



DIDLS Template: Figuring Out Tone



DIDLS will help you analyze HOW an author creates MEANING and TONE. You should then use this in the construction of your own writing. Remember that authors make choices in the techniques they use and how they use them based on SOAPS.

DIDLS AREA	Areas to Examine	Question to Ask: Look for the WHY and link to author TONE
DICTION:	<p>Examine the words that the author uses. Define the denotation of words that are crucial to the argument (even if you think that you know the word).</p> <p>List the words and attempt to group or label the words based on their connotations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the important words of the piece? • Why does the author choose certain kinds of words? • What kinds of words can be grouped together? • What words create contrasts? • What words could be subbed into the writing instead of the key words and how would that change the meaning? • What are the abstract words? What are the concrete words?
IMAGERY:	<p>Examine the images that the author creates- remember there is more than just visual imagery: Visual, tactile, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, organic, and kinesthetic.</p> <p>Think about what mood is established through imagery and try to name it.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does any sense/reference dominate? • How do the images impact the reader/listener? • Can you draw the image? • What details in the image seem important? • What does the image focus on or what does it leave out?
DETAILS:	<p>Examine the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title and its significance- think about it before you read and then after. • The Central Claim: locate the main claim being made by the author. • Key Evidence: locate key evidence from the piece that seems crucial to the overall meaning. • Examples/Allusions: note examples and allusions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the meaning of the title change or grow after reading? • What does the author want the reader to think, feel and understand? • What sentences seem crucial to getting the audience to do, think or feel what the author wants? • How do examples/allusions help the reader understand the author's claim?
LANGUAGE:	<p>Examine the figurative language that the author uses such as metaphors, similes, puns, hyperbole, understatement, personification, symbolism, apostrophe, metonymy, etc.</p> <p>Note the kinds of verbs and adjectives used by the author especially if the claim has to do with how an author feels about something or someone.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What figures of speech are used (these are items that are NOT literal)? • What about the figure of speech helps the author meet his/her purpose? • What about the subjects used in the figure of speech help with the purpose of the writing? • What do the verbs and adjectives describe?
STRUCTURE/ SYNTAX	<p>Look at the overall structure of the piece and the author's craft. Note the transition words and how they help structure the writing.</p> <p>Look at the sentence structures and how they are constructed. Examine the sentence type (interrogative, imperative, declarative, periodic (important info at the end), or cumulative sentence (important info at the start), simple or complex sentences.</p> <p>Note the use of parallelism, juxtaposition, fragments, run-ons, short and long sentences.</p> <p>Note the repetitions of words, phrases and ideas.</p> <p>Note the punctuation choices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How would you describe the way the piece opens and closes? • What are the author's transitions with in the piece and how would you describe them from _____ to _____? • How do the sentences begin and end? Does anything repeat? • How does the sentence length vary? • Are there phrases that repeat the same pattern? • Are there sentences that look grammatically incorrect? • What kind of punctuation is used and when? Why does the author choose one over another? • What words, phrases and ideas are repeated? Do they change or stay consistent in meaning?

When pulling evidence from a piece place it in a chart like this?

Evidence Quoted from the Writing	Name /Describe the Techniques (DIDLS) used to Create Meaning	Analyze the evidence and explain HOW the techniques help the author reach his/her PURPOSE Assert the Meaning/Tone Created- use WORDS
<p>TONE: Based on what you found using DIDLS , label tone for the entire piece with two words that help get at the complexity of the piece. Use one of the following:</p> <p>_____, but _____</p> <p>_____, yet _____</p> <p>_____, and _____</p> <p>*what you found for DIDLS should be your proof of the tone</p>		