

## Week 9: The Rhetorical Analysis with Evaluation

### Rhetorical Analysis Essay

Rhetoric is the study of how writers and speakers use words to influence an audience. A rhetorical analysis is an essay that breaks a piece of writing into parts and then explains how the parts work together to create a certain effect—whether to persuade, entertain or inform. You can also conduct a rhetorical analysis of a primarily visual argument such as a cartoon or advertisement, or an oral performance such as a speech.

A rhetorical analysis should explore the goals of the author, the techniques (or tools) used, examples of those techniques, and the effectiveness of those techniques. When writing a rhetorical analysis, you are NOT simply summarizing what the author said, you are NOT saying whether or not you agree with the argument, and you do NOT try to disprove or contradict it. Instead, you're discussing *how* the writer makes that argument and whether or not the approach used is successful.

Examples: let's say that you had watched the original Star Wars movie (you know, the GOOD one, *Episode 4, A New Hope*). Let's look at how a summary would differ from a response and how would both would differ from an analysis.

Summary: Princess Leia steals Death Star plans and hides them in some droids, which make their way to Luke Skywalker and Obi Wan Kenobi. They meet up with Han Solo and Chewbacca, who fly them to a planet that has been blown up the Death Star. They get captured but then get away, but only after Obi Wan is killed by Darth Vader. They take the plans to the rebels, who find a weakness in the Death Star. They exploit that weakness and blow up the death star just before it destroys the planet housing the main rebel base.

Response/Argument: I didn't like the movie. None of that could really happen even today, and at the beginning it said it had happened a long time ago. Who would have had that kind of technology way back then? I thought it was dumb.

Analysis: George Lucas created a successful movie through the use of good (although for the most part unknown) actors, an interesting plot, and amazing special effects. [Then I would give examples of each of these in the body of my essay.]

I know this is quite brief, but do you see how the summary simply says what happened in the movie, while the analysis explains HOW THE MOVIE WAS DELIVERED? That's the difference here. A summary is the WHAT. An analysis is the HOW.

Chapter 11, your reading this week, will discuss this essay in more detail, along with providing several other important tools:

1. The basic organizational pattern (pg. 82)
2. **THE ASSIGNMENT ITSELF** (pgs. 81-82 starting at bottom of pg. 81)\*
3. A sample essay for your review (pgs. 83-85)

As with our other essays, we will write this essay over the span of two weeks. This week your job is to read the chapter, select a topic, write a rough draft, and post that draft to the Rhetorical Analysis Essay Rough Draft Submission Forum, as well as participate in our normal classroom discussion.

Next week your job will be to provide peer reviews for your classmates' essays as well as prepare your own final draft.

\*As with our summary response essay, rather than include specific articles from which you could choose, I placed "xxx" in the selection area of the assignment. Online articles change regularly, so I didn't want a hard copy of a website that was no longer valid. I have copied the list of articles that I offered for your summary response essay to this learning module; feel free to write your rhetorical analysis on one of these, *even on the same article you used for your last essay*. (You can do this because, although similar, this two essays have a different focus.)

In order to complete this essay, do the following:

1. Select a topic
2. Find an article that takes a clear stand on that topic
3. Use that article as the basis for your rhetorical analysis essay

## READING

**Chapter 11 in *The Super Compact Guide***

### THE SUMMARY RESPONSE DISCUSSION FORUM

Once you've completed the reading, go to the Rhetorical Analysis Discussion Forum link. Review my opening question and respond, and then respond to at least TWO of your classmates throughout the week.

### THE RHETORICAL ANALYSIS ESSAY ROUGH DRAFT SUBMISSION FORUM

By midnight Sunday night, post the rough draft of your Rhetorical Analysis Essay to the Rhetorical Analysis Essay Rough Draft Submission Forum. Next week you will return to this forum to download at least THREE of your classmates' drafts to review. You will post those peer reviews in the Week 10 Rhetorical Analysis Essay Peer Review Forum, which will be available next week.