DB Dr. P. Bawa

Rhetoric in Argument: Logos, Pathos, Ethos

This presentation will discuss the core elements of rhetorical arguments.

Lesson 1 of 6

Building and Strengthening Arguments

DB Dr. P. Bawa

What Is an Argument?

An argument isn't just a disagreement between two or more parties. In a professional or academic setting, **the goal of an argument is to motivate an audience to change their mind or take a specific action**.

> The term 'Argument' is taken from Latin and means, "to make clear"

Let us take a look at a classical argument farce that has several kernels of truth in it.

YOUTUBE

Argument

One of my favourite sketches from the original TV series of Monty Python's Flying Circus

VIEW ON YOUTUBE >

Argument = Assertion + Claims + Evidence

An argument consists of three key elements: An **assertion** backed up by **claims** that must be supported by **evidence**.

ASSERTION | TYPES OF ASSERTION

When people make a statement investing their strong belief in it, as if it is true, though it may not be, they are making an assertion.
Assertion involves making a strong declaration, a forceful or confident and positive statement regarding a belief or a fact.

ASSERTION

TYPES OF ASSERTION

Basic Assertion
It is a simple and straightforward statement for expressing feelings, opinions, and beliefs.

Emphatic Assertion
An emphatic assertion occurs when the speaker or writer conveys sympathy or recognition of the other person's position or feelings. This acknowledgement is then followed by a statement that conveys the speaker's own beliefs.
Escalating Assertion

An escalating assertion begins with an assertion that doesn't receive a response. The speaker or writer then escalates by making a second assertion that states their position more forcefully.
Language Assertion

Language assertions are frequently used during interpersonal conflict to defuse the situation. As the term's name indicates, these statements rely on the first-person pronoun I that is used to describe the other person's behavior followed by how it affects the writer, a description of their feelings, and a statement indicating what the writer wants

CLAIM

TYPES OF CLAIMS

Claim is a statement in which a writer presents an assertion as truthful to substantiate an argument.

The purpose of a claim is to convince a reader of something. The reader may not initially agree with the statement the author makes or may require more information to reach their own conclusion, and claims point them in the direction of a specific answer.

A claim may function as a single argument by itself, or it may be one of multiple claims made to support a larger argument.

Claims are more than opinions; you can back a claim up with evidence, while an opinion is simply something you feel is truthful or accurate.

Evaluative
An evaluative claim, or value judgement, assesses an idea from either an ethical or aesthetic viewpoint.
An ethical evaluative claim comments on the morality or principles—or lack thereof—of a person, idea, or action, with a value judgement about a topic or idea.
An aesthetic evaluative claim judges the artistic merits of the claim subject. Critics often make these types of claims when writing reviews and analyses of creative works.

Interpretative
An interpretative claim explains or illuminates the overall argument the writer is attempting to make. On a basic level, a simple book report is a type of interpretative claim; you present your own understanding of the text, how it conveys meaning, and your interpretation of the larger points the author makes.

Factual
A factual claim argues an accepted truth about reality. Verifiable information can support these claims. Usually, such claims are backed up by years of research and scientific evidence.

Policy
A policy claim tries to compel a reader—usually, a politician or governing body—to take a specific action or change a law or viewpoint. These types of claims are common in politically and socially focused scenarios.

In argument, evidence refers to facts, documentation or testimony used to strengthen a claim, support an argument or reach a conclusion.

Testimony

The final type of evidence used in writing a convincing argument is Testimony. There are two types of testimony: 1) **the account of an eyewitness**, and 2) the **judgment of an expert** who has had the chance to examine and interpret the facts. Both of these lend validity to an argument. The eyewitness can supply important facts for the writer to use, and the expert can provide valuable judgments in order to give strength to the argument

Demonstrative Evidence

As the name suggests, this type of evidence is primarily visual. Demonstrative evidence visually conceptualizes a witness's testimony and can take the form of diagrams and charts. Demonstrative evidence is only admissible if it can reasonably and correctly depict a writer's claim and statement.

Documentary Evidence

Documentary evidence entails all evidence that has been documented. Documentary evidence can be either in the form of a primary or secondary source.

EVIDENCE | TYPES OF EVIDENCE | PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SOURCES

Primary sources include original documents, photographs, interviews, and so forth. Secondary sources present information that has already been processed or interpreted by someone else.

For example, if you are writing a paper about the movie "Jaws," the movie itself, an interview with the director, and production photos could serve as primary sources of evidence.
A movie review from a magazine or a collection of essays about the film would be secondary sources.

Depending on the context, the same item could be either a primary or a secondary source: if I am writing about people's relationships with animals, a collection of stories about animals might be a secondary source; if I am writing about how editors gather diverse stories into collections, the same book might now function as a primary source.

While these elements are at the core of all arguments, there are several different types of arguments.

Debate

Participants on both sides

Debate

trying to win

1 of 8

Courtroom argument

Lawyers pleading before a judge and jury

2 of 8

Dialectic

People taking opposing views and finally resolving the conflict.

3 of 8

Single-perspective argument

One person arguing to convince a mass audience.

4 of 8

One-on-one everyday argument

One person trying to convince another.

5 of 8

Academic inquiry	One or more people examining a complicated issue.

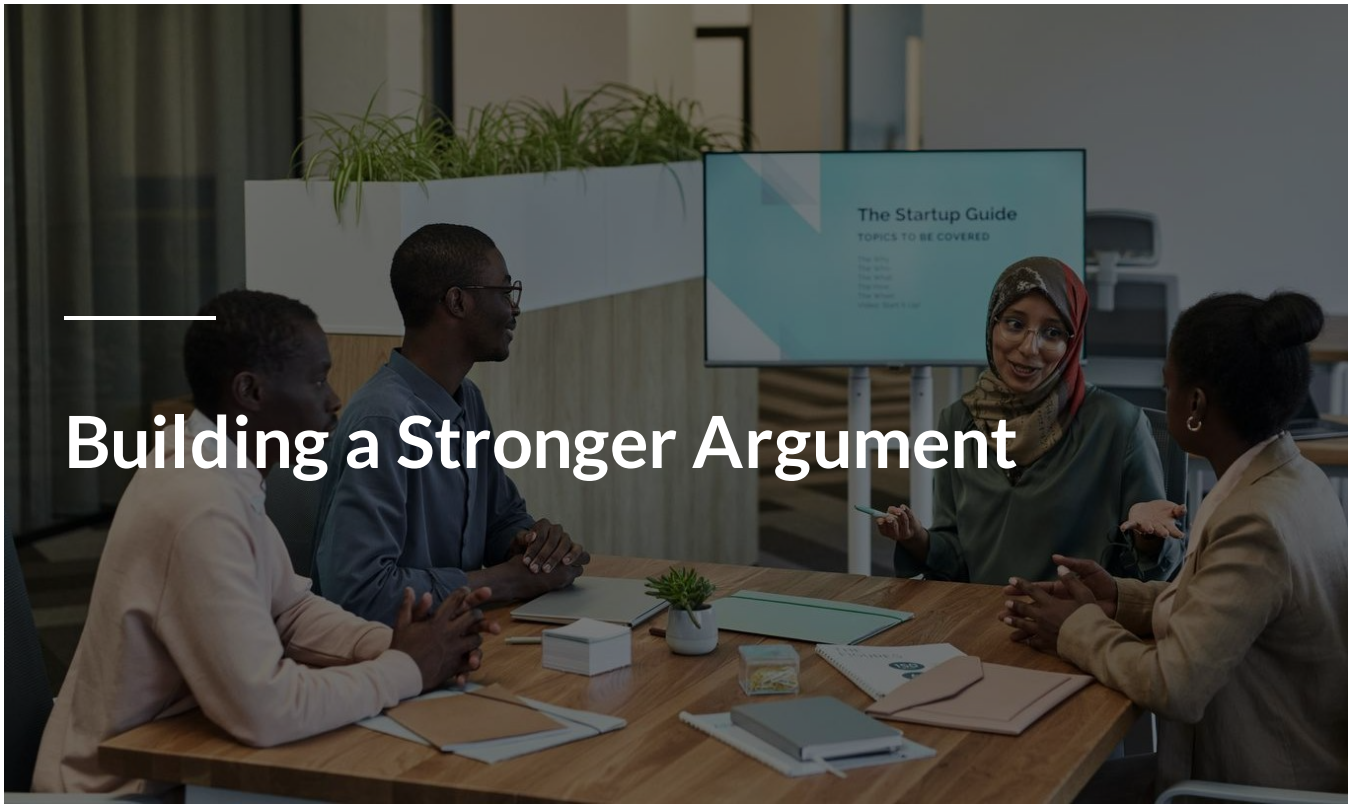
6 of 8

Negotiation	Two or more people working to reach consensus.

7 of 8

Internal argument	Working to convince yourself

(Wood, 2004).



Building a Stronger Argument

Persuasion isn't a superpower some people have, and others don't. With the right tools and understanding, it's a skill anyone can develop. Let us take a look at the steps for building and strengthening an argument.

Establish a Clear Purpose

The goal of an argument is to persuade your audience (stakeholders or decision-makers) to change their minds about a topic or take a specific action. To start, make sure your intention is clear. Begin by writing it out as succinctly as possible.

Remember these **two tips** to establish a clear purpose:

1. Be concrete.
2. Be action oriented.

Unclear purpose:

Prove to my colleagues that my idea for a cafeteria is the best one

Clear purpose:

Convince my colleagues to raise funds through a cultural variety show to expand the college cafeteria menu that is more inclusive and offers food options from different cultures.

Consider the Audience

Understanding your audience helps you craft a more effective argument. Keep these considerations in mind:

1. Who is my audience?
2. What do they care about most?
3. What will their objections be?
4. How do they prefer to receive information?
5. What tone or style do they respond to best?
6. What do they already know about the topic?
7. What information do they need to make a decision?
8. Why should they listen to me?

Support Claims With Evidence

Remember that claims require evidence from credible sources. Evidence takes the form of facts, data, expert analysis, and case studies. When supporting claims, make sure your sources are:

1. **Current.** Data and statistics change frequently, so limit your search parameters to ensure current results.
2. **Objective.** Avoid biased sources. Biased sources may have a personal stake in the subject, a conflict of interest, or something to gain (or lose) from their position.
3. **Credible.** A credible source has expertise in the subject through education, experience, or professional or academic associations.
4. **Accurate.** Double-check the accuracy of your sources by finding the primary source of the information or cross-referencing it with other credible sources.
5. **Diverse.** When possible, use multiple sources to ensure a diversity of evidence and include different types of evidence to create a well-rounded argument.

Use Rhetorical Appeals

Strong arguments use a combination of appeals:

1. **Ethos** is an appeal to credibility or authority. The source of the information is more compelling when they have the experience, reputation, or education to support their points. Example: *"Dr. Armstrong has more than 20 years of experience and has published several peer-reviewed articles on the efficacy of professional development."*
2. **Logos** is an appeal to logic or reason. A strong argument not only presents concrete, factual information; it avoids logical fallacies (which we'll cover below).Example: *"The data shows that businesses that invested in professional development for their employees showed higher annual revenue than those that didn't."*
3. **Pathos** is an appeal to emotions. When you make a personal or emotional connection with the audience, they are more likely to listen to what you have to say. Example: *"We invest in professional development because we care about our employees and we want to see them succeed and find joy in their work."*

Anticipate/Refute Counter-Arguments

Addressing your audience's counter-arguments is essential to the process. Not only do you have to anticipate their objections, but you also have to gently persuade them that your strategy will neutralize their concerns.

Counter-argument: *"We simply don't have the money to invest in new technology right now."*

Refutation: *"A small investment now will save us significantly more money in the long run. Here's how..."*

Avoid Logical Fallacies

Arguments rely on sound logic and reasoning, and relying on logical fallacies undermines efforts to make a solid case. Here is a brief list of common logical fallacies to avoid when building your argument.

1. **Ad hominem.** This is a personal attack on someone's character, skill level, or appearance. Example: *"Tom is a liar and a hypocrite. He's always looking out for number one."*
2. **Circular reasoning.** Sometimes known as "begging the question," this fallacy often uses its own conclusion as its premise, without providing any actual evidence. Example: *"Investing in our social media efforts is the smart thing to do because it makes the most sense."*
3. **Faulty cause/effect reasoning.** When you assume that, just because A came before B, it caused B, you are using faulty cause/effect reasoning. Example: *"Our stock started to plummet right after we hired our new CEO. Therefore, she must be the culprit.*
4. **Straw man fallacy.** The straw man fallacy is misrepresenting the other side's argument to make them look bad or make yourself look better. Example: *"Our competitor wants to start a monopoly and put the rest of the industry out of business."*
5. **Slippery slope.** The slippery slope fallacy argues that because one event happens, it will lead to a string of negative events; therefore, you should prohibit the inciting event. Example: *"If we start letting employees work from home two days a week, pretty soon they'll never want to come back to the office, and productivity will take a nosedive."*

Note: This list is by no means comprehensive. In the course website's First Things First folder, you will find the complete list of logical fallacies with examples and explanations.

Don't be too rigid. Be willing to concede when your audience makes good points or raises legitimate objections. It builds trust and demonstrates flexibility. If you automatically reject opposing viewpoints or react negatively to criticism, you create an adversarial dynamic. Meet them halfway, and you'll go much farther working together.

Check Your Understanding

We've covered a lot of territory related to argumentation. Take a moment to test your knowledge of these concepts by completing the matching exercise below.

Matching Exercise

Drag and drop each box to match the concept with the correct definition.

SUBMIT

Summary

In a professional setting, a strong argument helps effectively express opinions, advocate for resources, propose new projects, persuade clients, and more. To start, remember the basic structure: argument = assertion + claims + evidence.

To build more effective arguments, follow these six steps:

1. Establish a clear purpose.
2. Consider the audience.
3. Support claims with evidence.
4. Use rhetorical appeals.
5. Address counter-arguments.
6. Avoid logical fallacies.

Arguments are about much more than winning a disagreement or proving a point. When you use concrete evidence and sound logic to convince decision-makers to change their thinking or take action, you make a meaningful impact on your organization.

Understanding Rhetoric

DB Dr. P. Bawa

What is it?

In brief, "rhetoric" is any communication used to modify the perspectives of others.

However, it is a lot more than that. Rhetoric is a complex process designed to motivate, persuade, or inform, using language that supports rhetorical appeals and devices. Some examples of a rhetorical situation are:

- Politicians delivering rallying cries to inspire people to act.
- Advertisers creating catchy slogans to get people to buy products.
- Lawyers presenting emotional arguments to sway a jury
- Business owners soliciting funding or resources from angel investors

The ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle strongly influenced modern day versions and perceptions of the rhetorical situations. Aristotle defined rhetoric as "an ability, in each particular case, to see the available means of persuasion" (Aristotle Rhetoric I.1.2, Kennedy 37)

Today, the academic definition and use of "rhetoric" has evolved to include any situation in which people consciously communicate with each other.

Because people tend to perceive and understand things differently from one another, and because this difference varies to a lesser or greater degree depending on the situation, it is now assumed that rhetoric deals with more than just persuasion. Instead of just persuasion, rhetoric is the set of methods people use to identify with each other—to encourage each other to understand things from one another's perspectives (Burke, 1969).

The Rhetorical Situation and Analysis

A Rhetorical situation deals with the interactions between a text, an author, and the target audience.

Meaning can change based on when, where, and why a text was produced, and meaning can change depending on who reads the text. Rhetorical situations affect the meaning of a text because it may have been written for a specific audience, in a specific place, and during a specific time.

In order to produce effective rhetorical arguments, a writer should continually analyze their writing, using the lens of the rhetorical context pertaining to the writing. This involves analyzing the set of circumstances leading to the text. Any time anyone is trying to make an argument, one is doing so out of a particular context, one that influences and shapes the argument that is made. "**When we do a rhetorical analysis, we look carefully at how the rhetorical situation (context) shapes the rhetorical act (the text)**" (Jeffery & Zickel, 2022).

To write an effective argument, we must unpack the key concepts that go into the foundation of any rhetorical situation. Aristotle organized these concepts as author, audience, setting, purpose, and text.

Author

The author creates the text. It is the person who is communicating in order to try to effect a change in his or her audience. An author need not be a single person or a person at all – an author

could be an organization. To understand the rhetorical situation of a text, one must examine the identity of the author and his or her background.

- What kind of experience or authority does the author have in the subject about which he or she is speaking?
- What values does the author have, either in general or with regard to this particular subject?
- How invested is the author in the topic of the text? In other words, what affects the author's perspective on the topic?

Audience

In any text, an author is attempting to engage an audience. Before we can analyze how effectively an author engages an audience, we must spend some time thinking about that audience. An audience is any person or group who is the intended recipient of the text and also the person/people the author is trying to influence. To understand the rhetorical situation of a text, one must examine who the intended audience is by thinking about these things:

- Who is the author addressing?
    - Sometimes this is the hardest question of all. We can get this information of "who is the author addressing" by looking at where an article is published. Be sure to pay attention to the newspaper, magazine, website, or journal title where the text is published. Often, you can research that publication to get a good sense of who reads that publication.
- What is the audience's demographic information (age, gender, etc.)?
- What is/are the background, values, interests of the intended audience?
- How open is this intended audience to the author?
- What assumptions might the audience make about the author?
- In what context is the audience receiving the text?

Setting

Nothing happens in a vacuum, and that includes the creation of any text. Essays, speeches, photos, political ads – any text – was written in a specific time and/or place, all of which can affect the way the text communicates its message. To understand the rhetorical situation of a text, we can identify the particular occasion or event that prompted the text's creation at the particular time it was created.

- Was there a debate about the topic that the author of the text addresses? If so, what are (or were) the various perspectives within that debate?
- Did something specific occur that motivated the author to speak out?

Purpose

The purpose of a text blends the author with the setting and the audience. Looking at a text's purpose means looking at the author's motivations for creating it. The author has decided to start a conversation or join one that is already underway. Why has he or she decided to join in? In any text, the author may be trying to inform, to convince, to define, to announce, or to activate. Can you tell which one of those general purposes your author has?

- What is the author hoping to achieve with this text?
- Why did the author decide to join the "conversation" about the topic?
- What does the author want from their audience? What does the author want the audience to do once the text is communicated?

Text

In what format or medium is the text being made: image? written essay? speech? song? protest sign? meme? sculpture?

- What is gained by having a text composed in a particular format/medium?
- What limitations does that format/medium have?
- What opportunities for expression does that format/medium have (that perhaps other formats do not have?)

Rhetorical Appeals: Logos

DB Dr. P. Bawa

Appeal to Reason

Logic. Reason. Rationality. Logos is brainy and intellectual, cool, calm, collected, objective. When an author relies on logos, it means that they are using logic, careful structure, and objective evidence to appeal to the audience. An author can appeal to an audience's intellect by using information that can be fact checked (using multiple sources) and thorough explanations to support key points. Additionally, providing a solid and non-biased explanation of one's argument is a great way for an author to invoke logos.

Logos can be **anecdotal** (meaning it's derived from a handful of personal experiences), **data oriented** (derived from statistics and experiment results) or **purely theoretical** (derived from scholarly resources where other writers offer their perspectives on ideas).

Some of the ways in which writers can establish logos are discussed below.

Comparison

A comparison between one thing (with regard to your topic) and another, similar thing to help support your claim. It is important that the comparison is fair and valid – the things being compared must

share significant traits of similarity.

1 of 7

Causality

Cause/effect thinking – you argue that X has caused Y, or that X is likely to cause Y to help support your claim. Be careful with the latter – it can be difficult to predict that something "will" happen in the future.

2 of 7

Deductive reasoning

Starting with a broad, general claim/example and using it to support a more specific point or claim

3 of 7

Inductive reasoning

Using several specific examples or cases to make a broad generalization

4 of 7

Exemplification

Use of many examples or a variety of evidence to support a single point

5 of 7

Moving beyond just including a

Elaboration	fact, but explaining the significance or relevance of that fact

6 of 7

Coherent thought	Maintaining a well-organized line of reasoning; not repeating ideas or jumping around

7 of 7

Credibility of Logos

Not all speakers who use logos can be blindly trusted. As Aristotle specifies in his definition of the term, logos can be "proof, or apparent proof."

Proof

A writer may present facts, figures, and research data to show that they have "done their homework," in an effort to attain the degree of credibility that is often automatically attributed to scientific studies and evidence-driven arguments.

Apparent Proof

A writer might present facts in a way that is wholly or partially misrepresentative, using those facts (and, by extension, logos) to make a claim that feels credible while actually arguing something that is untrue.

Yet another factor that can cause a text to have the appearance of providing proof is the use of overlong words and technical language—but just because someone sounds smart doesn't mean their argument stands to reason.

Bogus Proof

A writer uses fake news and alternate facts to push an agenda to convince their readers. Fake or bogus proof can have real negative consequences.

Fake News and Bogus Proof

Fake news is information that is not representative of truth, and it has been around for centuries.

Examples

In the Roman history Octavian used it to denigrate the character and reputation of his rival Antony •

The Great Moon Hoax of 1835 where "The New York Sun published six articles about the discovery of life on the moon, complete with illustrations of humanoid bat-creatures and bearded blue unicorns" (Posetti & Matthews,2018).

In today's world fake news has been defined as "news [...] that are intentionally and verifiably false and could mislead readers" (Kim et al, 2019, p. 934).

Step 1

●Misinformation

It is characterized by a plethora of information, most of which is false and misleading. Misinformation can be unintentional when the persons spreading the facts also believe them to be true and are unaware of the truth (Hendricks & Vestergaard, 2018; Van der Linden, 2022).

Step 2

●Disinformation

This is misinformation that is deliberate and spread with the intent to mislead (Alonso-Galbán & Alemañy-Castilla, 2022; Hendricks & Vestergaard, 2018).

Step 3

●Cherry-picking

This type of fake information is generated when only some facts or evidence are selected to further an agenda or perspective and other facts are underplayed or hidden (Asudeh, 2021; Hamidi, 2022; Hendricks & Vestergaard, 2018).

Step 4

●Omission

As opposed to clickbait and cherry picking where specific facts are selected and highlighted, omission involves deliberate disregard and hiding of facts that does not further or support perspectives or agendas.

Omitting information that does not fit specific perspectives undermines evidence-based information (Asudeh, 2021; Hamidi, 2022; Hendricks & Vestergaard, 2018; Van Swol et al, 2022).

Step 5

Fabrication

This is where information is false, fabricated and/or made up. Fabrication can come in the form of **deep fakes** (videos that are altered to create false news), **zombie papers** (published articles using fraudulent data and evidence that were redacted), and/or **fully fabricated evidence** and content (Campbell et al, 2021; Page & Columb, 2021).

Summary

When writing or reviewing argument/persuasive work, care must be taken to ensure that writers have used proof and not apparent or bogus proof.

Check your knowledge

- Where four decades ago there was rubble, today in West Berlin there is the greatest industrial output of any city in Germany--busy office blocks, fine homes and apartments, proud avenues, and the spreading lawns of parkland. Where a city's culture seemed to have been destroyed, today there are two great universities, orchestras and an opera, countless theaters, and museums.

- Where there was want, today there's abundance--food, clothing, automobiles--the wonderful goods of the Ku'damm. From devastation, from utter ruin, you Berliners have, in freedom, rebuilt a city that once again ranks as one of the greatest on earth...In the 1950s, Khrushchev [leader of the communist Soviet Union] predicted: "We will bury you." But in the West today, we see a free world that has achieved a level of prosperity and well-being unprecedented in all human history.

- Where four decades ago there was rubble, today in West Berlin there is the greatest industrial output of any city in Germany--busy office blocks, fine homes and apartments, proud avenues, and the spreading lawns of parkland. Where a city's culture seemed to have been destroyed, today there are two great universities, orchestras and an opera, countless theaters, and museums.

- Where there was want, today there's abundance--food, clothing, automobiles--the wonderful goods of the Ku'damm. From devastation, from utter ruin, you Berliners have, in freedom, rebuilt a city that once again ranks as one of the greatest on earth...In the 1950s, Khrushchev [leader of the communist Soviet Union] predicted: "We will bury you." But in the West today, we see a free world that has achieved a level of prosperity and well-being unprecedented in all human history.

Comparison

- Where four decades ago there was rubble, today in West Berlin there is the greatest industrial output of any city in Germany--busy office blocks, fine homes and apartments, proud avenues, and the spreading lawns of parkland. Where a city's culture seemed to have been destroyed, today there are two great universities, orchestras and an opera, countless theaters, and museums.

- Where there was want, today there's abundance--food, clothing, automobiles--the wonderful goods of the Ku'damm. From devastation, from utter ruin, you Berliners have, in freedom, rebuilt a city that once again ranks as one of the greatest on earth...In the 1950s, Khrushchev [leader of the communist Soviet Union] predicted: "We will bury you." But in the West today, we see a free world that has achieved a level of prosperity and well-being unprecedented in all human history.

Coherent Thought

- Where four decades ago there was rubble, today in West Berlin there is the greatest industrial output of any city in Germany--busy office blocks, fine homes and apartments, proud avenues, and the spreading lawns of parkland. Where a city's culture seemed to have been destroyed, today there are two great universities, orchestras and an opera, countless theaters, and museums.

- Where there was want, today there's abundance--food, clothing, automobiles--the wonderful goods of the Ku'damm. From devastation, from utter ruin, you Berliners have, in freedom, rebuilt a city that once again ranks as one of the greatest on earth...In the 1950s, Khrushchev [leader of the communist Soviet Union] predicted: "We will bury you." But in the West today, we see a free world that has achieved a level of prosperity and well-being unprecedented in all human history.

Elaboration

- Where four decades ago there was rubble, today in West Berlin there is the greatest industrial output of any city in Germany--busy office blocks, fine homes and apartments, proud avenues, and the spreading lawns of parkland. Where a city's culture seemed to have been destroyed, today there are two great universities, orchestras and an opera, countless theaters, and museums.

- Where there was want, today there's abundance--food, clothing, automobiles--the wonderful goods of the Ku'damm. From devastation, from utter ruin, you Berliners have, in freedom, rebuilt a city that once again ranks as one of the greatest on earth...In the 1950s, Khrushchev [leader of the communist Soviet Union] predicted: "We will bury you." But in the West today, we see a free world that has achieved a level of prosperity and well-being unprecedented in all human history.

Exemplification

- Where four decades ago there was rubble, today in West Berlin there is the greatest industrial output of any city in Germany--busy office blocks, fine homes and apartments, proud avenues, and the spreading lawns of parkland. Where a city's culture seemed to have been destroyed, today there are two great universities, orchestras and an opera, countless theaters, and museums.

- Where there was want, today there's abundance--food, clothing, automobiles--the wonderful goods of the Ku'damm. From devastation, from utter ruin, you Berliners have, in freedom, rebuilt a city that once again ranks as one of the greatest on earth...In the 1950s, Khrushchev [leader of the communist Soviet Union] predicted: "We will bury you." But in the West today, we see a free world that has achieved a level of prosperity and well-being unprecedented in all human history.

Deductive Reasoning

- Where four decades ago there was rubble, today in West Berlin there is the greatest industrial output of any city in Germany--busy office blocks, fine homes and apartments, proud avenues, and the spreading lawns of parkland. Where a city's culture seemed to have been destroyed, today there are two great universities, orchestras and an opera, countless theaters, and museums.

- Where there was want, today there's abundance--food, clothing, automobiles--the wonderful goods of the Ku'damm. From devastation, from utter ruin, you Berliners have, in freedom, rebuilt a city that once again ranks as one of the greatest on earth...In the 1950s, Khrushchev [leader of the communist Soviet Union] predicted: "We will bury you." But in the West today, we see a free world that has achieved a level of prosperity and well-being unprecedented in all human history.

Causality

- Where four decades ago there was rubble, today in West Berlin there is the greatest industrial output of any city in Germany--busy office blocks, fine homes and apartments, proud avenues, and the spreading lawns of parkland. Where a city's culture seemed to have been destroyed, today there are two great universities, orchestras and an opera, countless theaters, and museums.

- Where there was want, today there's abundance--food, clothing, automobiles--the wonderful goods of the Ku'damm. From devastation, from utter ruin, you Berliners have, in freedom, rebuilt a city that once again ranks as one of the greatest on earth...In the 1950s, Khrushchev [leader of the communist Soviet Union] predicted: "We will bury you." But in the West today, we see a free world that has achieved a level of prosperity and well-being unprecedented in all human history.

Proof

Summary

Logos is a powerful, evidence-based rhetorical appeal for arguments. However, we must ensure that the evidence we use is credible and the process we adopt is ethical.

Lesson 4 of 6

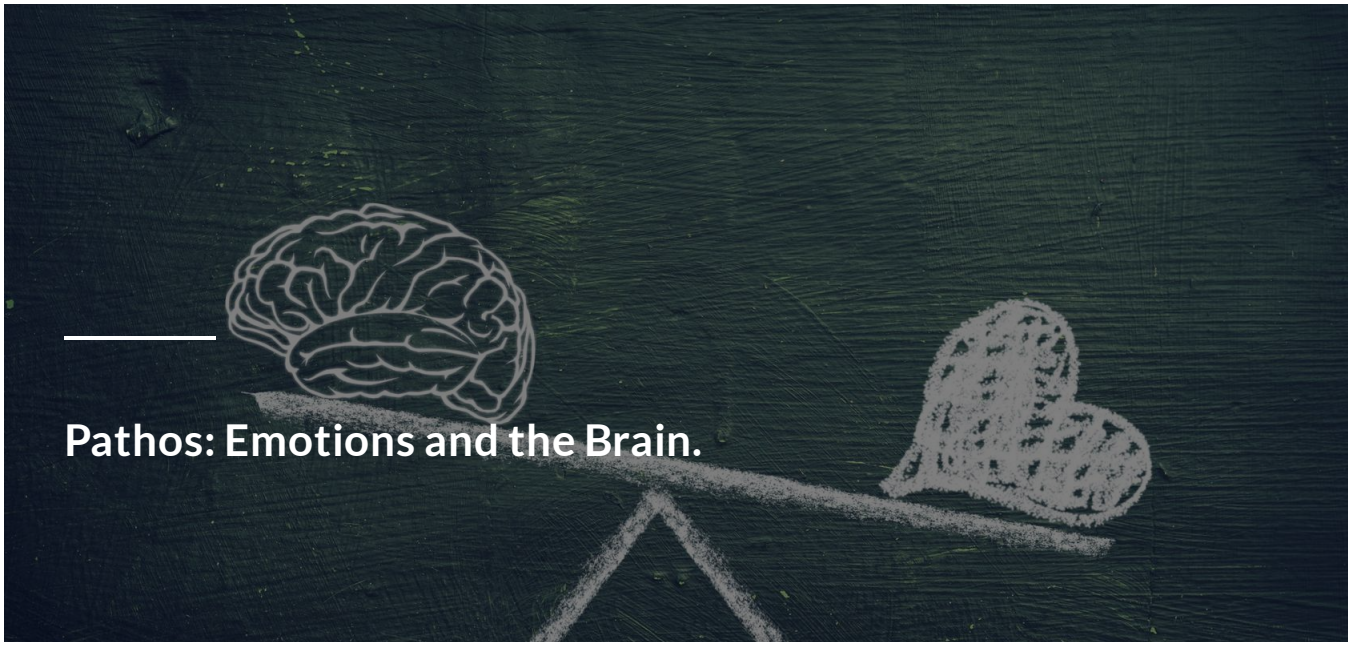
Rhetorical Apples: Pathos

DB Dr. P. Bawa

Pathos: Appealing to Emotions

Pathos, or the appeal to emotion, means to persuade an audience by purposely evoking certain emotions to make them feel the way the author wants them to feel. Authors make **deliberate word choices, use meaningful language, and use examples and stories that evoke emotion**. Authors can desire a range of emotional responses, including sympathy, anger, frustration, or even amusement.

When an author relies on pathos, it means that they are trying to tap into the audience's emotions to get them to agree with the author's claim. An author using pathetic appeals wants the audience to feel something: anger, pride, joy, rage, or happiness.



Why Pathos?

Pathos is originally a Greek word meaning “suffering” or “experience”. The concept of pathos as a mode of persuasion originated with the Greek philosopher Aristotle. In his book *Rhetoric*, Aristotle describes pathos as a means of awakening people’s emotions in order to sway their opinion towards that of the orator.

Appealing to emotion can be a very effective means of sharing your frame of mind and persuading your audience to agree with your point of view, because humans are naturally prone to affective sensitivities and reactions. Our bodies and brain secrete certain hormones (estrogen, progesterone, testosterone, norepinephrine and epinephrine, serotonin, GABA, dopamine, acetylcholine, and oxytocin) that influence our thoughts and feelings, making us highly susceptible to emotional stimulus (Alexander et al, 2021).

Thats is also why, writers should not depend solely on pathos during a persuasive process, since it can create an unethical and non-credible imbalance in their appeals. When employing pathos as a means of persuasion, it’s important to balance it out with the use of ethos or logos. Arguing based on emotion alone can lead to flawed arguments, also known as logical fallacies. Oftentimes writers can appeal to emotion when the logic of their argument is faulty, or they lack credibility or knowledge in the subject they are addressing.

Some ways in which writers can add pathos to their work are as follows.

Expressive Descriptions

Expressive descriptions of people, places, or events that help the reader to feel or experience those events

Imagery

Vivid imagery of people, places or events that help the reader to feel like he or she is seeing those events

Sharing Personal Stories

Sharing personal stories that make the reader feel a connection to, or empathy for, the person being described

Emotional Vocabulary

Using emotion-laden vocabulary as a way to put the reader into that specific emotional mindset (what is the author trying to make the audience feel? and how are they doing that?)

Emotional information

Using any information that will evoke an emotional response from the audience. This could involve making the audience feel empathy or disgust for the person/group/event being discussed, or perhaps connection to or rejection of the person/group/event being discussed.

Pathos Fallacies

An appropriate appeal to pathos is different than trying to unfairly play upon the audience's feelings and emotions through fallacious, misleading, or excessively emotional appeals. Such a manipulative use of pathos may alienate the audience or cause them to tune out. Let us check out the types of pathos fallacies (McKee & McIntyre, 2021).

Argument by Dismissal

Rejecting an idea without providing a reason or explanation for its dismissal. Let us take a look at a short political ad.

YOUTUBE

Alabama's Tim James Wants English Only Driver License Exams

Alabama governor candidate Tim James want driver license exams to be take only in English. Tim James said "This is Alabama; http://www.sodahead.com/united-states/alabamas-tim-james-wants-english-only-driver-license-exams-bad-news/question-990875/ we speak English. If you want to live here, learn it." Tim James said it is not a racial matter, but an Alabama public safety measure.

VIEW ON YOUTUBE >

Observations like, “This is America!” or, “You are free to live elsewhere if you prefer” do not add to the credibility of an argument. While we do live in the United States and people are free to live wherever they want, neither of these observations actually addresses the argument, either for or against a systematic issue. The observer relies on the simple (and fallacious) dismissal of the opposing viewpoint.

Argument by Emotive Language

Using emotional words that are not supported by evidence and/or are unconnected to the argument being made. Substituting facts and evidence with words that stir up emotion, with the

attempt to manipulate others into accepting the truth of the argument. In this the Logical Form is- Person A claims that X is true. Person A uses very powerful and emotive language in the claim. Therefore, X is true.

For example, in the assertion-"If children are not taught evolution, big bang, and relativism, it will be disastrous." Here, the emotive word, *disastrous*, is used rather than sound reasoning.

Appeal to Pity

Drawing on irrelevant personal experiences or feelings in order to produce a sympathetic response. For instance, when writing about the necessity of universal health care, the writer includes a personal anecdote about falling ill in Canada and being unable to receive free health care, that anecdote could be a fallacious appeal to pity. The personal experience, though interesting, does not illuminate the issue of universal health care, unless supported with other, more universally tangible evidence.

The Slippery Slope

Suggesting that a particular argument or course of action will lead to disastrous consequences without offering evidence. This fallacy usually produces an emotional response.

A common example is diet related where the argument is that if you break your diet and have one cookie tonight, you will just want to eat 10 cookies tomorrow, and before you know it, you will have gained back the 15 pounds you lost.

While you won't go obese from eating a single cookie, if you were to follow this sequence of events through to the end, you very well might put on some significant weight. This type of fallacy creates a fear factor in the audience.

Summary

Pathos is a powerful rhetorical appeal and should be used with moderation and caution to create effective persuasions.

Rhetorical Appeals: Ethos

DB Dr. P. Bawa

Ethos: Appeal to Trust

Ethos is used to convey the writer's credibility and authority. When evaluating a piece of writing, the reader must know if the writer is qualified to comment on this issue. The writer can communicate their authority by using several strategies. Ethical appeals have two facets: audience values and authorial credibility/character.

Audience Values-These values can sometimes feel very close to emotions, but they are felt on a social level rather than only on a personal level. When an author evokes the values that the audience cares about as a way to justify or support his or her argument, is classified that as ethos.

Authorial Credibility- Ethos that is centered on the author revolves around two concepts: the credibility of the authors and their character.

Credibility

- Credibility of the speaker/author is determined by their knowledge and expertise in the subject at hand.
- To establish credibility, authors may draw attention to who they are or what kinds of experience they have with the topic being discussed as an ethical appeal (i.e., "Because I have experience with this topic – and I know my stuff! – you should trust what I am saying about this topic").

- Some authors do not have to establish their credibility because the audience already knows who they are and that they are credible.

Character

- Character is another aspect of ethos, and it is different from credibility because it involves personal history and even personality traits.
- A person can be credible but lack character or vice versa. For example, in politics, sometimes the most experienced candidates – those who might be the most credible candidates – fail to win elections because voters do not accept their character.
- Politicians take pains to shape their character as leaders who have the interests of the voters at heart. The candidate who successfully proves to the voters (the audience) that he or she has the type of character that they can trust is more likely to win.

Matters of Trust

Thus, ethos comes down to trust. How can the authors get the audience to trust them so that they will accept his or her argument? How can the authors make themselves appear as a credible speaker who embodies the character traits that the audience values? In building ethical appeals, authors mostly use the following strategies:

1. Referring either directly or indirectly to the values that matter to the intended audience (so that the audience will trust the writer)
2. Using language, phrasing, imagery, or other writing styles common to people who hold those values, thereby "talking the talk" of people with those values (again, so that the audience is inclined to trust the writer)
3. Referring to their experience and/or authority with the topic (and therefore demonstrating their credibility)
4. Referring to their own character, or making an effort to build their character in the text

Fallacious Ethos

AD HOMINEM (ARGUMENT TO THE P...	ARGUMENT FROM AUTHORITY	APPEAL TO AUTHORITY	ARGUMENT FROM FALSE AUTHORITY	A AN A

Attacking the person instead of the argument. For example, "You say I shouldn't drink so much, but you drink every day." The validity of the argument (drink less) can't be based on the behavior of the person making the argument. Instead, the validity of the argument should be evaluated on its own terms—separate from the person making the claim.

Claiming to be an expert and, on that basis, to be deserving of trust.

It's important to remember that there are different kinds and levels of expertise. For example, my one time visit to the Louvre, a world-renowned art museum, does not make me an expert on Van Gogh, although I may have learned a lot during my visit. So, I might be an authority on some elements of Van Gogh's work, but not all of it.
When faced with an argument from authority, it is important to investigate the credentials of the speaker or writer.

AD HOMINEM (ARGUMENT TO THE P... | ARGUMENT FROM AUTHORITY | APPEAL TO AUTHORITY | ARGUMENT FROM FALSE AUTHORITY

Using a statement taken out of context as authoritative support.
For instance, a claim that a specific brand of cereal is the best way to start the day because athlete Michael Jordan says that it is what he eats every day for breakfast.

When writers use appeal to authority, they are claiming that something must be true because it is believed by someone who said to be an "authority" on the subject. Whether the person is actually an authority or not, the logic is unsound. Instead of presenting actual evidence, the argument just relies on the credibility of the "authority."

AD HOMINEM (ARGUMENT TO THE P... | ARGUMENT FROM AUTHORITY | APPEAL TO AUTHORITY | ARGUMENT FROM FALSE AUTHORITY

Using an expert in a specific field as an expert in all related fields. For example, an actor who promotes a medical product despite having no medical training can be considered a false authority, because they lack relevant credentials or expertise with regard to the product that they're promoting.

AD HOMINEM (ARGUMENT TO THE P... | ARGUMENT FROM AUTHORITY | APPEAL TO AUTHORITY | ARGUMENT FROM FALSE AUTHORITY

Using appeals to nonspecific groups (e.g., doctors, scientists, researchers, and so on). For example, "Research shows that all women are inferior to men." Or, "Studies indicate that all college students binge drink." Neither of these statements offers a specific credible source, so both claims lack authority.

AD HOMINEM (ARGUMENT TO THE P...	ARGUMENT FROM AUTHORITY	APPEAL TO AUTHORITY	ARGUMENT FROM FALSE AUTHORITY	A AN A

Using a conflict between two authorities as a reason to dismiss their arguments and knowledge. For instance, it would be fallacious to assert that global climate change does not exist because two scientists disagree about its effects.

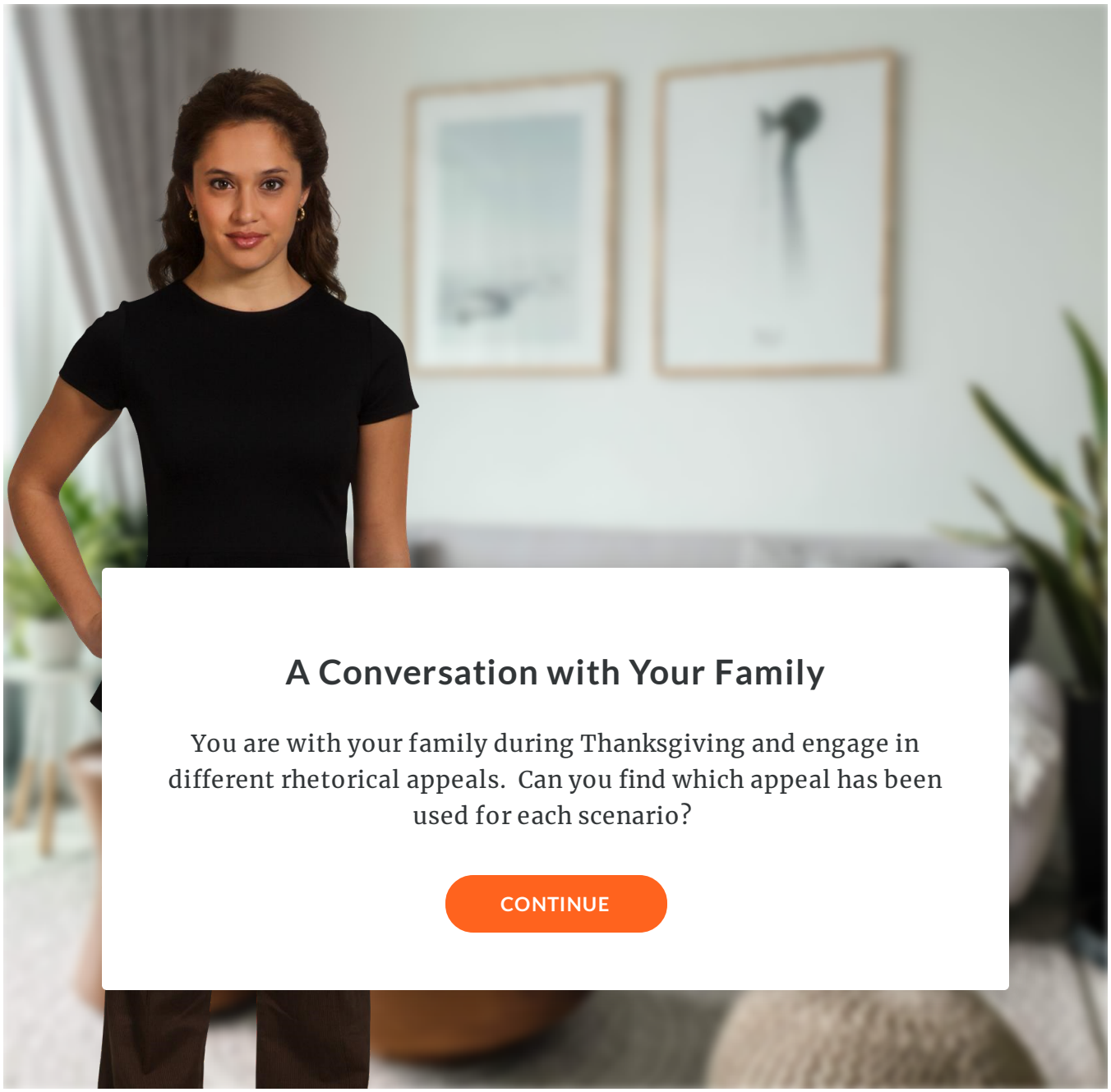
CONTINUE

Check Your Knowledge

DB Dr. P. Bawa

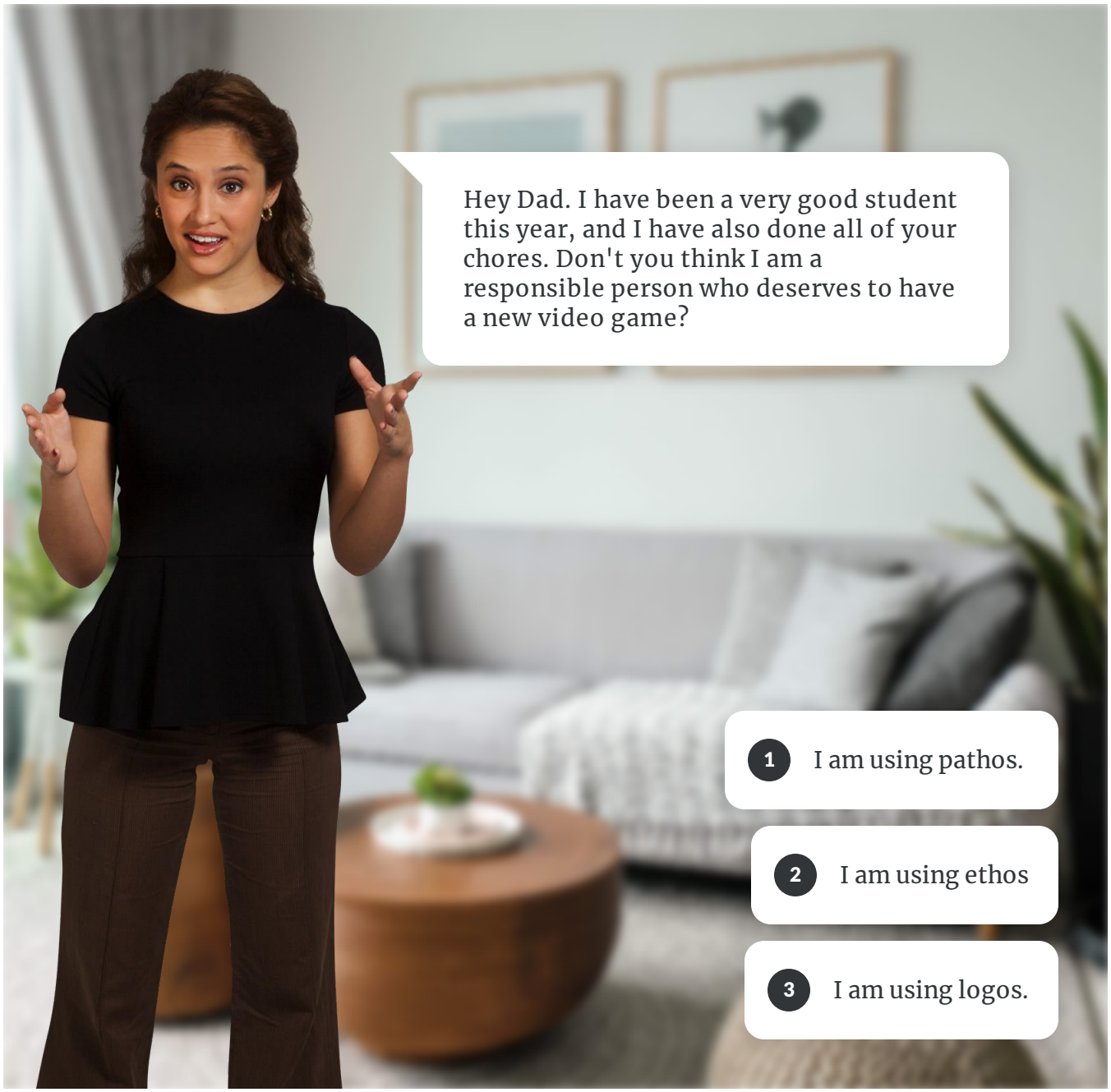
Use what you've learned about rhetorical analysis by completing the exercises below.

Appeal Scenarios



Scene 1 Slide 1

Continue → Next Slide

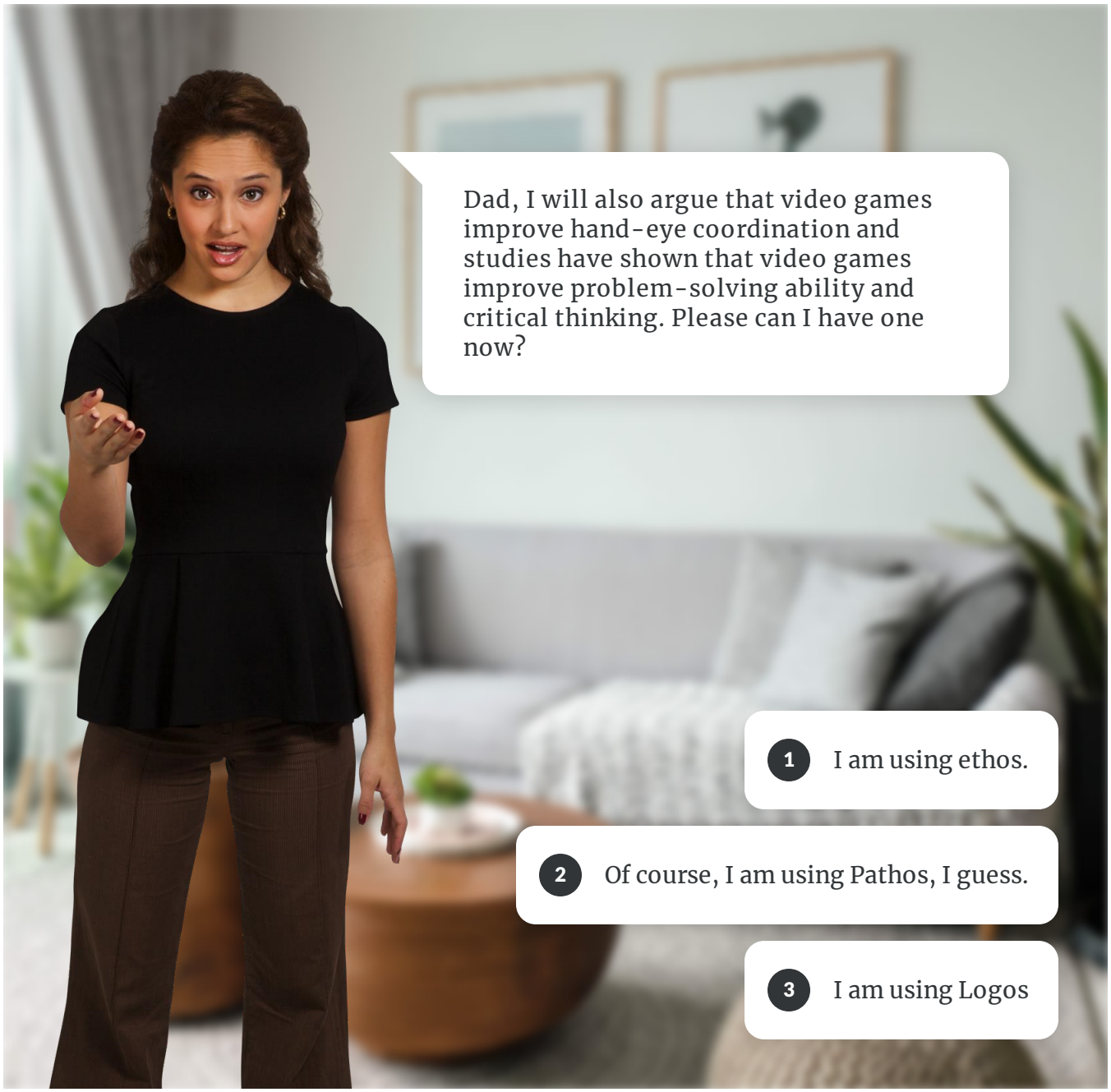


Scene 1 Slide 2

0 → Next Slide

1 → Next Slide

2 → Next Slide

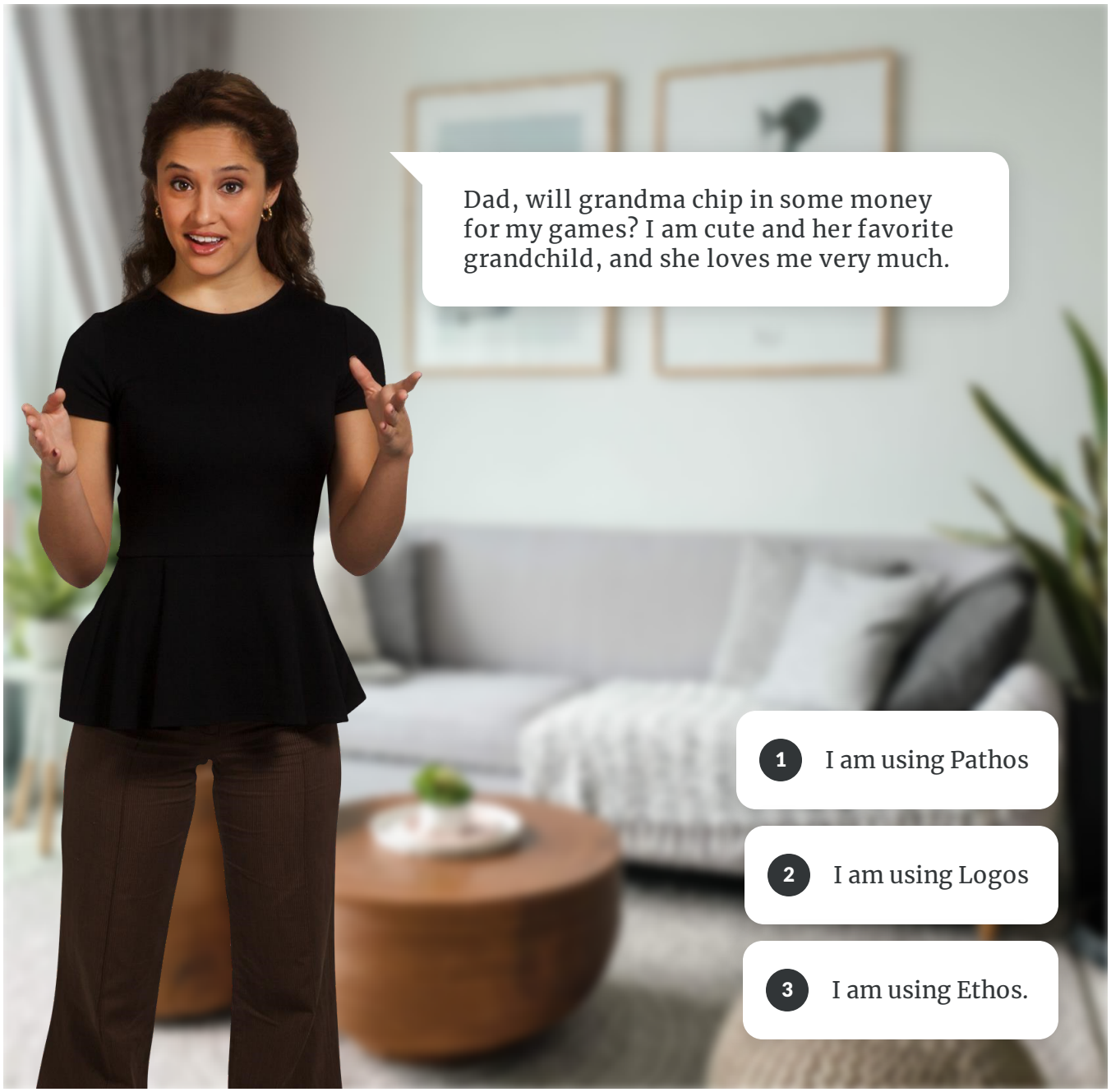


Scene 1 Slide 3

0 → Next Slide

1 → Next Slide

2 → Next Slide

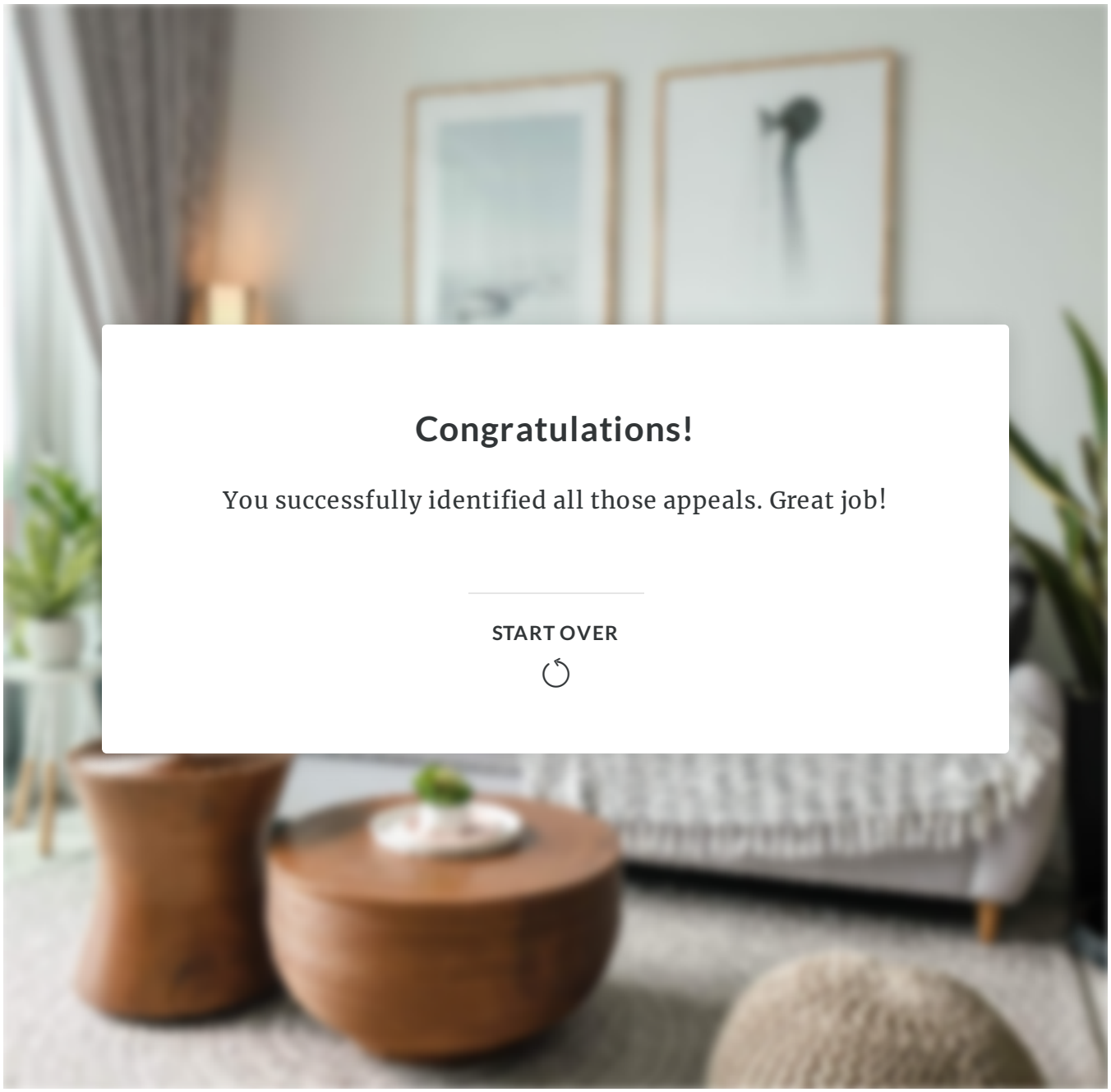


Scene 1 Slide 4

0 → Next Slide

1 → Next Slide

2 → Next Slide



Scene 1 Slide 5

Continue → End of Scenario

You just used three methods of persuasion: appealing to your own character, appealing to logic, and appealing to emotions.

While no one type is better than the other, the most effective arguments - the ones most likely to persuade someone of something - use all three.

However, some may be more appropriate for one audience over another.

For example, a team of scientists is more likely to be persuaded by studies, research, and logical thinking, so it may be better to use logos.

A prestigious university may be more likely to be persuaded by your character and credibility as a person, meaning it may be better to use ethos.

And your family may be more likely to be swayed by emotions, using pathos.

Check out the picture below and identify which paragraph aligns with pathos, ethos or logos.

- Imagine this: a small dog sits in a dark, cold garage. His hair is matted and dirty; he is skinny and weak from going days without food. There is no water for him to drink, no person to give him love and no blanket to keep him warm at night.

- While this might be a hard scenario to imagine, it is not an uncommon one in America today. According to the Humane Society of the United States, nearly 1,000,000 animals are abused or die from abuse every year.

- As a veterinarian with 30 years of experience, I have seen how even one incident of abuse can affect an animal for the rest of its life. As a society, we need to be more aware of this terrible problem and address this issue before it gets worse.

- Imagine this: a small dog sits in a dark, cold garage. His hair is matted and dirty; he is skinny and weak from going days without food. There is no water for him to drink, no person to give him love and no blanket to keep him warm at night.

- While this might be a hard scenario to imagine, it is not an uncommon one in America today. According to the Humane Society of the United States, nearly 1,000,000 animals are abused or die from abuse every year.

- As a veterinarian with 30 years of experience, I have seen how even one incident of abuse can affect an animal for the rest of its life. As a society, we need to be more aware of this terrible problem and address this issue before it gets worse.

Pathos

The author paints a vivid picture to evoke a feeling from the reader—sadness and pity for the abused animal.

- Imagine this: a small dog sits in a dark, cold garage. His hair is matted and dirty; he is skinny and weak from going days without food. There is no water for him to drink, no person to give him love and no blanket to keep him warm at night.

- While this might be a hard scenario to imagine, it is not an uncommon one in America today. According to the Humane Society of the United States, nearly 1,000,000 animals are abused or die from abuse every year.

- As a veterinarian with 30 years of experience, I have seen how even one incident of abuse can affect an animal for the rest of its life. As a society, we need to be more aware of this terrible problem and address this issue before it gets worse.

Ethos

The author establishes their own credibility by stating their occupation and experience

- Imagine this: a small dog sits in a dark, cold garage. His hair is matted and dirty; he is skinny and weak from going days without food. There is no water for him to drink, no person to give him love and no blanket to keep him warm at night.

- While this might be a hard scenario to imagine, it is not an uncommon one in America today. According to the Humane Society of the United States, nearly 1,000,000 animals are abused or die from abuse every year.

- As a veterinarian with 30 years of experience, I have seen how even one incident of abuse can affect an animal for the rest of its life. As a society, we need to be more aware of this terrible problem and address this issue before it gets worse.

Logos

The author uses a startling statistic to appeal to our intellect. Keep in mind that these three strategies can often overlap.
This sentence qualifies as both Logos and Ethos because it cites a reputable organization, so we know the author is using credible sources.

CONTINUE

Summary

Pathos—does the writer appeal to the emotions of their reader?

- Do they use individuals' stories to "put a face" on the problem you're exploring? For example, using an individual's story about losing their home during the mortgage crisis of the 2008 Recession may be more powerful than using only statistics.

- Do they use charged language or words that carry appropriate connotations? For example, if a writer describes a gun as a "sleek, silver piece of sophisticated weaponry," they are delivering a much different image than if she writes, "a cold hunk of metal, dark and barbaric and ready to kill."
- Do they avoid pathetic fallacies?

Logos—does the writer appeal to the rational mind by using logic and evidence?

- Do they include facts and statistics that support their point? It's more convincing to tell the reader that "80% of students have committed some form of plagiarism," than simply saying that "Lots of students have plagiarized."
- Do they walk us through the logical quality of their argument? Do they show us how ideas connect in a rational way? For example: "English students have been able to raise their overall grade by meeting with peer tutors, so it's safe to assume that math students could also benefit from frequent tutoring sessions." This example points out that logically, if the result has been seen in one situation, then it should be seen in a different but similar situation.
- Do they avoid logical fallacies?

Ethos—is this writer trustworthy?

- What are their credentials? Are they an expert in the field? Have they written past essays, articles or books about this topic?
- Do they use reputable sources? Do they support her statements with sources from established publications like The New York Times or a government census report? Do they fail to mention any sources?
- Are they a fair-minded person who has considered all sides of this issue? Have they acknowledged any common ground they share with the opposite side? Do they include a counterargument and refutation?
- Do they avoid ethical fallacies?