

Rhetorical Analysis Writing Guidelines

The most important aspect of rhetorical analysis is reading the passage and prompt accurately.

Once you have generated notes on what you understand to be the rhetorical situation, you are ready to plan and write your rhetorical analysis.

Your Title:

- Make it brief and descriptive

Your Introduction:

- Set up the rhetorical situation: the subject, the writer, the context, the audience, and the principal aim/purpose of the text.
 - Completing a quick WECAMP via annotation will help you discover this information. **THIS IS THE CRUCIAL FIRST STEP.**
- If the writer makes a central claim, state it.
- End your introduction with a thesis statement which links the rhetorical situation to what you perceive to be the most noteworthy features of the passage which advance purpose and affect the audience. (See possible noteworthy features below.)

Your Body Paragraphs:

- Develop a clear and supported analysis of these possible noteworthy features in light of the rhetorical situation:
 - diction (level and style → tone)
 - figurative language, symbolism, allusion (biblical, historical, etc.),
 - prominent tone: humorous, ironic/satirical, urgent, etc.
 - imagery
 - number and length of paragraphs
 - length and style of sentences
 - rhythm and repetition
 - logical reasoning
 - rhetorical questions
 - anecdotal stories / personal experience
 - statistics
 - contrasts between two ideas or images or situations
 - shifts in tone or style or message or purpose
 - appeals to shared values
 - emphasizing the moral or academic authority of the writer
 - emotional appeals
 - counter-arguments
 - formal language
 - figurative language
 - repetition of words, phrases, ideas
 - flow which organizes evidence to support a conclusion
- **KEY: How do these particular noteworthy aspects of the passage enable the writer to achieve her/his purpose? How do they help the writer develop a clear argument? How do they help the writer connect to the audience? How do they motivate the audience to action?**

Your Conclusion:

Use your conclusion to comment on the effectiveness of the passage as a whole, but avoid simply repeating ideas already made clear in the body. Consider including a final ethical comment on the subject discussed in the original passage.

Note the following conventions of writing your analysis:

- Analyze a text in the simple present tense
- Enclose essay titles inside quotation marks
- Refer to yourself using first person (but limit your use of phrases like “I believe”)
- Support your claims with textual evidence (brief, direct quotations and paraphrases)