

## What Is Rhetoric?

[Rhetoric](#) is the study and practice of communication practices.

As one professor of rhetoric explains, “Rhetoric is the study of effective speaking and writing. . . . In its long and vigorous history rhetoric has enjoyed many definitions, accommodated differing purposes, and varied widely in what it included. And yet, for most of its history it has maintained its fundamental character as a discipline for training students 1) to perceive how [language](#) is at work orally and in writing, and 2) to become proficient in applying the resources of language in their own speaking and writing.” ([Silva Rhetoricae](#)) To learn more about rhetoric, you might want to begin by reading parts of [Artistotle’s Rhetoric](#), [this introduction to the term by Madeline Lane](#), or Gertrude S. Buck's consideration of the it in her 1901 essay ["What Does 'Rhetoric' Mean?"](#)

A rhetorical situation is any act of, or occasion for, communication. Rhetorical situations always involve a speaker, audience, and purpose. The rhetorical situation is commonly depicted as a triangle, which is then referred to as the “rhetorical triangle.”