

Fox Engl 131

Rhetorical Analysis: Group Inquiry

Questions to Ask Every Text

You are looking for quotes that address the following 6 questions which pinpoint the basic rhetorical strategies. Set up your worksheet so that you copy the quote from your primary text and then, underneath, paraphrase it (i.e., restate the quote in your own words: "What I think she is saying here is ..."). Your group will report its answers to the class and explain the rhetorical strategy at work in your particular data. (Why, for example, is a statement an example of *pathos*? What does *pathos* do and how does your chosen statement work well in that way?)

Group 1: What is the question at issue? (subject) Why has the author written this text? (purpose)

Group 2: What is the author doing in this text? What material is the author examining? (project)

Group 3: What is the author's authority to address this question? (writer) (*ethos*)

Group 4: How does the author use words to connect with your emotions or convictions? (*pathos*)

Group 5: What is the author's central claim? (argument)

Group 6: What is the evidence that backs up this claim? (*logos*)

All Groups (for in-class discussion):

1. What is the situation that prompted this text, & how do you know? (historical context)
2. How might this argument relate to a situation specifically American? (ideological context)
3. How does the text speak of its time?
4. How does this text speak of its author?
5. What are you being asked to believe, think, or do? (audience) (persuasion)
6. What is the most important sentence in this text, to you? Why is this sentence so meaningful?
7. What context as audience do you bring to bear on this decision?