Tone and Mood

Tone: is the author’s attitude towards the subject matter

-writing can have more than one underlying tone

-it is created by the setting, word choice, details (both included and excluded), images that evoke a sense, sentence structure

Examples: irate, optimistic, pessimistic, pride

Mood: is the feeling that the reader gets from the piece of writing

-often referred to as the atmosphere

-it may be the same as the author’s intended tone, or sometimes the reader may obtain a different mood

-it is created by setting, word choice, details, images, sentence structure, and tone

Examples: melancholy, joyful, guilty

Tone Exercise

The phrase “I love you” or “I see you” might be said affectionately, questioningly, sarcastically, or coldly. The following is a brief scene with a simple dialogue. You will need to use a different tone of voice to suit different characters and contexts. Have fun!

A: You’re late!

B: I know. I couldn’t help it.

A: I understand.

B: I knew you would.

A: I have something for you.

B: Really? What?

A: This!

In groups of two, choose one scene below to play out the specific roles. You will change your tone depending on the seriousness of your roles.

-spies

-lovers

-parent to child

-teacher to student

-co-worker to co-worker

-friends going to a movie

In each scene, the tone will control the audience’s understanding and interpretation.

\*\* For your scene, you will need to decide what “this” is (you can use a prop, perform an action, or insert a word)

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