

SUMMARY & RHETORICAL ANALYSIS (150 PTS)

First Draft Due Tuesday, 10/22

Final Draft Due Thursday, 10/24
(in a two-pocket folder and on BB)

RATIONALE

In this age of social media, we are constantly bombarded with information: advertising, political messages, news reports, and endless, endless memes. Being able to analyze these messages is an important skill to have, not only as a college student but as a professional in your field and as a citizen of the world. At every turn, we encounter a host of different perspectives and experiences that attempt to persuade us—and such attempts are not always ethical, honest, or made in good faith. Understanding the rhetorical tools used to communicate not only helps you better understand the messages others attempt to convey, but it also helps you more effectively express your *own* intentions and ideas. Being aware of the rhetorical situation of any given argument will help you become a more effective, sophisticated, and ethical communicator/writer, which is essential to ensuring your success in the roles you will play before *and* after you graduate.

YOUR TASK

For this assignment, you will be writing a summary and rhetorical analysis of Molly Worthen's "U Can't Talk to Ur Professor Like This," which can be found on pages 165-170 of our textbook (and which we will be discussing in class on Tuesday, October 15th). The first paragraph after your introduction should concisely summarize the text. Then, drawing on rhetorical concepts discussed in your textbook and in class, compose an analysis that examines the text's use of appeals in light of the rhetorical situation the text constructs.

In order to conduct your analysis, consider the following questions:

- What values, assumptions, and beliefs must one possess in order for the argument to be persuasive?
- In what larger social or cultural conversations does the text participate?
- How is the argument structured? What proof is provided to back up claims?
- What stylistic choices are significant to the (in)effectiveness of the argument?

Be sure to include the vocabulary we learn in class in your paper: rhetorical situation, purpose, audience, context, rhetorical appeals (ethos, pathos, logos), etc. Your analysis should demonstrate your understanding of these concepts and your ability to apply them appropriately.

FORMATTING

- ✚ Required page length: 3-4 pages
- ✚ Times New Roman size 12 font
- ✚ Double-spaced
- ✚ One-inch margins all around
- ✚ Your essay must have an **original title**
- ✚ The first page of your paper should look like the example of a properly-formatted MLA-style document, which can be found here:
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_sample_paper.html

EVALUATION CRITERIA

CONTENT—Does the essay respond thoughtfully to the assignment? Have you presented a clear thesis that provides the ultimate focus of your discussion, and does your essay successfully work in the service of that thesis? Is your analysis sophisticated, detailed, nuanced, and thorough? Throughout the essay, do you provide concrete examples, evidence, and illustrations from the text to support the points you make? Are you accurately referencing and citing the text as you quote, paraphrase, and summarize?

ORGANIZATION—How effective is the organization (the order in which information is presented) of your essay? Is all the material that is included, and information that is presented, made relevant to the discussion and thus to your thesis? Are you writing effective transitions and cohesive, coherent paragraphs? How effective are the opening and closing of the essay?

STYLE—Are you successfully maintaining a consistent third-person point of view (use of first person is not forbidden, but remember to try to maintain emotional distance from the analysis)? Are your sentences clear and maybe even sophisticated? Do you vary your sentence structures to create interest for the reader? Is your vocabulary precise and mature, avoiding repetition and vagueness? To what extent is your essay free of mechanical errors in spelling, syntax, and punctuation?

SCORING

Your essay will be evaluated according to the following characteristics:

Purpose/Focus (20 pts): The essay's focus (thesis) is clear, easy to identify, and successfully demonstrates understanding of the assignment's genre (Summary & Rhetorical Analysis).

Summary (30 pts): The summary paragraph is concise, accurate, fair, and evenhanded.

Analysis (60 pts): The analysis is well developed and demonstrates a strong understanding of rhetorical terms and concepts; evidence/examples from the text are provided in support of analytical claims.

Organization (20 pts): The essay follows a logical organization, with effective transitions and paragraph structures; all included material is relevant to the thesis.

Style (20 pts): Writing is polished and reasonably free from errors that obscure meaning and clarity.