

Tone Vocabulary Words

A

admonitory – serving to warn; expressing reproof or reproach

allusive – full of allusions

angry – feeling anger or resentment

antagonistic – opposing and actively competing with another; adversarial

apprehensive – anxious or fearful about the future; capable of understanding and quick to understand

B

bantering – good-natured teasing or joking

benevolent – doing or inclined to do good; charitable

bitter – difficult or distasteful to accept, admit or bear; exhibiting strong animosity; expressing severe grief, anguish, or disappointment; marked by resentment or cynicism

burlesque – broadly comic or satirical imitation as of a writing, play, etc; derisive caricature; low comedy

C

candid – frank, outspoken; open and sincere

clinical – purely scientific; dispassionately curious; impersonal

colloquial – designation of words, phrases and idioms characteristic of informal speech; may be outdated speech

compassionate – sympathizing deeply; pitying

complimentary – conveying or expressing praise, commendation or admiration

concerned – interested; troubled or anxious

condescending – graciously willing to do something regarded as beneath one's dignity; to deal with others in a proud or haughty way

confident – assured; certain; trustful

contemptuous – expressing disdain, or scorn, or intense disgust

critical – inclined to judge - severely and find fault; crucial or decisive as in the forming of a turning point; characterized by careful or exact judgment

cynical – denying the sincerity of people's motives and actions

D

detached – not involved by emotion; impartial

didactic – intended for teaching/instruction; too much inclined to teach others

disgusted – to cause nausea or loathing of; to offend the taste or moral sense of; repel

disdainful – treating or regarding as beneath one's dignity; showing aloof contempt or scorn

dramatic – filled with action, emotion, or exciting qualities

E

effusive – pour out freely; overflowing; expressing excessive emotion in an unrestrained manner

elegiac – sad; mournful; plaintive

elusive – hard to grasp or retain mentally; baffling

enthusiastic – demonstrating great excitement or interest

F

facetious – joking or being silly, especially at an inappropriate time

factual – containing facts; real; actual

fanciful – imaginative in a playful way; whimsical

flippant – frivolous and disrespectful; impertinent

G

grating – irritating or persistently annoying

H

halcyon – calm and peaceful; tranquil

hopeless – despairing; bleak; having no possibility of solution

I

impartial – without prejudice or bias; not favoring one side more than another

incisive – sharp; keen; penetrating

incredulous – skeptical; disbelieving

indignant – expressing anger or scorn, especially at an unjust or ungrateful action

inflammatory – likely to rouse excitement, anger, violence, etc; caricature

informative – educational, instructional

insolent – presumptuous and insulting in manner or speech - arrogant; audaciously rude or disrespectful - impertinent

insipid – without flavor; tasteless; not exciting or interesting (Flavor and taste do not relate to food, although it could.)

irreverent – disrespect; lack of love or awe for something sacred

ironic – contrary to what is expressed or usual

insolent – boldly rude or disrespectful; impertinent

J

K

L

lighthearted – happy and carefree

lugubrious – very sad or mournful to an exaggerated or ridiculous extent

M

melancholic – sad, depressed; gloomy; pensively reflective or contemplative

mock-heroic – mocking or burlesquing a heroic manner, action, or character

moralistic – adhering to a system of morals or perhaps imposing this system on others

N

nostalgic – a bittersweet longing for persons or things of the past

O

objective – without bias or prejudice; detached; impersonal

outraged – to offend grossly; to produce anger or resentment

P

patronizing – to treat in a condescending manner

pedantic – to stress minor or trivial points of learning

petty – relatively worthless; trivial; minor

pompous – pretentious; stately

pretentious – making claims, implicit or explicit, to some distinction or importance

Q

R

reminiscent – tending to recall or suggest something from the past

restrained – limited; restricted; suppressed

S

sardonic – characterized by bitter or scornful derision

satiric – use of ridicule, sarcasm, irony to expose, attack or deride vices, follies, stupidities or abuses

scornful – filled with extreme indignant contempt; disdain; refusing or rejecting as wrong/disgraceful

sentimental – having or showing tender, gentle, or delicate feelings, but sometimes in an excessive or maudlin way, influenced more by emotion than reason

somber – dark and gloomy; earnest and solemn

sympathetic – looking upon with favor

T

taunting – challenging or reproachful in a sarcastic, insulting or jeering manner

turgid – inflated, overblown or pompous; bombastic

U

V

vibrant – throbbing with life; vigorous, energetic, radiant

W

whimsical – unpredictable, fanciful

X

Y

Z

zealous – marked by active interest and enthusiasm (A zealot may be overzealous, however.)