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# ARS RHETORICA

COMPILED FOR  
THE NEW SAT (ESSAY)

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A NUMBER OF FASCINATING AND LIFE-CHANGING EXPLANATIONS AND  
EXAMPLES  
PRESENTED IN A CLEAR AND USEABLE WAY

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# Chapter 1

## Rhetoric

### 1.1 Overview

- Set your **goals** and the argument's **tense**
- Think of whether you want to emphasize **character**, **logic**, or **emotion**
- Make sure the **time** and the **medium** are ripe for persuasion

**Cicero's speech outline:**

1. Introduction
2. Narration
3. Division
4. Proof
5. Refutation
6. Conclusion

### 1.2 Goals

#### 1.2.1 Personal Goal

What you want from your audience

#### 1.2.2 Audience Goals

- Mood: This is the easiest thing to change
- Mind: A step up in difficulty from changing the mood
- Willingness to act: Hardest of all, because it requires an emotional commitment and identification with the action

### 1.2.3 Issue control

Mastering argument's chief topics

- Blame (Forensic): Covers the past. Its chief topics are *guilt* and *innocence*
- Values (Demonstrative): Get argued in the present tense. Chief topics are *praise* and *blame*.
- Choice (Deliberative): Deals with the future. Its chief topic is the *advantageous* - what's best for the audience.

## 1.3 Ethos

This is argument by character - using your reputation or someone else's as the basis for argument. When you give a speech, play up your character - or what you want the audience to think it is. Its three chief aspects are virtue (areté), practical wisdom (phronesis), and disinterest (eunoia).

### 1.3.1 Decorum

Your ability to fit in with the audience's expectation of a trustworthy leader.

- Code Grooming: Using language unique to the audience
- Identity Strategy: Getting an audience to identify with an action - to see the choice as one that helps define them as a group
- Irony: Saying one thing to outsiders with a meaning revealed only to your group

### 1.3.2 Virtue, or Cause

The appearance of living up to your audience's values, areté.

- Bragging: The straightforward, and least effective, way to enhance your virtue
- Witness Bragging: An endorsement by a third party, the more disinterested the better
- Tactical Flaw: A defect or mistake, intentionally revealed, that shows your rhetorical virtue
- Switching Sides: Appearing to have supported the powers that be all along
- Throwing the support behind the inevitable: Enthusiastically endorse the opponent's view to show off your virtue. Only use if you're bound to lose anyway.

### 1.3. ETHOS

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- Logic-free Values: Focusing on the individual values-words and common-places to bring a group together and get it to identify with you.
- Identity: Get people to describe themselves. Usually the first thing they mention reveals their best sense of who they are. And most people will do just about anything to live up to that identity.
- The Halo: Sum up the issue in a few words. Suss out the values of your audience. Now, find a representative or piece of the issue that can symbolize those values.

#### 1.3.3 Practical Wisdom, or Craft

Phronesis, a type of wisdom relevant to practical things, requiring an ability to discern how or why to act virtuously and encourage practical virtue, excellence of character, in others.

- Showing off experience
- Bending the rules
- Appearing to take the middle course

#### 1.3.4 Disinterest, or Caring

Eunoia - an apparent willingness to sacrifice your own interests for the greater good.

- Reluctant Conclusion: Appearing to have reached your conclusion only because of its overwhelming rightness
- Personal Sacrifice: Claiming that the choice will help your audience more than it will help you.
- Dubitatio: Seeming doubtful of your own rhetorical skill

#### 1.3.5 Liar detector

Techniques for judging a person's credibility.

- Needs Test: Do the persuader's needs match your needs?
- Comparable Experience: Has the persuader actually done what he's talking about?
- Dodged Question: Ask who benefits from the choice. If you don't get a straight answer, don't trust that person's disinterest.
- 'That depends' Filter: Instead of a one-size-fits-all choice, the persuader offers a solution tailored to you.

- ‘Sussing’ Ability: The persuader cuts to the chase of an issue.
- Extremes: How does the persuader describe the opposing argument? How close is his middle-of-the-road to yours?
- Extremist Detector: An extremist will describe a moderate choice as extreme.
- Virtue Yardstick: Does the persuader find the sweet spot between the extremes of your values?
- Code Inoculation: Be aware of the terms that define the groups you belong to, and watch out when a persuader uses them.

### 1.3.6 Screw-up Recovery

Enhancing your ethos through your own mistakes.

- Set your goals right after you screw up
- Be first with the news
- Switch immediately to the future
- Avoid belittling the victim
- Don’t apologize. Instead, express your feelings about not living up to your standards.

## 1.4 Pathos

Argument by emotion is the seductive part of persuasion. Pathos can cause a mood change, make an audience more receptive to your logic, and give them an emotional commitment to your goal.

### 1.4.1 Sympathy

Registering concern for your audience’s emotions.

- Oversympathizing: Exaggerated sympathy can make your audience feel ashamed of an emotion you want to change.

### 1.4.2 Belief

This is the key to emotion.

- Experience: Refer to the audience’s own experience, or plant one in their heads; this is the past tense of belief.
- Storytelling: A way to give the audience a virtual experience.
- Expectation: Make an audience expect something good or bad, and the appropriate emotion will follow.



## 1.4. PATHOS

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### 1.4.3 Volume Control

Underplaying an emotion, or gradually increasing it so that the audience can feel it along with you

- Simple speech: Don't use fancy language when you get emotional.

### 1.4.4 Unannounced Emotion

Avoid tipping off your audience in advance of a mood. They'll resist it.

### 1.4.5 Passive Voice

If you want to direct an audience's anger away from someone, imply that the action happened on its own: "The chair got broken," not "Pablo broke the chair."

### 1.4.6 Backfire

You can calm an individual's emotion in advance by overplaying it yourself. This works especially well when you screw up and want to prevent the wrath of an authority.

### 1.4.7 Persuasive Emotions

- Anger: One of the most effective ways to rouse an audience to action. But it's a short-lived emotion.
- Belittlement Charge: Show your opponent disrespecting your audience's desires. A belittled audience is an angry one.
- Patriotism: Attaches a choice or action to the audience's sense of group identity.
- Emulation: Emotional response to a role model. The greater your ethos, the more the audience will imitate you.
- Humor: A good calming device that can enhance your ethos.
  - Urbane Humor: Plays off a word or part of speech.
  - Wit: Situational Humor.
  - Facetious Humor: Joke telling, a relatively ineffective form of persuasion.
  - Banter: Snappy answers - works best in defense.

### 1.4.8 Figures of Speech

- Cliché Twisting: Using overworked language to your advantage.
  - Literal Interpretation: Reducing a cliché to absurdity by seeming to take it at face value.
  - Surprise Ending: Starting a cliché as it's normally said, but ending it differently.
  - Reworking: Switching words around in a cliché
- Word Swap: Changing normal usage and grammar for effect.
  - Chiasmus: Creates a crisscross sentence.
- Weighing both sides: Comparing or contrasting opinions in order to define the issue.
  - Either/Or Figure (Dialysis): Weighs each side equally.  
*"You're either for us, or against us."*
  - Contrasting Figure (Antithesis): Emphasizes the difference between the two ideas.  
*"The success of our economy has always depended not just on the size of our gross domestic product, but on the reach of our prosperity..."*  
(Barack Obama)
  - Meaning-change Figure (Antistasis): Repeats a word in a way that uses or defines it differently.  
*"He that composes himself is wiser than he that composes a book."*  
(Benjamin Franklin)
- Editing Out Loud: Interrupting yourself or your opponent to correct something.
  - Self-correction Figure (Metanoia): Lets you amplify an argument while seeming to be fair and accurate.
  - Redefiner (Correctio): Repeats the opponent's language and corrects it.
- Volume Control: Amplifying or calming speech through figures.
  - Ironic understatement.  
*"I lived at West Egg, the — well, the less fashionable of the two, though this is a most superficial tag to express the bizarre and not a little sinister contrast between them."* (*The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald)
  - Climax: Uses overlapping words in successive phrases in a rhetorical crescendo. ...the author lays example after example of (positive/negative events), building

## 1.5. LOGOS

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- Word Invention: Figures help you create new words or meanings from old words
  - Verbing (Anthimeria): Turns a noun into a verb or vice versa.
  - “Like” Figure (Parecon): Strips a word of meaning and uses it as a pause or for emphasis. (*“Like,” “You know,”*)

## 1.5 Logos

Argument by logic. People like to think that all argument should be nothing but logic; however, Aristotle said that when it comes to persuasion, rational speech needs emotion and character as well.

### 1.5.1 Deduction

Applying a general principle to a particular matter.

- Enthymeme: A logic sandwich that contains deduction. “We should [choice], because [commonplace].” Aristotle took formal logic’s syllogism, stripped it down, and based it on a commonplace instead of a universal truth.
- Proof Spotter: A proof consists of examples or a premise. A premise usually begins with “because,” or implies it.
- Commonplace: Any cliché, belief, or value that can serve as your audience’s boiled-down public opinion. It’s the starting point of your argument.
  - Babbling: An audience’s repetition of a word or idea; it often reveals a commonplace.
  - Rejection: Another good commonplace spotter. An audience will often use a commonplace when it rejects your argument.
  - Commonplace Label: Applying a commonplace to an idea, a proposal, or a piece of legislation as part of a definition strategy.

### 1.5.2 Induction

Argument by example. It starts with the specific and moves to the general.

- Fact, Comparison, Story: The three kinds of examples to use in inductive logic.

### 1.5.3 Concession

Using your opponent’s own argument to your advantage.

### 1.5.4 Framing

Shaping the bounds of an argument.

- Framing Strategy
  1. Find the audience's commonplaces.
  2. Define the issue broadly, appealing to the values of the widest audience.
  3. Deal with the specific problem or choice, using the future tense.
- Definition Strategy: Controlling the language used in an argument.
- Term Change: Inserting your own language in place of your opponent's.
- Redefinition: Accepting your opponent's terms while changing their connotation.
- Definition Jujitsu: Using your opponent's language to attack him.
- Definition Judo: Using terms that contrast with your opponent's, creating a context that makes him look bad.

### 1.5.5 Logical Fallacies

- Bad Proof: The argument's commonplace or principle is unacceptable, or the examples are bad.
  - False Comparison: Two things are similar, so they must be the same.
  - Fallacy of Association: A is a member of group B. A is a member of group C. Therefore, group B is C. For example, natural ingredients are good for you, so anything called "natural" is healthful.
  - Appeal to Popularity (Argumentum ad populum): Concludes that a proposition is true because many or most people believe it: "If many believe so, it is so."
  - Hasty Generalization: Uses too few examples and interprets them too broadly
  - Misinterpreting the Evidence: Takes the exception and claims it proves the rule.
  - Unit Fallacy: Confusing the part for the whole
  - Argument from Ignorance (Ad Ignorantium): Claims that if something has not been proven, it must be false.
- Bad Conclusion: We're given too many choices, or not enough, or the conclusion is irrelevant to the argument.

## 1.5. LOGOS

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- Many Questions: Squashes two or more issues into a single one. Committed when someone asks a question that presupposes something that has not been proven or accepted by all the people involved.
- False Dilemma: Offers the audience two choices when more actually exist.
- Fallacy of Antecedent: If P, then Q. Therefore, not P, then not Q.
- Red Herring: Introduces an irrelevant issue to distract or confuse the audience. Eg. *“There is a lot of commotion regarding saving the environment. We cannot make this world an Eden. What will happen if it does become Eden? Adam and Eve got bored there!”*
- Straw Man: Sets up a different issue that’s easier to argue. Eg. *“Obama’s going to take all our guns!”*
- Disconnect Between Proof and Conclusion: The proof stands up all right, but it fails to lead to the conclusion.
  - Tautology: A logical redundancy; the proof and the conclusion are the same thing
  - Reductio ad Absurdum: Takes the opponent’s choice and reduces it to an absurdity
  - Slippery Slope: Predicts a series of dire events stemming from one choice.
  - Post Hoc Ergo Propter Hoc: Assumes that if one thing follows another, the first thing caused the second one.

### 1.5.6 Rhetorical Fouls

Mistakes or intentional offenses that stop an argument dead or make it fail to reach a consensus.

- Switching Tenses Away From The Future: It’s fine to use the past or present, but deliberative argument depends on eventually discussing the future.
- Inflexible Insistence On The Rules: Using the voice of God, sticking to your guns, refusing to hear the other side
- Humiliation: An argument that sets out only to debase someone, not to make a choice
- Innuendo: A form of irony used to debase someone. It often plants an idea in the audience’s head by denying it.
- Threatening (Argumentum ad Baculum): It denies the audience a choice.
- Nasty Language or Signs
- Utter Stupidity

## 1.6 Kairos

The Romans called it *occasio*, the art of seizing the occasion. Kairos depends on timing and the medium.

### 1.6.1 Persuadable Moment

When the audience is ripest for your argument

- Moment Spotter: Uncertain moods and beliefs - when minds are already beginning to change - signal a persuadable moment.
- Perfect Audience: Receptive, attentive, and well disposed toward you
- Audience Change: If the current audience isn't ready for persuasion, seek another one. This is what market research is all about.

### 1.6.2 Senses

The five senses are key to the proper medium.

- Sight: Mostly pathos and ethos
- Sound: The most logical sense
- Smell, Taste and Touch: Almost purely emotional

## 1.7 Speechmaking

### 1.7.1 Invention

The crafting part of a speech. Its tools are the tools of logos.

### 1.7.2 Arrangement

The organization of a speech. Ethos first, then logos, then pathos.

- Introduction (Exordium): The ethos part, which wins you the interest and the good will of the audience.
- Narration, or Statement of Facts: Tell the history of the matter or list your facts and figures. If you have time, do both. This part should be brief, clear, and plausible. Don't repeat yourself. State the facts in chronological order, but don't begin at the beginning of time - just the part that is relevant to the immediate argument. Don't startle the audience with "believe it or not" facts - this part should be predictable. What they hear should sound usual, expected, and natural.

## 1.7. SPEECHMAKING

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- Division: List the points where you and your opponent agree and where you disagree. This is where you can get into definitions as well. It's a biological issue. It's an ethical issue. It's a rights issue. It's a practical issue (what benefits our society the most?). It's a fairness issue. Division can actually help your ethos, if you use the reluctant conclusion.
- Proof: Here is where you get into your actual argument, setting out your argument packet ("We should do this because of that") and your examples.
- Refutation: Destroy your opponent's (anticipated) arguments here.
- Conclusion: Restate your best points and, if you want, get a little emotional.

### 1.7.3 Style

Choice of words that make a speech attractive to the listener. The five virtues of style:

- Proper Language: Use words that suit the occasion and your audience
- Clarity: Would the least informed reader understand it?
- Vividness (Enargeia): The ability to create a rhetorical reality before the audience's very eyes. Involves all five senses.
- Decorum: The art of fitting in. Behave the way your audience expects you to.
- Ornament: Rhythm of your voice and the cleverness of your words. Does it sound good when you read it aloud?

### 1.7.4 Memory

The ability to speak without notes.

### 1.7.5 Delivery

The action of giving a speech.

- Voice: Should be loud enough for the room
- Gesture: The eyes are key, even in a large room, because they lead your other facial muscles. Use few hand gestures in a formal speech.