

## Rhetorical Analysis of Your Own Writing

LENGTH: 750-1000 Words

FORMAT: Traditional essay (intro, at least three body paragraphs, conclusion)

***For this assignment you will choose a piece of persuasive writing that you've done in the past and then you will analyze it to identify the rhetorical strategies you used (or could have used).***

**Objectives:** To identify your rhetorical strengths and weaknesses; to analyze your own writing style and tone; to practice using quotations and paraphrase; to develop a thesis-driven essay

### Directions:

1. By the deadline on your schedule, find and bring to class a copy of some written argument you've made in the past. This could be a text argument, a twitter argument, a Facebook argument, an email or letter you've written, a paper you've composed, etc. It needs to be attempting to persuade someone to do or think something.
2. In class we will discuss different kinds of rhetorical strategies and logical fallacies, using "Is Google Making Us Stupid?" as an example argument. You will then look for rhetorical strategies and/or logical fallacies in YOUR OWN written argument. Some of the strategies you'll examine will be things like: how did you establish your tone? What words did you use, and how did they impact the tone? How did you organize your evidences? What kinds of evidences did you use? How did you present those evidences, etc?
3. You will draft an essay in which you explain what strategies you made in your written argument, what mistakes you made, and what the impact of your strengths and/or weaknesses were on the success of your argument. You will show your reader what you mean by quoting from different parts of your argument as examples and then discussing those examples.
4. Your audience is both me AND other people engaged in arguments like the one you were in. On one hand, your rhetorical analysis will demonstrate to me that you understand how rhetorical strategies function (and that you can articulate that knowledge in an organized, coherent, and interesting essay); on the other hand, your rhetorical analysis will help someone in a similar situation to better analyze the rhetorical context so they can be more persuasive and effective in debate/argument situations. You might even think of your audience as the future you.

### ORGANIZATION TIPS:

- Your introduction should establish the context for your argument, summarize any necessary knowledge I need to know (and your future self will want to remember) before you get into the analysis.
- Your introduction should contain an EXPLICIT THESIS that makes clear in a succinct statement (1-3 sentences) what you have learned, overall, about your rhetorical skills by analyzing them. It should "forecast" what your body paragraphs are going to talk about.

- Each of your body paragraphs should address a distinct aspect of your rhetorical skills. You might analyze three different rhetorical strategies you used (one per paragraph); or, you might analyze some things you did well and then some things you did not do well.
- Your conclusion should look forward and answer some form of the following questions: how did analyzing your own writing change your perspective of your own writing and/or of the debate itself? How can that information be used in the future?