

**Analyzing Rhetorical Analysis Free Response Questions by Medium & Genre**

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**Overview:** Before diving into rhetorical analysis essays, it's essential to understand the kinds of texts you'll be asked to analyze on the AP Language and Composition Exam. These are typically nonfiction texts that reflect a specific rhetorical situation. In this assignment, you will analyze sample AP rhetorical analysis prompts (without the passage) to:

- Identify the medium and genre of the source text.
- Infer the rhetorical situation surrounding the source.
- Predict rhetorical conventions based on the genre/medium.
- Build familiarity with the types of nonfiction you'll most often encounter.

**Learning Objectives (Aligned with AP Framework)**

- Identify and describe components of the rhetorical situation.
- Recognize and classify nonfiction mediums and their conventions.
- Practice close reading of AP prompts to develop expectations for analysis.
- Build familiarity with genre-based rhetorical choices.

**What You'll Do:** You will be given the prompt of actual AP rhetorical analysis prompts (with the passages removed). For each prompt, do the following:

**1. Reflecting Course Content**

- Consider how the prompts (and passages) have changed over time
- What do you notice? What common concrete or abstract ideas are evident?

**2. Match the Prompt to Medium**

- From a provided list of nonfiction mediums (see below), match the prompt to its most likely medium
- Briefly justify your reasoning using textual clues from the prompt.

**3. Outline the Rhetorical Situation**

For each prompt, infer and list the components of the rhetorical situation:

- Speaker: Who is likely speaking?
- Audience: To whom is the text directed?
- Purpose: What is the speaker's aim?
- Message: What is the core message likely being delivered?
- Context: What is the historical or cultural moment in which this was written?

- Exigence: What occasion or need prompted the creation of this text?
- Medium: Through what form is this text being communicated?
- Choices: What rhetorical strategies or appeals are expected in this genre?

#### 4. Predict Conventions and Strategies

- Based on the genre/medium, list 3–5 rhetorical conventions or features you might expect (e.g., anecdotes in memoirs, parallel structure in speeches, elevated diction in eulogies, emotional appeals in letters).
- Use rhetorical terminology such as ethos, pathos, logos, tone, diction, syntax, figurative language, allusions, repetition, etc.

Medium/Genre	Examples of Texts	Common Conventions
Speech	Political speech, commencement speech	Repetition, appeals to audience values, formal tone
Memoir	Personal narrative with reflection	Anecdotes, descriptive imagery, first-person perspective
Autobiography	Life story focused on self and society	Chronological structure, historical context
Essay	Reflective or argumentative piece	Clear thesis, logical appeals, commentary
Eulogy	Tribute to a deceased person	Elevated tone, personal anecdotes, repetition
Letter	Open letter, personal letter, epistolary	Direct address, tone shifts, emotional appeal
Introduction to a Speech/Book	Preface, foreword, introduction	Contextual setup, establishing ethos, previewing purpose
Editorial	Opinion piece from publication	Persuasive tone, logos, call to action
Testimony	Legal or personal testimony	Factual evidence, emotional appeals, first-person

**Expectations & Submission**

- Use complete sentences and academic vocabulary appropriate for AP Language (or at least an advanced course since the terminology is still new to you.)
- Reference specific language from the prompt to support your inferences.
- Submit your completed analysis on the assigned prompts in the worksheet provided or in a typed document.