

Consistency in Style and Tone

Name: _____

Date: _____

Score: _____ / 10



Quick Review

STYLE is the level of FORMALITY in your writing — formal (a research report or letter to the principal) vs. informal (a text to a friend or a personal narrative). TONE is the writer's ATTITUDE toward the subject — serious, urgent, sympathetic, humorous, neutral. A piece of writing should maintain ONE style and ONE tone from start to finish. A formal essay should not slip into 'gonna,' 'kinda,' or 'I bet.' A friendly letter should not suddenly use legal language like 'pursuant to.' A serious news article should not include jokes. When revising, match every word and sentence to your AUDIENCE and PURPOSE.

PRACTICE

Choose the correct answer for each question.

1. Read the paragraph. Which sentence BREAKS the formal tone? (1) The Amazon rainforest is one of the most biodiverse regions on Earth. (2) Scientists estimate that it is home to more than three million species. (3) That is, like, a TON of animals and plants. (4) Protecting this fragile ecosystem requires international cooperation.
 - A. Sentence 1
 - B. Sentence 2
 - C. Sentence 3
 - D. Sentence 4
2. A student is writing a formal email to the principal. Which sentence fits the formal style?
 - A. Hey Dr. Park, I was wondering if maybe we could chat about the dress code thing?
 - B. Yo Dr. Park — the dress code is kinda outdated, just saying.
 - C. Dear Dr. Park, I would like to request a meeting to discuss the dress code policy.
 - D. Dr. Park!!! We HAVE to talk about the dress code!!!
3. Read the paragraph. Which revision of the underlined sentence BEST maintains the urgent tone? 'A wildfire has reached the edge of our town. Residents must evacuate immediately. UNDERLINED: Anyway, you might want to think about packing some stuff if you feel like it. Emergency shelters have opened at the high school.'
 - A. Anyway, packing up your things would probably be a good idea or whatever.
 - B. Pack essential belongings now and leave by the marked evacuation routes.
 - C. If you have the time, maybe consider possibly packing a few items eventually.
 - D. Some people might want to think about maybe packing, just in case, you never know.



4. Which sentence BEST fits a humorous personal narrative about a family camping trip?
- A. The expedition was undertaken with considerable trepidation by all participants.
 - B. Pursuant to our arrival at the campsite, several malfunctions occurred.
 - C. By the time we found the tent poles, the raccoons had clearly elected my dad president of their snack club.
 - D. Camping is an activity that involves sleeping outdoors in a temporary shelter.
5. Read the two versions. Which maintains a CONSISTENT formal tone? VERSION 1: 'The study examined the effects of sleep on memory. Researchers concluded that students who slept eight hours performed significantly better. Honestly, that's wild.' VERSION 2: 'The study examined the effects of sleep on memory. Researchers concluded that students who slept eight hours performed significantly better. These findings have important implications for school schedules.'
- A. Version 1, because it sounds more interesting.
 - B. Version 1, because the casual sentence adds variety.
 - C. Version 2, because every sentence uses formal, academic language.
 - D. Version 2, because it is longer.
6. Read the paragraph. Which sentence BREAKS the sympathetic tone? (1) Losing a beloved pet is one of the hardest experiences a child can face. (2) Many young people feel a deep sadness that adults sometimes underestimate. (3) Honestly, get over it — it was just an animal. (4) Talking with a trusted adult can help a grieving child begin to heal.
- A. Sentence 1
 - B. Sentence 2
 - C. Sentence 3
 - D. Sentence 4
7. A student is writing a research report on climate change. Which sentence is INCONSISTENT with that formal, informational style?
- A. Global temperatures have risen approximately one degree Celsius since 1880.
 - B. Scientists attribute this warming primarily to human activity.
 - C. Honestly, climate change is super scary and we're all gonna be in big trouble.
 - D. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions remains the most effective response.
8. Read the friendly letter opening. Which sentence MAINTAINS the warm, informal tone? 'Dear Grandma, Thanks so much for the birthday card and the photo of you and Grandpa at the lake! It made me smile all day.'
- A. The enclosure of the photographic image was greatly appreciated by the undersigned.
 - B. I am writing pursuant to the receipt of your aforementioned correspondence.
 - C. I can't wait to show it to my friends — you two look like movie stars on that boat!
 - D. The recipient hereby acknowledges your communication.



9. Rewrite this sentence so it MAINTAINS the formal tone of a school report. Replace any informal language. ORIGINAL: 'The Civil War was a HUGE deal, and like, tons of soldiers died on both sides.'

10. Write a two-sentence email opening to your principal asking for a meeting. Use a formal, respectful tone throughout.



Answer Keys

- 1 A B C D
- 2 A B C D
- 3 A B C D
- 4 A B C D
- 5 A B C D

- 6 A B C D
- 7 A B C D
- 8 A B C D
- 9
- 10

Explanations


1. C	Sentence 3 uses casual slang ('like, a TON') and all-caps emphasis, which clash with the formal, informative tone of the surrounding sentences about biodiversity and ecosystem protection. Sentences 1, 2, and 4 all use academic vocabulary ('biodiverse,' 'estimate,' 'fragile ecosystem,' 'international cooperation') consistent with a formal report.
2. C	C uses a formal greeting ('Dear Dr. Park'), a polite request ('I would like to request'), and precise vocabulary ('dress code policy') — exactly what a formal email to a school administrator requires. A uses casual phrases ('Hey,' 'chat,' 'thing'). B uses slang ('Yo,' 'kinda,' 'just saying'). D uses multiple exclamation points and shouting capitals, which signal high emotion, not respect.
3. B	The surrounding sentences are urgent and direct ('must evacuate immediately,' 'Emergency shelters have opened'). B keeps that tone with imperative verbs ('Pack... leave') and specific nouns ('essential belongings,' 'marked evacuation routes'). A, C, and D all use hedging language ('probably,' 'maybe,' 'if you have the time,' 'might want to'), which sounds casual and slow — the opposite of urgent.
4. C	C uses a playful image (the raccoons electing dad 'president of their snack club') that fits the humorous, narrative style. A and B use legal-style language ('considerable trepidation,' 'pursuant to') that sounds stiff and formal — the wrong register for a family story. D sounds like a dictionary definition, which has no humor at all.
5. C	Version 2 keeps the formal academic tone in every sentence — vocabulary like 'findings,' 'implications,' and 'school schedules' matches the opening about a study and researchers. Version 1's last sentence ('Honestly, that's wild') drops into informal speech, breaking the established tone. A and B mistakenly treat tone-breaking as a positive. D is irrelevant — length alone does not determine consistency.
6. C	Sentence 3 is dismissive and harsh ('get over it,' 'just an animal'), which contradicts the gentle, sympathetic tone of the surrounding sentences ('beloved pet,' 'deep sadness,' 'grieving child'). Sentences 1, 2, and 4 all show empathy and treat the child's feelings with respect.
7. C	C uses casual filler ('Honestly,' 'super scary,' 'gonna,' 'in big trouble') that does not belong in a research report. The other three sentences use formal scientific language ('approximately one degree Celsius,' 'attribute this warming,' 'greenhouse gas emissions'), creating the expected academic tone.
8. C	C continues the warm, conversational tone with playful praise ('movie stars on that boat'), an enthusiastic verb ('can't wait'), and the second-person voice ('you two'). A, B, and D all use stiff legal or business language ('enclosure,' 'pursuant to,' 'undersigned,' 'hereby acknowledges'), which clashes with a friendly letter to a grandmother.



9.	<p>Answer: Sample answer: The Civil War was a major conflict, and hundreds of thousands of soldiers died on both sides.</p> <p>A formal report avoids casual emphasis words ('HUGE,' all caps), filler words ('like'), and vague quantifiers ('tons of'). The sample replaces 'HUGE deal' with 'major conflict,' removes 'like,' and replaces 'tons of' with the more precise 'hundreds of thousands.' Any rewrite that removes the informal markers and uses precise, formal vocabulary is correct.</p>
10.	<p>Answer: Sample answer: Dear Dr. Marshall, I would like to request a brief meeting at your convenience to discuss a proposal for a new after-school book club.</p> <p>A formal email to a principal uses a formal greeting ('Dear Dr. Marshall'), a polite request structure ('I would like to request'), respectful timing language ('at your convenience'), and a clear, specific purpose. Any answer that includes a formal greeting and a respectful request with no slang or casual filler is correct.</p>



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