

English Pro Tip

- When you write about characters in a book, a novel's themes, or any discussion over the book's plot you always write in the **PRESENT tense.**
- Dill **is** charming in the scene when...
- Dill was charming in the scene when...
- Lee celebrated youth in her novel.
- Lee **celebrates** youth in her novel.

Quick Write

- After reading chapter 1, **make predictions** about what the novel may be about.

Diction (Charged Language)

Words that are weird

Words that pack a punch

Diction (aka Charged Language)

Diction: choice of words

When analyzing diction, look at individual words and ask

- What feeling do these words create?
- Does this feeling fit the speaker's purpose, audience, and occasion?
- Why is the author using these specific words?

Examples in TKAM

- Miss Stephanie Crawford- “the neighborhood scold”
- “...pulled on a cowlick in the center of his head.”
- “That was the summer Dill came to us”

Diction

Pay attention to:

- The *weird words*—the uncommon words, or the familiar words that are used in a surprising way.
- Words that **hit**—that pack a lot of emotional punch because they are unexpected or blunt.

Diction and Tone

A word about *Tone*.

Tone = the author's attitude toward his or her subject.

- Is the author celebrating the subject?
- Is she condemning the subject?
- Is she simply curious about the subject?
- Is the tone *formal/academic*? Is it more *conversational*?

Diction and Tone

- The author's *diction* reveals his/her *tone*.
- The author's *tone* decides his/her *diction*.

Diction

Diction can vary in a few ways:

1. Formality
2. Degree
3. Connotation (what a word *suggests* in addition to its meaning).
4. Concrete vs. Abstract

Formality

Formality: (formal vs. conversational)

Crib vs. Home vs. Residence

*Which one you use depends on the occasion, audience, and tone of your writing.

Degree

His efforts were good.

His efforts were admirable.

His efforts were astounding.

Each word gives a different sense of degree.

Connotation: an idea of feeling in addition to the literal meaning of a word.

Look at the following sentences:

The students in that school are well-behaved.

The students in that school are obedient.

What is the difference?

Connotation

What is the difference between the two words:

Cheap

Inexpensive

Connotation

What is the difference between the two words:

Determined

Stubborn

Concrete vs. Abstract Diction

Concrete = Able to be touched or seen; tangible.

Abstract = Something that only exists in one's mind; not able to be touched.

Ex: We must rely on hope and love. (Abstract)

We must rely on our hands and muscles. (Concrete)

Pro tips when writing about diction

- “The author uses diction.”
- Put an **adjective** in front of “diction:”
 - *The author uses [formal, inflammatory, suggestive] diction.*
- Put a **verb** after “diction:”
 - *The author’s diction [reveals, suggests, shocks] _____.*

Writing about TKAM

- Describe Harper Lee's diction used in the first chapter of *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

Tone and Mood

- Tone is set by the author's word choice (diction), use of motifs, and other literary devices – The author attitude towards the subject makes you feel a certain way....The author's tone creates a...
- MOOD – The way the reader feels when reading the novel

**Tones to look
for in To Kill a
Mockingbird**

Humorous (at times)

Somber

Serious

Thought-provoking

Moods that Harper Lee's Tone Creates

Child-like
inquisitiveness

Closeness of
family ties

Protective

Suspenseful

Community
pride

Embarrassment

Anger

Compassion

Homework

Read Chapter 2

○ Summarize Chapter 2

MLA Format

Typed

1 paragraph

- Topic Sentence

- Details

- Concluding sentence

Use your best writing skills

Due: Tuesday, at the beginning of class