

Tone

Consider:

The best part of human language, properly so called, is derived from reflection on the acts of the mind itself. It is formed by a voluntary appropriation of fixed symbols to internal acts, to processes and results of imagination, the greater part of which have no place in the consciousness of uneducated man; though in civilized society, by imitation and passive remembrance of what they hear from their religious instructors and other superiors, the most uneducated share in the harvest which they neither sowed nor reaped.

— Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*

Discuss:

1. What is Coleridge's attitude toward the uneducated man?
2. How does Coleridge's choice of details, diction, and syntax reveal his attitude toward the uneducated man?

Apply:

Rewrite the first sentence of this passage. Keep the same basic ideas that Coleridge expresses, but change the tone. Your tone should express contempt for academic elitism. Choose details, diction, and syntax that support your tone. Share your sentence with the class.