

Overarching Question: What is my story?

Overarching Challenge: Use the format of your choice to effectively tell your story.

Lesson Question: How can you create an effective tone in your writing?

Lesson Challenge: Choose a tone for your writing that will help you effectively communicate your message.

Lesson Summary: Have you ever received a written message from a friend and thought you understood the message, but then discovered that it had meant something else? Or maybe you've written a note, only to have it misunderstood by the reader? You've probably discovered written messages can be interpreted in different ways. In this lesson, you will practise choosing a tone for your writing that will help effectively communicate your message.

Big Idea: Knowing how to create an effective tone in your writing can help you more effectively tell your story.



Lesson Question: How can you create an effective tone in your writing?

Lesson Challenge: Choose a tone for your writing that will help you effectively communicate your message.

Start Your Thinking

Have you ever received a written message from a friend and thought you understood the message, but then discovered that it had meant something else? Or maybe you've written a note, only to have it misunderstood by the reader? You've probably discovered written messages can be interpreted in different ways.

Check out this email message that a grade 8 student sent to their teacher. What do you think the student wanted to say? Do you think that the teacher understood the message?

Hey Ms.K whazzup i need help with hmrk see u tmrrw sometime 4 help?
ttyl
W

What message do you think the student was trying to send to the teacher?

- I'll come at lunch time tomorrow to get help.
- I really don't care about my homework.
- My homework is important to me.
- Other:

What do you think the teacher thought or felt after reading the message?

- The student is coming to get help at lunch time tomorrow.
- I am not sure when the student is coming for help.
- The student doesn't really care about their homework.
- Other:

Why might the student's message have been misunderstood by the teacher?



Think About the Lesson Challenge

In this lesson, you will practise choosing a tone for your writing that will help effectively communicate your message. Before moving on to the next part of the lesson, pause and think about a time when a message you were sending or receiving was not understood. You can also talk with another student, a teacher, a friend, a relative, a Knowledge Keeper, or an Elder about their experiences. What are the most likely reasons why the message was not understood? How might it have been communicated differently?

You may express yourself in whichever way you feel is best (for example, words, symbols, or images).



Most Likely Reasons the Message(s) Were not Understood

Other Ways the Message(s) Could Have Been Communicated

Grow Your Thinking

All the parts of a written message—the words, the punctuation, the length of the sentences—all work together to create a tone. There are many different kinds of tones; the tone of a message can be formal, informal, funny, serious, or emotional—and many more.

Finding an effective tone for your message will help the reader understand what you're trying to say. But if the tone isn't quite right, your reader may not understand your message. In fact, the wrong tone could even make your reader think something very different than what you wanted!

In the next part of this lesson, you'll practise creating a tone that will help communicate what you're trying to say.

Let's start by comparing the tones of these two text messages:

Message A

i really don't like pickles 😊

What's the tone of Message A?

- serious
- humorous
- other:

What's the meaning of Message A?

- The author is serious about not liking pickles.
- The author actually likes pickles.
- Other:

Message B

i REALLY don't like pickles!

What's the tone of Message B?

- serious
- humorous
- other:

What's the meaning of Message B?

- The author is serious about not liking pickles.
- The author actually likes pickles.
- Other:

Look carefully at the similarities and differences between the two messages. How does the writing of each message shape the tone and the meaning?

How are messages A and B the same?

How are messages A and B different?

Lesson Question: How can you create an effective tone in your writing?

You may have noticed that the tone and meanings of the two messages are very different, even though they use the same words. This is because different writing techniques were used in each message.

You can change the tone and meaning of a written message by using different writing techniques including:

- formal or casual words
- punctuation
- symbols and emoticons
- capital letters

The most important thing to remember is that you will use writing techniques to make sure that your tone matches your audience and purpose for writing.

BUILDING MY TOOLBOX

What can you do to make sure that the tone of your writing sends the message you want the reader to receive? Try using these questions to guide your writing:

✓ **Identify the purpose for writing**

- Why am I sending this message?
- What do I want my audience to do after reading my message?
- What feelings, emotions, or impressions do I want my message to send?

✓ **Identify the audience**

- Who am I writing to?
- What is my relationship to the audience?
- What are the main characteristics of the audience? (e.g., age, location, jobs, identity)
- What might the audience expect from me?

✓ **Consider writing techniques:**

- Should my words and sentences be formal or informal?
- Which words, phrases, and punctuation match my purpose and audience?

Lesson Question: How can you create an effective tone in your writing?

Let's practise creating tone and meaning in messages. For each situation, put a checkmark by the phrase you would use, and an X next to the phrase you would *definitely not* use. An example has been done for you.



	Phrase	Writing to your best friend to see if they're feeling better after being ill	Writing to a business owner about a job that you're interested in
At the beginning of your message	To whom it may concern	X	
	Dear Steve		
	Hey	✓	
	Hello friend!		
	Reasons that support your choice	<i>I can be more casual in a message to a friend.</i>	
In the middle of your message	U ok?		
	Have you recovered from your illness?		
	Tell me more about the job that was advertised!		
	I am interested in the job that was advertised.		
	Reasons that support your choice		
At the end of your message	TTYL		
	Sincerely		
	Thank you		
	Love		
	Reasons that support your choice		

Practise the Strategy

Let's practise creating an effective tone by following these steps:

1. Select one item from each of the columns below. You can choose the format, audience, and purpose for a message. For example, you could choose to write an email to the school principal to share an idea. If you wish, you can add your own ideas to the columns.
2. Use the thinking strategy on page 9 to plan your message. Remember to note the writing techniques that you'll use to match the format, audience, and purpose of your message.
3. Write your message on page 9.



Format of Message	Audience	Purpose
email	an Elder	to share a funny story
text message	a grandparent	to say thank you
note	school principal	to share a concern
letter	a friend	to share a good idea
		to ask a question

This thinking strategy can also be used in other situations where you want to send a written message. For example, maybe you'd like to share your thoughts about access to safe drinking water in your community with a local politician. You could use the thinking strategy on page 10 to help decide which writing strategies would set an effective tone for your message.



What tone would be the best for my message?

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Identify the purpose for writing

Why am I sending this message?

What do I want my audience to do after reading my message?

What feelings or impressions do I want my message to send?

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Identify the audience

Who am I writing to?

What is my relationship to the audience?

What are the main characteristics of my audience? (e.g., age, location, jobs)

What might the audience expect from me?

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Which writing techniques should I use to match my tone with my audience, and purpose?

Should my words and sentences be formal or informal?

Which words, phrases, and punctuation match my purpose and audience?

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My message

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Guiding questions

- Does my tone match my audience and purpose?
- Do my words and sentences create the tone that matches my purpose and audience?
- Does my punctuation create the tone that matches my purpose and audience?



Creating an Effective Tone in My Writing

Type of message: email text message note letter other:

What tone would be the best for my message?

Identify the purpose for writing

Why am I sending this message?
 What do I want my audience to do after reading my message?
 What feelings or impressions do I want my message to send?

Identify the audience

Who am I writing to?
 What is my relationship to the audience?
 What are the main characteristics of my audience?
 (e.g., age, location, jobs)
 What might the audience expect from me?

Which writing techniques should I use to match my tone with my audience, and purpose?

Should my words and sentences be formal or informal?
 Which words, phrases, and punctuation match my purpose and audience?

My message

Guiding questions

- Does my tone match my audience and purpose?
- Do my words and sentences create the tone that matches my purpose and audience?
- Does my punctuation create the tone that matches my purpose and audience?

Lesson Question: How can you create an effective tone in your writing?



Reflect on Your Thinking

Think About the Lesson Challenge

Think back to the email message from the beginning of this lesson:

Hey Ms.K whazzup i need help with hmrk see u tmrrw sometime 4 help?
t tyl
W



Think about what you've learned in this lesson. How could you rewrite this message to improve the tone and make the main idea clearer?



Can you think of other situations when you could use this thinking strategy?

Think About the Overarching Challenge

Remember our overarching question: What is my story? After you've finished the English lessons, you'll select the format of your choice to tell your story.



How might this thinking strategy help me tell my story?

