**SOAPSTone Analysis**

When using this method of analysis, all components of this approach MUST be supported from the text and MUST be backed up by the words from the text.

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| **Speaker** | The voice that tells the story. No independent research is allowed on the speaker. You must prove your answer based on the text. In non-fiction texts, do not simply identify the speaker/author by name. Include important facts about the speaker that will help the reader (the audience) make judgments about the speaker’s position (the speaker’s point of view).  | * Identify the speaker.
* Identify the voice and point of view from which he or she is speaking.
* Identify the speaker’s values, biases, and beliefs.
* Determine if the speaker can be trusted.
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| **Occasion** | The time and place of the piece; the context that encouraged the writing to happen. Note the larger occasion, the broad issue that is the center of ideas and emotions. | * What is the time and place?
* Is there a particular historical context that influences the message or speaker?
* What specific set of circumstances prompted the writer to write this?
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| **Audience** | The people to whom this piece is directed. The audience may be one person, a small group, or a large group; it may be a certain person or a certain people. | * Who has the author intended will hear or read this message?
* What is/are the intended audience’s biases or values?
* Will this intended audience be open to the message?
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| **Purpose** | The reason behind the text. Considering the purpose is important so that the reader can examine the writer’s argument and logic of it. You should ask yourself, “What does the speaker want the audience to think or do as a result of reading this text?” This helps you examine the argument and its logic. | * What does the author want the audience to know?
* What does the author want the audience to understand?
* What does the author want the audience to do?
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| **Subject** | The general topic, content, and ideas contained in the text. You should be able to state the subject in a few words or a phrase. | * What is this piece of writing about?
* What is the main idea?
* How is this subject significant for the audience?
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| **Tone** | The attitude of the author. The *spoken word* can convey the speaker’s attitude and help impart meaning through tone of voice. However, with the *written word*, tone extends meaning beyond the literal. Tone can be determined by examining the author’s diction (choice of words), syntax (sentence construction), and imagery (vivid descriptions that appeal to the senses). | * What is the dominant tone? (Look primarily to the author’s attitude.)
* What is the effect of this tone on the audience?
* What words, images, or figures of speech reveal the author’s attitude?
* Are there any shifts in tone within the document, and if so, what is the result?
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