NATIONAL
MATH + SCIENCE
INITIATIVE

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Using the Appeals

Guide to Using the Student Resource

ABOUT THIS LESSON

One of the most valuable life skills students can acquire is the ability to analyze an argument. Writers and speakers constantly manipulate people to do this, buy that, believe this, or value that. If they recognize when and how such manipulation occurs, students can develop and maintain their independence of thought. After college, they may never again have to write an essay, but for the rest of their lives they will need the skill of analyzing the arguments of others.

English teachers who stress college-readiness quickly discover that, when the topic of "argument and persuasion" arises, two separate skills are involved. One skill is a reading skill; the other is a writing skill. Students need to learn how to analyze the arguments of others, whether that argument appears in an editorial, an essay, an advertisement for a product, a speech, or a political ad. And just as important as the reading skill is the skill of writing effective and cogent arguments. Students first learn to analyze the arguments of others, and then they can model in their own writing or speaking what they have seen or heard others do.

When students analyze arguments, they first determine the credibility of the writers or speakers and their purposes. Students determine what strategies the writers use to accomplish those purposes. This process resembles other forms of analysis—style analysis, tone analysis, literary analysis. In argument analysis, students may focus on how writers appeal to targeted audiences by using three classical strategies.

TEACHER PAGES

Three different strategies for appealing to the audience in arguments are

- logical (logos [**log**-os])
- emotional (pathos [**pey**-thos])
- ethical (ethos [**ee**-thos])

The Student Resource includes a description of each type of appeal. A persuasive writer knows how to effectively combine each appeal according to his/her intended purpose.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

The Student Resource is designed as a ready reference for students and can be provided as a handout for students to keep in their notebooks. However, teachers need to spend some time reviewing this resource when they first provide it to students, and they may want to revisit it periodically throughout the year.

The first page of the resource provides an overview of the persuasive appeals, while the second page provides a graphic representation of some devices writers or speakers use to create these appeals. One of the most important takeaways from this handout is that the appeals are not themselves devices that can be located within a written or visual text; the appeals are created through the use of various devices and techniques. It is also important to note the overlapping areas of the Venn Diagram, noting, for example, that a personal anecdote might be used to create ethical, emotional, or logical appeal, depending on the choice of anecdote and its presentation to the audience.

Students should be encouraged to use the Student Resource as a reference when they complete any of the lessons that include rhetorical or persuasive analysis.

Using the Persuasive Appeals
Student Resource

Purpose and Audience

When crafting an argument, you must first consider your purpose and your audience. In other words, you must answer these questions:

- What group of people are you specifically addressing?
- What do you want that audience to do?

Based on the answers to these two questions, you will then prepare your argument in a way that best appeals to your target audience and convinces them to take whatever action you deem appropriate.

Convincing speakers and writers make use of three types of rhetorical appeals, or persuasive strategies, to support their claims and to respond to opposing arguments:

- logical (*logos* [**log**-os])
- emotional (*pathos* [**pey**-thos])
- ethical (*ethos* [**ee**-thos])

These appeals, identified by the Greek philosopher Aristotle, are often referred to by the Greek words associated with them (in parentheses above).

What are the appeals?

> **Logical appeals** (*logos*): The speaker or writer appeals to the audience's logic by constructing a well-reasoned argument. Some methods of creating a **logical appeal** include:
> - facts
> - statistics
> - research
> - references to experts
> - cause and effect

> **Emotional appeals** (*pathos*): The speaker or writer appeals to the audience's emotions. An **emotional appeal** evokes anger, laughter, sadness, fear, joy, pride, etc. in the reader or listener. Some methods of creating emotional appeals include:
> - connotative diction
> - carefully-crafted syntax
> - personal anecdotes

> **Ethical appeals** (*ethos*): The speaker or writer appeals to the audience's trust by establishing his credibility or trustworthiness as a writer or speaker. Some methods of creating **ethical appeal** include:
> - stating qualifications for expertise
> - using first person pronouns
> - citing relevant authorities and allusions

Creating Appeals

While we often speak of the three types of appeals—*logos*, *pathos*, and *ethos*—as if they are separate and distinct from one another, it is actually very difficult to separate one from the others. An appeal is not a concrete device—one that you can point to in the text. Instead, writers and speakers use various techniques, devices, or strategies to *create* appeals, and even those techniques, devices, and strategies do not fit neatly into categories. For example, a writer or speaker might use a particular word to indicate his specialized knowledge of a subject and thereby create an **ethical appeal**, but he might use another highly-connotative word to create **emotional appeal**. Consider the following diagram, which shows some of the ways writers and speakers appeal to their readers and audiences:

Logical Appeals

facts
common sense
cause/effect
comparison/contrast
statistics
precedent
research

Emotional Appeals

Ethical Appeals

syntax
details

references to experts
citing authority

diction
personal
anecdote

imagery
sound devices
figurative language
connotative diction

allusions
humor
celebrity
endorsements

stating qualifications or personal experience
using first person pronouns
using specialized language