# Rhetorical Analysis Essay[1]

For this assignment, you will write a thesis-driven rhetorical analysis essay in which you examine the rhetorical effectiveness of an article related to our course theme. Choose an article that interests you from those available on our Blackboard page. Your audience for this essay is your classmates. Even though you are writing to people you know, this is a formal academic paper. Write in an English variety appropriate to formal academic writing (which we will discuss in class). See pages 167-168 in our textbook for tips on how to do well on this assignment.

This assignment requires that you do the following:

- Analyze two or more of the rhetorical features of your article. Choose rhetorical features from the "What to Focus On" list on pages 156-157 of our textbook. Use the questions under "Applying These Questions" to guide your analysis.

- In your introduction: 1) discuss the context of the larger conversation that your article is a part of, 2) briefly summarize the article's argument, and 3) present your thesis (a claim plus reasons) highlighting two or more rhetorical features of the argument that you find to be central to the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the argument.

- In the body of your essay: 1) Develop and support each point from your thesis, 2) include examples from the article as evidence to support your points in every paragraph, 3) analyze this evidence closely and thoroughly, and 4) explain and discuss your analysis of the evidence fully. Also, 5) use quotes or paraphrases for your examples from the article, 6) use signal phrases to introduce every quote (The author writes, Jones says, Smith argues), and 7) cite all quotes and paraphrases in MLA Style.
  - Remember: Your job in every paragraph is not to simply identify the use of rhetorical appeals (such as, "Here is an example of pathos") but to analyze the effectiveness of those appeals (such as, "The author makes an appeal to pathos by doing X, and this appeal is ineffective because…").

- Conclude your essay by summarizing your argument and wrapping up your discussion.

- Include a Works Cited page with a citation for your article in MLA Style, 8th edition.

In completing these assignment requirements, you will write an essay that is 6 pages or longer (typed, double-spaced, including Works Cited page). Use MLA Style to format your paper, cite your article within the paper, and format your Works Cited page. Make sure to proofread your work carefully from a printed copy to ensure that you submit your best, polished writing. On Sept. 8, the first 2-3 pages of your essay draft are due in class. The final version of this essay is due on Blackboard by start of class on Sept. 15.

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[1] This assignment comes from our textbook, pages 166-67: Ramage, John D., John C. Bean, and June Johnson. *Writing Arguments: A Rhetoric with Readings.* Brief 10th ed., Pearson, 2016.

I will grade your paper using the following rubric:

**Introduction and Conclusion**

| 12-9 | 8-5 | 4-0 |
|---|---|---|
| Offers full context for the conversation the article is part of. Fully summarizes argument that article makes. Conclusion offers a rich summary of author's own argument. | Offers incomplete context for the conversation the article is part of or presents incomplete summary of argument that article makes. Conclusion offers a summary of author's argument. | Does not offer context for the conversation the article is part of or does not summarize the article's argument that the. Conclusion is incomplete. |

**Thesis**

| 8-6 | 5-3 | 2-0 |
|---|---|---|
| Establishes thesis that makes strong argument about the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of specific rhetorical appeals in article. | Establishes a wishy-washy thesis (see page 167 of our textbook) that falls short of making a strong argument. | Does not establishes thesis that makes strong argument about the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of rhetorical appeal(s) in article. |

**Development and support of thesis parts**

| 40-27 | 26-14 | 13-0 |
|---|---|---|
| Each part of thesis is fully developed in the essay. Provides substantial evidence from article to support points. Analyzes all evidence thoroughly. Explains analysis fully in every paragraph. | Each part of thesis is addressed in the essay. Provides substantial evidence from article to support most points. Uneven analysis of evidence. Some incomplete explanations of analyses. | Parts of thesis are not developed in the essay. Some paragraphs do not present evidence from article to support points. Analysis of evidence is incomplete. |

**Use and citation of outside sources**

| 7-5 | 4-3 | 2-0 |
|---|---|---|
| Clearly distinguishes between own and others' ideas. Uses signal phrases effectively to introduce quoted material. Uses correct MLA Style, 8th edition, to cite all outside sources in text and on Works Cited page. | Some unclear distinctions between own and others' ideas. Signal phrases used inconsistently. Uses correct MLA Style, 8th edition, to cite all outside sources in text and on Works Cited page. | Unclear distinctions between own and others' ideas. Signal phrases used inconsistently. Errors in use of MLA Style, 8th edition, to cite outside sources in text and/or on Works Cited page. |

**Professionalism (Your own ethos!)**

| 8-6 | 5-3 | 2-0 |
|---|---|---|
| Follows assignment guidelines. Is free from typographical and other sentence-level errors. | Follows some but not all assignment guidelines; writing is careless and contains some typographical or other sentence-level errors. | Does not follow assignment guidelines; contains numerous typographical or other sentence-level errors. |

This assignment is worth 75 points, or 15% of your total semester grade.