Purdy Rhetorical Analysis

Ethos, Pathos and Logos

In this unit, the result will be for you to write a fully developed rhetorical analysis paper. Think of this as a review of someone’s work. Because this is used in both testing for the SAT/ACT and in first year college courses, we will go one step at a time, using different sources, so that you know confidently how to properly assess an intellectual work.

Our breakdown is as follows:

1. PPT on Ethos, Pathos & Logos
2. Worksheet for assessment on Ethos, Pathos, Logos
3. Group work on speeches
   1. I Have a Dream – Martin Luther King Jr.
4. How to write an effective rhetorical analysis paper
5. Practice writing before the final – to be handed in
6. Final paper (Take home writing – if there is time)
   1. Your final paper will be on a non-fiction speech. You are to address which appeals work and which ones don’t. You are also to discuss the writing style (voice, tone, language, dialect, imagery, etc.) and its effect on the argument. I will print out a copy of the speech and give you printed lined paper for you to hand write your answer.

I will be providing a sentence by sentence structure for you to fill in before we do the final paper.

**DEFINITIONS:**

**Ethos (Credibility),** or **ethical appeal**, means convincing by the character of the author. We tend to believe people whom we respect. One of the central problems of argumentation is to project an impression to the reader that you are someone worth listening to, in other words making yourself as author into an authority about the paper, as well as someone who is likable and worthy of respect.

**Pathos (Emotional)** means persuading by appealing to the reader's emotions. We can look at texts ranging from classic essays to contemporary advertisements to see how pathos, emotional appeals, are used to persuade. Language choice affects the audience's emotional response, and emotional appeal can effectively be used to enhance an argument.

**Logos** **(Logical)** means persuading using reasoning. This will be the most important technique we will study, and Aristotle's favorite. We'll look at deductive and inductive reasoning, and discuss what makes an effective, persuasive reason to back up your claims. Giving reasons is the heart of argumentation and cannot be emphasized enough. We'll study the types of support you can use to substantiate your thesis, and look at some of the common logical fallacies, to avoid them in your writing.