

SOAPSTone Reading Strategy Guide

(adapted from The College Board)

To encourage and strengthen readers' interaction with and comprehension and analysis of text.

<u>S</u>peaker	Who is the voice that tells the story? The author and the speaker are NOT necessarily the same. An author may choose to tell the story from any number of different points of view . Is someone identified as the speaker? What assumptions can be made about the speaker? What age, gender, class, emotional state, education, or...? In nonfiction, how does the speaker's background shape his/her point of view?
<u>O</u>ccasion	What is the time and place of the piece -- the (rhetorical) context that encouraged the writing to happen? Is it a memory, a description, an observation, a valedictory, a diatribe, an elegy, a declaration, a critique, a journal entry or...? Writing does not occur in a vacuum. There is the larger occasion : an environment of ideas and emotions that swirl around a broad issue. Then there is the immediate occasion : an event or situation that catches the writer's attention and triggers a response.
<u>A</u>udience	Who is the audience -- the (group) of readers to whom this piece is directed? The audience may be one person, a small group, or a large group; it may be a certain person or a certain people. Does the speaker identify an audience? What assumptions exist about the intended audience?
<u>P</u>urpose	Why was this text written? You should ask yourself, " What does the speaker want the audience to think or do as a result of reading this text? " How is this message conveyed? What is the message? How does the speaker try to spark a reaction in the audience? What techniques are used to achieve a purpose? How does the text make the audience feel? What is its intended effect? Consider the purpose of the text in order to examine the argument and its logic.
<u>S</u>ubject	What are the general topic, content, and ideas contained in the text? You should be able to state the subject in a few words or a phrase. How do you know this? How does the author present the subject? Is it introduced immediately or delayed? Is the subject hidden? Is there more than one subject?
<u>T</u>one	What is the attitude of the author? The spoken word can convey the speaker's attitude, and, thus, help to impart meaning, through tone of voice. With the written work, it is tone that extends meaning beyond the literal. If the author were to read aloud the passage, describe the likely tone of that voice. It is whatever clarifies the author's attitude toward the subject. What emotional sense pervades the piece? How does the diction point to tone? How do the author's diction, imagery, language, and sentence structure (syntax) convey his or her feelings?