

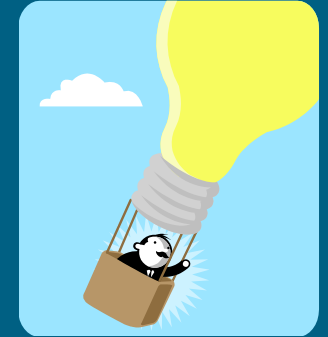
Practical Principles for Writing Rhetorically

Using Your Words
to Powerfully
Persuade



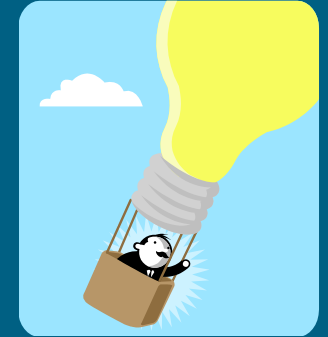
Edits and alterations by Tina Heller 2013

What is Rhetoric?



- According to Aristotle's teaching:
Rhetoric is the art of finding the best available means of persuading a specific audience in a specific situation.

What is Rhetoric?



- Rhetoric may be used as a method of writing.
- The facets or tactics of rhetoric may also be used to examine the writing of others.

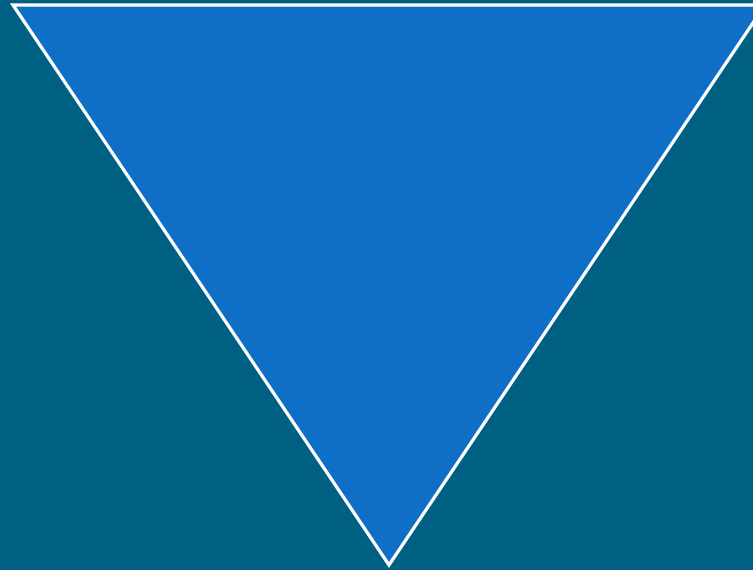
What are the Tactics of Rhetoric?

- **Ethos** – presenting the trustworthiness and authority of the author or speaker
 - A skilled heart surgeon who writes about heart bypass methods demonstrates ethos.
- **Pathos** – speaking to the emotions and deeply-held beliefs of the audience
 - Cut welfare and children suffer! Children starve!
- **Logos** – using the logic, reasoning, and evidence of the subject as presented
 - North Dakota provides about 11% of the U.S. oil production.

The Rhetorical Triangle

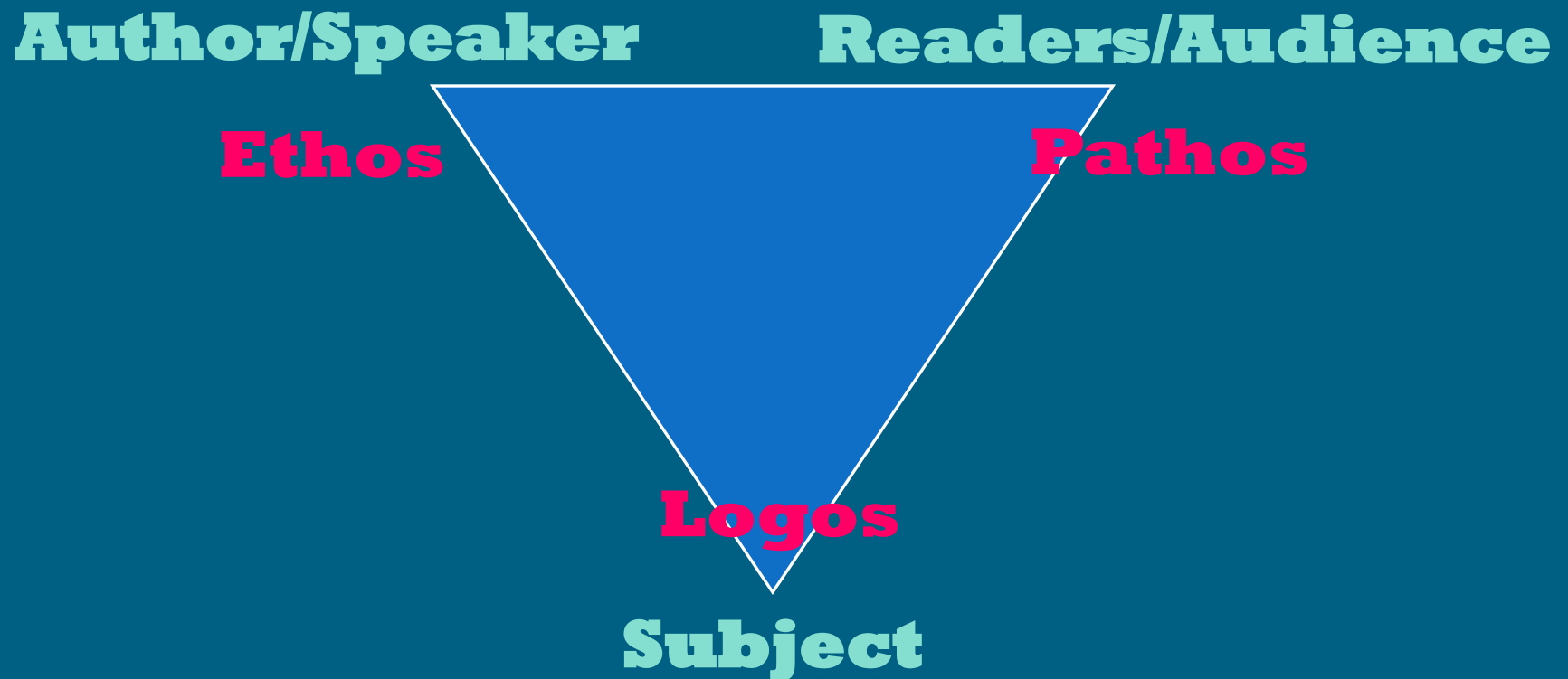
Author/Speaker

Readers/Audience



Subject

The Rhetorical Triangle and the Tactics (appeals) of Rhetoric



The Rhetorical Triangle and the Larger Context

Personal &
Community History

Author/Speaker

Ethos

Personal &
Community History

Readers/Audience

Pathos

Purpose

Logos

Subject

Present Discussion and
Developments in its
Historical Context

Use These Practical Rhetorical Principles



The Principle of **Point of View**

The Principle of **Pavement**

The Principle of **Precision**

The Principle of **Passion**

Practical Rhetorical Principles – Point of View

- Where we stand and where we look determines how we present the subject
- Choose a Distance
 - Step back to provide context
 - Step close to provide detail and action



Practical Rhetorical Principles –

Point of View 2

- Choose a Person
 - 1st Person presents firsthand experience (ethos)
 - 2nd Person provides identification with the audience and their experience (pathos)
DANGER—AVOID the use of 2nd Person because it makes ASSUMPTIONS about the READER that may be offensive to him or her.
 - 3rd Person points to the subject (logos)



Practical Rhetorical Principles –

Point of View 3

- Choose a Position
 - A position presents the subject through the lens of an established set of values
 - Use definitions and illustrations
 - Use consistency and repetition
 - Use comparison and contrast
- *Remember that your “values” may be different than the values of your reader!



Practical Rhetorical Principles –

Pavement (or a thread that connects)

- Provide a path for your readers to follow
- The path should guide . . .
 - The reader's eyes
 - The reader's thoughts
 - The reader's emotions



- Start where your readers are and walk them step by step to your intended goal
- Use such tools as outlining, transitions, layout, purposeful repetition, and visual logic

Practical Rhetorical Principles –

Precision (organize & sort logically)

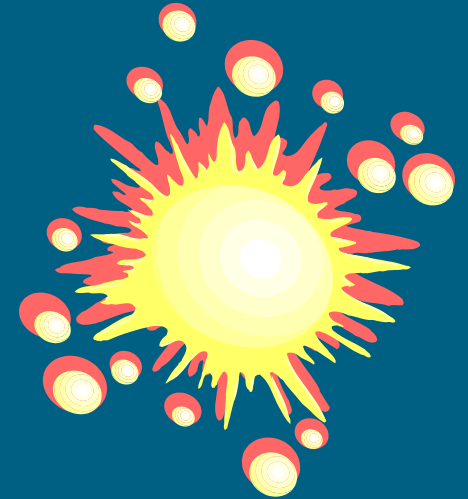
- Sort the issues
- Group them logically
- Present them one at a time

- Include the necessary and exclude the clutter (**conciseness & clarity**)
 - Use **simplicity** in presentation
 - Use **clarity** in explanation
 - Use **specificity** in illustration



Practical Rhetorical Principles – Passion

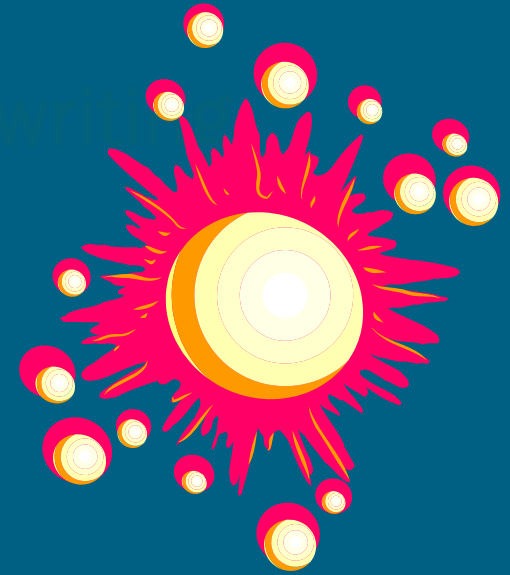
- Create interest in these ways:
 - Use **details** and **description**
 - Use **graphics** and **color ... when appropriate**
 - Use **composition** and *controlled creativity ... when appropriate*



*Keep your PURPOSE & AUDIENCE in mind!

Practical Rhetorical Principles – Passion

- Compel assent in these ways:
 - Use **dialogue** and **debate**
 - Use **words** laden and loaded
 - Use **logic** and **reason**
 - Use **passion** and **personal illustration** (anecdote)...when appropriate
 - Use **humor** and **satire** ... when appropriate
 - Use **humanity** and **compassion**



Review



- What is Rhetoric?
- What are the 3 Tactics of Rhetoric?
- What are the points of the Rhetorical Triangle?
- What are the 4 Rhetorical Principles?

Rhetoric in Writing & Speaking



Webster's Definition of *RHETORIC*

- 1: the art of speaking or writing effectively: as
 - a* : the study of principles and rules of composition formulated by critics of ancient times
 - b* : the study of writing or speaking as a means of communication or persuasion
- 2: skill in the effective use of speech
- 3: verbal communication : discourse

What about Rhetoric in Reading?

- Why should a reader apply his or her knowledge about rhetoric to informational texts and texts other than just argumentation?
- How might a reader examine the triangle, tactics (appeals) or principles of rhetoric to a broader range of texts than argumentation?



Questions?

