not analyzing."

You might be staring at your paper, waiting for the idea fairy to come land on your head. Wait no more. Chances are, one of these questions will get to the heart of the matter. Answer honestly and then go address the problems.

- My thesis statement is actually a thesis statement. *Do I have a DEBATABLE idea controlling the essay? Has it accounted for author's purpose and audience?*
- Does each body paragraph have a DEBATABLE topic sentence that supports the DEBATABLE thesis statement? *If there is no debatable thesis statement, I certainly can't check this box.*
- Are the details concrete? *Am I referring directly or indirectly to SPECIFIC items or elements in the piece? Can I point to them (e.g., figurative language) or describe them in detail (e.g., irony)?*
- Are the details supportive of the DEBATABLE topic sentences? *Have I used excerpts or referred to sections that support or defend the arguments made in the topic sentences?*

These questions are asked in order of importance. If you can't check the first box, the rest do not matter. Fix it first. If you can check the first but not the second, the rest do not matter. Fix it next. You get the picture.

If all four of the above boxes are checked, then you can move on to writing the analysis (or commentary). If the boxes are not checked, you *will* hit a brick wall. Answer at least one of these questions:

- How does this word, phrase, image, device, movement, choice, or strategy help the writer or speaker achieve her or his purpose with the audience?
- Why does the author make this specific choice that I just wrote about in a concrete detail? How does that concrete detail defend the truth of my topic sentence?

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