

## “Rhetorical Analysis: The Ethos of it All” handout

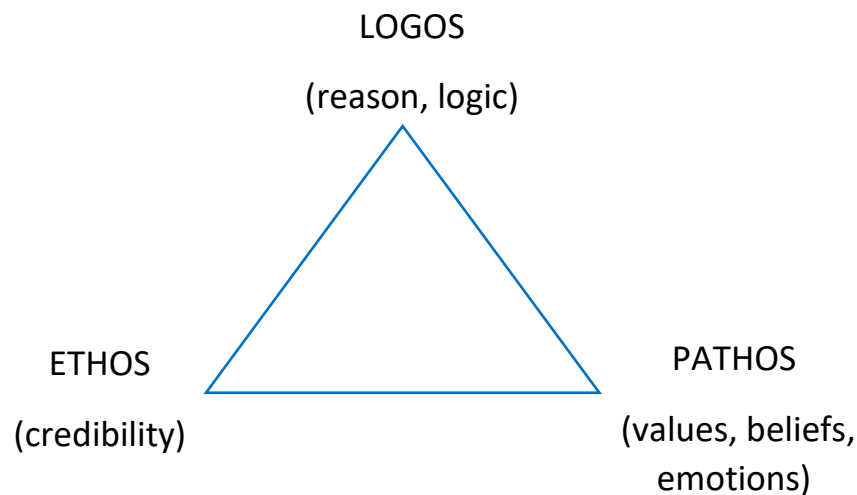
### The Rhetorical Triangle

Creators and authors use rhetorical appeals to persuade an audience. This handout provides a brief overview of the main appeals used in advertising: logos, ethos, and pathos. The rhetorical triangle can be used as a basis for a rhetorical analysis.

**Logos** appeal to reason and is often seen in advertisements that use statistics and common beliefs

**Ethos** appeals to the character of the author or creator. Using a celebrity is often a way of providing ethos to a product or call to action.

**Pathos** appeals to the emotions of the audience, as well as beliefs and values.



The rhetorical triangle does not indicate that all elements or rhetorical devices must be equal. The purpose of the analysis and the identified target audience plays a large part in deciding what to focus on. For example, some advertisements heavily use logos, while others may use pathos or ethos, depending on their target audience and key demographics.



## Questions to ask yourself about the rhetorical devices used by you or others

### Logos:

- Is it supported by solid reasons and credible evidence?
- Is the argument logical and arranged in a well-reasoned order?

### Ethos:

- What are the writer's qualifications?
- How has the writer/creator connected themselves to the topic being discussed?
- Does the writer demonstrate respect for multiple viewpoints by using sources in the text?
- Are sources credible?
- Are sources documented appropriately?
- Is the tone suitable for the audience/purpose?
- Are word choices used appropriately for the audience/purpose?
- Is the document presented in a polished and professional manner?

### Pathos:

- Are vivid examples, details, and images used to engage the reader's emotions and imagination?
- Does the writer appeal to the values and beliefs of the reader by using examples readers can relate to or care about?
- Who would this stir up emotions for?

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