1. Listen to and follow the lyrics to the song “Mean” by Taylor Swift. Determine the subject then the tone. Use your tone words!
2. Read lines 1-15 only. List diction choices that support tone.
3. Read lines 16-26. Identify and describe the details the speaker uses to support tone.
4. Taking the poem as a whole:
5. List one interrogative sentence.
6. List a sentence with parallel structure.
7. List two elements of figurative language the writer uses.
8. Would you say that there is any imagery used in this poem? Where? Write a line that extends one of the lines written in the poem that adds imagery that would add to your understanding of the tone.
9. Classify words like “wanna”, “gonna”, and “Well”. What do they say about her tone?
10. After looking at all facets of voice-is your tone correct? Is there a shift?
11. What is the theme of the song?

**Your turn:**

1. In groups of two to four, find a song whose lyrics are appropriate for school and has appropriate voice. What is the tone?
2. List the diction choices that give you tone.
3. Look at the details in the poem. Write down 3 lines that are particularly detailed. How do they help you understand the tone?
4. Describe the syntactical structure of the poem. List as many elements as you can: what kind of sentence type (declarative, imperative, interrogatory, exclamatory) does it have? Periodic or cumulative sentences? List one or two of these. Any noted juxtaposition of ideas? Identify and describe what this does to the structure and meaning. Take a line and “Magic Lens” it for parts of speech and parts of sentence. Most songs have shorter lines or sentences. Are there any that are longer? What does that do for meaning? What figurative language elements can you find? List these.
5. List all of the images used and what kind of imagery it is (sight, sound, touch, taste, smell). How does this enhance the tone of the poem?
6. List your tone explicitly with elevated diction.
7. What is the theme of the poem?
8. What is the mood brought on by listening and reading the lyrics? Just kidding-I don’t care.

“Mean”

[Taylor Swift](https://www.google.com/search?safe=strict&sxsrf=ACYBGNTyeiXR38pB39kl8MvmdiR-3G9eyw:1567782557347&q=Taylor+Swift&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAONgVuLUz9U3SMkxNTNfxMoTkliZk1-kEFyemVYCAFwkYHocAAAA&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjUtqmTvbzkAhXJTd8KHb4rCQEQMTAAegQIDBAF)

(1)You, with your words like knives
And swords and weapons that you use against me
You, have knocked me off my feet again,
Got me feeling like a nothing
(5)You, with your voice like nails
On a chalk board, calling me out when I'm wounded
You, picking on the weaker man

You can take me down
With just one single blow
(10)But you don't know what you don't know

Someday I'll be living in a big old city
And all you're ever gonna be is mean
Someday I'll be big enough so you can't hit me
And all you're ever gonna be is mean
Why you gotta be so mean?

(15)You, with your switching sides
And your wildfire lies and your humiliation
You have pointed out my flaws again
As if I don't already see them
I walk with my head down,
(20)Try to block you out 'cause I never impress you
I just…

You, with your switching sides
And your wildfire lies and your humiliation
You have pointed out my flaws again
(25)As if I don't already see them
I walk with my head down,
Try to block you out 'cause I never impress you
I just want to feel okay again

I bet you got pushed around
(30)Somebody made you cold but the cycle ends right now
'Cause you can't lead me down that road
And you don't know what you don't know

Someday I'll be living in a big old city
And all you're ever gonna be is mean
(35)Someday I'll be big enough so you can't hit me
And all you're ever gonna be is mean
Why you gotta be so mean?

And I can see you years from now in a bar
Talking over a football game
(40)With that same big loud opinion
But nobody's listening, washed up and ranting
About the same old bitter things
Drunk and grumbling on about how I can't sing
But all you are is mean
(45)All you are is mean and a liar and pathetic
And alone in life and mean, and mean, and mean, and mean

But someday I'll be living in a big old city
And all you're ever gonna be is mean
Yeah someday I'll be big enough
(50)So you can't hit me
And all you're ever gonna be is mean
Why you gotta be so (mean)
Someday I'll be living in a big old city
(Why you gotta be so mean)

(55)And all you're ever gonna be is mean
(Why you gotta be so mean)
Someday I'll be big enough so you can't hit me
(Why you gotta be so mean)
And all you're ever gonna be is mean
(60)Why you gotta be so mean?

Source: [LyricFind](https://www.lyricfind.com/)

Songwriters: Taylor Swift

Mean lyrics © Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC