ACTIVITY 1.12
Voice and Style

Purpose:
- To write in a variety of voices and tones
- To examine text for stylistic components such as syntax, diction, and tone

Steps:

1 To continue developing awareness of their own voices, encourage students to explore tone of voice and how **tone** and **voice** vary with the speaker's or writer's thoughts and feelings, purpose, and audience. Students will complete an exercise called "Mad Talk, Soft Talk, Fast Talk," adapted from the book *Inside Out* by Kirby, Liner, and Vinz. They will do three **quickwrites** in response to three different situations.

2 Review the elements of *syntax* (the order of words in a sentence), *diction* (the writer's choice of words), and *tone* (attitude). Tell students the graphic organizer on the student page will help them write in three distinct voices that vary in syntax, diction, and tone.

3 First, tell students to imagine a situation that makes them angry (mad talk). Have them **visualize** the situation and think about what they want to say. They should be able to hear the tone and words in their heads and then write for a short time in their angry voice.

4 Then have them **think-pair-share** a discussion of their quickwrites. As students share their quickwrites aloud, tell listening students to take notes on the writer's syntax (Are the sentences full? short? fragments?), diction (Does the writer use loaded language or repeat words?), and tone (What emotion is expressed?).

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SUGGESTED LEARNING STRATEGIES: Quickwrite, Graphic Organizer, Think-Pair-Share, Visualizing

Mad Talk Quickwrite	Reflection on Syntax, Diction, and Tone
Soft Talk Quickwrite	Reflection on Syntax, Diction, and Tone
Fast Talk Quickwrite	Reflection on Syntax, Diction, and Tone

LITERARY TERMS

Tone is a writer's attitude toward his or her subject or audience.

Syntax is the way in which words are put together to make meaningful elements, such as phrases, clauses, and sentences.

Diction is the writer's choice of words.

Now choose one of these voices to present orally to your classmates. Use facial expressions, eye contact, and tone to convey emotion.

What differences do you notice among the voices in other presentations?

What factors explain the differences between the voices?

5 Repeat the exercise twice by having students imagine a situation in which someone needs comforting (soft talk) and one in which they need to persuade somebody to do something (fast talk). Remind them to focus on language use (syntax, diction, and tone).

6 In small groups, have students orally present one quickwrite. Then have group members give each other feedback on how realistically each voice was presented. Ask students to discuss the differences among the voices and to identify the factors that made them different (audience, purpose, and context).