Identifying Tone and Mood

**Tone** is the author’s attitude toward the writing (his characters, the situation) and the readers. A work of writing can have more than one tone. An example of tone could be both serious and humorous. Tone is set by the setting, choice of vocabulary and other details. **Tone is the way feelings are expressed.**

**Mood** is the general atmosphere created by the author’s words. It is the feeling the reader gets from reading those words. It may be the same, or it may change from situation to situation. **Mood is the feeling of a work.**

**Words That Describe Tone:** amused, humorous, pessimistic, angry, informal, playful, cheerful, ironic pompous, horror, light, sad, clear, matter-of-fact, serious, formal, resigned, suspicious, gloomy, optimistic, and witty.

**Words That Describe Mood:** fanciful, melancholy, frightening, mysterious, frustrating, romantic, gloomy, sentimental, happy, sorrowful, joyful, and suspenseful.

**Directions:** For each example, identify the tone, what context clues are used to convey the tone, and the overall mood of the sentence.

1. Drawing the attention of his classmates as well as his teacher, the student dared to experiment with his professor’s intelligence by interrogating him about the book.
   
   **Tone:** __________________________________________________________
   
   **Context Clues:** __________________________________________________
   
   **Mood:** _____________________________ _______________________________________________________________________

2. He furtively glanced behind him, in fear of his imagined pursuers, then hurriedly walked on, jumping at the slightest sound even of a leaf crackling under his own foot.
   
   **Tone:** __________________________________________________________
   
   **Context Clues:** __________________________________________________
   
   **Mood:** ___________________________________________ _______________

3. Gently smiling, the mother tenderly tucked the covers up around the child’s neck, and carefully, quietly, left the room making sure to leave a comforting ray of light shining through the opened door should the child wake.
   
   **Tone:** __________________________________________________________
   
   **Context Clues:** __________________________________________________
   
   **Mood:** __________________________________________________________

4. The laughing wind skipped through the village, teasing trees until they danced with anger and cajoling the grass into fighting itself, blade slapping blade, as the silly dog with golf ball eyes and flopping, slobbery tongue bounded across the lawn.
   
   **Tone:** __________________________________________________________
   
   **Context Clues:** __________________________________________________
   
   **Mood:** __________________________________________________________