

Description of Assignment

Preparation: Select one or two paragraphs from a current events article that has a particularly strong and identifiable voice and that makes a specific argument.

Class 1: Monday

- Opening Discussion: Ask students what they think “voice” refers to in a written context based on previous experience and learning.
- Lecture: Provide an overview of the definition and components of voice (tone, style, *ethos* and persona) on an overhead or docu-cam. Be prepared to answer follow-up questions during this time. Include a discussion of academic voice: authoritative, objective, culturally sensitive.
- Closing: Assign reading for the next class: selections from a current events blog. Ask the students to read these paragraphs and have a general idea of the overall themes and goals in preparation for the next class period. *This step assumes previous knowledge of recognizing themes and arguments, knowledge of which would come from previous classes.

Class 2: Wednesday

- Groupwork: Divide students into groups of three or four and have them analyze the assigned paragraphs using the following questions. The questions are divided into categories related to other aspects of writing. Have each group concentrate on answering the questions under one heading.

Argument: What is the author’s argument? How do the author’s tone and style relate to the overall goal of the article?

Audience Awareness: In what ways do the tone and style reveal the author's attitude toward the reader? Is this piece geared toward a specific audience?

Perspective of the Author: In what ways do the tone and style reveal the author's attitude toward the subject matter? What do you think is the author's background or perspective?

Credibility of the Author: How does the author's tone affect your reaction to the arguments being made? Do you find the author to be trustworthy?

- Discussion: Bring the groups back together to discuss their findings. Allow groups to present their answers to the whole class and let other groups comment.
- Closing: Ask students to rewrite the paragraphs from an academic perspective/voice based on the definition discussed on Monday. Have them expand the paragraphs, if necessary, by providing arguments of their own.

Class 3: Friday

- Discussion: If all groups do not have time to report on Wednesday, allow them to present their findings during this class period.
- Peer review: Have students pair up and exchange their rewritten paragraphs. After reading their partner's paper, have students answer the following questions in writing:
 1. Has the writer achieved an academic tone of voice?
 2. Which aspects of the writing reveal this?
- Have students submit their rewritten paragraphs and responses. Review these assignments and provide feedback.