

Honors Literature and Short Stories**Week 20****Shakespeare**

You have finished reading *Romeo and Juliet*. You have probably read other stories, or seen movies that are based around the same theme and plot idea as *Romeo and Juliet*. One famous one is *Westside Story*, a modernized version of *Romeo and Juliet*. The theme of young, misunderstood love is one that remains throughout every generation.

Tone

What is “tone” in writing? When you speak to someone or someone speaks to you, the tone of voice can tell you how the person means what he or she says. When you write (as in e-mail or chat) often we are unable to determine the tone. In literature, tone is the writer’s attitude towards the subject. Perhaps it is angry, bitter, wistful, solemn ironic, sympathetic, sorrowful, sentimental, or objective and impersonal or many other tones. We discussed irony last semester. Verbal irony is a very important tone to recognize. If we do not recognize it as irony, then we will miss the meaning of the piece.

To identify tone, it is often helpful to jot notes about the way people react in the story, and how YOU react to the people and events. For instance, if the story seemingly is about a robbery gone badly, how YOU react will reflect the tone the author is presenting. If you find yourself laughing at the story, it is likely that the tone is humorous. If you find yourself feeling angry, the tone is likely to be serious and bitter. Write down all the words that describe how you feel about the events in a story, as well as the characters in the story. Once you have done that, you will be able to identify tone.

Assignments

1. Write a 1 page summary of how *Romeo and Juliet* would be applied to a modern scenario, or write a 1 page short-short story of a modern version.
Due Week 20. 50 points
2. **Weekly Shorts: 5 points** Write about an incident that has happened to you. Then write the same incident using a different tone.
3. **Journal 10 points** One writer whose life and times influenced both his tone and his work is Stephen Crane. First read a brief biography of Stephen Crane at <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/archive/poet.html?id=1493>
<http://www.online-literature.com/crane/>

Next, read the poem by Stephen Crane, “War is Kind” on page 563 of *Literature and the Writing Process* or at the website:

<http://theotherpages.org/poems/crane01.htm>

Discuss the tone of the poem. Identify specific words and phrases that help you identify the tone. How does the poem make you feel? From what you read of Stephen Crane, does this tone make sense? How did his life and times affect his work? Explain.