

Elements of Rhetoric



introduction

Rhetoric—is the art of using language to communicate effectively and has been a major part of Western education since the Ancient Greeks.

Appeals in Writing

Three Types of Appeals Exist

These are rhetorical devices used to enhance observations in research papers:

- A. logos— (rational)
- B. pathos— (emotional)
- C. ethos— (ethical)

These are similar to the different **purposes** for papers:

inform, persuade, speculate, entertain, incite, instigate

Of these, the primary purposes for the class assignments will be:

inform
persuade
speculate

Appeals in Writing: Logos

All three of these purposes can be merged into one paper; the longer the work, the greater the necessity for multiple intentions.

Likewise, just as one essay can fulfill multiple purposes, an essay can use multiple appeals; the purpose of the work controls the type of appeal in use.

Logos (rational)

- **Using a rational appeal** requires a burden of proof, or **claim**.

Academic writing requires evidence to back up observations.

Furthermore, rational appeals utilize different types of claims.

Five Types of Claims

1. factual claim: declarative sentence that asserts something about a

- current reality:

Austin is the capital of Texas.

- future condition:

The US plans to colonize Mars by 2030.

- past event:

Vikings discovered the New World hundreds of years before Columbus.

2. value claim: opinion based declarative promoting personal feelings or tastes, detailing preference between two objects, people, situations.

The book, Ulysses, is James Joyce strongest, and most complex, novel.

Five Types of Claims

3. a moral claim is made on the basis of a perscribed code of values (not necessarily religious):

Despite the school board's intentions, teaching creationism in a high school science class does not offer a well-rounded education.

4. causal claims: asserts and defines causes for an event or situation:

Slavery was only one cause of the American Civil War.

5. deliberative claim: a declarative sentence which asserts something should or should *not* be done.

Capital punishment is a necessary deterrent to crime and should continue as a part of Texas' legal process.

Appeals in Writing: Pathos

Pathos (emotional)

- When using a persuasive purpose, an emotional appeal works best.
- Emotional, personal writing produces a reaction from the audience.
- When analyzing an emotional appeal, look carefully at the writer's emotionally charged words and the nature of their use.
- When reading an emotional appeal, be sure to determine:
 - >What emotion is the writer wanting you to feel?
 - >What manner is figurative language being used?
 - >Is the audience being manipulated?
 - >Is the emotion consistent with the purpose?
 - >Is the emotion appropriate to the audience, the situation, and the subject?
 - >Is the emotion the dominant part of the essay (which shows a bias)
or do rational arguments appear the main focus?
 - >Is the emotional material used to *clarify a complex argument*.

Appeals in Writing: Ethos

Ethos (ethical)

- most complicated portion of the rhetorical process
- applies to good debate tactics and public speaking.
- borders on philosophical approaches to your particular life values
- avoidance of *plagiarism or theft of another writer's ideas.*

Essay Writing Modes

- **Understand the boundaries of the assignment:**

- > Date due
- > Page restrictions / word count
- > Prompt specifications

- **Determine :**

- > purpose
- > audience
- > tone
- > point of view

- Again, the primary **purpose** of the assignments in this class serve to inform, persuade or speculate

Essay Writing Modes

- **Audience:**

- > primary audience and secondary audience

- What information does your audience already know?
- What new information will you provide?
- What is your audience's attitude?
- Are they sympathetic, neutral, or against your opinion?
- What is your audience's background?

The answers to these questions will determine:

What tone or level of formality should you use in your essay?

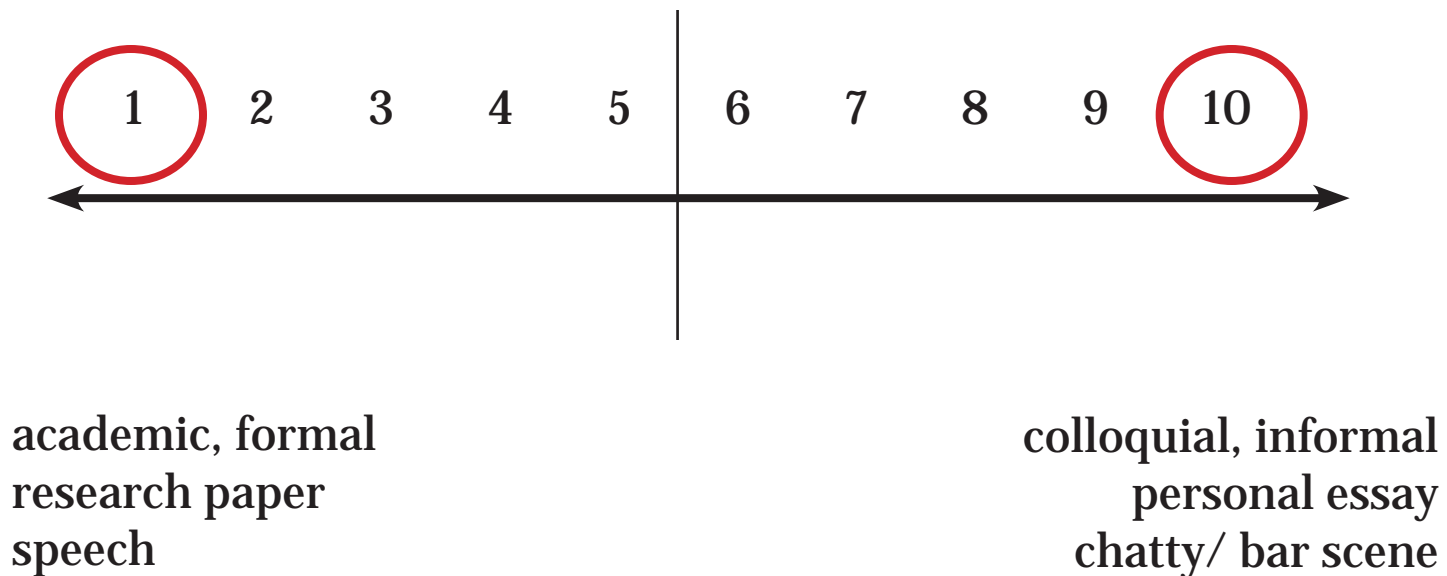
When bringing your opinions together, do you want to cite anger in your audience? Do you want to motivate action as a community?

Essay Writing Modes

Would a formal or informal tone work best in this situation?

• **Tone:** is emotional states expressed in writing:

anger, resentment, over-critical, comical or levels of formal and informal talk



Essay Writing Modes

• **Points of view**

first person: me, myself, I

mostly informal

second person: you, yours, your

third person: he, she, it

mostly formal