Individual idiosyncrasies in the use of language—that is, tone and style—reveal the person behind the words and therefore the person to whom we respond when we read. Chapter 10 breaks down the features that contribute to the building of tone and style and offers students practice in identifying those features. Because students learn to write by reading (among other ways), those who read more tend to develop facility with tone and style more quickly than those who read little. The readings and the writing assignments guide students in learning to sharpen their sensitivity to words, sentence patterns, and paragraph development. More importantly, the assignments turn students back to their own drafts so they can apply to their writing the various strategies they have observed from reading.

For Patricia Hampl, “The issue of tone is central . . . because I want my readers to know that another human being is speaking to them.” For students, the issue is one of authenticity, honesty, and appropriateness for audience and purpose. These matters are difficult for some students, who may not trust their own voice and may feel they must affect an “academic” voice, choosing pompous words and phrases because they erroneously believe these “sound better.”

**TONE**

All writing has tone, even if the tone is monotonous or blah. As students learn to analyze the writing situation—subject, audience, and purpose—they learn to make decisions that most effectively serve their purposes. You can encourage students to put a sense of themselves in their writing by asking them what kind of writing most appeals to them. As their confidence increases through practice writing and researching, a more engaging and appropriate tone will also appear in their writing, and they will recognize that they are real people speaking to other, albeit unseen, people.
Exercises (pp. 264–265)

1. Walker Percy’s purpose here is to inform, to make the reader aware of the influence of “the preformed symbolic complex” on perception. Although a sense of regret permeates the passage, Percy’s primary purpose is not to describe his personal sense of loss at not being able to view the Grand Canyon afresh, as the Spaniards did, but to explain the phenomenon of the symbolic complex, the effect of preconceived images on a viewer’s perception.

Both diction and syntax convey this informational, impersonal tone. For example, Percy uses learned words such as *preformulation* and formal phrasing such as “It is rather that which has already been formulated.” In addition, he uses contrast to instruct: “Where the wonder and delight of the Spaniard arose from his penetration of the thing itself, from a progressive discovery of depths, patterns, colors, shadows, etc., now the sightseer measures his satisfaction by the degree to which the canyon conforms to the preformed complex.” Although the informative tone is maintained, the references to familiar experiences—picking up an unfamiliar object in one’s back yard, being disappointed when the Grand Canyon doesn’t look like the picture postcard—personalize this otherwise formal discussion.

2. Jan Morris’s purpose seems to be both informative and affective. On the one hand, she wishes to explain how Manhattan has become progressively divided into ethnic enclaves; on the other hand, she wishes to describe her experiences and perceptions of these enclaves.

The blend of information and personal experience results in a tone that begins objectively and informatively and becomes progressively more personal and affective. A clue to the direction in which the passage will move is the hyperbole at the end of the first sentence: “Everything comes onto the island; nothing much goes off, even by evaporation.” The next sentence is balanced and informative: “Once it was a gateway to a New World, now it is a portal chiefly to itself.” In the third sentence, the writer signals her turn to personal experience. From there on, the description becomes personal and informal, even colloquial—“Harlem has become almost a private city in itself, no longer to be slummed through by whities after dinner.” As a result of Morris’s combined purpose and strategies, her tone is balanced, a mixture of an impersonal and a personal tone.

3. Richard Wright’s purpose is to describe his feelings as he left the South. He is not trying to analyze the effects of the South on blacks in general, but to describe those effects on himself. In keeping with this purpose, Wright uses the first person throughout: “The face of the South that I had known was
hostile and forbidding.” He also refers to specific personal experiences—
“when I had fled the orphan home.” He describes personal feelings, his tension
and terror in the past, his relief and hopefulness for the future. As a result of
Wright’s purpose and strategies, his tone is affective and highly personal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informative</th>
<th>Affective</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Percy passage)</td>
<td>(Morris passage)</td>
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**Distance**

Distance, another element of tone, suggests the relationship the writer wishes to
establish with readers. Does the writer wish to present herself or himself in
personal, informal terms, as someone the reader can trust and identify with, or does
the writer prefer a more impersonal, formal approach as someone the reader should
regard as an authority?

**STYLE**

Style has been defined as the deliberate manipulation of language and as the
unconscious imprint of the individual writer. The definition in Chapter 10
acknowledges the inseparability of style from other rhetorical factors but does so
without becoming overly complicated.

Rather than belabor the telling of what style is, the text shows students through
the example from *Huckleberry Finn* (p. 267). The Twain passage is made even
funnier if it is read in conjunction with Emmeline Grangerford’s poem:

Ode to Stephen Dowling Bots, Dec’d

And did young Stephen sicken,
    And did young Stephen die?
And did the sad hearts thicken,
    And did the mourners cry?

No; such was not the fate of
    Young Stephen Dowling Bots;
Though sad hearts round him thickened,
    ’Twas not from sickness shots.

No whooping-cough did rack his frame,
    Nor measles drear with spots;
Not these impaired the sacred name
   Of Stephen Dowling Bots.

Despised love struck not with woe
   That head of curly knots,
Nor stomach trouble laid him low,
   Young Stephen Dowling Bots.

Oh no. Then list with tearful eye,
   Whilst I his fate do tell
His soul did from this cold world fly
   By falling down a well.

They got him out and emptied him;
   Alas it was too late;
His spirit was gone for to sport aloft
   In the realm of the good and the great.

Exercises (pp. 273–274)

Passage 1
Sentence structure: Although the seven sentences in the Beryl Markham passage are moderate in length, averaging twenty-six words per sentence (the shortest contains ten words and the longest forty-five), they are formal in structure. For example, sentence 2 is a balanced sentence, sentence 3 involves parallel structure, and sentence 4 is a rhetorical question. The last sentence is a long periodic sentence.

Diction: The passage is full of learned words (“emanates,” “elemental,” “callow”), figures (“tinker’s mind of modern civilization,” “mortar-board intelligence”), and allusions (“Eden,” “genesis of earth”). It contains no contractions, colloquial phrases, or personal references.

Tone: Markham’s attitude toward her subject, Africa and its people, is almost reverential. This passage is speechlike, sermonic, clearly in the grand style. The writer establishes a distance between herself and her audience, expressing a disdain for that audience, which is presumably allied with those “competitors in conquest” who “have overlooked the vital soul of Africa.”

Summary: Highly formal, this passage is reminiscent of the Walt Whitman passage (pp. 269–270) in its use of ornamental language and syntax. But unlike Whitman, Markham not only elevates her subject but also castigates others for failing to do so.
Passage 2

Sentence structure: Calvin Trillin’s twelve sentences average twenty-nine words in length, but this longish average does not indicate formality. Some sentences are as short as six or seven words; the high average comes from several long, highly embedded cumulative sentences. One sentence is fifty words in length; another, sixty-seven words. These cumulative sentences contribute to the informal style of the piece. Furthermore, the sentences are lengthened by parenthetical asides that create a leisurely, conversational pace. One example is the digression on the disappointed businessman in Tahiti following the sentence “She was concerned, I think, that over the years I might have created a vision of Hong Kong in my mind that could not be matched by the reality.”

Diction: The diction is moderate, leaning toward the colloquial. Hardly any words are learned, except perhaps “harried” and “visionary.” The whole piece is told in the first person, with a sprinkling of contractions and slang (“hip,” “knock off”). Conversational phrases such as “a bit anxious” also contribute to the informality.

Tone: Trillin’s tone is light. Although he is surprised at what he finds in Hong Kong, he seems more bemused than upset. The passage reads like an urbane after-dinner conversation.

Summary: The passage is moderate in style. Despite the informality, the passage is not highly colloquial. The writer uses little slang, and the cumulative sentences, while conversational, are sophisticated and polished.

Passage 3

Sentence structure: The Hugh Gibson passage is only six sentences in length and has a deceptively high average of words per sentence, approximately thirty-one. As in the Trillin passage, a long cumulative sentence of seventy-three words hikes the average. Such a sentence is usually conversational, and is not formal, despite its length. The first four sentences are complex sentences, each beginning with an adverbial clause. This similarity in syntax as well as the list in the third sentence creates readability. The imperative following the colon in the first sentence and the direct address used throughout establish a close writer-reader relationship.

Diction: The diction reflects a moderate style. There is occasional slang (“He cannot throw you to the wolves) and occasional formality (“Evidences of irritation are fatal”). Most words are midrange.
Tone: The writer pulls the reader close to tell a “professional secret.” The tone is intimate, conspiratorial. The writer’s focus is on the reader; the information is for the reader’s personal benefit, not for the reader’s erudition.

Summary: The series of complex sentences and the list in sentence 3 read like an informal set of instructions, which they really are. This passage is the most colloquial of the three, although you may choose to place it on the scale somewhere between moderate and colloquial.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Colloquial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Markham passage)</td>
<td>(Trillin passage)</td>
<td>(Gibson passage)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CHECKING YOUR TONE AND STYLE ON YOUR COMPUTER

- Make lesson files of several passages of prose representing various styles, and ask students to analyze the passages on screen and submit their analyses to you via computer. A variation on this activity would be to ask students to write a short two- or three-paragraph essay in an academic style, then rewrite it for a children’s book. They can discuss how audience needs can dictate style.

- The peer response guide can be composed on the computer at the end of the writer’s draft. The writer can read the analysis and save it in another file or print it. In addition, the writer can maintain a “process” log, recording observations on a draft as it is being constructed. Students can use a split screen in order to maintain a running commentary on their own process, or they might simply format the essay and keep a commentary space to the side of each paragraph. This approach can help students increase their awareness of how they compose, and it also provides meaningful context for engaging in their own writing. Important research questions might arise from such a practice.

- The kind of analysis used in Chapter 10—average sentence length, number of multisyllabic words, and so on—can be provided by software designed to check style. This software can also give the student the readability level of the text and generic suggestions for revising for style. This kind of feedback might be helpful, as long as it is interpreted in light of the writer’s subject, audience, and purpose. Students should be warned against looking to software programs for “the” answer to problems in their writing. The real answer lies in themselves as writers: What do they want to say, and how do they want to say it? Computer technology and software helpmates can help highlight potential
trouble areas or help students know what to look for as they develop their writing.

READINGS

“Third World Driving Hints and Tips,” P. J. O’Rourke

Students might research articles on driving in other countries in travel guides, magazines, or official State Department documents for government workers traveling abroad to compare the tones of the pieces. They might then compare the audience and purpose for such articles with the audience and purpose of this piece. Another approach is to ask students to bring in copies of articles on other topics that seem to match this style.

Discussion questions (p. 277). At what point in the essay do you realize that O’Rourke’s purpose is to entertain? How does his purpose affect his tone?

The first hint that O’Rourke’s essay may not be the informative essay it appears to be comes in the second sentence, the parenthetical jab that “Italy is not technically part of the Third World, but no one has told the Italians.” In the following sentence the narrator modestly claims, “I don’t pretend to be an expert.” We quickly see through this as the narrator then proceeds to tell us everything he knows about how to drive in less-than-ideal conditions in newly industrializing countries. The title of the essay, the opening sentence, and the headings (“Road Hazards,” “Basic Information,” “Traffic Signs and Signals”) create the impression that the essay is a straightforward “how-to” manual for drivers new to the challenges of driving on the inadequate infrastructures of newly industrializing countries. The tone is that of an expert offering advice to the uninitiated. Although his description of conditions probably is not exaggerated (“What would be a road hazard anywhere else, in the Third World is probably the road”), his solutions are. The way to cope with such roads is to drive either “very fast so your wheels ‘get on top’ of the ruts” or “very slowly. This will also result in disaster.” The tone continues to be straightforward and serious, and it is the combination of the exaggerated seriousness and the impossible solutions that makes the piece so funny.

By the time the reader gets to the section on “basic information,” it is clear that this is not a driving manual at all but a humorous and entertaining piece of writing. At this point, we expect to find twists and exaggerations, and we are not disappointed. We learn that “roads are 620 per cent worse than anything you’ve ever seen” and that “when you see a 50-k.p.h. speed limit, you might as well figure that means 500 m.p.h. because nobody cares.” We also learn that armies enforce the
speed limits, “and soldiers, if they feel like it, will shoot you no matter what speed you’re going.”

O’Rourke continues to offer advice and comfort to Americans trying to interpret international road signs “that look like Boy Scout merit badges,” some of which show “such things as an iguana silhouette with a red diagonal bar across it.” Nevertheless, we are not to worry: “The natives don’t know what they [the signs] mean, either.” His apparent expertise, the conversational tone, and the Boy Scout merit badge simile all contribute to the lightness of the piece. The pace sends us forward through more “advice”: the section headed “Learning to Drive like a Native” provides seriously formatted, nonsensical guidelines for using the horn; “Road-Blocks” offers straightforward directions that are impossible to follow; “Animals in the Right of Way” prepares us for dealing with donkeys, goats, cows, chickens, and children; “Accidents” warns us to “never look where you’re going—you’ll only scare yourself,” but should you get into an accident, “throw big wads of American money at everyone.” Finally, we are left with “Safety Tips,” in which we learn that the one “nice thing about the Third World” is that “you don’t have to fasten your safety belt.” This safety tip becomes yet another exaggeration: the “average life expectancy is forty-five minutes.”

“The Ugly Tourist,” Jamaica Kincaid

Students might imagine a conversation taking place between Jamaica Kincaid and Patricia Hampl on the issue of tourism. How do the different writers define and interpret tourism? How might their backgrounds and travel experiences have influenced their conclusions?

Discussion questions (p. 279). How would you characterize Kincaid’s style—formal, moderate, colloquial? What distinctive features of her style—sentence structure, diction, tone—influence your assessment?

Kincaid’s style is colloquial, consisting of two paragraphs and twenty-five sentences, many of which are cumulative beyond what we would ever expect to read. The “tacking on” of thought on thought creates a sense of conversation, and it suggests the process of thinking aloud. Throughout the piece, Kincaid also delicately positions formal and moderate tone and diction, albeit sparingly.

Most notable are the repetitions and clarifications: “And so, ordinarily, you are a nice person, an attractive person, a person capable of drawing to yourself the affection of other people . . . a person at home in your own skin (sort of; I mean, in a way; I mean, your dismay and puzzlement are natural).” All this occurs in a single sentence, which emphasizes the conversational quality. The next sentence also
includes an exaggerated cumulation of detail—178 words. Within three consecutive clauses, the word *ordinary* is used three times, creating a drumming sense of monotony that emphasizes the idea of tourism as an escape from the “ordinariness” of everyday life. Stuck in the middle of the seemingly spewed-out stream of tourist fantasy is the embedded clause “You make a leap from being that nice blob just sitting like a boob in your amniotic sac of the modern experience to being a person visiting heaps of death and ruin and feeling alive and inspired at the sight of it.” The diction here jumps from slang (“boob”) to learned (“amniotic sac”), thus replicating the leap from ordinary, daily, humdrum existence to the escape that tourism offers.

Kincaid uses the repetition of the colorless word *thing* to emphasize the idea of the ugly tourist: “An ugly thing, that is what you are when you become a tourist, an ugly, empty thing, a stupid thing, a piece of rubbish pausing here and there to gaze at this and taste that.” Like a mantra, she tells “you” how others see you as a tourist, and then, in the following sentence, she shocks us: “They do not like you.” It is the length of the sentence that readers find so startling and the simplicity of the noun-verb-object construction, without embedded or cumulative clauses, without learned diction, in a simple, matter-of-fact tone. The sentence, following quick on the heels of three inordinately long and exaggeratedly complex constructions, hits us between the eyes, stuns us, and we read on to the next sentence, which screams in italics: “*They do not like me!*” Again we are stunned. The short sentences here shoot us to the end of the piece, until the final sentence, which repeats the sentence before it: “They are too poor. They are too poor to escape the reality of their lives; and they are too poor to live properly in the place where they live, which is the very place you, the tourist, want to go.” The second half of the sentence, separated by a dash, just as those in poverty are separated from the benefits of capitalism, repeats the word *envy*: “So when the natives see you, the tourist, they envy you, they envy your ability to leave your own banality and boredom, they envy your ability to turn their own banality and boredom into a source of pleasure for yourself.” This repetition of the lexical items *poor* and *envy* and the sentence cumulation leave us no doubt about why the native hates the tourist.

“Prague,” Patricia Hampl

Hampl’s essay vividly illustrates the effectiveness of using “I” in an essay, which many students are reluctant to do. You might bring in a tour-guide description of Prague and ask students to compare the styles of description.

Discussion questions (p. 281). Identify the specific passages in Hampl’s essay where you sense that “another human voice is speaking to” you. Where does Hampl
use a formal tone? Where does she use a more conversational tone? How does this mixture help her readers understand the conclusions she forms in the last paragraph?

Because Hampl freely employs the “I” pronoun, the reader is constantly aware of her presence in the essay. The first sentence tells us that in May 1975, “I went to Prague for the first time.” Descriptions of what she saw follow, and throughout the following paragraphs, the story is of a real person as engaged in the telling as we are in the reading. She shares personal thoughts and expectations that enrich the descriptions and provide a context for understanding how she views the city: “Prague was the first Continental European city I had seen (I had come from London).” We learn that she is bookish: “My England was so much a product of the nineteenth-century novels and poetry I’d been reading all my life that I knew I would be shocked to see automobiles.” We learn that she is from St. Paul: “I had arrived in a river city, just as I had left one in St. Paul.” We also learn that the city of Prague left her spiritually and emotionally speechless: “The city silenced me. It was just as well I didn’t know the language and was traveling alone. There was nothing for me to say. I was here to look.” What she sees, of course, is “ancient grime. . . . It bewitched me, that dirt, caught in the corners of baroque moldings and decorative cornices.” It is the juxtaposition of the dirt with the architecture that becomes a metaphor for her as she studies the city. The dirt of the past is embedded in the experience of the “now,” just as many of her sentences are constructed of embedded clauses. Her choice of the verb *bewitched* heightens the otherworldly quality of her experience. We see her unable to shake free of the dust, in fact seeking it out at coffeehouses, drawing it into her lungs, and “looking out from the blue wreath around me to other deep-drawing smokers,” despite the fact that she was not a smoker before going to Prague.

Hampl’s tone is affective, serious, contemplative. Because her purpose is to re-create Prague for the reader and communicate the feelings Prague elicited in her, this tone is exactly right. Information about Prague—its coffeehouses, its architecture, its sections, its history—is told in a more formal style: “On the right bank of the Vltava (in German, the Moldau) the buildings were old—to me. Some of them were truly old, churches and wine cellars and squares dating from the Middle Ages.” She is never far from the reader, even here, however: “to me,” she inserts. Later, she tells us that “across the river, in Malá Strana (Small Side—Prague’s Left Bank), the city became most intensely itself, however; it rose baroquely up, villa by villa, palace crushed to palace, gardens crumbling and climbing, to the castle that ran like a great crown above it on a bluff.” These more formal descriptions frame her personal reactions to Prague.
The sentence structure varies. Many sentences are straightforward subject-verb-object constructions, sometimes with a colon following the main clause and an elaboration added—“My original intention in going to Prague was simple: to see the place my grandparents had come from, to hear the language they had spoken” (paragraph 6). Constructions such as these bring a conversational quality to the prose, as do cumulative sentences such as “Many offices and stores had photographs in their windows, blowups from 1945 showing Russian soldiers accepting spring bouquets from shy little girls, Russian soldiers waving from tanks to happy crowds” (paragraph 2). The sentences at times meander, just as she describes herself meandering: “I walked around Prague, hardly caring if I hit the right tourist spots, missing baroque gems, I suppose, getting lost, leaving the hotel without a map as if I had no destination” (paragraph 23). Here form is consonant with meaning; the structure of the cumulative sentence mirrors the aimless wandering the sentence describes.

The mixture of formal with less formal sentence patterns, diction, and tone leads us into her final thoughts about her experience in Prague: “I was beautiful—at last. And I didn’t care—at last. I stumbled through the ancient streets, stopped in the smoke-grimed coffeehouses and added my signature of ash, anonymous and yet entirely satisfied. . . . It was grimy and sad and broken. I was relieved of some weight. . . . I simply felt accurate.” Her personal life story crosses paths with her familial and ethnic history in a mixture of beauty and brokenness told in a mixture of formality and informality.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

1. Narrate: Students may want to target a particular type of traveler—business travelers, those on a shoestring, traditional or nontraditional vacationers or explorers. The assignment will require some personal research and memory, which will help students with the special section. Their personal story might also be woven throughout the historical research to provide a stronger personal voice to what could otherwise become just a catalogue of facts.

2. Observe: Students might revise a section from the travel guide they wrote for assignment 1 to produce an essay in which they argue for one form of travel over another based on experience as well as on data regarding cost, comfort, and convenience. As background, students might review Walker Percy’s comments from “The Loss of the Creature” (pp. 264–265). They might read the entire essay and other travel essays such as Paul Theroux’s “Stranger on a Train,” in which he states, “A train journey is travel; everything else—planes especially—is transfer, your journey beginning when you arrive” (128).
3. Investigate: Students must come up with a hypothesis about the relationship between gender, class, or profession and speech intonation and inflection and test that hypothesis through primary research. It is important to stress that students should approach such investigations in as neutral a way as possible, avoiding metalinguistic judgments in order to report their observations and draw conclusions about them. After they have successfully gathered data—through legitimized eavesdropping—and analyzed the information, they might then judge the impact of “tuneful speaking.” If women employ this strategy for the purposes of getting and holding attention, as Sally McConnell-Ginet believes, students might ask what role interruptions play in encouraging this pattern of speaking among women. Given that linguists also report that men interrupt women more frequently than women interrupt men, students might examine the context for “tuneful speaking” to see if it occurs more in public speaking situations than in private conversations and to see if the tuneful speaker has encountered any interruptions from other speakers. Students might also want to examine other characteristics of the speakers: age, profession, class.

4. Collaborate: Students might also turn this assignment around to test what they know about other countries. During their interviews with international students, both students might list what they expect the other to know about their respective cultures and then compare their expectations to the actual encounters. They might also study the speech patterns of international students to find out whether common clichés about how Spanish or Japanese people speak English are true and then examine why such pronunciation or syntax occurs. As they listen to others speak, and become more aware of their own language variations (dialect, idiolect), the concept of “other” and “difference” may take on new meaning.

5. Read: Students might want to select a place to which they themselves have traveled. In addition to examining the differences in tone and style of the guidebooks suggested, they might want to analyze a personal journal they kept during their travels, much the same way they examined Pam Smith’s journal, “Excerpts from a Painter’s Studio Notes,” in Chapter 8. Other students might want to research a place to which they have not traveled but would like to. Whatever they choose, the advice to focus on one specific spot will help them define the scope of their study. In addition, students might reread the collaborative essay they wrote for writing assignments 4 and 5 from Chapter 2.
for tone and style, noting especially how writing for a contest affects tone. Students might use the earlier essay and research to develop this assignment.

6. Respond: Another approach to this assignment is to revise O’Rourke’s essay from the point of view of a native. This means that students must research the social, cultural, and economic background of a newly industrializing country to concentrate on getting an authentic “native” voice into the essay. (Students might interview students on campus from such countries for first-hand reports. They also might question the political implications of the term Third World, which implies inferiority and the existence of a “first” or better world that can make judgments about the actions of those living in Third World countries. Where did this term originate, who uses it, and in what contexts is it used? It may be possible to trace the term through the Atlantic Monthly “Word Watch.”)

7. Analyze: Had Kincaid used a different pronoun, the effect of what she has to say about being a tourist would be more distant. By using the “you” pronoun, she creates a direct, powerful, symbiotic link between herself and her readers. The choice of the “you” address is appropriate to the subject matter as well because it underscores the informality and relaxed tone that most tourists seek. As an in-class exercise, you might ask students to choose one of the longer sentences and rewrite it by using a more formal approach.

8. Evaluate: It is clear that Hampl’s style is more intimate and personal when she describes her responses to Prague than when she recounts historical events or architecture. It is coming face to face with the past—her own family and Prague itself—that silences Hampl, whose expectations about places have been shaped by her experience with literature or, presumably, by stories from and about her own grandparents. Letting go of expectations and seeing the dirt, the “ancient grime,” are part of what helps her “feel accurate” and allows both darkness and light (beauty and brokenness) to come together within her. Students might use the essay as a jumping-off point for experiences they may have had on a similar visit to their “roots” or as an opportunity to study about a place they would like to visit.

9. Argue: As students work on this assignment, they might also consider Hampl’s essay on Prague and the idea of “letting go” to soak up the atmosphere of the moment and the place. This essay might become a conversation among the different kinds of travelers, or students might imagine
the conversation they would have with these writers on the topic of touring styles. The assignment makes a good extension of writing assignments 1 and 2.

10. Argue: As students think about assignment 10, they might consider how their own experience (or lack of it) influences their thinking. What are their expectations about travel? How were these expectations shaped? They might want to examine their cultural biases and look at the context of their ideas about travel. You might also introduce other ideas about travel, such as those from Bruce Chatwin, who suggests in his book *The Songlines* that the natural state of human beings is to travel and that we bring about our own unhappiness by buying into the idea of settling down in one place. His ideas stem from his travels among the aboriginal peoples of Australia.

**USING THE WRITING CENTER**

Writing Center tutors can work closely with students to help them find their own voice. The three essays in this chapter, all dealing with some aspect of tourism, provide a strong base for showing students the wide range of possible tones and styles they can use in writing on a single topic.

Many students come to the writing classroom with preshaped notions that there is something “wrong” or “incorrect” about using “I” in an essay. Tutors can help students see that the use of the pronoun is a function of appropriateness. Usually, the problem is one of balance as students learn to integrate personal stories and responses naturally into more formal, academic structures.

**ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR THE COLLABORATIVE CLASSROOM**

The exercises and guidelines in Chapter 10 offer practical tools for both self-evaluation and evaluation by peers. The Guidelines for Revising Your Style on pages 275–276 can be adapted as a peer critique exercise. In addition, any of the writing exercises can be recast as an in-class collaborative activity.

- Ask students to bring to class a piece of writing they admire—a column by a favorite columnist, a story or novel by a favorite writer, a magazine article they enjoyed. In groups, have them describe the stylistic features that make the writing engaging. They can begin by examining their own responses to the
writing. Why did they want to read it in the first place? What made it memorable enough to make them want to read it again or read other pieces by the same writer?

• To provide practice in controlling style and tone, ask students to rewrite passages in different styles. For example, one group might rewrite the Leibowitz (p. 268) or Twain (p. 267) passage in a formal style or the Whitman (pp. 269–270) passage in a colloquial style. (Another approach is to ask students to rewrite Twain using Whitman’s voice.) You might bring in other writing samples for this exercise as well. In addition, students might rewrite a passage from a paper written by a group member. Still another approach is to ask each group to compose a brief review in two different styles—for example, a formal movie review for an academic journal and a review of the same movie for a popular magazine or student newspaper.

• The following exercise comes from Dan Kirby and Tom Liner in their book Inside Out (120–122):
  1. Ask students to think of someone or something that makes them very angry. It might be slow drivers, the neighbor’s dog that keeps them awake at night, a cranky waiter at a local restaurant, the high cost of textbooks or tuition. Give students five minutes to write about their angry feelings toward that person, thing, or situation.
  2. Ask students to think of a person to whom they’d like to apologize or with whom they would like to reconcile differences. Tell them to concentrate on this person or situation and their wish for improved relations. Ask them to write an apology or peacemaking speech to this person.
  3. Finally, ask students to think of someone whom they would like to persuade to do something or believe something—a parent they would like to talk into buying them a new car, a professor from whom they would like a deadline extension. Tell them to write their most persuasive argument to that person.
  4. The class discussion will illustrate the different characteristics for each tone. Ask each student to read the “angry” piece first. After this reading, ask the class to characterize the prose. Students will easily note the characteristics of an angry tone: inflammatory language, short sentences, predominance of one-syllable words, profanity, repetition of key words and phrases, a fast pace. As they read apologies, students will notice longer sentences, more multisyllable words, a slower pace. Finally, their
appeal letters will reveal logical, parallel sentence patterns and strong verbs.

**Tone and Style**

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<tr>
<th>Peer respondent:</th>
<th>Writer:</th>
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1. Analyze the sentence structure, diction, and tone in the paper, using the scale on page 271 and the sample analyses on pages 268–272 for reference.

2. Now that you have a description of the tone and style, evaluate their effectiveness according to these guidelines:

   a. What is your overall impression of the writer’s tone and style? Is the tone informative or affective? Is the style moderate, formal, or colloquial? Use evidence from the draft to support your judgment.

   b. Do the tone and style fit the writer’s purpose? Explain why or why not by referring to specific passages in the draft.

   c. Are the tone and style consistent?

   d. As a reader, do you like the tone and style? Do you find them inviting? Why or why not?

   e. Do you have any suggestions for revising the style or tone of this draft to make the draft more effective?

**SOURCES AND ADDITIONAL REFERENCES**


Joy S. Ritchie explores the struggle of beginning college writers as they try to find their voice in the academic conversation in “Beginning Writers: Diverse Voices and Individual Identity,” *College Composition and Communication* 40 (1989): 152–74.
