

Further Tips for Writing a Classical Rhetorical Analysis

The following information connects to p. 232 of *Acting on Words*.

Apply the Following Useful Outline for a Rhetorical Analysis

Introduction -- identify the writing and author, briefly summarize the writing situation and essay's content, identify the probable target audiences and author's thesis, and provide your own thesis, outlining how logos, pathos, and ethos are used and to what effect.

First body paragraph – if necessary, give any context and support that there wasn't room for in the intro. (how you identified the audience and thesis, for example). Otherwise, go on to discuss the strategies as outlined below.

Second and subsequent body paragraphs – identify the main strategies used by the author to appeal to the audience(s) using logos, pathos, and ethos. These are not necessarily discrete categories, and an example that is used to support your discussion of logos may also fit in well under another category.

Conclusion – brief summary of points made, as well as an assessment of the effectiveness of the strategies used and of the piece as a whole in persuading the audience of the author's thesis.

Recognize the Appeals

- ❖ *Logos* – methods (cause-effect, comparison, classification, definition, illustration –examples) as well as use of evidence, primary and secondary, facts, statistics, etc. Note any logical fallacies (see Chapter 3) which may undermine the author's argument.

- ❖ *Pathos* – methods (narration, description), diction (emotionally evocative language, including figurative language). Note any unfair use of language and “trigger” words.
- ❖ *Ethos* – evidence of fairness (recognizes opposing views, correct use of source material), ethical behavior and character. It may be established by reputation prior to the piece of work, but should be reinforced by what we read here.

Practice Activity

For practice, you may want to write or make an outline for your own analysis on one of the following essays: “The Other Canadians and Canada’s Future” (p. 416), “A Liberal Education is Key to a Civil Society” (p. 461), and “Canadians: What do They Want?” (p. 467). Then, compare your essay to the student analyses at this website, Chapter 15, “Classical Rhetorical Analysis: Four Samples.” Look for similarities and differences between your approach and the one used in the sample. You may come up with different, though equally convincing, ideas.