

Paper 1 Description Sheet

Rhetorical Analysis

Comp. II

Assignment Length: 3-5 pages

For this assignment, you are to write a rhetorical analysis. However, this type of writing differs from what you have been writing. Therefore, to help explain this assignment, I am including portions taken directly from the University of Arkansas' Quality Writing Center (QWC) to help guide us in this endeavor. In writing a rhetorical analysis, the QWC points out,

Writing a rhetorical analysis can be more challenging than it seems. The assignment does not simply ask you to synthesize or critique the arguments of one or several articles, as you might have done in Comp I. **Instead, a rhetorical analysis assignment generally asks you to do two things: 1) figure out what a writer is trying to accomplish, and 2) identify what *writing tactics* he or she is utilizing to accomplish it.**

The assignment is based on the premise that all writing is aimed at a specific audience for a specific purpose. Your task with this assignment is to determine the exact goal of each piece of writing and to explore, on paper, the strategies and devices used by the writer to achieve this goal. Following are some suggestions that should help make the process easier. (QWC, University of Arkansas)

In order to do this, please note the following instructions or strategies to know how to begin. To do that, we need to once again turn to the QWC's helpful instructions, which are outlined as follows:

Drafting Your Paper

Your introduction (which you might want to draft *after* you write your paper) should

- include a description of the topic being addressed in the article(s) or essay(s) you're analyzing,

- list the title(s), author(s), and source publications of both article(s) or essay(s), if they are known or provide,
- give an overview of the apparent aims of the articles or essays, and
- tell your reader what to expect in your paper by way of an essay map.

As far as the body goes, you may wish to do one of the following:

Form subtopic sections out of the rhetorical strategies you've identified. If you go with this approach, in each of these sections you can contrast the ways in which the articles make use of the devices. For instance, a section on language might be made up of a paragraph or two revealing how, say, one article makes heavy use of the slang and diction of young adults, while the other uses more formal language and academic jargon.

Other things to keep in mind: As with any other paper, of course, be sure to **use examples** to illustrate your points, and continuously **link the ideas in your body**

paragraphs to your thesis by reminding your reader how the rhetorical strategies you're describing serve the essay or article in which were employed.

Remember that you don't *know* what the writer's aims are; you are only in a position to speculate, based on the product in front of you (and the apparent perspective of the publication in which it appears).

A note on conclusions: All papers need conclusions, yet it can be difficult to know how to write a conclusion. Often, conclusions are viewed as a place to restate the introduction. That approach is rather limited, though, since it allows for no real development in the paper, no growth of ideas. Try to look at a conclusion as the last word you'll have on a subject. In ending this paper, think about what you can say to make the reader feel that the subject and your discussion of it matter. Remind your reader about the importance of the issue, perhaps, or about the persuasive power of rhetorical devices. Talk about how the parts of a piece of writing assemble to form the whole, and the whole can change the mind of the reader. However you approach it, remember that your conclusion is your last word on the subject, the commentary that will, with luck, linger. (QWC, University of Arkansas)