

Name: _____ Date: _____

Of Mice and Men & The Central Park Five

Formal Tone vs. Conversational Tone

Circle language with a formal tone.

- Third person (he, she, they)
- Academic language (first of all, in conclusion, diction)
- No contractions (did not, cannot, will not)
- Objective (The text states, The author notes)
- Literary present when referencing the text (The character says, Lennie mentions)

Highlight language with a conversational tone.

- First person (I, me, us)
- Informal language (I want to point out, I think, word choice)
- Contractions (didn't, can't, won't)
- Opinion (My favorite, I love when, I didn't like when)
- Past tense when discussing opinion (I noticed, I realized)

Firstly, Acevedo's poem "Hair," in which she proudly wears and celebrates her natural hair, emphasizes how rejecting marginalizing language can empower people to reclaim control over their identity. In the opening stanza, the speaker's mother tells her to "fix" her hair, and the speaker knows this means "straighten" or "whiten." She goes on to ask, "Did they imagine that their great-grand-children would look like us, and would hate them how we do?" using negative diction such as "hate" to highlight her ancestors' shock at how their descendants would desire to change aspects of who they are. However, unlike proponents of "fixing hair," the speaker is proud of her hair and her heritage. In stanza four, she mentions how when she has children, she "will break pride down their back so from the moment they leave the womb they will be born in love with themselves." The positive diction "pride" and "love" highlight that the speaker embraces her hair, even though she has received the message from those around her that it is something that she should fix. All in all, the speaker emphasizes how one can ignore marginalizing diction like "fix" or "whiten" and instead use empowering diction, such as "pride" and "love."

First up, I'm going to talk about how Acevedo's poem "Hair," in which she proudly wears and celebrates her natural hair, emphasizes how rejecting marginalizing language can empower people to reclaim control over their identity. In the opening stanza, the speaker's mother tells her to "fix" her hair, and the speaker knows this means "straighten" or "whiten." She goes on to ask, "Did they imagine that their great-grand-children would look like us, and would hate them how we do?" using negative diction such as "hate" to highlight her ancestors' shock at how their descendants would desire to change aspects of who they are. The next part of the poem is my favorite. Unlike people who want to fix natural hair, the speaker is proud of her hair and her heritage. In stanza four, she mentions how when she has children, she "will break pride down their back so from the moment they leave the womb they will be born in love with themselves." Words like "pride" and "love" highlight that the speaker embraces her hair, even though she has received the message from those around her that it is something that she should fix. Overall, I think the poem is a great example of how people can ignore marginalizing words and instead focus on empowering words.

Directions: Revise the following sentences to have a conversational tone.

1. She goes on to ask, "Did they imagine that their great-grand-children would look like us, and would hate them how we do?" using negative diction such as "hate" to highlight her ancestors' shock at how their descendants would desire to change aspects of who they are.

2. All in all, the speaker emphasizes how one can ignore marginalizing diction like "fix" or "whiten" and instead use empowering diction, such as "pride" and "love."