

Name: _____ Date: _____

Tone Quiz

Tone is the author's attitude toward either the subject he or she is writing about or toward the reader.

Words that could describe tone include *doubtful*, *humorous*, *gleeful*, *serious*, and *questioning*.

Authors create tone through word choice, the information they include, and how they organize the text.

In this activity, you will analyze the tone of Lila's and Josh's letters in "Assigned Seating in the Cafeteria?"

1. Consider these sentences from Lila's letter:

- "Thank you for giving the students of Lakeside Middle School the chance to voice our opinions about the issue of assigned seating in the cafeteria."
- "It is nice to know that you care what we think."
- "Thank you for considering my opinion."

These sentences contribute to a(n) _____ tone.

- (A) offended (C) passionate
(B) polite (D) confident

2. Lila writes, "I think assigned seating in the cafeteria is a FANTASTIC idea." What does this sentence help you understand about Lila's attitude?

- (A) Lila is enthusiastic about the idea of assigned seating in the cafeteria and feels strongly that her school should adopt this practice.
(B) Lila has mixed feelings about assigned seating in the cafeteria. She is leaning toward supporting it but has some worries about it too.
(C) Lila does not feel strongly one way or the other about assigned seating.
(D) Lila thinks that the intentions behind assigned seating are good but fears that it will not work out as well as some people think.

3. Lila explains that kids usually sit with other kids in the same social group. Then she writes, "I don't think there is anything wrong with that, but sitting with the same group every day does prevent you from meeting new people." Which two words best describe the tone of this sentence?

- (A) judgmental, dismissive (C) respectful, reasonable
(B) disgusted, frustrated (D) amused, encouraging

4. Which best describes Josh's attitude about his school having assigned seating at lunch?

- (A) He is furious that his principal is even considering assigned seating.
(B) He would like more information about assigned seating before coming to a conclusion about it.
(C) He would prefer that his school not adopt assigned seating in the cafeteria, but it's not something he feels strongly about.
(D) He is very worried about the possibility of his school adopting assigned seating; he thinks it would make him and others very unhappy.

5. Which phrases from Josh's letter help establish the attitude you chose in question 4? You may choose more than one answer.

- (A) "I've been bummed . . ."
(B) "It would not be fair to take that privilege away."
(C) "... would it be worth making others (like me) miserable?"
(D) "... we are not excluding anyone."

6. Which line from Josh's letter conveys that he is sympathetic to kids who have trouble finding a place to sit at lunch?

- (A) "I don't think it's a good idea, and here's why."
(B) "It's true that finding a seat in the cafeteria can be stressful for some students, and I don't want anyone at Lakeside to dread lunchtime."
(C) "For one thing, forcing kids to sit next to each other doesn't mean they're going to end up being friends."
(D) "If our seat assignments changed all the time, friendships like ours would not have time to grow."

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2. Lila writes, "I think assigned seating in the cafeteria is a FANTASTIC idea." What does this sentence help you understand about Lila's attitude?

- (A) Lila is enthusiastic about the idea of assigned seating in the cafeteria. She feels strongly that her school should have assigned seating at lunch.
(B) Lila has mixed feelings about assigned seating in the cafeteria. She is leaning toward supporting it but has some worries about it too.
(C) Lila does not feel strongly one way or the other about assigned seating.
(D) Lila is worried that assigned seating will not work out the way the principal thinks.

3. Which best describes Josh's attitude about his school having assigned seating at lunch?

- (A) He is furious that his principal is even considering assigned seating.
(B) He would like more information about assigned seating before coming to a conclusion about it.
(C) He would prefer that his school had not assigned seating in the cafeteria. However, he does not feel strongly about assigned seating.
(D) He is very worried about the possibility that his school will have assigned seating. He thinks it would make him and others very unhappy.

4. Which phrase from Josh's letter does NOT help establish the attitude you chose in question 3?

- (A) "I've been bummed . . ."
(B) "It would not be fair to take that privilege away."
(C) "... would it be worth making others (like me) miserable?"
(D) "... we are not excluding anyone."

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Write an Argument Essay

Directions: Read "Assigned Seating in the Cafeteria?" Complete the scavenger hunt on page 29.
Then follow the steps below.

STEP 1: DECIDE WHAT YOU THINK

Should cafeterias have assigned seating?

Consider what you read in the two essays, as well as your own viewpoint.
Check the box next to the point of view you will argue in your essay,
or write your own opinion in the space provided.

☐ **Yes!** Cafeterias should have assigned seats. ☐ **No!** Cafeterias should not have assigned seats.

STEP 2: GATHER SUPPORT FOR YOUR OPINION

Which details from the essays support your opinion? What other information supports your opinion?
List at least three supporting details on the lines below.

Here's an example: If you think cafeterias should have assigned seats, one of your supporting details might be that having to find a seat at lunch creates a lot of anxiety for some students.

1.

2.

3.

STEP 3: ACKNOWLEDGE THE OTHER SIDE

If you think cafeterias **SHOULD** have assigned seats, summarize the strongest arguments against assigned seating that Josh presents in his letter. If you think cafeterias **SHOULD NOT** have assigned seats, summarize the strongest arguments in favor of assigned seating that Lila presents in her letter.

STEP 4: CRAFT YOUR THESIS (CENTRAL CLAIM)

The thesis is where you tell readers what your essay is going to be about. The thesis should be a clear, strong statement of the opinion you gave in Step 1. The rest of your essay will support this thesis.

Your thesis: _____

STEP 5: WRITE YOUR HOOK

The very beginning of your essay is called the hook because it "hooks" your readers' attention. The hook should relate to the topic of your essay, but it can take many forms. It can be:

- 1. An anecdote** (a very short story): Describe a personal experience that you've had in the cafeteria. Has finding a seat ever been stressful for you? Do you recall a particularly special day of sitting with your friends at lunch?
- 2. A surprising fact:** Find a fact that will raise your readers' eyebrows. Several surprising facts are included in the article. You can also do some research to find one that is not included in the article.
- 3. A rhetorical question** (a question to which you don't expect an answer): Ask your readers a question that reflects your point of view about assigned seating in cafeterias. Here's one way you could structure your question: "Would assigned seats in the cafeteria really _____?"
- 4. A quote:** Find a thought-provoking quote that relates to the topic of your essay.

Choose one of the ideas above, or use your own idea, and write a hook on the lines provided.

Your hook: _____

STEP 6: SUMMARIZE THE ISSUE

Let readers know a little about the issue you will be writing about. This is not your point of view; it's a brief summary of the issue. Use information from both essays to finish the summary below.

Lila thinks that her school should have assigned seating in the cafeteria. Josh disagrees and believes that _____

STEP 7: START WRITING

On the next page, you'll find guidelines for how to organize your essay.

Argument Essay Outline

Directions: Use the outline below to write your essay. You will use what you wrote on the first three pages of this activity.

1

INTRODUCTION

Open with your hook from Step 5.

↓

Write a transition sentence that relates your hook to the question of assigned seating in the cafeteria.

↓

(See *Scope's* handout "Great Transitions" for some ways to link your ideas.)

↓

Write your summary of the issue from Step 6.

↓

Finish with your thesis from Step 4.

2

BODY PARAGRAPH(S)

Now write your supporting points from Step 2.
For each one, write 1-3 sentences that provide additional details.

You can put your supporting points and detail sentences together in one paragraph or you can split them into several paragraphs. It depends on how much you want to write about each point.

Hint! Order your supporting points from weakest to strongest. Readers will remember details that are presented last.

3

ACKNOWLEDGE THE OTHER SIDE

Now it's time to recognize the other side of the argument.

Use what you wrote in Step 3.

Then explain why you think the opposing point of view is wrong.

4

CONCLUSION

Write 2-3 sentences to remind your readers of your main points.

Finish with a strong final sentence.

Need an idea?
Refer to your hook, find a quote, or give a call to action.

5

READ AND REVISE

Use *Scope's* "Argument-Essay Checklist" to evaluate and edit what you have written.

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Scavenger Hunt

Directions: Fill in the boxes below to explore how the authors of the letters in "Assigned Seating in the Cafeteria?" develop their arguments. We filled in some information for you.

	Lila	Josh
line(s) that expresses the central idea, or central claim	"I think assigned seating in the cafeteria is a FANTASTIC idea."	
two pieces of evidence that support the central idea, or central claim		
line(s) that expresses the counterargument		"It's true that finding a seat in the cafeteria can be stressful for some students, and I don't want anyone at Lakeside to dread lunchtime."
line(s) that contains the rebuttal to the counterargument		

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line(s) that expresses the central idea, or central claim	"I think assigned seating in the cafeteria is a FANTASTIC idea."	
two pieces of evidence that support the central idea, or central claim		

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Go to Scope
Online to listen
to the words
and definitions
read aloud.

Vocabulary:

"Assigned Seating in the Cafeteria?"

1. dread (dred) *verb or noun*; *Dread* means "to fear greatly" or "to be extremely reluctant." If you fear public speaking, you would dread getting up in front of your class and giving a presentation.

Dread can also be used as a noun to refer to great fear or unease. Before you give your presentation, you might be filled with dread.

2. exclude (ek-SKLOOD) *verb*; To exclude someone or something is to keep that person or thing from joining or taking part in something. If your friends are over and you are playing a board game, your mom might ask you not to exclude your little sister from the game.

3. privilege (PRIV-uh-lij or PRIV-lij) *noun*; A privilege is a special right or advantage given to a person or group of people. For example, at some high schools, older students are given the privilege of going out for lunch instead of having to eat on campus in the cafeteria.

4. socialize (SOH-shuh-lahyz) *verb*; To socialize means to associate or mingle with others. When you are hanging out with your friends, you are socializing. You are also socializing when you talk to a group of people you don't know at an event, such as a dance or party.

5. usher (UHSH-er) *noun or verb*; As a noun, *usher* refers to a person who leads people to their seats at an event such as a concert, play, or religious service.

As a verb, *usher* means "to lead someone or something to a place." When you are visiting someone at the hospital, a nurse might usher you into the patient's room. *Usher in* means "to celebrate the beginning of something." Many people have parties on December 31 to usher in the New Year.

Directions: On the back of this page, list any other words from the debate whose definitions you are not sure about. For each word, use context clues to try to figure out the meaning. Then look up the word in a few different dictionaries. Discuss the primary meaning of the word with your teacher or another adult. Then write a definition for the word and one example sentence using the word.

Vocabulary Practice

"Assigned Seating in the Cafeteria?"

Directions: Fill in the circle next to the best answer to each question below.

1. Which would more likely be considered a **privilege**?

- Ⓐ taking the garbage out on Saturday mornings
- Ⓑ getting to stay out late on Halloween

2. Which word is MOST similar in meaning to **exclude**?

- Ⓐ ban
- Ⓑ accept

3. Where would you be more likely to find **ushers**?

- Ⓐ a theater
- Ⓑ a library

4. Where would it likely be easier to socialize?

- Ⓐ in the middle of a graduation ceremony
- Ⓑ at your friend Emily's birthday party

5. Which would someone likely dread?

- Ⓐ having a cavity filled
- Ⓑ having a refreshing drink on a hot day

6. Which word is LEAST similar in meaning to **privilege**?

- Ⓐ disadvantage
- Ⓑ honor

Directions: Write three sentences that each include a word or words from the list of vocabulary words on page 1 of this activity (including any words you added).

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____
