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## LESSON PLAN: REVIEWING THE RHETORICAL ANALYSIS ESSAY

### Objective for the Week

For an AP® English Language Analysis essay, students will review and score student samples, dissect and annotate a rhetorical analysis passage, evaluate and revise sample commentary, and write and revise a rhetorical analysis essay.

### Lesson Duration

Five sessions consisting of approximately 45 minutes each

### Schedule

#### DAY 1

#### Resources

##### 1. Study Guide: Rhetorical Analysis Essay



##### 2. Rubric: Rhetorical Analysis Essay



- Reviewing the Rhetorical Analysis Study Guide and Rubric—To review the elements of the rhetorical analysis essay, require students to review both the Rhetorical Analysis Study Guide and the Rhetorical Analysis Rubric. This will help them more accurately score the student samples for the 2019 rhetorical analysis prompt provided by College Board.
  - Prompt—<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/pdf/ap19-frq-english-language.pdf>
    - Students will review page 9 before scoring the student samples.
  - Samples—<https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/ap/pdf/ap-english-language-and-composition-2019-frq2-samples-2020-rubrics.pdf>
    - You can save these documents as PDF documents to share with the students rather than sharing the link with them. By sharing the document rather than the link, students will not have easy access to the scoring commentary until you are ready for them to have it. We recommend that they score samples PP, HH, and J.
- After students have reviewed and scored the student samples, students can post their scores along with a justification, using evidence from both the rubric and the essays, to the online system you are using. If you are using Google Classroom or Canvas, you can even require that students respond to a peer's score and justification.
- Finally, reveal the score of the sample essays via a post discussion of your own.
  - Commentary—<https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/ap/pdf/ap-english-language-and-composition-2019-frq2-scoring-commentaries-2020-rubrics.pdf>

#### SELF-PACED OPTION

Although these lesson plans are designed for teachers to assign to students remotely, they could also be administered on a self-paced schedule with some modifications.

#### RHETORICAL ANALYSIS PROMPT

Note: If you have already used the 2019 student samples, you may use the 2018 samples. We recommend these two options because College Board has scored the samples with the new 6-point rubric.

If you have already used both examples, feel free to allow students to use any of the past tests that can be found at <https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-english-language-and-composition/exam/past-exam-questions>.

## DAY 2

### Resource

#### 1. Student Handout: “The Ballot or the Bullet”



- Breaking down the rhetorical analysis prompt: <https://youtu.be/ov6F2mffoNQ>
- Analyzing the Passage
  - Using the provided student handout, students will complete an annotation of “The Ballot or the Bullet,” using Kami if applicable. On their mark-up, they must identify elements of the rhetorical situation, including the main idea of the piece and the primary points that Malcolm X makes to achieve his purpose.
  - Once students have identified the main idea and primary points, they can begin to analyze the text for evidence. As they reread, they should bracket evidence that reveals information about the speaker and circle any text that exposes information about the audience.
  - In your online system, post a discussion question that prompts students to identify two primary points and explain how those points demonstrate an understanding of Malcolm X’s audience. Require students to reflect on three other students’ posts, defending, challenging, or expanding on a peer’s analysis.
- Free Live Review Session for Students: Strategies for Developing Commentary (Q2)
  - <https://marcolearning.com/free-events/>

## DAY 3

### Resource

#### 1. Student Handout: Describing Commentary



- Writing commentary for the rhetorical analysis essay
  - Now that students have analyzed “The Ballot or the Bullet,” they can analyze effective commentary for an analysis. We recommend that you post the PDF to your online system, and students complete the handout using Kami if applicable.

#### DAY 4

- Writing the rhetorical analysis essay
  - Now that students have analyzed the passage and commentary, they are ready to write their own essays. Encourage them to review the Rhetorical Analysis Study Guide, and rubric as they write. Ask students to time themselves, allotting 40 minutes only.

#### DAY 5

- Revising and submitting the rhetorical analysis essay
  - Before students submit the essay, ask them to identify the following elements within their essay and highlight them in the corresponding colors. If the essay is lacking the element, they should revise the essay to reflect the requirements.
    - Thesis statement—highlighted in yellow.
    - Supporting Claim (minimum of two)—highlighted in blue.
    - Supporting evidence from the passage—highlighted in pink.
    - Commentary linking evidence to the thesis—highlighted in orange.
    - Transitional statements—highlighted in purple.

## WHAT IS RHETORIC?

Rhetoric is “the art of effective or persuasive speaking or writing, especially the use of figures of speech and other compositional techniques.”

### Analyzing Rhetoric

To analyze rhetoric, follow the steps below.

1. Identify the relationship between the speaker, subject, and audience—often, much of this information can be found in the prompt of a Q2 essay.
2. As you read the passage, chunk by primary points. This can be determined by asking yourself: “What is the author pointing out to the audience?” There may be one primary point for several paragraphs.
3. Take note of textual evidence that appeals ethically, logically, or emotionally to the audience or strengthens the speaker’s credibility.
4. Examine the speaker’s purpose for writing the passage. Consider which primary points best support his/her purpose

### Rhetorical Appeals

There are three main types of rhetorical appeals that speakers and writers make. These appeals are the result of rhetorical choices that an author makes within a text.

| APPEAL TO AUTHORITY   | APPEAL TO EMOTION  | APPEAL TO LOGIC   |
|---|--|---|
| When appealing to authority, the author can present details or evidence of any of the following to establish their own credibility: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience</li> <li>• Moral character</li> <li>• Credentials</li> <li>• Accolades</li> </ul> | An author or speaker can effectively accomplish their goal by making their audience feel any one of a wide variety of emotions, including (but not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sympathy</li> <li>• Sadness</li> <li>• Anger</li> <li>• Joy</li> <li>• Pride</li> <li>• Fear</li> </ul> | This appeal can be accomplished by supplying any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facts</li> <li>• Statistics or data</li> <li>• Evidence</li> <li>• Rational and logical argument</li> </ul> |

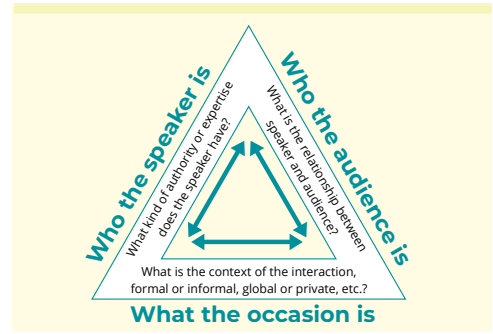
### Writing the Analysis

**Inadequate:** Lincoln begins his speech by using ethos. He tells his audience that “at this second appearing to take the oath of the Presidential office there is less occasion for an extended address than there was at the first.” This makes the audience trust him.

**Adequate:** Lincoln begins his speech with a precise tone, informing his audience that “no prediction in regard to the [progress of arms] is ventured.” This matter of fact attitude reflects how Lincoln is tired of the war and ready to move forward as he hopes the audience will be after listening to his address.

**Sophisticated:** To begin his speech, Lincoln apprises the audience of his executive experience and acknowledges that there is “less occasion” for long dialogue. This salutation mirrors the morale of the war-ravaged country and entices his audience to continue to listen to a “detail of a course” that hopes to repair the nation.

The preceding examples were constructed from Abraham Lincoln’s “Second Inaugural Speech.” You can visit the prompt and the passage on page 2 of the document found at [https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/apc/eng\\_lang\\_frq\\_02\\_10330.pdf](https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/apc/eng_lang_frq_02_10330.pdf)



### MAIN IDEA, PURPOSE, AND TONE

Whether analyzing a multiple-choice passage or a free response question, there are three general characteristics that you must examine.

#### Main Idea

- Refers to the content of the passage.
- Answers the question “What is this passage about?”

#### Purpose

- Related to Main Idea, but not the same.
- Answers the question “What does the speaker hope to accomplish through the main idea?”

#### Tone

- Refers to the author’s attitude about their subject.
- As you read through the passage, circle any extreme words, and look for images and associations and consider how the collection of tone words affect the audience. How would that effect help the speaker achieve his purpose?

When writing a rhetorical analysis, it is important to address how a writer’s rhetorical choices affect the audience by appealing to one of these six universal topics:

- Moral
- Spiritual
- Political
- Social
- Psychological
- Historical

**Justification:** In the first example, the student states that Lincoln “uses ethos.” This is a common mistake—a speaker cannot “use” ethos (or logos or pathos for that matter); however, a speaker will make a choice that establishes credibility with the audience. While the adequate paragraph is “technically correct,” it lacks an explanation of how Lincoln’s words would induce the audience to move forward. A sophisticated writer analyzes how a rhetorical choice creates a logical or emotional impact on an audience and examines what sort of assumptions a writer made about his audience to make such an appeal successful.

# Scoring Rubric for Question 2: Rhetorical Analysis Essay



|                                  |   |   |  |   |  |  |
|----------------------------------|---|---|--|---|--|--|
| <b>THESIS</b>                    | <b>0 POINTS</b>   |   | <b>1 POINT</b>   |   |  |  |
|                                  | For any of the following:<br><input type="checkbox"/> No defensible thesis<br><input type="checkbox"/> Simple restatement of prompt only<br><input type="checkbox"/> Summary of topic with no clear claim<br><input type="checkbox"/> Off-topic |   | <input type="checkbox"/> Defensible thesis which examines the writer’s rhetorical choices  |   |  |  |
| <b>EVIDENCE &amp; COMMENTARY</b> | <b>0 POINTS</b>   | <b>1 POINT</b>  | <b>2 POINTS</b>  | <b>3 POINTS</b>   | <b>4 POINTS</b>  |  |
|                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Simple restatement of thesis (if existing)<br>OR<br><input type="checkbox"/> Fewer than 2 sources referenced<br>OR<br><input type="checkbox"/> Opinion-based with no text evidence                                     | <b>EVIDENCE:</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> Generalization of evidence<br>AND<br><b>COMMENTARY:</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> Simple summarization of passage<br><input type="checkbox"/> Rhetorical choices have little to no explanation   | <b>EVIDENCE:</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> Some textual references that are applicable to the thesis<br>AND<br><b>COMMENTARY:</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> Unsupported assertions or assumptions<br><input type="checkbox"/> Some explanation of the connection between the evidence and the thesis.<br><input type="checkbox"/> Missing or faulty line of reasoning. | <b>EVIDENCE:</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> Specific textual references that support all claims<br>AND<br><b>COMMENTARY:</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> Some explanation of how the evidence supports the argument<br>AND<br><input type="checkbox"/> Discussion of at least one rhetorical choice’s contribution to the writer’s argument  | <b>EVIDENCE:</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> Specific textual references that support all claims<br>AND<br><b>COMMENTARY:</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> Consistent explanation of evidence in support of the line of reasoning.<br>AND<br><input type="checkbox"/> Discussion of various rhetorical choices’ contributions to the writer’s argument. |  |
|                                  | <b>SOPHISTICATION</b>   | <b>0 POINTS</b>   |  | <b>1 POINT</b>  |  |  |
|                                  |   | <input type="checkbox"/> Unmet requirement<br><input type="checkbox"/> Sweeping generalizations of context<br><input type="checkbox"/> Subtle indication of other arguments within the passage<br><input type="checkbox"/> Examination of rhetorical choices independently rather than in relationship with each other<br><input type="checkbox"/> Misuse of complicated or complex sentences |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Sophisticated thought and/or notable awareness of the rhetorical situation<br><input type="checkbox"/> Thorough analysis of the impact of the writer’s rhetorical choices<br><input type="checkbox"/> Address of the passage’s complexities or tensions<br><input type="checkbox"/> Mature, convincing writing style |  |  |

ROW A

ROW B

ROW C

**TOTAL POINTS EARNED:**  / 6

Malcom X, a civil rights activist, delivered this speech in April of 1964, an election year. Two thousand people—including some of his opponents who believed his separatist ideas would make the civil rights' movement more difficult—turned out to hear him speak. Read the passage carefully. Write an essay that analyzes the rhetorical choices Malcolm X makes to convey his message that the fight for racial justice must continue.

...I'm not here to argue or discuss anything that we differ about, because it's time for us to submerge our differences and realize that it is best for us to first see  
*Line* that we have the same problem, a common problem...  
5 We're all in the same boat and we all are going to catch the same [trouble] from the same man. He just happens to be a white man. All of us have suffered here, in this country, political oppression at the hands of the white man, economic exploitation at the hands of the white  
10 man, and social degradation at the hands of the white man. Now in speaking like this, it doesn't mean that we're anti-white, but it does mean we're anti-exploitation, we're anti-degradation, we're anti-oppression. And if the white man doesn't want us to be anti-him, let him stop  
15 oppressing and exploiting and degrading us.... If we don't do something real soon, I think you'll have to agree that we're going to be forced either to use the ballot or the bullet. It's one or the other in 1964. It isn't that time is running out—time has run out!  
20 1964 threatens to be the most explosive year America has ever witnessed. The most explosive year. Why? It's also a political year. It's the year when all of the white politicians will be back in the so-called Negro community jiving you and me for some votes.  
25 The year when all of the white political crooks will be right back in your and my community with their false promises, building up our hopes for a letdown, with their trickery and their treachery, with their false promises which they don't intend to keep. As they nourish  
30 these dissatisfactions, it can only lead to one thing, an explosion; and now we have the type of black man on the scene in America today... who just doesn't intend to turn the other cheek any longer.  
I'm not a politician, not even a student of politics;  
35 in fact, I'm not a student of much of anything. I'm not a Democrat. I'm not a Republican, and I don't even consider myself an American. If you and I were Americans, there'd be no problem.... Everything that came out of Europe, every blue-eyed thing, is already an  
40 American. And as long as you and I have been over here, we aren't Americans yet.  
Well, I am one who doesn't believe in deluding myself. I'm not going to sit at your table and watch you eat, with nothing on my plate, and call myself a diner. Sitting at the  
45 table doesn't make you a diner, unless you eat some of

what's on that plate. Being here in America doesn't make you an American. Being born here in America doesn't make you an American. Why, if birth made you American, you wouldn't need any legislation; you wouldn't need any  
50 amendments to the Constitution....  
No, I'm not an American. I'm one of the twenty-two million black people who are the victims of Americanism. One of the twenty-two million black people who are the victims of democracy; nothing but disguised  
55 hypocrisy. So, I'm not standing here speaking to you as an American...no, not I. I'm speaking as a victim of this American system. And I see America through the eyes of the victim. I don't see any American dream; I see an American nightmare.  
60 These twenty-two million victims are waking up. Their eyes are coming open. They're beginning to see what they used to only look at. They're becoming politically mature.... It's possible for them to see that every time there's an election, the races are so close  
65 that they have to have a recount.... Well, what does this mean? It means that when white people are evenly divided, and black people have a bloc of votes of their own, it is left up to them to determine who's going to sit in the White House and who's going to be in the dog-  
70 house....  
So it's time in 1964 to wake up...let them know your eyes are open. And let them know you—something else that's wide open too. It's got to be the ballot or the bullet. The ballot or the bullet. If you're  
75 afraid to use an expression like that, you should get on out of the country; you should get back in the cotton patch; you should get back in the alley. They get all the Negro vote, and after they get it, the Negro gets nothing in return.... That's camouflage, that's trickery, that's  
80 treachery, window-dressing.... Half of the people in the South can't even vote....  
That's why, in 1964, it's time now for you and me to become more politically mature and realize what the ballot is for; what we're supposed to get when we cast  
85 a ballot; and that if we don't cast a ballot, it's going to end up in a situation where we're going to have to cast a bullet. It's either a ballot or a bullet....



## Developing Commentary

One of the most difficult processes in the Rhetorical Analysis Essay is developing commentary, which is the articulation of HOW the author writes, rather than WHAT she actually wrote. To do this, you will need to identify the relationship between the rhetorical situation and the strategies the author uses to achieve her goal or purpose of writing the piece.

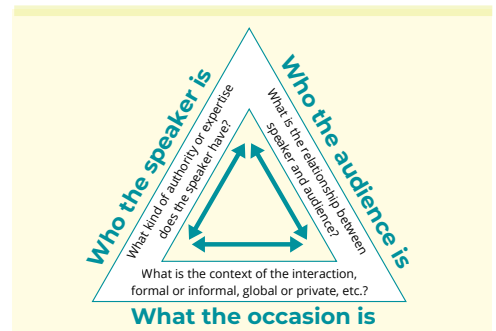
### The “Commentary Checklist”

After you have identified the author’s purpose and primary points, your next step is to identify what rhetorical choices the speaker makes to develop the claims. When choosing the evidence to illustrate the choice, read closely to ensure that what you’ve chosen supports one of the primary points.

Next, you will need to create your commentary that includes small snippets of evidence and an analysis of how the evidence supports the primary point, ultimately helping the writer achieve her purpose.

Use the following questions to help you evaluate your commentary:

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| <p><b>Meaning</b></p> | <p><b>-Have you explained the actual meaning of the evidence?</b></p> <p><b>-Why did the author choose this specific evidence for her purpose, for the intended audience?</b></p> <p><b>-How does the evidence connect to what the author is actually saying in the strategy?</b></p> <p>For example, a metaphor should be explained. Parallelism is often used to emphasize that two or more ideas have the same level of importance or to highlight the similarities and differences between two or more things.</p>  |
| <p><b>Impact</b></p>  | <p><b>-How does the evidence impact the audience?</b></p> <p><b>-How does the choice make the audience more amenable to the speaker’s persuasion?</b></p> <p>When discussing impact, you will likely refer to a logical, emotional, or credible appeal. However, avoid the terms ethos, logos, pathos. Instead, when discussing an appeal to credibility, you can explain how “the author endears herself to the audience by . . .” or explaining how a choice “elicits a sense of shame within the audience” instead of simply calling the evidence “pathos.” Psychologically, repetition can have a positive effect on an audience’s reception of and agreement with an argument, and create a greater familiarity with the message and often leads to gradual agreement.</p> |
| <p><b>Purpose</b></p> | <p><b>-How does the rhetorical choice help the speaker achieve her purpose?</b></p> <p><b>-What does it reveal about human nature or a universal idea in order to help the speaker achieve her purpose?</b></p> <p>Be sure to proofread your commentary. You may have embedded this within the discussion of the meaning or impact of the choice/evidence. If not, you may need to discuss how “a sense of fear often spurs humans into action, thus convincing his audience to join the war.”</p>  |



### Universal Ideas:

Often, a speaker will make assumptions about the audience’s beliefs, values, or needs. These assumptions could be based on the exigence, subject, setting, purpose, or additional information provided in the actual prompt. As an analyst, it is your job to identify and examine those assumptions and explain the significance behind them in connection to the impact of the rhetorical choices.

When writing a rhetorical analysis, it is important to address how a writer’s rhetorical choices affect the audience by appealing to one of these six universal topics:

- Moral
- Spiritual
- Political
- Social
- Psychological
- Historical

When discussing the universalities, it is not necessary to specifically state that “the author addresses a moral universality.” Instead, you can discuss how the speaker’s use of rhetorical questions serves “to prompt the audience to question their own moral behavior.”

**Instructions:** Using the checklist on the right-hand side, identify whether the following commentary satisfies the three essential criteria for commentary. If you determine that the sample would not earn full points, then rewrite the commentary in the lined space so that it would earn full points.

All of the responses are based on the following prompt:

Malcom X, a civil rights activist, delivered this speech in April of 1964, an election year. Two thousand people—including some of his opponents who believed his separatist ideas would make the civil rights’ movement more difficult—turned out to hear him speak. Read the passage carefully. Write an essay that analyzes the rhetorical choices Malcolm X makes to convey his message that the fight for racial justice must continue.

**Sample 1:**

*To begin, Malcolm X creates a bond with his audience, acknowledging that, although they may have differences, they are all united by their “common problem” referring to the oppression and exploitation that African-Americans have endured at the hands of the “white man.”*

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**Sample 2:**

*By repeatedly mentioning that “1964” is the year of political change for African Americans, Malcolm X establishes a sense of urgency among his audience.*

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**CRITERIA**

- Explains the meaning of evidence
- Examines the impact on the audience
- Analyzes how the choice supports the author’s purpose

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/ [4] Commentary

**CRITERIA**

- Explains the meaning of evidence
- Examines the impact on the audience
- Analyzes how the choice supports the author’s purpose

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/ [4] Commentary



**Sample 3:**

*Malcolm X establishes an either-or argument and works diligently through his speech to support how the “time has run out” for African-Americans to sit idly by. Instead, he calls for his audience to live by his motto, “the ballot or the bullet,” arguing that if they do not use their right to vote, they will be forced to use violence, “the bullet,” to gain freedom.*

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**Sample 4:**

*To further illustrate his argument, Malcolm X ridicules those in his audience that continue to delude themselves. Painting a picture of a man sitting at a table with no food yet watching another eat, Malcolm X ascertains that the man with no food cannot call himself a diner much like his audience cannot call themselves “Americans.” Through this metaphor, the audience is forced to examine their own allegiance to the country.*

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**CRITERIA**

- Explains the meaning of evidence
- Examines the impact on the audience
- Analyzes how the choice supports the author’s purpose

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/ [4] Commentary

**CRITERIA**

- Explains the meaning of evidence
- Examines the impact on the audience
- Analyzes how the choice supports the author’s purpose

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/ [4] Commentary

**Sample 5:**

*Malcolm X alludes to Martin Luther King, stating that he doesn't see a "dream" but a "nightmare" instead.*

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**Homework**

Review the passage and identify two rhetorical choices Malcolm X employs to support his purpose. Be sure to include the three elements of effective commentary in each response.

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2. \_\_\_\_\_

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**CRITERIA**

- Explains the meaning of evidence
  - Examines the impact on the audience
  - Analyzes how the choice supports the author's purpose
- 
- / [4] Commentary