

Rhetorical Appeals: Logos, Ethos, and Pathos

Whenever you read (or write) an argument you must ask yourself, “How is the author working to be persuasive? And to whom?” There are several ways to appeal to an audience. Among them are appealing to logos, ethos, and pathos. These appeals are prevalent in almost all arguments.

To Appeal to LOGOS (logic, reasoning)	To Develop or Appeal to ETHOS (character, ethics)	To Appeal to PATHOS (emotion)
: the argument itself; the reasoning the author uses; logical evidence	: how an author builds credibility & trustworthiness	: words or passages an author uses to activate emotions
Types of LOGOS Appeals	Ways to Develop ETHOS	Types of PATHOS Appeals
- Theories / scientific facts - Indicated meanings or reasons (because...) - Literal or historical analogies - Definitions - Factual data & statistics - Quotations - Citations from experts & authorities - Informed opinions - Examples (real life examples) - Personal anecdotes	- Author’s profession / background - Author’s publication - Appears sincere, fair minded, knowledgeable - Concedes to the opposition - Morally / ethically likeable - Appropriate language for audience and subject - Appropriate vocabulary - Correct grammar - Professional format	- Emotionally loaded language - Vivid descriptions - Emotional examples - Anecdotes, testimonies, or Narratives about emotional experiences or events - Figurative language - Emotional tone (humor, sarcasm, disappointment, excitement, etc.)
Effect on Audience	Effect on Audience	Effect on Audience
Evokes a cognitive, rational response. Readers get a sense of, “Oh, that makes sense” or “Hmm, that really doesn’t prove anything.”	Helps reader to see the author as reliable, trustworthy, competent, and credible. The reader might respect the author or his/her views.	Evokes an emotional response. Persuasion by emotion. (usually evoking fear, sympathy, empathy, anger,)
How to Talk About It	How to Talk About It	How to Talk About It
The author appeals to logos by defining relevant terms and then supports his claim with numerous citations from authorities.	Through his use of scientific terminology, the author builds his ethos by appearing knowledgeable.	When referencing 9/11, the author is appealing to pathos. Here, he is eliciting both sadness and anger from his readers.