**Rhetoric and Rhetorical Devices**

**What is *rhetoric?*** Rhetoric is the study of effective public speaking and writing. Authors use rhetoric to persuade their audience. For example: A politician uses rhetoric to persuade the public to be for or against a certain political issue. A lawyer uses rhetoric to defend his client against charges of murder. Coca Cola uses rhetoric to convince people to drink its product, etc.

**Rhetorical Devices:** Rhetorical Devices are techniques used by speakers and writers to effectively convey their message.

1. **Ethical Appeal (ethos):** developed by choosing language that is appropriate for the audience and topic (also means choosing proper level of vocabulary), making yourself sound fair or unbiased, introducing your expertise or pedigree, and by using correct grammar and syntax.
   * Ex: Sally, who has played soccer for 10 years, shares her thoughts on the impact it has on a person’s athletic ability. Using slang to argue your point does not establish credibility, trustworthiness, reputation, or authority
2. **Emotional Appeal (pathos):** a plea to the audience that arouses their emotions in order for them to follow the speaker’s conclusions; writers may appeal to fear, anger, joy, etc. to sway their readers.

* For example: If you buy foreign made products you will *be putting thousands of Americans out of their jobs.* If you care about your child’s success in school, you will consider buying this software program.

1. **Logical Appeal (logos):** Appeal to logic and facts
2. **Diction:** Writers tend to reinforce their arguments by choose words which will influence their reader’s perception of something.
   * For example: Is a person “slim” or “skinny”? Is an oil spill an “incident” or an “accident”? Is a government expenditure an “investment” or a “waste”?
3. **Analogy:** This tool is not limited to poets. Essay writers often use figures of speech or comparisons (simile, metaphor, personification) for a desired emphasis; Analogies help the reader relate your topic/position to an image or idea with which he/she is already familiar.
   * For example: The man who keeps silent in the face of oppression *is as guilty as he who notices a fire and fails to raise the alarm*; Your brain on drugs is like an egg frying in a pan.
4. **Appeal to Authority:** Something that is claimed to be true based upon on an authority rather than facts.
   * For example: Most dentists agree that *eating saltwater taffy is good for your teeth.*; Mrs. Spruill believes The Tragedy of Othello is an important play; Dr. Shaw agrees that strict policies help make a school run smoothly.
5. **Euphemism:** A substitute of a word by a phrase that makes the word less offensive.
   * For example instead of saying the word “stupid” you could say *He is a few fries short of a happy meal.* Instead of saying that hundreds of innocent people were killed as a result of an attack, one might say, there was collateral damage.
6. **Hyperbole:** This is one of the more enjoyable persuasive techniques. It involves completely overstating and exaggerating your point for effect.
   * When your mom says, "I must have asked you a million times to clean your room!" A wealthy person might be described as having tons of money. I’m so tired I could sleep for a year. “the shot heard round the world” – Ralph Waldo Emerson
7. **Syntax:** the grammatical structure of a **sentence**; the arrangement of words in a sentence. (i.e. the way a writer chooses to join words into phrases, clauses, and sentences)

Syntax includes both the length of the sentence as well as the kind of sentence (**simple**, **complex**, **compound**, **compound/complex**, **interrogative**, **exclamatory**, **declarative**, **imperative, rhetorical question**, **parallelism**, etc.).

* **Parallelism:** Successive clauses that follow the same structure and make a similar point. The repetition helps get the message across to the audience.
  + - For example: “Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I may remember. Involve me and I will learn.” – Benjamin Franklin; “I have a dream…” - Martin Luther King, Jr.; “Give me liberty or give me death.” – Patrick Henry
* **Rhetorical Question:** A question that is asked but is only hinted at for an answer. Rhetorical Questions are used to provoke, emphasize, or argue.
  + - For example: What defense do the homeless *have if the government won’t protect them?* Does anyone want to be poor? Who doesn’t like chocolate ice cream?

**Review of Rhetorical Devices (last year)**

Rhetorical question:

Allusion:

Repetition:

Restatement:

Parallelism:

**Propaganda Terms**

What is propaganda?

Bandwagon:

Testimonial:

Transfer:

Repetition:

Card stacking:

Fear:

Glittering generalities:

Name-calling:

Plain folks:

Emotional Words (Loaded Language):