

Elements of Nonfiction

TONE AND DICTION

The **tone** of a piece of writing is the expression of the writer's attitude toward a subject. One way a writer can create tone is through diction. **Diction** refers to the word choice and the arrangement of those words, or **syntax**. A writer might use word choice and syntax to create a tone that is serious, mocking, sentimental, or humorous.

Directions: Fill in this chart with examples of each key element from the text and tell how each element contributes to the tone of the piece.

Key Element	Evidence from Text	Description of Tone
Diction		
Syntax		
Images		
Other Details		

THE PLOT AGAINST PEOPLE

COPY MASTER

Reading Check

Directions: Recall the ideas and events from Russell Baker's essay. Then answer the questions in phrases or sentences.

1. What does Baker say is the goal of all inanimate objects?

2. What are the three categories of objects Baker addresses?

3. When does an automobile break down?

4. How does Baker think items such as gloves and purses become lost?

5. What is the purpose of building objects that never work?

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