

The Rhetorical Analysis Essay

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An **analysis** is a detailed examination of the elements of a text. **Rhetoric** is the art of persuasion. Therefore, a **rhetorical analysis** is an examination of the elements an author uses to persuade the reader of their point. Identifying the author's argument is the first step to writing a rhetorical analysis; once you've identified their argument the next step is to analyze *how* and *how efficiently* the author delivers this argument through **rhetorical devices/features**. You will need to support your analysis with evidence from the text, external sources, or both, depending on the requirements of the assignment. Some rhetorical devices include genre, author's purpose, audience, logos, ethos, pathos, and style/voice.

Genre: The way works are categorized due to similarities in form, style, or subject (e.g. science fiction, nonfiction, fantasy).

Author's Purpose: The author's reason or intent for writing (e.g. to persuade, inform, satirize).

Audience: Those in which the writer intentionally addresses.

Logos: An appeal to the audiences' sense of reason or logic.

Ethos: An appeal to the audiences' ethics.

Pathos: An appeal to the audiences' emotion.

Kairos: The right moment to present a text for maximum intended emotional efficiency.

Style/Voice: The persona the author presents through tone and word choice.