

WRITING THROUGH THE RHETORICAL MODES

SECTION 1: A RHETORICAL MODES READER

Chapter Four: The Persuasive Mode

A Note on the Rhetorical Appeals, or Modes of Persuasion

By Ashar Foley

Persuading your audience to share or at least consider your opinion requires that you make rhetorical appeals. There are three kinds of rhetorical appeals: logical (logos), emotional (pathos), and moral/ethical (ethos), and you will use each appeal in your essay.

Logical appeals persuade an audience by reason. For example,

- "You don't need to jump in front of a speeding truck to know that it's a bad idea. Why then would you need to try drugs to know if they're damaging? That's nonsense."
- "The study's findings are perfectly clear: the correlation between smoking and cancer is both generalizable and statistically significant, and therefore we can conclude that smoking causes cancer."
- "In 25 years of driving this route, I haven't seen a single bear."

Emotional appeals persuade an audience by creating an emotional response. For example,

- "If we don't submit this report soon, we're all going to get fired! Can't you see that we need to stop procrastinating?"
- "Peace of mind is priceless. Our travel insurance will protect your ticket in the event of a flight cancellation."
- "Imagine how you would feel if, one day, you were moved out of your home and onto a reservation."

Moral/Ethical appeals persuade by convincing the audience of the speaker's or source's moral authority or credibility:

- "You know me – I've taught Sunday School at your church for years, babysat your children, and served as a daycare director to boot."
- "If my old age doesn't convince you that my opinion matters, at least consider that I love you and I want what's best for you."
- "Doctors all over the world say, 'It works!'"



Original content by Ashar Foley.

This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/).