An Introduction to Rhetoric: Using the “Available Means”
Assignment

- Follow along with your notes from the PowerPoint. Add to the notes to reinforce the concepts presented.
Key Elements of Rhetoric

- Rhetoric is always situational: it always has a context and a purpose.
  - **Context**: the occasion, time, place it was written or spoken
  - **Purpose**: goal that the speaker or writer wants to achieve.
Nowadays, the word “rhetoric” is often used to signal deception.

Rhetoric means the effective use of language to communicate an idea.

Rhetoric can serve sincerity (as in Lou Gehrig’s speech) as well as trickery.
Key Elements of Rhetoric

- **Context** of Lou Gehrig’s speech is the poignant contrast between the celebration of his athletic career and his life-threatening diagnosis.
Key Elements of Rhetoric

- **Purpose** of Lou Gehrig’s speech is to remain positive and downplay his “bad break.”

[Link to related content: http://www.baseballforum.com/]
Key Elements of Rhetoric

- Context and Purpose are essential to analyzing effective rhetoric.

First, consider the context: occasion, time, place;

Then, consider the purpose: What is the speaker’s goal in this communication?
Key Elements of Rhetoric

- Remember that sometimes **context** arises from current events or cultural bias.
The Rhetorical Triangle

Speaker

Purpose

Subject

Audience
**SPEAKER**: The voice that tells the story. The author and the speaker are NOT necessarily the same.

When analyzing non-fiction, consider important **facts** about speaker, from the text, that will help assess his/her point of view or position.
When discussing the speaker of an essay, the author’s name is never enough. Question: what do we know about the speaker by reading the text?
OCCASION: (part of the context): The time and place of the piece; the context that encouraged the writing to happen. Writing does not occur in a vacuum.

• Larger Occasion: an environment of ideas and emotions that swirl around a broad issue.

• Immediate Occasion: an event or situation that catches the writer’s attention and triggers a response.
AUDIENCE:

The group of readers or listeners to whom this piece is directed.

The audience may be one person, a small group, or a large group; it may be a certain person or a certain people.
PURPOSE:
The reason behind the text. The author/speaker’s GOAL in the communication.

Consider the purpose of the text in order to examine the argument and its logic.

“What does the speaker want the audience to think or do as a result of reading this text?”
Purpose

- Is the speaker...
  - Trying to win agreement?
  - Persuade us to take action?
  - Evoke sympathy?
  - Make us laugh?
  - Inform?
Purpose

Does the speaker want to...

- Provoke?
- Celebrate?
- Repudiate?
- Put forth a proposal?
- Secure support?
- Bring about a favorable decision?
The general topic, content, and ideas contained in the text. The main idea. You should be able to state the subject in a few words or a phrase.
The **attitude** of the author toward the subject matter. With the written work, it is **tone** that extends meaning beyond the literal.
TONE is determined by examining:

- diction (word choice)
- syntax (word order)
- imagery (vivid descriptions that appeal to the senses).
Tone

- Tone: Is the author...
  - amiable?
  - detached?
  - passionate?
  - zealous?
  - sardonic?
  - sincere?
Tone: Is the author...
- matter-of-fact?
- authoritative?
- nostalgic?
- condescending?
- insolent?
- angry?
Appeals: How to Persuade

- **Ethos**: appeals to a sense of character, credibility, authority.
  - The writer makes a good impression.
  - The reader believes the writer knows what he or she is talking about.
  - The speaker’s ethos is his expertise, knowledge, experience, training, sincerity, or a combination.
Appeals: How to Persuade

- **Logos**: appeals to reason, sense of logic.
  - Solid facts
  - Sound argument
  - Acknowledge the counterargument
  - Concession and refutation
Appeals: How to Persuade

- **Pathos**: appeals to emotion
  - Figurative language
  - Personal anecdote
  - First person
  - Strong connotations.
The Aristotle Appeals

Ethos

Pathos

Context

Logos
Logical Fallacies

- Attractive but unreliable pieces of reasoning.
Logical Fallacies

- Relying too heavily on ethos (such as celebrity endorsement) without corroborating logos, can be a fallacy.

- Relying too much on emotion without corroborating logos, can be a fallacy.
Important Note

- When analyzing, we refer to appealing to ethos, logos or pathos.

- We NEVER say the author uses ethos, logos or pathos.
Logos

- Is generally considered the strongest form of persuasion.
Visual Rhetoric

Editorial Cartoons
1960

Do you have Prince Albert in a can?

Hee Hee

Today

Let's knock out the power grid in the entire Western Hemisphere

Hee Hee
Arrangement

✦ Another element of rhetoric: organization of an essay or speech.
Arrangement

- Classic arrangement:
  - Introduction: draws the reader in
  - Narration: facts and background
  - Confirmation: main part developing the proof
  - Refutation: addresses the counterargument
  - Conclusion: appeal to pathos, reminds reader of ethos established earlier. Answers the question, “so what?”
Modern Patterns of Development:
- Narration
- Description
- Process Analysis
- Exemplification
- Comparison and Contrast
- Classification and Division
- Definition
- Cause and Effect
At the end of your notes, summarize the information you have learned so far about Rhetoric.