

Essay 1: Rhetorical Analysis

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Due Sunday by 11:59pm **Points** 300 **Submitting** a file upload **File Types** pages, doc, and pdf
Attempts 0 **Allowed Attempts** 1 **Available** Jan 3 at 12am - Jan 17 at 11:59pm 15 days

This essay assignment connects to our **Course Objectives** “to read and critically evaluate college-level material from a variety of sources” and “to identify and analyze the structure of arguments.”

This assignment also connects to our **Student Learning Outcomes** “to be able to argue a point and support it in writing” and “To write an essay that evaluate logic in texts for logic and effectiveness.”

Here is the assignment:

Find an editorial or an Op-Ed in a recent newspaper (see the definitions of terms in [this](#) Essay 1 Module). Read the editorial carefully and critically, taking time to make sure you understand the claims it is making and the evidence that backs up the claim. Then analyze it rhetorically, using principles discussed in the lecture notes in our Essay 1 Module, on page 100 of our textbook (“Composing a Rhetorical Analysis”), and in the guidelines listed below.

Page length: **3-4 pages**

Final draft due: **1/17/21 @ 11:59pm**

• WHAT IS A RHETORICAL ANALYSIS?

The purpose of the rhetorical analysis essay is not to summarize a piece of writing, but to explore how rhetoric works, explore how ideas are presented, and analyze how the strategy is working to help the writer achieve his or her purpose.

• WHAT IS RHETORIC?

Rhetoric is the art or skill of speaking or writing formally and effectively, especially as a way to persuade or influence listeners or readers. To analyze a writer’s rhetoric, you need to investigate *how* the writer composed the writing to achieve his or her goal.

• QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT BEFORE WRITING

What do you think was the author’s purpose in writing the editorial?

Who was the intended audience and how does that audience affect the writing?

What style and tone does the author use? Why?

What rhetorical appeals does the writer use? (ethos, pathos, logos)

How is the text organized? Why do you think the writer chose that pattern?

What kinds of evidence does the author include to support the point of view, and how was that evidence used?

• HOW DO I COMPOSE A RHETORICAL ANALYSIS?

Take the following four steps to plan your rhetorical analysis draft:

1. Analyze the rhetorical appeals
2. Brainstorm your introduction
3. Develop your body paragraphs
4. Draw to a conclusion

Let's discuss each step, one by one:

1. Analyze the Rhetorical Appeals

Ethos: Ethical appeals establish the credibility and goodwill of the author or of the sources used to support an argument. Where and how does the author explain his or her related background or establish the credibility of the sources used?

Pathos: Emotional appeals draw on the readers' emotional response to the subject and on shared beliefs and values. Where does the author use language and/or create images that are emotionally charged?

Logos: Logical appeal use reasoning and evidence to support an argument.

Logical appeals draw on facts, stats, research, and financial costs to reach conclusions. Where and how does the author use evidence? What kinds of evidence are used? Does the author use logic to interpret the evidence?

2. Brainstorm Your Introduction

Once you have thought about the "Questions to think about before writing" and responded to the rhetorical appeals prompts, you should have generated enough information for your rhetorical analysis. You are now ready to start drafting your paper.

In a rhetorical analysis paper, the purpose of the introduction is to provide information about what is to come. Introduce the editorial you are analyzing: Who is the writer? Why was the editorial written? Give the full title of the editorial, the date it was published, and the intended audience.

What do you think was the writer's purpose?

What did the writer want the reader to conclude?

What type of argument is it, and how does the type chosen affect the argument? (rhetorical strategy)

What are the rhetorical appeals used by the author? Which appeals will you discuss in your analysis?

How does the writer use the rhetorical strategies and appeals to accomplish his or her purpose? Was the writer successful? The answers to these questions will be your thesis statement.

Rhetorical analysis thesis statement - student example:

The author's emphasis on her first-hand experience as a mother who lost her son to E. coli and use of evidence that is descriptive and data-driven make her argument about FDA policy reform effective.

From this example, can you identify which rhetorical strategies and appeals this student will likely discuss?

3. Develop Your Body Paragraphs

Make sure to analyze instead of summarize your editorial. Each paragraph in the body should have its own topic sentence and a unified focus.

Another good rule of thumb: You should write one paragraph on each of the rhetorical strategies and appeals that you mention in your introduction.

Questions to consider for your outline:

What is the definition of the rhetorical strategy or appeal you are writing about?

What is your evaluation of the writer's use of that rhetorical strategy or appeal in regard to his or her purpose?

How do two or three examples from the editorial illustrate the use of that strategy or appeal?

How does that strategy or appeal contribute to the writer's purpose?

4) Draw to a Conclusion

In the conclusion to your rhetorical analysis essay, summarize the main points of your analysis to explain its significance and to draw to a clear and specific conclusion.

What conclusions can you draw about the role in general of rhetorical appeals and strategies in producing clear and effective communication through writing?

Was the author successful in using rhetorical appeals for the intended audience and purpose?

• FORMAT

All essays must be typed or word-processed in black ink, double-spaced, stapled, set in Times Roman with size 12 font, have 1" margins on all sides and adhere to current MLA style guidelines.

Each paper must have your name, my name, the course title and section number, date and assignment title (e.g. Essay 1: Rhetorical Analysis) in the upper left hand corner of the first page and the student's last name and page number in upper right hand corner of each succeeding page.

Each paper should also have a title which is centered one line above the first line of your essay. Do not skip lines between paragraphs. Please include a "Works Cited" page for your editorial.

