

ALTERNATIVE TONE WORDS FOR VCE LANGUAGE ANALYSIS

When writing a language analysis essay for VCE English, you should always comment on the author’s tone and how the author’s tone is designed to persuade their audience.

However, some tone words – such as “calm”, “negative”, or “passionate” are overused by VCE students in their English language analysis essays. While there is nothing *wrong* with these words, consider using alternative terms to make your essay stand out to exam markers.

Below is a list of commonly used tone words and some less common alternatives you should try to incorporate into your language analysis essays.

| DON'T SAY | TRY INSTEAD |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Calm, logical, reasoned | Reasoned, measured, rational, considered, moderate, respectful, earnest, reassuring, laid-back, frank, sensible, serious, reflective |
| Excited, angry, passionate | Aggressive, antagonistic, mocking, disrespectful, emotional, fervent, ardent, vehement, assertive, emotive, pleading, outraged |
| Complaining or otherwise negative | Embittered, resentful, appalled, pessimistic, despondent, anxious, disgusted, sarcastic, disparaging, bitter, biting, critical, frustrated, hostile, disillusioned, hostile, pessimistic |
| Positive or happy | Hopeful, enthusiastic, humorous, optimistic, confident, encouraging, supportive, admiring, approving, |
| Neutral | Impartial, balanced, objective, detached, dispassionate, guarded |

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| Disrespectful | Disbelieving, ridiculing, sarcastic, incredulous, sceptical |
| Casual | Colloquial, relaxed, friendly, approachable |
| Kind | Compassionate, empathetic, understanding, affable, collegial, amicable. |
| Over the top | Dramatic, hyperbolic |
| Sad | Wistful, doleful, sorrowful, pessimistic, cheerless, woeful |
| Firm | Uncompromising, assertive, commanding, forceful |
| Warning | Cautionary, foreboding, advisory |