

# The Language of Literary Analysis

## **TONE WORDS**

accusatory  
 admiring  
 afraid  
 ambivalent  
 amused  
 analytical  
 angry  
 annoyed  
 apathetic  
 apologetic  
 approving  
 audacious  
 bemused  
 benevolent  
 bitter  
 bored  
 callous  
 calm  
 candid  
 cautious  
 childish  
 cold  
 comic  
 compassionate  
 complimentary  
 conciliatory  
 condescending  
 confident  
 confiding  
 confused  
 contemplative  
 contemptuous  
 contented  
 critical  
 curious  
 cynical  
 derisive  
 detached  
 didactic  
 disappointed  
 disdainful  
 disgusted  
 dismayed  
 disparaging  
 dramatic  
 dreamy  
 earnest  
 ecstatic  
 effusive  
 elated  
 elegiac  
 energetic  
 enthusiastic  
 exaggerating  
 facetious  
 factual  
 fanciful  
 fascinated  
 flippant  
 forgiving  
 forthright

frivolous  
 giddy  
 gloomy  
 grudging  
 happy  
 harsh  
 haughty  
 hollow  
 hopeless  
 horrific  
 humorous  
 impartial  
 impulsive  
 incisive  
 indignant  
 indulgent  
 informal  
 informative  
 insisting  
 instructive  
 irate  
 ironic  
 irreverent  
 joking  
 jovial  
 joyful  
 judgmental  
 learned  
 lyrical  
 matter-of-fact  
 melancholy  
 mocking  
 mordant  
 mournful  
 nostalgic  
 objective  
 optimistic  
 passionate  
 patronizing  
 peaceful  
 pensive  
 persuasive  
 pessimistic  
 pitiful  
 plaintive  
 playful  
 poignant  
 pretentious  
 proud  
 provocative  
 puzzled  
 querulous  
 reflective  
 regretful  
 remorseful  
 resentful  
 resigned  
 respectful  
 restrained  
 reverent  
 sad  
 sarcastic

sardonic  
 satiric  
 satisfied  
 scornful  
 sentimental  
 serene  
 severe  
 sharp  
 silly  
 sincere  
 solemn  
 somber  
 spiteful  
 straightforward  
 strident  
 superficial  
 suspicious  
 sweet  
 sympathetic  
 taunting  
 thoughtful  
 tired  
 tolerant  
 troubled  
 unsympathetic  
 upset  
 urgent  
 vexed  
 vibrant  
 wary  
 whimsical  
 wistful  
 witty  
 wry  
 zealous

## **STYLE WORDS**

abstract  
 argumentative  
 colloquial  
 complex  
 concrete  
 conversational  
 descriptive  
 detached  
 disingenuous  
 disjointed  
 effusive  
 expository  
 figurative  
 homespun  
 informal  
 instructive  
 metaphorical  
 moralistic  
 objective  
 pedantic  
 plain  
 poetic  
 precise  
 reasoned  
 scholarly

symbolic  
 terse  
 trite  
 understated  
 wry

## **MOOD WORDS**

bleak  
 dark  
 delirious  
 dismal  
 eerie  
 elegiac  
 haunting  
 lonely  
 ominous  
 peaceful  
 playful  
 quizzical  
 reproachful  
 satiric  
 serene  
 soothing  
 suspenseful  
 tense  
 threatening  
 uplifting  
 whimsical

## **CHARACTER WORDS**

absorbed  
 aggressive  
 aloof  
 ambitious  
 amorous  
 anxious  
 apathetic  
 argumentative  
 arrogant  
 bitter  
 bored  
 carefree  
 careless  
 cautious  
 churlish  
 compassionate  
 conceited  
 conniving  
 curious  
 deceitful  
 demure  
 detached  
 devious  
 devoted  
 dishonest  
 easygoing  
 envious  
 exacting  
 frantic  
 fretful  
 gregarious  
 intelligent

irritable  
 loquacious  
 manipulative  
 mendacious  
 naive  
 nervous  
 noble  
 outgoing  
 patient  
 picky  
 scrupulous  
 self-involved  
 sincere  
 sloppy  
 spontaneous  
 suspicious  
 talkative  
 testy  
 uninvolved  
 unpredictable  
 vindictive  
 welcoming  
 wise  
 worried

## **DICTION WORDS**

abstract diction  
 concrete diction  
 connotation  
 denotation  
 elevated/formal  
 low/informal  
 colloquial  
 conversational  
 jargon  
 slang

## **SYNTAX WORDS**

balanced sentence  
 complex sentence  
 compound sentence  
 compound-complex sentence  
 declarative  
 exclamatory  
 imperative  
 interrogative  
 interruption  
 inversion  
 juxtaposition  
 loose/cumulative sentence  
 parallel structure  
 periodic sentence  
 repetition  
 rhetorical question  
 simple sentence