

Handout 1.A. SOAPSTone

Overview: When we begin reading a text, we should automatically start asking some questions to help us get the gist of a text before we begin analyzing it. Not every question posed here can be answered immediately, but exploring each one consciously throughout your reading process is essential.

S What is the subject of the piece? What is the general topic or idea of the piece?

O What is the occasion? What is the time, place, and setting of the piece? What is the situational context of the utterance?

A Who is/are the audiences? To whom is this utterance directed?

P What is the speaker's purpose?

S Who is the speaker?

Tone What is the tone of the piece as a whole? In other words, what tone of voice might this speaker use if he or she were to say this out loud? Remember that it changes throughout even the shortest poem, so consider plural answers to this question. Also ask what is the tone of each part of the text?