**Rhetorical Analysis Worksheet**

Adapted from Ramage et al.’s *Writing Arguments* (155-157)

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| --- | --- |
| **Your name:** |  |

Conducting a rhetorical analysis asks you to bring to bear on an argument your knowledge of argument and your repertoire of reading strategies. The chart of questions for analysis below can help you examine an argument in depth (and be sure to see the additional corresponding, and certainly helpful, questions posed in the chart in the book on pages 155-157). Although a rhetorical analysis will not include answers to all of these questions, using some of these questions in your thinking stages can give you a thorough understanding of the argument while helping you generate insights for your own rhetorical analysis essay.

Short and “free-write” type answers are ok, but be sure to address each question. Take as much space as you need, and spend more time to expand on those questions in which you find yourself interested.

First, go reread the Rhetorical Situation worksheet you completed for this text so that you’re reminded of the author’s background, purpose, argument, and rhetorical strategies; the context, exigence, intended audience, text/genre; as well your initial responses to the text.

What additional insights or corrections, if any, regarding the text or author might you add to the information you gathered in the Rhetorical Situation worksheet?

**Audience and rhetorical effectiveness**

**Writer’s identity and angle of vision**

**Argument, reasons, evidence, and appeals to logos**

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| 1. What is the argument? Is it explicitly stated or implied? Upfront or delayed? |  |
| 2. What are the main reasons in support of the claim? Are the reasons audience-based?  |  |
| 3. How effective is the writer’s use of evidence? How is the argument supported and developed? |  |
| 4. How well has the argument recognized and responded to alternative views? |  |
| 5. What is emphasized and what is omitted in this text? |  |

**Author background and appeals to ethos**

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| 6. How does the writer’s personal history, education, gender, ethnicity, age, class, sexual orientation, and political leaning influence the angle of vision? How much does the writer’s angle of vision dominate the text? |  |
| 7. What *ethos* does the writer project? How does the writer try to seem credible and trustworthy to the intended audience? How knowledgeable does the writer seem in recognizing opposing or alternative views and how fairly does the writer respond to them? |  |

**Assumptions, values, and appeals to pathos**

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| 8. What assumptions, values, and beliefs would readers have to hold to find this argument persuasive? |  |
| 9. How well does the text suit its particular audience and purpose? How would this argument be received by different audiences? |  |
| 10. How does the writer use concrete language, word choice, narrative, examples, and analogies to tap readers’ emotions, values, and imaginations? |  |

**Writer’s style**

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| 11. How do the writer’s language choices and sentence length and complexity contribute to the impact of the argument? How well does the writer’s tone (attitude toward the subject) suit the argument? |  |

**Rhetorical context: Genre**

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| --- | --- |
| 12. How does the genre and the argument’s place of publication influence its content, structure, and style? Might the text/approach be radically different if a different genre or publication was used? |  |

**Overall persuasiveness of the argument**

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| 13. What features of this argument contribute most to making it rhetorically interesting, memorable, effective, disturbing, or problematic for its target audience and for you yourself? |  |

**Your brainstorms**

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| 14. Freewrite here what rhetorical features you’re thinking of focusing on in your Rhetorical Analysis Essay. |  |
| 15. Freewrite here some of the points you want to make by analyzing the above features. |  |