

Jar-ing Their Thinking: A Hands-On Rhetorical Review for AP Lang

By Angela Hardin

You've taught rhetorical devices. You've practiced essays. But somehow, when it matters the most, students still struggle to connect the two. At this point of the school year, AP Lang can feel a bit like trying to organize a junk drawer. All the tools are there, but nothing is where it should be.

Here's a low-prep, hands-on activity that you can use in your classroom to get students thinking and applying the skills they have been learning all year. It's a way for students to organize their AP Lang "junk drawer".

Prep: Print the rhetorical device words. To save time, you can precut these. Otherwise, have students cut them out. Print out the three jars. (I laminate mine so that I can use them each year.)

Activity:

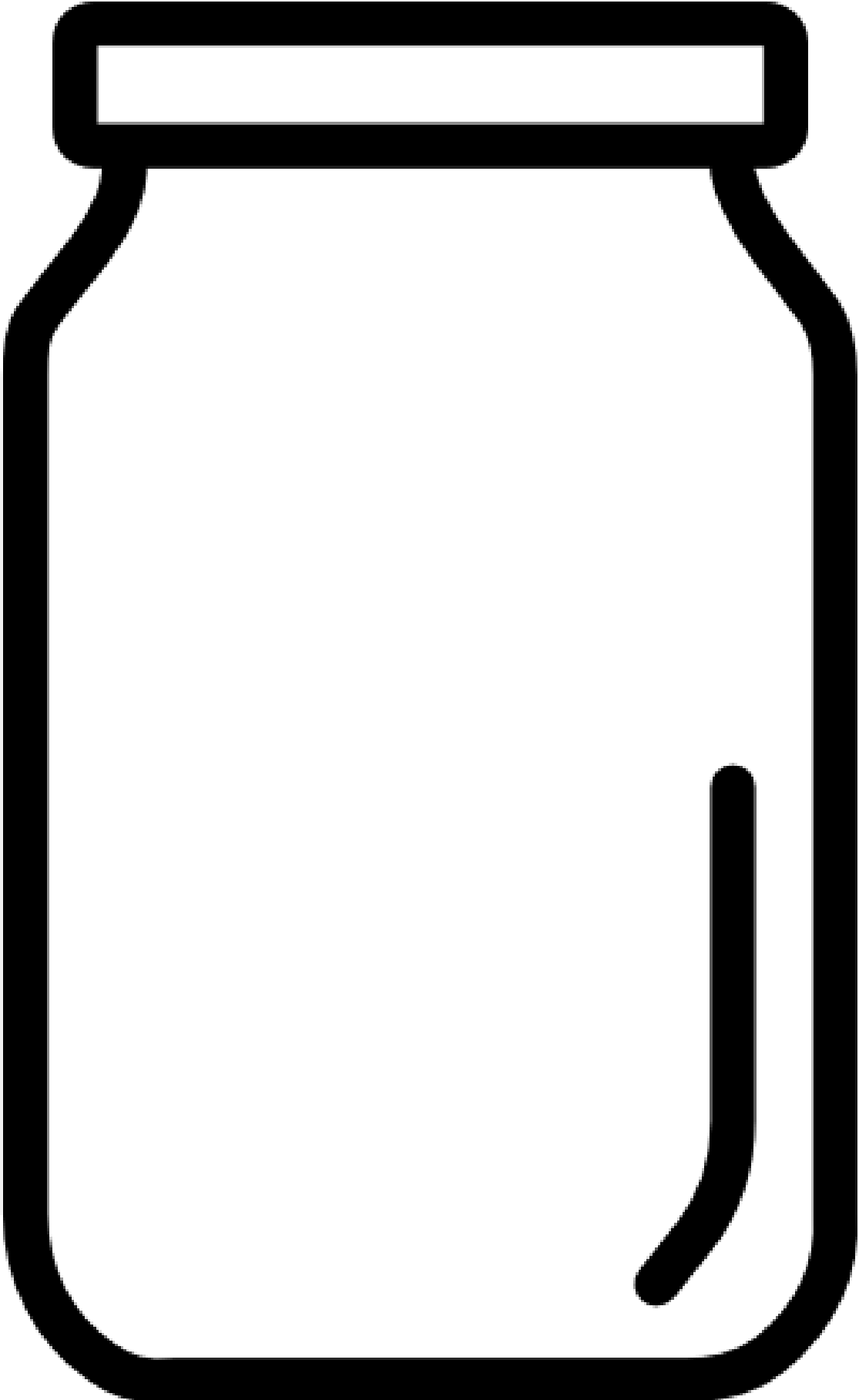
1. Lay the materials in front of the student and explain the activity to them.
 - **Teacher Script:** *There are three basic rhetorical strategies. We know these as ethos, pathos, and logos, but the problem is that we cannot call them that in our AP essays. Instead, we have to think of a way to **explain** how the writer achieves ethos, pathos, or logos in their writing, and **why** the author is choosing that strategy. When you are reading a piece, ask yourself, "Why is this strategy used at this moment? What does this strategy do for the audience? For the speaker/author?"*
2. Have the students work together in small groups, or with a partner, to classify the rhetorical device vocabulary words into the correct rhetorical strategy jar.
 - **Teacher Script:** *The jars are overarching rhetorical strategies. Each of these terms is a rhetorical device. A device is the way that words are used. These rhetorical devices are serving a bigger purpose. They are: conveying something bigger, contrasting ideas to show something grandeur, arguing a point that is worth thinking about, etc.*
3. This is the most important step! After students sort these, have the students choose a few of the ones that can fit in different jars (like testimony) to express why they categorized them the way they did. Talk this out and address any misconceptions. This step is also where you can further scaffold support as needed.
4. Give the students an essay, past AP test prompt from the College Board Released Items, or another piece of writing from the AMSCO Advance Placement English Language and Composition Textbook.
5. Have students highlight a rhetorical device they notice. Next, talk about **what** they think the device is doing and **why** the author wants it to do that. Scaffold this support by connecting these explanations to the overarching idea of the prompt.

Why I love this activity:

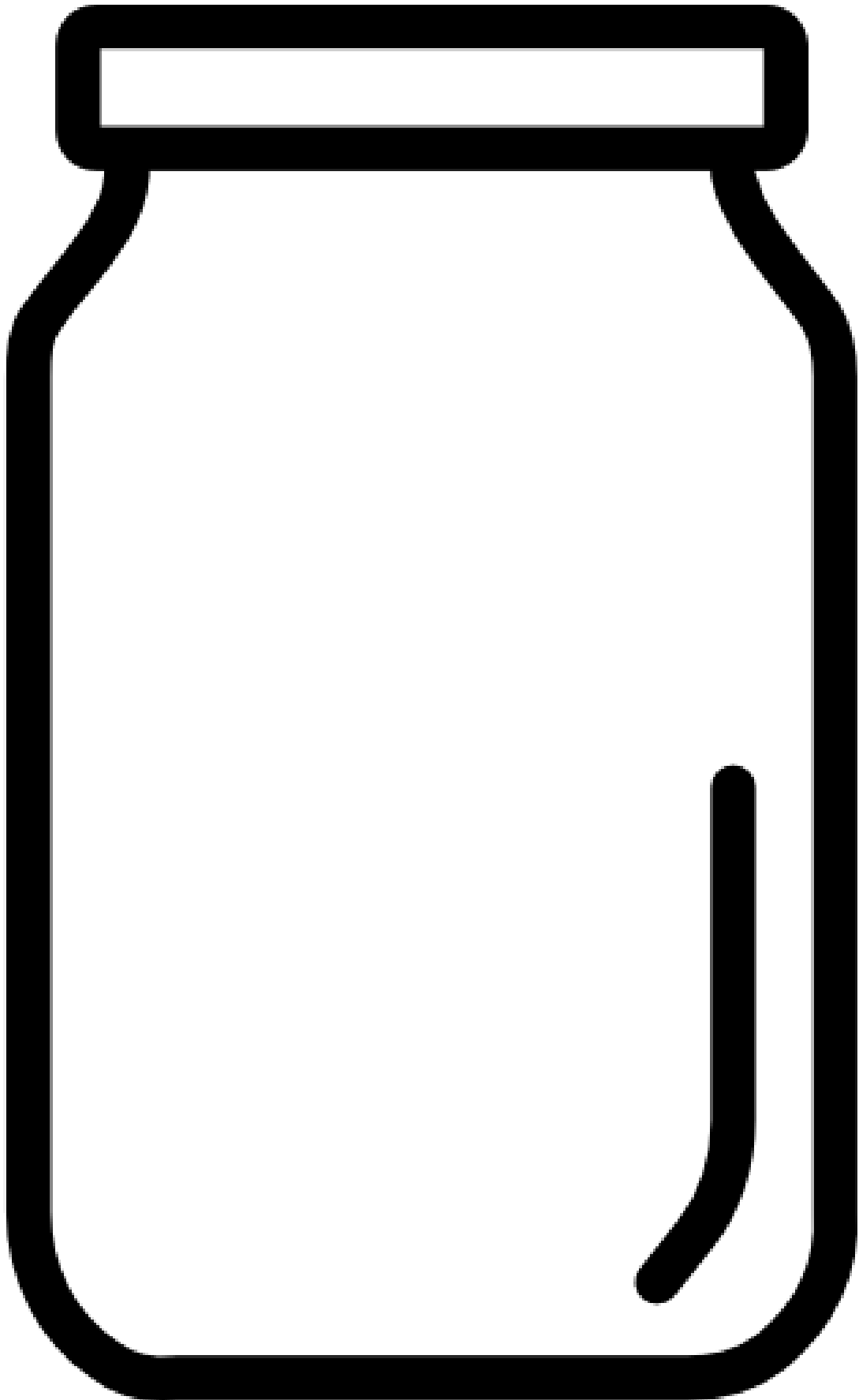
- It's a "grab-and-go" resource that you can print and use as a hands-on learning task.
- It builds on information previously taught.
- Students can work independently or in small groups.
- You can put this as a center rotation and have students write out their thinking before self-checking answers, or you can use it with guided teacher instruction.
- You can easily scaffold support through guided questioning and how you partner students.
- Connect this activity to speeches, essays, and past released items.

Important Tip: Be mindful not to teach these skills in isolation. While this activity is helpful in several ways, be sure to always explain how the devices connect to the overarching idea and purpose of the response.

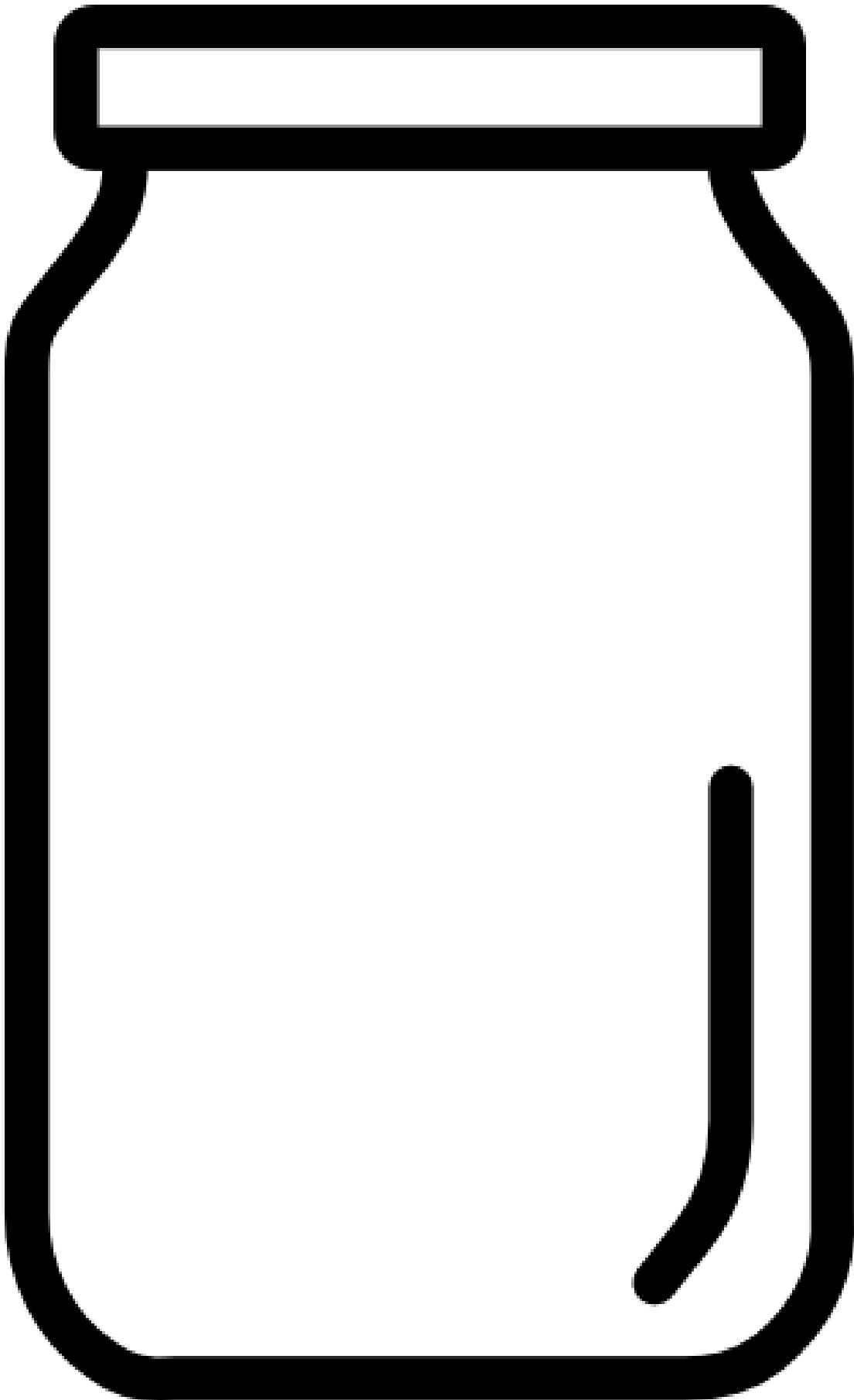
ETHOS



LOGOS



PATHOS



authority	expert	facts	statistics
repetition	diction	allusion	testimony
concession	anecdote	hyperbole	imagery
juxtaposition	anaphora	analogy	oxymoron
satire	irony	connotation	rhetorical question

Student Directions: Cut these out and place them in the correct jar.

authority	expert	facts	statistics
repetition	diction	allusion	testimony
concession	anecdote	hyperbole	imagery
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Teacher Answers:

Ethos (Credibility/Ethics)	Logos (Logic)	Pathos (Emotion)
Allusion Concession Authority Testimony Anaphora - sometimes Satire Rhetorical question	Authority Expert Repetition Statistics Facts Diction Juxtaposition Anaphora - only on occasion Analogy Irony Rhetorical question	Diction Testimony Repetition Anecdote Hyperbole Imagery Juxtaposition Diction Metaphor Anaphora - most of the time Oxymoron Connotation Satire Irony Rhetorical question

NOTE: *(Some of these can be in different categories based on their use. For example, a testimony could establish credibility or evoke emotions.)*