

Tone

Consider:

Everybody latched on to you during these trips, congressmen, businessmen and directors and presidents of this and that. Every hotshot in town wanted to be next to *the astronaut*. For the first ten or fifteen minutes it was enough for them to breathe the same air you breathed and occupy the same space as your famous body. But then they began looking at you . . . and waiting . . . Waiting for what? Well, dummy! – waiting for you to say a few words! They wanted something hot! If you were one of the seven greatest pilots and seven bravest men in America, then obviously you must be fascinating to listen to.

— Tom Wolfe, *The Right Stuff*

Discuss:

1. What is Wolfe's attitude toward the astronaut? How do you know?
2. What is Wolfe's attitude toward the people who come to see the astronaut? What diction and syntax reveal this attitude?

Apply:

Think about your favorite musician or movie star. Using Wolfe's paragraph as a model, write a paragraph, addressed directly to the star, about his/her relationship with the fans. Your tone should be conversational and enthusiastic. Share your paragraph with a partner.