Choose the right tone

Learning Notes

First, infer a speaker's attitude and explain how their words convey it in context.

Unit 2 / How punctuation changes the reading

Context	Clause in use
Several coaches, one selected	The coach who trains goalkeepers will speak.
Coach Lee already identified	Coach Lee, who trains goalkeepers, will speak.

Your learning route

01 Reading tone from a deliberate word choice p. 1
Try the literal meaning ·Read the clash aloud

02 Editing relative clauses without losing the meaning p. 2
Ask which coach ·Try removing the description

03 Explaining a problem in a formal request p. 3
Place the obstacle ·Connect harm and request

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Name _____ Class _____

Date _____

01 Reading tone from a deliberate word choice

Learning goal Infer a speaker's attitude and explain how their words convey it in context.

Key idea

Try replacing the key word with a neutral alternative. Ask what praise, irritation or doubt disappears. Test your inference against the facts: a compliment spoken after a failure may sound ironic, but the failure itself must be visible in the text.

Worked example

After the printer produced twenty blank pages, Rob sighed, 'A wonderfully productive morning.' How does Rob sound? Explain.

1 **Try the literal meaning** Productive normally describes a morning with worthwhile results. Compare that praise with the twenty blank pages.
2 **Read the clash aloud** Rob sighs before speaking. The sigh and the failed print job make the exaggerated praise sound ironic and frustrated.

Worked answer Frustrated and ironic. Wonderfully productive usually praises results; twenty blank pages show exactly the opposite.

Common mistake "Rob is proud because he says wonderfully."

Check your thinking A positive word can express displeasure when the scene contradicts it. Explain that contradiction.

Unit 1 • Guided practice

The new sign pointed straight at a brick wall. 'That should clear everything up,' Jo muttered. Infer her tone.

Hint Identify a word or phrase, then explain why it sounds that way in this situation.

02 Editing relative clauses without losing the meaning

Learning goal Choose a relative clause that identifies one member or adds information about an already identified person.

Key idea

Ask whether the reader needs the clause to know which person or object is meant. An identifying clause has no surrounding commas. An added comment about an already named individual is set off by commas. Read the complete sentence again after joining.

Worked example

Two coaches are present. Only the one who trains goalkeepers will speak.
Combine: The coach trains goalkeepers. That coach will speak.

1 **Ask which coach** Two coaches are present, but only one trains goalkeepers. The description identifies the one who will speak.
2 **Try removing the description** The coach will speak leaves the listener asking which coach. Keep the identifying clause next to coach without enclosing commas.

Worked answer The coach who trains goalkeepers will speak. The clause distinguishes one of two coaches, so no commas are needed.

How punctuation changes the reading

Context	Clause in use
Several coaches, one selected	The coach who trains goalkeepers will speak.
Coach Lee already identified	Coach Lee, who trains goalkeepers, will speak.

Common mistake “The coach, who trains goalkeepers, will speak.”

Check your thinking Commas make the training sound like extra information about a coach already identified. Here it is needed to select one.

Continue with this guided practice on p. 4

03 Explaining a problem in a formal request

Learning goal Ask a school decision-maker for a specific feasible action and explain the evidence behind it.

Key idea

State what you observed without blaming anyone. Describe the impact on the intended users and make one request the reader can act on. More equipment would be nice is weaker than asking for a named item in a named place.

Worked example

Write to the librarian. The returns trolley blocks the low shelves; wheelchair users cannot reach the books. Ask for it to be moved.

1 **Place the obstacle** Say where the returns trolley stands. Readers can picture an object in front of low shelves more easily than an unspecified access problem.

2 **Connect harm and request** Name who cannot reach the books. Then ask politely for a move that leaves the shelves accessible.

Worked answer Dear Librarian, the returns trolley stands in front of the low shelves, so wheelchair users cannot reach those books. Could it be moved beside the counter instead?

Common mistake "The library is awful. Fix it soon."

Check your thinking The librarian needs the exact obstacle and an achievable change. A courteous, specific request is easier to act on.

Unit 3 • Guided practice

Ask the office to enlarge the print on a timetable. Three room changes are in tiny print and pupils have gone to the wrong rooms.

Hint Use observation, consequence and request as three checks on the finished message.

Apply what you learned

Unit 1 • New context

After the third bus passed without stopping, Pia muttered, "What splendid service." What tone do you hear, and why?

Unit 2 • Guided practice

We have one principal, Ms Fung. Add the second fact with a relative clause: Ms Fung opened the exhibition. She collects old maps.

Hint Try removing the clause. Would the reader still know exactly who or what is meant?

Unit 2 • New context

Three librarians work here. Only the one who runs the reading club will visit. Combine the identifying detail and the visit in one sentence.

Unit 3 • New context

A display blocks the large-print timetable near reception. Write two sentences to the office explaining the effect and asking for a change.

Unit quiz

Instructions Work independently. Show your thinking, then hand your work to your teacher or parent.

Task 1

The reviewer writes, 'The so-called express queue took twice as long as the ordinary one.' Explain the reviewer's attitude through one phrase.

Task 2

Three boxes stand by the door. Only one holds glass. Join: The box holds glass. That box needs padding.

Task 3

Write to the games teacher. The equipment list is inside a locked cupboard and captains cannot check it before matches. Suggest a specific fix.

Check your practice

Unit 1 Reading tone from a deliberate word choice

Guided practice Sceptical or mocking. Clear everything up sounds confident, but a sign towards a wall makes the route more confusing.

Application Ironic and annoyed. Splendid praises the service, while three buses passing her show it has failed her.

Unit 2 Editing relative clauses without losing the meaning

Guided practice Ms Fung, who collects old maps, opened the exhibition. Her name already identifies her; the extra fact goes between commas.

Application The librarian who runs the reading club will visit.

Unit 3 Explaining a problem in a formal request

Guided practice Dear Office Team, the three room changes are printed very small. Some pupils have gone to the wrong rooms. Could you display a larger copy of the timetable?

Application The new display hides the large-print timetable, so visitors who rely on it cannot read the times. Could the display be moved to the side?

Revisit a task Choose one task. Copy a clue or rewrite one part of your answer.