

AP Language Terms and Definitions

Rhetorical Appeals

Rhetorical Appeals – dominant persuasive strategies speakers/writers uses to deliver messages	
Definitions	Identifying the Appeal
Appeal to Ethos (credibility) – a persuasive strategy in which a speaker/ writer appeals to the audience’s sense of trust	Writers and speakers often have to build ethos by explaining their credentials or background to their readers, or by emphasizing shared values to gain the reader’s trust.
Appeal to Logos (reason) – a persuasive strategy in which a speaker/ writer appeals to the audience’s sense of logic	Speakers appeal to logos, or reason, by offering clear, rational ideas. Look for and use: facts, data/statistics, scientific facts, literal or historical analogies, definitions, and quotations.
Appeal to Pathos (emotion) – a persuasive strategy in which a speaker/ writer appeals to the audience’s sense of emotion	An effective speaker or writer understands the power of evoking an audience’s emotions by using such tools as figurative language, personal anecdotes, and vivid images.

Argument Essay Terms

Argument – a process of reasoned inquiry (def: perceptive thinking); it is a persuasive discourse resulting in a coherent and considered movement from a claim to a conclusion	
Claim – also known as an assertion or proposition, a claim states the argument’s main idea or position; claim differs from a topic or subject in that a claim has to be arguable	
Thesis – a statement of the main idea of the argument	
Evidence – once a writer has established a claim and developed a thesis statement, the next step is to support it with effective evidence; it the proof that supports the thesis of an argument	
Counterargument – an opposing to the one a writer is putting forward; rather than ignoring a counterargument, a strong writer will usually address it through the process of concession and refutation	
Concession – an acknowledgement that an opposing argument may be true or reasonable; in a strong argument, a concession is usually accompanied by a refutation challenging the validity of the opposing argument	
Refutation – a denial of the validity of an opposing argument; in order to sound reasonable, a refutation often follows a concession	
Definitions	Examples
Induction – it is a logical process wherein you reason from particulars to universal, using specific cases in order to draw a conclusion	Regular exercise promotes weight loss. Exercise lowers stress levels. Exercise improves mood and outlook. Generalization: Exercise contributes to better health.
Deduction – it is a logical process wherein you reach a conclusion by starting with a general principle or universal truth (a major premise) and applying it to a specific case (a minor premise)	The process of deduction is usually demonstrated in the form of a syllogism . Major Premise: Exercise contributes to better health. Minor Premise: Yoga is a type of exercise. Conclusion: Yoga contributes to better health.

Argument Structure

Classical Argument – an argument that incorporates the five parts of a discourse that ancient teachers of rhetoric believed were necessary for persuasion
--

Five-Part Classical Argument Structure

Introduction (exordium) – introduces the reader to the subject under discussion; the speaker warms up to the audience, establishes rapport, and announces the general theme or thesis of discussion
Narration (narratio) – provides factual information and background material, or context, on the subject at hand, thus beginning the development paragraphs, or establishes why the subject is a problem that needs addressing; the first two parts of the classical argument, the introduction and narration, are often run together
Confirmation (confirmatio) – usually the major part of the text, includes the proof needed to make the writer’s case – containing the most specific and concrete detail in the text; where you present the claims and evidence that back up or substantiate the thesis of your argument
Refutation (refutatio) – addresses the counterargument, or opposing viewpoints; it is a bridge between the writer’s proof and conclusion
Conclusion (peroratio) – brings the essay to a satisfying close where the speaker wraps up the various arguments into a summary statement, and amplifies the force of arguments already made; writers should remember the classical rhetoricians’ advice that the last words and ideas of a text are those the audience is most likely to remember

Rhetoric Terminology

Style – the manner of expression of a particular writer, produced by choice of words (diction), grammatical structures (syntax), use of rhetorical devices, and all the possible parts of language use
Diction – word choices by the speaker/writer
Denotation – literal definition of a word
Connotation – an additional emotion associated with a word; usually expressed in a positive and negative way
Syntax – sentence structure; the way in which linguistic elements (words and phrases) are arranged to form grammatical structure
Tone – the author’s attitude toward a subject

Rhetorical Devices

Rhetorical Devices – specific rhetorical tools writers use to convey specific messages
Figurative Language – writing or speech that is not intended to carry literal meaning and is usually meant to be imaginative and vivid

SCHEMES – artful syntax; a deviation from the normal order of words		
Definition	Example	Effect
Rhetorical Question – asking a question in which the answer is merely implied	“In this age of modernity, can we really condone such horrific acts?”	A rhetorical question is used to provoke the reader to respond or to think, or to lead them to the next idea.
Hypophora - asking a question, then proceeding to answer it	“How do we know this to be true? We have observed it in the lab.”	A hypophora is used to lead a reader directly to a conclusion.
Periodic Sentence – a sentence that presents its central meaning in a main clause at the end	After a long, bumpy flight and multiple delays, I arrived at the San Diego airport.	A periodic sentence is used to add emphasis and structural variety.
Repetition – the repeating of any element of language, such as a word, phrase, clause, sentence, or grammatical pattern;	In August, 1963, Martin Luther King Jr. gave us one of the richest speech examples for repetition. This includes “I have a dream ...” and many other repetition-laden passages	Repetition is used to create a memorable, powerful effect and/or to reinforce an idea.
Parallel Structure – there is the same general organizational structure for multiple parts of a sentence	“The manor—designed for beauty and grace, built for durability and strength, and located for privacy and safety—was the ideal home for those three children.”	Parallel structure creates a memorable, powerful effect and is used to reinforce an idea.
Antithesis – the juxtaposition of contradicting language by keeping the same sentence structure, but use contrasting words	“I speak not from ignorance, but from experience.”	Using antithetical statements brings out a contrast in ideas and is a fairly simple way to show a complex thought.
Juxtaposition – placing two things side by side, usually to show contrast		Juxtaposition is often used to call attention to extremes or contrast ideas

TROPES – artful diction; expresses ideas through playing with or changing the meaning of words		
Definition	Example	Effect
Simile – compares two unlike things by using the terms like or as; this device emphasizes similarities and dissimilarities	“The shower room, steamy like a Louisiana summer, rang with the athletes’ jubilant laughter.”	Similes emphasize similarities and dissimilarities through comparison.
Metaphor – compares two unlike things, stating one thing is another thing;	“Dr. King was truly a king among men.”	Metaphors emphasize similarities and dissimilarities through comparison.
Allusion – a direct or indirect reference to something which is presumably commonly known, such as an event, book, myth, place, or work of art; allusions can be historical, literary, religious, topical, or mythical	“You don’t have to be Holden Caulfield to appreciate a good allusion.”	Allusions reference something famous to subtly show the depth of a topic and to clarify explanations.

TROPES (continued)		
Analogy – a comparison between two like or similar things used in explaining difficult concepts; substitutes a simple argument for a more complex argument and then the argument builds on the similarities	“The desire for wealth, when unchecked, can lead only to great evil. For though a man may begin without restraint, the urge will grow until one day he is a drunkard, blinded to all but his need, taking whatever steps are needed to find his fix.”	Analogies clarify arguments by substituting a simple argument for a more complex one.
Hyperbole – exaggerating some part of your statement in order to give it emphasis and focus; often used to expose truths	“At these words, the people became so silent you could hear a beating heart from across the room.”	Hyperboles exaggerate details to elicit a reaction from the audience and to focus the audience’s attention.
Understatement – a rhetorical form in which the force of a descriptive statement is less than what one would normally expect	“Whatever his faults, Sir Isaac Newton did have a fairly good mind for science.”	Understatements prompt readers to think how much more could be said—and by making them come to the conclusion themselves, you make that conclusion all the more powerful.
Paradox – an apparently contradictory statement that nevertheless contains a measure of truth	“Keep your friends close and your enemies closer.”	The effect of using a paradox is to point out an apparent contradiction.
Imagery — sensory details or figurative language used to describe, arouse emotion, or represent abstractions; often times, imagery is used with other figurative language		

NEUTRAL

Tone Words

1. Indifferent *impersonal; emotionless*
2. Confident *certain; assured*
3. Unbelievable *amazing; dubious*
4. Ironically *strangely; curiously*
5. Wondrous *astonishment; amazement*
6. Composed *calm; detached*
7. Sincere *truthful; straightforward*
8. Desirable *comfortable; alluring*
9. Bizarre *fantastic; grotesque*
10. Taciturn *reserved; subdued*
11. Picturesque *detailed; unusual*
12. Sublime *lofty; magnificent*
13. Provocative *provoking; stimulating*
14. Passionate *intense; amorous*
15. Courageous *audacious; fearless*
16. Exquisite *pleasing; delicate*
17. Exotic *strange; intriguing*
18. Satiric *mocking; bantering*
19. Anxious *uncertain; apprehensive*
20. Shocked *astonished; surprised*

Synonyms

Sorrow-Fear-Worry Tone/Attitude Words

- | | | | |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|----------|
| Aggravated | Embarrassed | Morose | Resigned |
| Agitated | Fearful | Mournful | Sad |
| Anxious | Foreboding | Nervous | Serious |
| Apologetic | Gloomy | Numb | Sober |
| Apprehensive | Grave | Ominous | Solemn |
| Concerned | Hollow | Paranoid | Somber |
| Confused | Hopeless | Pessimistic | Staid |
| Dejected | Horrific | Pitiful | Upset |
| Depressed | Horror | Poignant | |
| Despairing | Melancholy | Regretful | |
| Disturbed | Miserable | Remorseful | |

POSITIVE

Tone Words

1. Whimsical *fanciful; imaginary*
2. Lighthearted *carefree; happy*
3. Convivial *lively; jolly*
4. Optimistic *positive; affirmative*
5. Compassionate *tender; merciful*
6. Sympathetic *warm; considerate*
7. Benevolent *humane; charitable*
8. Jovial *contented; cheerful*
9. Felicitous *appropriate; desirable*
10. Carefree *lighthearted; happy-go-lucky*
11. Exuberant *buoyant; elated*
12. Ecstatic *delighted; enchanted*
13. Exhilarated *excited; uplifted*
14. Festive *pleased; merry*
15. Contentment *festive; joyous*
16. Affable *cordial; friendly*
17. Serene *pleasant; peaceful*
18. Sanguine *encouraging; hopeful*
19. Reverent *godly; holy*
20. Amicable *friendly; congenial*

Synonyms

NEGATIVE

Tone Words

1. Demoralizing *depressing; perverting*
2. Indignant *enraged; furious*
3. Melancholy *pensive; gloomy*
4. Disgruntled *discontented; dissatisfied*
5. Lugubrious *mournful; sorrowful*
6. Disparaging *sarcastic; critical*
7. Inflamed *irate; provoked*
8. Haughty *arrogant; condescending*
9. Menacing *threatening; ominous*
10. Hostile *malevolent; bellicose*
11. Enigmatic *puzzling; mysterious*
12. Sinister *cunning; portentous*
13. Bleak *desolate; lifeless*
14. Condescending *arrogant; snobbish*
15. Depressing *morbid; gruesome*
16. Disconsolate *downcast; sorrowful*
17. Morose *sullen; gloomy*
18. Scathing *cutting; trenchant*
19. Morbid *gruesome; macabre*
20. Dismal *dull; barren*

Synonyms