

The Rhetorical Analysis

What is a rhetorical analysis essay?

In a *rhetorical* analysis, you will be asked to analyze writing and particular strategies the author uses to appeal to or persuade his or her audience. In other words, a rhetorical analysis should not focus on summary but should focus on how well the author gets specific points across.

This essay discusses how the author makes the argument and whether his or her approach(es) is/are successful. It should not utilize personal opinion.

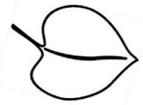


Rhetoric is the study of how authors use words in order to influence an audience.

What questions should be considered when writing?

Once you have picked a work to analyze, ask yourself these questions:

Questions	Your Responses
WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS WORK? What are the main points of the author's essay?	
IS THE AUTHOR EFFECTIVE IN MAKING HIS OR HER POINTS? If so, what makes the points effective? If not, what should the author have done in order to make his or her points?	
WHO IS THE AUTHOR'S INTENDED AUDIENCE? Given where this is published, who is most likely to read it? (There may be more than one audience.)	
IS THE TOPIC CLEAR AND CONCISE? Does the author use clear organization? Or, does the author have many points within one paragraph?	
WHAT IS THE CONTEXT OF THE WORK? When was it written? To whom was it written? What is the purpose of the document?	
WHAT TYPES OF LANGUAGE DOES THE AUTHOR USE? Does the author use vocabulary and terminology that only certain people will understand? If so, what does this say about the audience of the article? If not, then why do you think it is written in this way?	



What types of persuasion do authors use?

Authors use logos, ethos, and pathos in order to persuade their audience. The chart below explains each type of persuasion, the effect on the audience, and how to write about these techniques.

<p>Logos (logic, reasoning)</p> <p>the argument itself, the reasoning the author uses, logical evidence</p>	<p>Ethos (character, ethics)</p> <p>how an author builds credibility and trustworthiness</p>	<p>Pathos (emotion)</p> <p>words or passages an author uses to activate emotions</p>
<p>Types of Logos appeals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • theories/scientific facts • indicated meanings or reasons (because...) • literal or historical analogies • definitions • factual data and statistics • quotations • citations from experts and authorities • informed opinions • examples (real life examples) • personal anecdotes 	<p>Ways to develop Ethos</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • author’s profession/background • author’s publication • appearing sincere, fair minded, knowledgeable • conceding to opposition where appropriate • morally/ethically likeable • appropriate language for audience and subject • appropriate vocabulary • correct grammar • professional format 	<p>Types of Pathos appeals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emotionally loaded language • vivid descriptions • emotional examples • anecdotes, testimonies, or narratives about emotional experiences or events • figurative language • emotional tone (humor, sarcasm, disappointment, excitement, etc.)
<p>Effect on audience</p> <p>Evokes a cognitive, rational response. Readers get a sense of, “oh, that makes sense” or “hmm, that really doesn’t prove anything.”</p>	<p>Effect on audience</p> <p>Helps reader to see the author as reliable, trustworthy, competent, and credible. The reader might respect the author or his/her views.</p>	<p>Effect on audience</p> <p>Evokes an emotional response. Persuasion by emotion. Usually evokes fear, sympathy, empathy, or anger.</p>
<p>How to talk about it</p> <p>The author appeals to logos by defining relevant terms and then supports his claim with numerous citations from authorities.</p> <p>The author’s use of statistics and expert testimony are very convincing logos appeals.</p>	<p>How to talk about it</p> <p>Through his use of scientific terminology, the author builds his ethos by demonstrating expertise.</p> <p>The author’s ethos is effectively developed as readers see that he is sympathetic to struggles minorities face.</p>	<p>How to talk about it</p> <p>When referencing 9/11, the author is appealing to pathos. Here, he is eliciting both sadness and anger from his readers.</p> <p>The author’s description of the child with cancer was a very persuasive appeal to pathos.</p>

Upano, Alicia. “Aristotelian Appeals: Logos, Ethos, and Pathos.” Web. 14 October 2014. <https://sdsuwriting.pbworks.com>