

DETERMINING TONE

EXERCISE I: Circle the letter of the word that most clearly expresses the tone in each passage. If you are unfamiliar with any of the words, look them up before you select the correct answer.

- 1. Often you feel you've done nothing when you've actually done a lot. That's because what you did do seemed beneath notice—it was so small that it didn't "count." But it did—just as each stitch counts toward a finished dress, each brick or nail toward a house you can live in, each mistake toward knowing how to do things right.**
 - a. hesitant
 - b. encouraging
 - c. amused
- 2. A vaccine is a preparation of killed or weakened germs that is injected under the skin and causes the blood to produce antibodies against the disease. Effective vaccines, for instance, have been developed for small pox, rabies, and polio.**
 - a. objective
 - b. arrogant
 - c. regretful
- 3. We have come together this afternoon to mourn the deaths of sixteen miners—our friends and neighbors—who were trapped by fire yesterday, deep below the earth. They lived bravely and they died too soon, leaving behind grieving wives and bewildered children. We bid them a final farewell.**
 - a. forgiving
 - b. sorrowful
 - c. angry
- 4. Why do these things always happen to me?, Brad wondered. First I forget an important meeting, and nobody reminds me until it's over. Then my boss dumps a big project on my desk and wants it done by yesterday. And to top everything off, I leave my wallet on the bus.**
 - a. comic
 - b. self-pitying
 - c. optimistic
- 5. Each year in the middle of February, when slush is underfoot and the sky is a depressing gray, I begin dreaming of warm beaches, tropical fruits and sunsets. If only I could save enough for a winter vacation! Maybe next year I'll win the lottery. Meanwhile, I'll read travel brochures and sigh.**
 - a. unsure
 - b. joyous
 - c. longing

6. **We are seriously failing our nation’s teenagers when it comes to education concerning AIDS. Somehow we must convince them, without delay, that this terrible illness can happen to them, not just too isolated groups in big cities. Let’s give them the information they need to protect themselves—before it’s too late.**
- impassioned
 - mocking
 - ironic
7. **What’s the matter with those idiots in the city council? First they pass new parking regulations saying we can’t park our cars in front of our own houses without a special permit. Now they’ve gone and slapped another tax on gas purchase—just to widen a road that’s already wide enough. Anyway, nobody enjoys the traffic delays resulting from road construction. The sooner we vote those incompetents out, the better off we’ll all be.**
- objective
 - angry
 - surprised
8. **Yet another public figure has come forward to announce he has signed into an addiction-treatment center to deal with his alcohol problems. Reports say he has shown courage and honesty. Perhaps so, but what it really takes to enter a treatment center is money. What about the poor man, like my father, who may also have a drinking problem—and courage—but who doesn’t happen to have \$500.00 a day for a fancy rest home?**
- bitter
 - revengeful
 - sentimental
9. **Botulism, a type of rare, severe food poisoning, has been reported recently in New Jersey. It is believed that the victim, who is in critical condition at a local hospital, was stricken after eating from a jar of incorrectly preserved homegrown green beans from last summer’s garden. It has been ten years since the last instance of botulism poisoning was reported in the state.**
- light-hearted
 - serious
 - tragic
10. **Sure, litterbugs account for a lot of the trash blowing around our city’s streets, but there are other villains too. What about people who set out their trash days ahead of their scheduled trash pickup time? Worse yet are the stores that pile boxes in back alleys, and restaurants whose mounds of green—bagged trash draw rodents and roaches.**
- critical
 - tolerant
 - depressed

EXERCISE II. Match each definition with the correct term.

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| _____1. | malicious | A. | expressing unbelief. |
| _____2. | abstruse | B. | showing lack of respect or reverence. |
| _____3. | arrogant | C. | angry because of something unfair or unjust. |
| _____4. | indignant | D. | intending revenge. |
| _____5. | earnest | E. | having sympathy for the problems of others. |
| _____6. | impassioned | F. | polite or obedient from fear or the hope of gain. |
| _____7. | incredulous | G. | showing hatred, spite or ill will. |
| _____8. | evasive | H. | having a serious state of mind. |
| _____9. | reticent | I. | expressing one thing and meaning the opposite. |
| _____10. | apathetic | J. | having or showing little emotion or interest. |
| _____11. | ambivalent | K. | overbearing or having a feeling of superiority. |
| _____12. | irreverent | L. | showing great warmth or intensity of feelings |
| _____13. | condescending | M. | sentimental wish to return to a past time or condition. |
| _____14. | compassionate | N. | having a tendency to avoid or escape from an issue or situation. |
| _____15. | nostalgic | O. | having a simultaneous attraction to and repulsion from an idea. |
| _____16. | absurd | P. | dropping to a less formal or dignified level, or assuming an air or superiority. |
| _____17. | vindictive | Q. | difficult to understand. |
| _____18. | obsequious | R. | having a gloomy view or life. |
| _____19. | ironic | S. | inclined to be silent or secretive. |
| _____20. | pessimistic | T. | ridiculous and unreasonable. |