



What is a “Rhetorical Analysis”?

Imagine that you are an engineer working with businesses to help them transform their offices into more environmentally friendly spaces. You have to write **two different assignments**. The **first** is a proposal for your employers to convince them that they should implement your plan. The **second** is a newspaper article informing the general public about your work and why it is important.

For the first assignment, you will likely use *ethos* (ethical/moral appeals) and *logos* (logical appeals), but no *pathos* (emotional appeals). You will probably use your credentials (e.g. academic degrees) and provide all of the facts for your employers (e.g. data, tables, statistics, etc.). You might also include some technical engineering terms from your field to demonstrate your knowledge and expertise.

For the second assignment, you might rely more on *pathos*. For example, you might use *pathos* to explain why your work is important by stressing that if businesses do not make their practices more environmentally friendly, then future generations of human beings and animals will suffer from further climate change effects. You will probably also refrain from using technical terms to avoid confusing your readers.

∴ **Who you are trying to convince, and why you are trying to convince them, affects your writing strategies.**

Comparing the Rhetoric in Two Different Articles

Comparing the rhetoric in two different articles involves multiple steps. Here are *some ideas* for how to proceed:

Pre-Writing Steps (before writing your essay)

1. Read each article carefully
2. Determine *who* each author is writing to (his/her *audience*) and *why* (his/her *purpose*)
3. Analyze the *rhetorical strategies* (*ethos, logos, pathos*) that each author uses to convince readers.
4. Make a planning sheet (rhetorical strategies used, including examples), which *might* look like this:

	Article #1	Article #2
Ethos	- listed his/her credentials (p.10) - <other examples>	- listed agencies he/she works with (p.5) - <other examples>
Logos	- provided statistics (p.12) - <other examples>	- mentioned data from a survey (p. 7) - <other examples>
Pathos	- discussed his/her family (p. 14) - <other examples>	- referred to endangered animals (p. 9) - <other examples>

5. Construct a *thesis statement*—an argument stating which article is more persuasive and *why*.
6. Create an outline—here are two general options:

<i>Introduction</i> Article #1 – Appeal A, Appeal B, Appeal C Article #2 – Appeal A, Appeal B, Appeal C Conclusion	<i>Introduction</i> Appeal A – Article #1, Article #2 Appeal B – Article #1, Article #2 Appeal C – Article #1, Article #2 Conclusion
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Writing the Rhetorical Analysis Essay

7. Write an *introduction*, which includes the title of each article, and ends with your thesis statement.
8. Write your *body paragraphs*, which analyze the articles’ rhetoric and provide references/examples, and remember to link your points back to your thesis.
9. Write a *conclusion*, which restates your main argument using different words, and suggests why analyzing and comparing rhetoric is an important exercise.

