

Project 2

Your second project is a closer reading of an article. You will select an academic article (that is related to education and interesting to you) and you will analyze the choices the author made – paying particular attention to the argument the author is making. Your paper should be 4-5 pages.

The purpose of this project is to have you perform a rhetorical analysis (close reading) of an article; to work with presenting an interpretation of the article; to consider questions of voice, audience, and purpose; to identify strategies of development and rhetorical appeals in texts and then use them also in your own writing.

You may pick any article that relates to education; you may want to consider finding an article that you would be interesting in further researching for your argument paper. We will work together in class to use the library databases to find articles. You want an article that is at least 5 pages long, and from a credible source.

Your job is to analyze and critique the choices and examples the author made/used when creating this article/argument. You will need to bring your article to class every day as we work on this project.

Process:

This kind of analysis differs in significant ways from the literary, historical and philosophical writing you've done for other classes and in high school. You need to look through a rhetorical lens – this is an opportunity for you to work through a professional and disciplinary perspective. You must evoke and mention explicitly the terms of our discipline (pathos, logos, ethos, kairos, audience, persona, text). Your essay should be about the strategic use of rhetorical appeals and persuasive power of the particular article and not about the content issue. Focus on HOW it works, not simply WHAT it conveys; discuss how the use of rhetorical appeals determines the effectiveness of the argument and don't get distracted into arguing passionately a particular position or extolling the beauty/creativity of the text. To complete the essay successfully, you will need to discuss specific and concrete elements of the article as evidence -- the way we have done in class.

Developing a thesis:

Begin with a working thesis, but as you progress in your thinking, refine that thesis into a revelatory statement. You want to develop a thesis that provides a specific way of defining your point. 'This article is well thought out' is too broad and uninteresting. Be specific. How is the article well thought out? Remember, no 3-part thesis statements.

Audience:

For this project, your audience is me. If you are not sure if you should include something or not in your essay, ask me.

Format:

Your paper should be 4-5 pages and follow MLA format.

Possible Questions:

Who is the intended audience of this article?

What is the target age group?

What percentages of men and women are likely to read the journal/magazine/newspaper?

What income level is targeted?

Is a particular ethnicity being targeted?

What is this article trying to persuade people to do/buy into?

How does the article successfully or unsuccessfully do this?

How effective are the author's examples? Writing style?

How does the visual aspect of the article help or hinder the argument? (text size, font images, sentence/paragraph spacing, use of white space)

What do you know/can find out about the author?