Short Assignment 1: Genre Translation

**Due Tuesday, 4/3 by midnight**

Outcomes targeted: 1, 2

Over the next week, we will discuss the relationship between genre and audience and practice analyzing the rhetorical situation of a given text in order to make sense of the author’s rhetorical choices (tone, style, content, structure, appeals, etc.).

For this short assignment, please translate either Martin Luther King, Jr.’s “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” “The Message of the Diallo Protests,” or Art Spiegelman’s “41 Shots 10 cents” into another genre. For example, you may turn the piece into a political cartoon, a social media post, a poster, a speech, a GIF, or a letter (if it’s not a letter already). Whatever you choose, you must be able to **clearly depict the original author’s claims, evidence, and stakes.**

You will then submit a writer’s memo (1-2 pages) that describes your writing process and shows you tried to make **conscious rhetorical choices with regard to audience and genre**. Some questions to consider for the writer’s memo: Why and how did you choose the audience and genre you did? What rhetorical choices did you make to translate from one genre to another? What **genre conventions** did you use and why? What are the most striking differences between the original text and your translation? What do you think you did well on in this assignment and where do you feel you could improve?

A successful SA 1 will demonstrate to me that:

- You have a clear understanding of the strategies that writers use in different writing contexts (Outcome 1)

- You are able to write for different audiences and contexts, both within and outside the university classroom (Outcome 1.3)

-You can articulate and assess the effects of your writing choices (Outcome 1.4)

- You have an understanding of the course texts as necessary for the purpose at hand (Outcome 2.1)

- You can use course texts in strategic, focused ways to support the goals of your writing (Outcome 2.2)

**Formatting**: MLA heading, page numbers, double-spaced, 12 pt. Times New Roman font, 1-inch margins

SA 1: Genre Translation

Rubric

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Outstanding | Strong | Good | Adequate | Inadequate |
| **Choice of new genre** reflects engagement with elements of rhetorical situation, such as audience and purpose. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Original argument:** The translation effectively conveys the original text’s claims, evidence, and stakes. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Writer’s Memo: Reflection on Genre:** 1-2 page writer’s memo substantially reflects on choice of genre and audience, and on genre conventions of the translation. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Writer’s Memo: Effect of the Translation:** 1-2 page writer’s memo reflects on differences between the original text and the translation, and how these differences relate to rhetorical situation. Memo also discusses the process of composing the translation (what went well, etc.). |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Grammar, Style, Proofreading:** Sentences are clear and concise (non-repetitive);minimal typos and grammatical errors that confuse or impact meaning. |  |  |  |  |  |

Short Assignment 2: **Rhetorical Analysis**

**Due Tuesday, 4/10 by midnight**

In this short paper, you will do a rhetorical analysis of either Walter Benn Michaels’s “The Trouble with Diversity” or Barack Obama’s “A More Perfect Union,” focusing on the rhetorical situation, claims, assumptions, types of arguments, and rhetorical appeals. Think back to the work we did in class together on “Letter from Birmingham Jail” for a model of rhetorical analysis.

This paper will help us understand how arguments are made about inequality in America. Here’s a way to approach the assignment:

1. Reread the piece closely, noting particularly strong, interesting, confusing, or troubling moments.

2. What’s going on in the moments you noted above? (Are there rhetorical appeals?)

3. What is the text’s audience and purpose?

4. What is the **rhetorical situation** of the text?

5. What is the text’s central claim or claims about inequality and race?

6. What are the assumptions underlying these claims?

7. What type of argument might your author be making?

8. What does the text’s argument leave out?

Next, consider all this brainstorming. What does all this analysis tell you about persuasion? **Your claim should address how persuasion works in the text - how it works rhetorically.** Finally, why does this matter? What are the stakes of your claim? Again, consider what the author’s argument accomplishes, or perhaps what it omits.

Length: 2-3 pp.

Skills: analysis, developing a claim, identifying rhetorical situation, counterargument

Outcomes: 1, 2, 3

## **SA 2 Rubric: Rhetorical Analysis**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SA 2** | **Outstanding** | **Strong** | **Good** | **Adequate** | **Inadequate** |
| **Rhetorical situation/appeals and claim of text:** Essay identifies text’s audience and purpose, identifies specific rhetorical techniques employed in the text, and articulates the text’s claim. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Articulation of your own claim:** Essay makes a clear argument about how this text functions rhetorically in the context of its culture/situation (how does the text persuade its audience?). |  |  |  |  |  |
| **How rhetorical techniques work:** Essay explains how the chosen techniques support or detract from the rhetorical situation, purpose, claims, and/or audience. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Evidence:** Essay supports explanations of rhetorical techniques with appropriate quotations from the text. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Organization:** Logical order of paragraphs, clear transitions (at the sentence level and paragraph level), clear sentence structure. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Grammar and Proofreading:** It is evident that the paper has been proofread, and has minimal grammar errors that confuse or impact meaning. |  |  |  |  |  |

MP 1: **Rhetorical Analysis/Genre Comparison of the Representation of a Public Event**

**MP 1.1 due Tuesday, 4/17 by midnight**

**MP 1.2 due Tuesday, 4/24 by midnight**

**Length: 4-6 pages**, including Writer’s Memo (slightly longer is fine, too)

How is a public event represented or narrated, and how does **genre** affect persuasion (rhetoric)?

In this paper, you will consider the representation of a public event or issue--from history or the very recent past, and from any country or culture--and the relationship between persuasion and genre. **How do different textual genres--written and visual, for example--persuade differently?** You will conduct rhetorical analyses of two texts of different genres covering the same issue or event and **make your own claim** about how genre affects rhetoric in the representation of this particular issue or event.

You may write about an issue or event that we have already discussed in class, but you do not have to.

This is not an “agree or disagree” paper - please avoid arguing why your sources’ perspectives are right or wrong. You should also avoid excessive summary - keep in mind that there is a difference between summary (saying what a text says) and rhetorical analysis (stating how a text persuades). **Your job is to show HOW the sources use rhetoric (persuasion), and how this is dependent on genre.**

Your claim should focus on genre, but it may also consider the complexity of the event or what the representations of the event demonstrate about the culture in which the event occurred. You should also indicate what the **stakes** of your claim are. Why does your argument matter?

In addition, please include a **Writer’s Memo** at the end of the paper - about one double-spaced page, or slightly more or less - in which you discuss how developing a claim changed your understanding of the sources. In other words, how did the process of writing this paper shift or nuance your understanding of the sources you worked with or the event they represent? Writing about your own writing process is essential to the philosophy of English 131, and you’ll be required to do it in your final portfolio, so it’s important to practice this now.

Skills: intertextuality, working with sources, analysis, synthesis, claims, assumptions, developing a claim, metacognition

Outcomes: 1, 2, 3, 4

## **MP 1 Rubric: Rhetorical Analysis/Genre Comparison Paper**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **MP 1** | Outstanding | Strong | Good | Adequate | Inadequate |
| **Articulation of your claim:** Thesis statement (in introduction) makes a clear argument about genre and rhetoric: how do the texts **function rhetorically** in the context of their culture and rhetorical situation, and how does their rhetorical function relate to their genres? |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Evidence:** Essay supports explanations of rhetorical techniques with appropriate quotations or visual evidence from the text. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Analysis of Evidence:** Essay explains how the chosen techniques support or detract from the rhetorical situation, purpose, claims, and/or audience. **Analysis connects evidence to topic sentences/thesis.** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Organization:** Intro paragraph introduces texts and authors (if applicable), moves from general to specific; conclusion restates thesis in a new way and includes why your argument matters; coherent paragraphs; logical order of paragraphs; **strong topic sentences address rhetoric/persuasion,** clear transitions (at the sentence level and paragraph level). |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Grammar, Style, Proofreading:** Sentences are clear and concise (non-repetitive); **analysis is in present tense (with possible exceptions);** minimal typos and grammatical errors that confuse or impact meaning. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Writer’s Memo:**  discusses the questions listed on the prompt; demonstrates critical reflective thinking about the process of reading and analyzing sources about an event or issue. |  |  |  |  |  |