

The Rhetorical Analysis

AP English Language & Composition

What is Rhetoric?

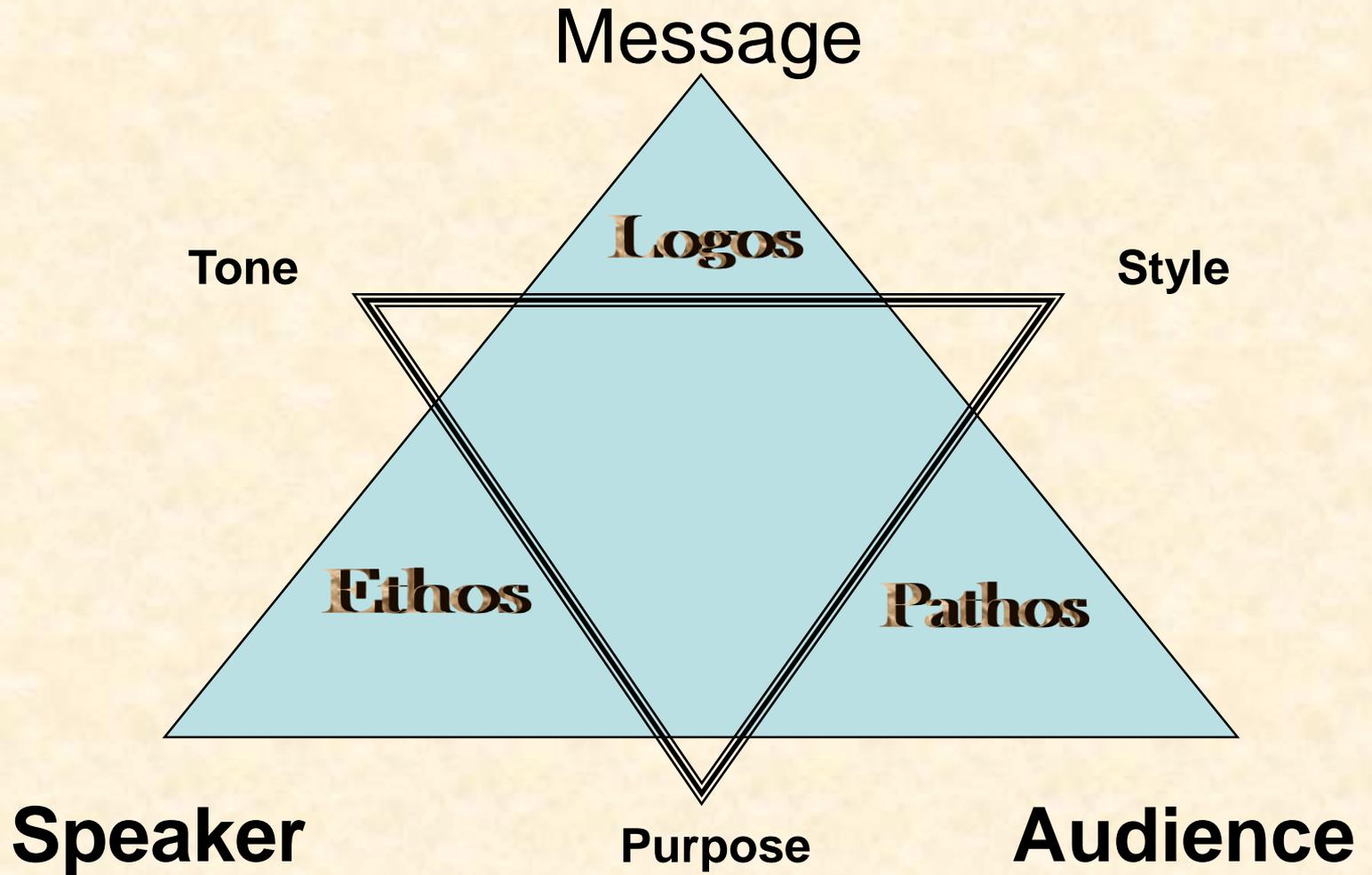
Consider all of the following when analyzing a text

- What is said (*message*)
- Who is saying it (*speaker*)
- Who is listening (*audience*)
- Where / when it is being said (*context, appeals*)
- Why it is being said (*purpose*)
- How it is being said (*tone, style*)

What is the Rhetorical Triangle?

- Shows the relationship between speaker, audience, message, style, purpose, tone
- Understanding these rhetorical elements makes both writing and analysis much clearer

The Rhetorical Triangle



The Author / Speaker

- Gender / racial / geographical/ socioeconomic/ political orientation of author
- Author Bias / hidden agenda
- Other important biographical information may affect text

The Audience

- Are they friend or foe? (hostile or sympathetic)
- How will they receive the message?
- How will they affect tone? style?
- Who is the intentional audience?
- Who is the unintentional audience?
- Over time, does the message/effect of the message change as the audience changes?

The Message

- Consider this when trying to identify the exact message:
 - What is the topic (1-2 words) about which the piece is written?
 - What is the most important aspect or perspective about that topic that the author wants you to understand?
 - What, exactly, does the author want the reader to think/do/feel/say?
 - What is the “no” on the other side of the author’s “yes?” (And vice versa)

The Style

- What strategies does the author employ in order to get his / her message across?
- These strategies may include: ethos, logos, pathos; organization; diction; syntax; figurative language; grammatical structure; selection of details; imagery

Summary

- Remember – it is **not one** of these elements of the rhetorical triangle that can be used to analyze a text; **it is the relationships between** these rhetorical elements that composes the meaning we get from a text!
- True analysis is not only the **what**, but also the **why** and the **how**!

The Ethical Appeal

- **ETHOS** –This refers to the writer’s credibility and character, his/her presentation of “self.”
- It’s how the writer/speaker establishes trust and respect, with his/her audience.
- **Ask:** Is the writer/speaker **ethical** enough to be a reliable source of information about the subject?
- Is the writer/speaker believable, sincere, fair-minded?



The Logical Appeal

- **LOGOS** – The use of **research, facts, statistics, expert testimony, witnesses, scientific data, etc.**
- **Ask:** Does the argument make sense?
- Does it evoke a cognitive, rational response?



The Emotional Appeal

- **PATHOS** – The use of words and images to evoke emotions such as fear, anger, empathy, jealousy, pity, love, etc.
- **Pathos may include:**
 - Language that Appeals to the Senses
 - A Bias or Prejudice
 - An Anecdote
 - Connotative Language
 - Figurative Language
 - Informal Language
- **Ask:** How does the speaker try to make the audience **empathize** with the piece?
 - What does the piece make you feel?



A Venn diagram consisting of three overlapping circles. The top circle is yellow and labeled 'pathos'. The bottom-left circle is blue and labeled 'ethos'. The bottom-right circle is pink and labeled 'logos'. The central area where all three circles overlap is a dark reddish-brown color. The overlapping area between 'pathos' and 'ethos' is a greyish-green color. The overlapping area between 'pathos' and 'logos' is an orange color. The overlapping area between 'ethos' and 'logos' is a purple color.

pathos

ethos

logos

Now that you know...

see if you can identify how each of the appeals—logos, pathos, and ethos—are used in the following print advertisements. Here is your first chance to try out your knowledge... The Magnus Harmonica!

What you need
is a
MAGNUS
ALL PLASTIC Harmonica

Easy to play... instructions in every package. Durable, hygienic... can be washed with soap and water. \$1. plus tax in black \$1.15 plus tax in bright colors. Sold at all stores.

Learn to play in 5 minutes—Write for **FREE** instruction booklet and song folio.

International Plastic Harmonica Corp., Newark, N. J.



What you need
is a



Easy
to play . . .
instructions in
every package.
Durable, hygienic
. . . can be washed
with soap and water.
\$1. plus tax in black
\$1.15 plus tax in
bright colors. Sold
at all stores.

Learn to play in
5 minutes—Write
for **FREE** instruction
booklet and song
folio.

International Plastic Harmonica Corp., Newark, N. J.

Did you notice

Pathos: The expressions on their face communicate specific emotions. The word “free” is also shown in the description (this is a loaded or emotional word). The words, “What you need is a Magnus...” suggest that the harmonica will be the solution to the man’s unhappiness. The words, “easy to play” seem to say that the man will have no trouble playing the harmonica on the first try, so he will not be disappointed in his performance (and his unhappiness will be relieved). The ad goes on to say that you can “learn to play in 5 minutes”

Ethos: The harmonica is sold by a company called “International Plastic Harmonica Corporation.” This suggests that this brand of harmonica is known around the world (although, if we look carefully, we notice that their business is run out of Newark, NJ).

Logos: The description of the harmonica offers us specific facts and features that persuade us to purchase the harmonica—“instructions in every package...can be washed in soap and water...” They also offer us a choice of colors and pricing options.

What you need
is a
MAGNUS
ALL PLASTIC Harmonica

Easy to play . . . instructions in every package. Durable, hygienic . . . can be washed with soap and water. \$1. plus tax in black \$1.15 plus tax in bright colors. Sold at all stores.

Learn to play in 5 minutes—Write for **FREE** instruction booklet and song folio.

International Plastic Harmonica Corp., Newark, N. J.

Guard Against Throat-Scratch

enjoy the smooth smoking of fine tobaccos - the finest quality money can buy



Wherever you go, notice how many people have changed to PALL MALL in the distinguished red package

**THE FINEST QUALITY
MONEY CAN BUY**

Handle With Care - You Can Measure



There's something about a **GREYHOUND-**



that makes it the **FRIENDLY** way to travel!

The people you meet aboard a Greyhound somehow seem more neighborly, more relaxed, easier to talk to.

Greyhound's extremely low fares help, too, for a person who has just bought a travel bargain is sure to be in a pleasant frame of mind.

Don't expect a Royal Welcome
if you bring
INFECTIOUS DANDRUFF!



Germs
(BOTTLE BACILLUS)

Flakes
Scales

And NOW this...

Now that we have looked closely at a selection of advertisements, let's see if any of the things you noticed match what I saw... What appeals did you notice and how were they used?



Pathos: Everyone shown in this image is smiling. Happiness seems to surround them as they sit together in what seems to be a ski lodge. They are dressed warmly and are sitting near a glowing fireplace. The red of the cigarette package stands out against the black and white image—this seems to suggest that the owner of the cigarettes might also “distinguish” himself (or stand out from the crowd) by owning the cigarettes. Loaded words like “smooth,” “finest quality,” “distinguished,” and “finest money can buy” suggest wealthy and upper class living.

Ethos: Pall Mall attempts to give their argument credibility by showing us a picture of one man offering the cigarettes to another. The man offering the cigarettes seems slightly older than the man receiving the cigarettes, maybe suggesting that the older man’s experience qualifies him to make a recommendation.

Logos: Interestingly, there is little or no evidence of a logical appeal, although the words, “guard against throat scratch” seem to suggest that smoking other brands will cause your throat to scratch.

Throat-Scratch

cacos - the finest quality money can buy



onged to PALL MALL in the distinguished red package

THE FINEST QUALITY
MONEY CAN BUY

There's something ab



that makes it the **FF**

The people you meet aboard a Greyhound somehow seem more neighborly, more relaxed, easier to talk to.

Pathos: As in the other advertisement, everyone shown in this image is smiling. Happiness seems to surround them as they sit together in the seats of a Greyhound bus. Everyone is formally dressed and neatly groomed. “The friendly way to travel” suggests that driving in a car, or riding your bike, are more aggressive. The ad also states, “The people you meet aboard a Greyhound somehow seem more neighborly, more relaxed, easier to talk to.” In fact, it looks like this group of people could have come from the same neighborhood.

Ethos: The ethical appeal is harder to see. Greyhound seems to be relying on the credibility of its name, and its presentation as a safe and clean environment in the advertisement.

Logos: Greyhound uses its low fares as evidence to support the passenger’s friendly attitude: “a person who has bought a travel bargain is sure to be in a pleasant frame of mind.” They don’t offer any specific pricing information, however.

Don't expect a Royal Wel
if you bring
INFECTIOUS DANDRU



Pathos: The man appears to be in the role of the husband returning home to his wife after a long day of work. He reaches for her, hat in hand, and instead of the “royal welcome” he expects, the man is greeted by the scrutinizing stare of his wife, whose expression seems to communicate suspicion, anxiety and possibly disgust. The font exclaims: “INFECTIOUS DANDRUFF!” Infectious is a loaded or emotional word that carries a negative connotation similar in tone to the expression on the woman’s face.

Ethos: The ethical argument is harder to see and seems connected to the pseudoscience (false scientific facts and information) pictured on the man’s shoulder.

Logos: The close-up image of the germs, flakes, and scales pictured on the man’s shoulder attempt to create a sense of scientific evidence, although they ultimately come across as specious.

Rhetorical Modes

Rhetorical Modes of Writing

- Good writing depends on factors such as purpose, type of writing, appealing to the audience, developing intended tone. That's why knowledge of the major categories of the **rhetorical modes** is important.
- - Rhetorical modes are patterns of organization aimed at achieving a particular effect in the reader.

1. Compare & Contrast

- Shows how things/topics are ALIKE and DIFFERENT.
- What things have in common/not in common.
- How concepts or items are similar/different.
- The similarities or differences between ideas or aspects of things.
- ***Features/Words:***
- similarly, like, the same as, compared to, in the same way, likewise, both...
- but, yet, on the other hand, however, instead, nevertheless, on the contrary, as opposed to, in contrast

2. Cause & Effect

- Start with a subject and tell the causes and/or effects.
- Explains the reasons why something happened or the results.
-
- **Features:** because, as a result, leading to, ultimately can cause; uses logic like “if this... then this...”

3. Example/Exemplification/Explanation

- giving an example – an example/situation that proves your main idea.
- giving an explanation/expository in nature
- **Feature:** for example, to illustrate this point, for instance, case in point, as shown by, as evidenced by, as demonstrated by...

4. Definition

- trying to define what something is like the dictionary, but much longer
- time order/chronology/process
- ***Features:***
- includes a key term that is being defined (who or what)
- includes the definition/classification--the group of people, events, or things to which it belongs
- includes a brief summarizing description of the term

5. Argument/Persuasion

- Anything that can be debated; an opinion; a stance
- ***Features:*** usually includes a thesis and supporting evidence

6. Classification

- Defining/explaining what group/category something, someone, or some event fits into
- Identifying a subject and breaking it down into little parts
- **Features:** categories, classifications, groups, classes, ways, elements, features, kinds, types, varieties, methods, movement

7. Description

- illustrative detail
- detailed writing that uses sensory imagery and/or explaining who, what, when, where, why
- ***Features:***
- spatial words (over there, above, under, into, in front of, beside, next to)

8. Narration

- a story, a series of events
- ***Features:*** time words in terms of sequence (ex. Then, later, first, after, next, suddenly, following this, slowly)