

# The Rhetorical Analysis Essay

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An **analysis** is a detailed examination of the elements of a text. **Rhetoric** is the art of persuasion. Therefore, a **rhetorical analysis** is an examination of the elements an author uses to persuade the reader of their point. Identifying the author's argument is the first step to writing a rhetorical analysis; once you've identified their argument the next step is to analyze *how* and *how efficiently* the author delivers this argument through **rhetorical devices/features/elements**. You will need to support your analysis with evidence from the text, external sources, or both, depending on the requirements of the assignment.

**Genre:** The way works are categorized due to similarities in form, style, or subject (e.g. academic/peer-reviewed journal, magazine, literary journal).

**Intended Audience:** Those in which the writer intentionally addresses.

**Purpose/Rhetorical Aim:** The author's reason or intent for writing (e.g. to persuade, inform, satirize).

**Angle of Vision:** An author's bias that manipulates their argument and how that gets across to the audience.

**Logos:** The way an author appeals to the audiences' sense of reason, commonsense, or logic.

**Ethos:** The way an author demonstrates their credibility to the audience.

**Pathos:** The way an author appeals to the audiences' emotion.

**Style/Voice:** The way the author presents their argument through tone and word choice.

**Document Design:** The way the author visually designs their article through typeface, page format, spacing, etc.

**Images:** The way the author includes photographs, diagrams, graphs, or clipart.

**Audio:** The way the author includes soundbites or music.

The point of the **comparative rhetorical analysis** essay is to argue how the authors of two texts use rhetoric similarly and/or differently to make their argument. Rhetorical contexts include the conditions in which the author writes, why they are writing, and who they are writing to. Rhetorical triangle elements include logos, ethos, and pathos. Rhetorical presentation is the way the author writes and how the text appears visually.

Rhetorical  
Contexts

	Text 1:	Text 2:
Genre (p.43)		
Intended Audience (pp. 44-45)		
Purpose/Rhetorical Aim (pp. 46-47)		
Angle of Vision (pp. 55-62)		
<i>Logos</i> (p. 62-63)		
<i>Ethos</i> (p. 62-63)		
<i>Pathos</i> (p. 62-63)		
Style & voice (pp. 63-71)		
Document design (pp. 97-100)		
Images (pp. 100-104; pp. 226-234)		
Audio (p. 109)		

Rhetorical  
Triangle  
Elements

Rhetorical  
Presentations