

# Rhetorical Analysis I: Understanding Speeches

## Overview

### Description

This three-part assignment helps students to understand and practice the complex processes of reading, understanding, analyzing, and writing about speeches addressed to specific audiences at specific times. Over the course of 1.5 to 2.5 weeks, students will go through a specified sequence three times, albeit in a somewhat different form; these sequences afford students the necessary practice with these processes to become increasingly independent.

**Final Product:** Students will write a rhetorical analysis essay that demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of how effective discourse—in this case, a speech—responds to and is shaped by a specific rhetorical situation. The assignment requires that students read closely and responsibly, conduct research on the rhetor, audience, occasion, setting, purpose, exigence, historical and cultural contexts, textual references, etc., to inform their analysis, and that they go through the recursive process of inventing, composing, revising, editing, and proofreading their papers.

### Subject

English IV

### Task Level

Grade 12

### Objectives

Students will:

- Read a transcript of a speech.
- Carefully annotate transcripts of speeches, marking, looking up, and determining the precise meaning of words and phrases about which they are uncertain.
- Carefully annotate transcripts of speeches, marking and looking up references and allusions (e.g., cultural, historical, geographical, literary) about which they are uncertain.
- Research and take precise notes on the broader context in which the speech was written.
- See how a rich understanding of context helps them to better understand the speeches.
- View and/or listen to a recording of a speech with attention to how the rhetor's delivery (e.g., tone, pacing of words and phrases, facial expression, hand movements, clothing choice, background setting) and audience reception likely provides interpretive clues.
- Take substantive notes as they work through analyses of a speech.

- Ask strategic questions in class discussion.
- Participate in collaborative groups to complete a project.
- Distinguish between the ways they understand and react to a speech and the ways the original or intended audience members understood and reacted to the speech and related to the rhetor's intentions.
- Accurately paraphrase sentences.
- Accurately and concisely summarize entire speech or segments of it.
- Determine, individually and as part of a group, what they need to know to analyze a speech, acquire that information, and reread parts of texts strategically, taking careful notes throughout.
- Analyze how the components of the rhetorical situation (rhetor, audience, occasion, exigence, purpose, context, etc.) shape the speech and are fundamental to understanding a speech's meaning.
- Note major and minor claims and whether and how they are supported.
- Identify shifts in topic, subtopic, or argumentative claim and explain how these shifts affect meaning.
- Note what is not said, including points the rhetor counts on the audience to fill in and points the rhetor wants to avoid.
- Draft and revise a detailed 3-4 page outline of a collaborative rhetorical analysis of a speech.
- Draft, revise, edit, and proofread a single-authored rhetorical analysis paper.

## Preparation

- Find transcripts of speeches with historical significance and, when possible, audio and video recordings of them. Select speeches that are loosely related and that are relatively unfamiliar to students. Select three speeches—one for each segment of this unit: an in-class analysis led by the teacher; an analysis done by collaborative groups of students that will be presented in outline form; and finally, an independent analysis that will be presented in their rhetorical analysis papers.

For example, you could select speeches linking sports and history:

- Jackie Robinson's 1962 Baseball Hall of Fame acceptance speech.
- Curt Flood's 1995 Bay Area Sports Hall of Fame acceptance speech and related articles. (*Bonus*: Flood's three-page typewritten speech is extensively edited in his own hand.)
- Jim Brown's 1971 Football Hall of Fame acceptance speech.
- John Jordan "Buck" O'Neil's 2006 speech at the National Baseball Hall of Fame. (O'Neil played in the Negro League.)

Thousands of speeches are available free online thanks to a number of organizations and institutions. The following websites offer transcripts of speeches and, in many cases, include audio or video recordings of speeches:

- <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speechbank.htm>
- <http://voicesofdemocracy.umd.edu/> (*Voices of Democracy: The U.S. Oratory Project*)
- <http://www.historyplace.com/speeches/previous.htm>
- <http://www.presidentialrhetoric.com/>

Or search the Library of Congress's *American Memory* collection at:

- <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/index.html>

Additionally, many presidential libraries and museums, including those in Texas, provide online access to speeches. For example, find transcripts at:

- [http://www.lbjlib.utexas.edu/johnson/archives.hom/speeches.hom/selected\\_speeches.asp](http://www.lbjlib.utexas.edu/johnson/archives.hom/speeches.hom/selected_speeches.asp)
- [http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/public\\_papers.php](http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/public_papers.php)

Find online recordings at:

- <http://www.lbjlib.utexas.edu/johnson/av.hom/streaming-index.shtm>

For those from the George Bush Presidential Library and Museum, contact the audiovisual archivist by phone at (979) 691-4025 or by facsimile at (979) 691-4020.

If you have more time to devote to selecting materials, the National Archives (<http://www.archives.gov/research/start/by-format.html>) offer an extensive array of speeches on all aspects of American life and history.

- Decide which speech to use in Part 1, which speech in Part 2, and which speech (or which speeches students may select from) in Part 3. Be sure to insert the names of these speeches on the Student Handout.
- Work through the speech you will introduce to students in Part 1.
  - Research the rhetorical situation (rhetor, audience, purpose, exigence occasion, setting) and its broader cultural and historical context.
  - Annotate your transcript of the speech, explaining significant words, phrases, references, and allusions.
  - View and/or listen to a recording of a speech with attention to how the rhetor's delivery (e.g., tone, pacing of words and phrases, facial expression, hand movements, clothing choice, background setting) provides additional interpretive clues.
  - Locate the major points or claims and examine how they are supported.
  - Work through how choice of words and phrases, sentence patterns, paragraphing, and larger patterns of the organization of the speech present the rhetor's message, and take substantive notes on how they contribute to the meaning of the speech.

- Understand how knowing the rhetorical, cultural, and historical contexts of the speech and paying careful attention to the rhetor's choice of topics, words, phrases, sentence patterns, paragraphing, and larger organizational decisions are necessary to analyzing the speech.
- Be prepared to discuss what a topnotch rhetorical analysis paper on this speech would include to deepen its readers' understanding of the speech. (Teachers may want to consult textbooks and other materials on rhetorical analysis to deepen their own reading of the speech.)
- Duplicate copies of the three speeches. Every student will need to write on the transcripts of all three speeches.
- Make copies of your updated Student Handout.
- Ensure students have access to the Internet and dictionaries.

Do similar preparation on the speeches used in parts 2 and 3 prior to introducing those units.

### Prior Knowledge

- Follow oral and written instructions precisely.
- Listen to class discussions and lectures and take careful notes.
- Work productively in groups.
- Stay focused and organized.
- Use the Internet to find appropriate, reliable research.
- Understand the components of a rhetorical situation.
- Understand and have substantial practice in all parts of the writing process, including invention, drafting, revision, and proofreading.
- Use word processing program.

### Key Concepts and Terms

(\* indicates vocabulary that state standards do not expect beginning 12<sup>th</sup> graders to know)

- Allude/Allusion
- Annotate/Annotation\*
- Audience, intended Audience,\* listener, reader
- Claim, reason, explanation, evidence
- Context
- Culture/Cultural\*
- Denotation, Connotation
- Exigence\*

- Message
- Occasion\*
- Opposing arguments
- Persuasion
- Purpose
- Refute/Refutation
- Rhetor\*, speaker, writer
- Rhetorical situation, rhetorical context
- Sentence structure, sentence patterns
- Style
- The 3 Proofs: ethos, logos, and pathos
- Tone
- Transcript\*
- Voice, gesture, posture, facial expression

### Time Frame

This assignment will require approximately 1.5 to 2.5 weeks of class time, plus substantial homework. Parts 1 and 2 are mostly done in class; Part 3 is mostly done out of class. Note that to achieve the unit's learning objectives, students must engage fully in the processes outlined above, practice them, and, through sustained inquiry, begin to move to deeper levels of comprehension. Done hastily, the unit will be completed with students doing superficial analysis. This unit can be modified to meet the needs of different classroom schedules and student ability levels.

## *Instructional Plan*

In each part of this three-part unit, students will focus on a different speech as they develop their skills in reading, research, analysis, and writing.

**Part 1 (in Getting Started)** has students participate in whole-class activities to analyze a speech that the teacher has already researched; it familiarizes students with the multifaceted processes involved in understanding and analyzing a speech.

**Part 2 (in Investigating)** has students work in groups to read, research, analyze, and write about a second speech.

**Part 3 (in Drawing Conclusions)** requires students to work through the entire process independently to compose a paper analyzing a third speech.

### **Getting Started – Part 1**

#### *Learning Objectives*

Students will:

- Read a transcript of a historically important speech.
- Mark words and phrases about which they are uncertain on the transcript.
- Mark references and allusions (e.g., cultural, historical, geographical, literal) about which they are uncertain on the transcript.
- Make quick notes recording their initial reading of the speech, including additional questions they have.
- Based on class discussion and teacher commentaries, annotate the transcript by writing down the precise meaning of words and phrases of the words they had marked on the transcript, words and phrases they hadn't realized they misunderstood, and words and phrases they had simply overlooked.
- Based on class discussion and teacher comments, annotate the transcript by writing down the meaning of references and allusions (e.g., cultural, historical, geographical, literal) which they had marked on the transcript, of references and allusions they hadn't realized they misunderstood, and of references and allusions they had simply overlooked.
- Take careful notes on the context in which the speech was written.
- Understand how a rich understanding of the immediate rhetorical situation and the larger historical and cultural context help them to better understand the speech.
- View and/or listen to a recording of a speech with attention to how the rhetor's delivery (e.g., tone, pacing of words and phrases, facial expression, hand movements, clothing choice, background setting) provides additional interpretive clues.
- Discuss and work through sentences, paragraphing, and larger patterns of the organization of the speech and take substantive notes on how and what they contribute to the meaning of the speech.

- Understand how knowing the rhetorical, cultural, and historical contexts of the speech and paying careful attention to the rhetor's choice of words, phrases, sentence patterns, paragraphing, and larger organizational decisions are necessary to analyzing the speech.
- Discuss and take notes on what a rhetorical analysis paper should include to deepen its reader's understanding of the speech.

### ***Procedure***

1. Distribute copies of the transcript of the speech to students and tell them that as they read to:
  - Mark words that they do not understand, including those about which they're not certain.
  - Mark references and allusions (e.g., cultural, historical, geographical, literal) they do not understand, including those about which they're not certain.
  - Make quick notes recording their initial reading of the speech.
  - Write down additional questions they may have.
2. Tell students about the immediate rhetorical situation and the broader cultural, historical context of the speech, inviting student comments and questions along the way.
3. Discuss what in the text and context you needed to research, what outside resources you used, and how you found them, and how the research process itself led you to discover additional points you needed to pursue).
4. Based on class discussion and teacher commentaries, have students annotate their transcript by writing down the precise meaning of words and phrases of the words they had marked on the transcript, words and phrases they hadn't realized they misunderstood, and words and phrases they had simply overlooked. Point them to the pitfalls of settling for the first definition listed under a word in the dictionary.
5. Based on a class discussion and teacher commentaries, have students annotate their transcript by writing down the meaning of references and allusions (e.g., cultural, historical, geographical, literal) which they had marked on the transcript, of references and allusions they hadn't realized they misunderstood, and of references and allusions they had simply overlooked.
6. Show students how a rich understanding of the immediate rhetorical situation and the larger historical and cultural context help them to better understand the speech.
7. View and/or listen to a recording of a speech with attention to how the rhetor's delivery (e.g., tone, pacing of words and phrases, facial expression, hand movements, clothing choice, background setting) provides additional interpretive clues.
8. Discuss and work through sentences, paragraphing, and larger patterns of the organization of the speech, and take substantive notes on how and what they contribute to the meaning of the speech.

9. Understand how knowing the rhetorical, cultural, and historical contexts of the speech, and paying careful attention to the rhetor's choice of words, phrases, sentence patterns, paragraphing, and larger organizational decisions are necessary to analyzing the speech.
10. Ask students—and have them take notes on—what a rhetorical analysis paper should include to deepen its reader's understanding of the speech.
11. Discuss what distinguishes students' (and/or your own) reactions to the speech and the reactions of its intended audience.

## Investigating – Part 2

In collaboration with other group members, students will engage in research for and compose a 4-page outline of a rhetorical analysis of a second speech.

### *Learning Objectives*

Students will:

- Read and carefully annotate, engage in research for, and compose a 4-page outline of a full rhetorical analysis that:
  - Introduces the rhetorical situation and the broader cultural, historical contexts of the speech and explains how the rhetor responded to prevailing public opinions or concerns.
  - Identifies the rhetor's purpose and message to his or her intended audience.
  - Identifies the main points and support for those points (e.g., explanation, examples, reasons, research).
  - Analyzes the rhetor's use of rhetorical strategies and devices to influence the audience by:
    - Establishing the rhetor's character, trustworthiness, expertise.
    - Appealing to the audience's values and emotions.
    - Trying to ensure that the audience understands his or her points.
  - Uses ample and appropriate evidence from the speech (e.g., brief summaries, paraphrase, direct quotation of words, phrases, and sentences) to illustrate or back up the analysis.
  - Is organized in ways that help real readers understand the analysis.
  - Identifies the rhetor's purpose and message to his or her intended audience.
  - Distinguishes between their own reactions to a text and the reactions of the intended audience.
  - Identifies the main points and support for those points (e.g., explanation, examples, reasons, research).

**Procedure**

1. Distribute second speech and ask students to read and mark up.
2. Assign students to small groups (three to five people) to work through a rhetorical analysis of the speech.
3. Ensure that students have access to the Internet during class as well as access to citation guides, etc.
4. Allot enough class periods for students to work through the process of reading, rereading, researching, understanding, analyzing, composing, and revising an outline of a rhetorical analysis.
5. Circulate among the groups to answer questions, notice problems, ensure that every student is participating, etc.
6. Every student must turn in an outline, annotated text, and notes in a folder with his or her name. Every work piece should be dated.

**Drawing Conclusions – Part 3****Learning Objectives**

Students will:

- Read and carefully annotate, engage in research for, and draft, revise, edit, and proofread a 3-4 page rhetorical analysis essay that:
  - Introduces the rhetorical situation and the broader cultural, historical contexts of the speech and explains how the rhetor responded to prevailing public opinions or concerns.
  - Identifies the rhetor’s purpose and message to his or her intended audience.
  - Identifies the main points and support for those points (e.g., explanation, examples, reasons, research).
  - Analyzes the rhetor’s use of rhetorical strategies and devices to influence the audience by:
    - Establishing the rhetor’s character, trustworthiness, and expertise.
    - Appealing to the audience’s values and emotions.
    - Trying to ensure that the audience understands his or her points.
    - Using claims and supporting them through explanation, examples, reasons, research, etc.
  - Uses ample and appropriate evidence from the speech (e.g., brief summaries, paraphrase, direct quotation of words, phrases, and sentences) to illustrate or back up the analysis.
  - Is organized in ways that help readers understand the analysis.
  - Is well edited for correct mechanics, usage, and conventions.

- Uses and documents research ethically and responsibly.
- Quotes the speech accurately and uses proper citation conventions.
- Is proofread for typos and other errors.

### ***Procedure***

1. Distribute the third speech.
2. Distribute instructions for the rhetorical analysis paper assignment.
3. Clarify and address questions about instructions for the independent rhetorical analysis assignment, emphasizing that most of the work for this paper will be done out of class.
4. Establish timeline for when students must bring in their work (copy of the speech that shows their annotations, research notes, invention notes, paper draft, final paper).
5. Ensure that students have access to the Internet out of class as well as access to dictionaries, citation guides, etc.
6. Review students' work, according to established timeline (due date).
7. Remind students that everyone must hand in his or her final paper along with all process notes and materials in a folder. All work must be dated.

## *Scaffolding/Instructional Support*

The goal of scaffolding is to provide support to encourage student success, independence, and self-management. Instructors can use these suggestions, in part or all together, to meet diverse student needs. The more skilled the student, however, the less scaffolding that he or she will need. Some examples of scaffolding that could apply to this assignment include:

- Providing an exemplar of a strong paper, a weak paper, and a fair paper to show common strengths and weaknesses and to teach students how to identify and address weaknesses.
- Allowing students to work in pairs when doing the research required in Part 3.
- Listing websites students can (or must) use for their research.
- Providing a guided peer review with specific directions and questions for early drafts of students' essays.
- Offering revision advice on each student's rough draft.
- Reviewing and/or providing exercises on when and how to quote from texts and how to use, cite, and document sources.
- Reviewing skills and concepts listed in the Prior Knowledge section.

## Solutions

The information below is intended to help you assess students' final work products. It does not represent all strategies and ideas. The accompanying scoring guide provides specific examples of ways a student might demonstrate content understanding and mastery of skills.

### ***Necessary Elements***

- Evidence of deep reading that moves well beyond obvious points.
- Deft use of historical context to explain speech.
- Judicious use of quotations from the speech to illustrate and support analysis.
- Delivered in clear prose that is relatively free from error.

### ***Key Connections***

- Students should understand how all texts are in some way rhetorical and use what they've learned here in school (not just English class) and out of school.
- Students should be able to see what components of their analysis would be useful in other types of assignments and which would not.

### ***Common Misconceptions***

- That understanding a text requires only superficial knowledge about the rhetorical elements.
- That paraphrasing or summarizing a text is analyzing a text.
- That simply knowing the names and definitions of specialized terminology (e.g., ethos, logos, and pathos) is the same thing as understanding the concept the term refers to and seeing how the concept is working in a given text.
- That skilled readers don't need to reread, mark up the text, look up words, references, etc.
- That skilled writers don't need to go through the process of inventing, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading.
- That editing is the same thing as revising. Students must understand that editing refers to copyediting their text—correcting mistakes in spelling, usage, mechanics, use of conventions, substituting more precise or more vivid words, and so on; though important to the paper, it tends to smaller units of their text. In contrast, revising tends to larger matters: it requires that they evaluate how well the paper conveys meaning to a reader through its focus, development and support, and organization. Proofreading is the final step: Students need to proofread their papers, which have already been revised and edited, to eliminate typos and other mistakes.
- That an error-free paper is necessarily a good paper. (An error-free paper that states the obvious is not a good paper.)
- That stating obvious points is sufficient.
- That a good rhetorical analysis discusses everything in the speech.

### TCCRS Cross-Disciplinary Standards Addressed

Performance Expectation	Getting Started	Investigating	Drawing Conclusions
<i>I. Key Cognitive Skills</i>			
A.1. Engage in scholarly inquiry and dialogue.	✓	✓	✓
A.2. Accept constructive criticism and revise personal views when valid evidence warrants.			✓
B.1. Consider arguments and conclusions of self and others.			✓
B.2. Construct well-reasoned arguments to explain phenomena, validate conjectures, or support positions.	✓	✓	✓
B.3. Gather evidence to support arguments, findings, or lines of reasoning.		✓	✓
B.4. Support or modify claims based on the results of an inquiry.		✓	✓
D.3. Strive for accuracy and precision.		✓	✓
D.4. Persevere to complete and master tasks.			✓
E.1. Work independently.			✓
E.2. Work collaboratively.		✓	
F.1. Attribute ideas and information to source materials and people.		✓	✓
<i>II. Foundational Skills</i>			
A.2. Use a variety of strategies to understand the meanings of new words.	✓	✓	✓
A.3. Identify the intended purpose and audience of the text.		✓	✓
A.4. Identify the key information and supporting details.	✓	✓	✓
A.5. Analyze textual information critically.		✓	✓
A.6. Annotate, summarize, paraphrase, and outline texts when appropriate.		✓	✓
A.8. Connect reading to historical and current events and personal interest.	✓	✓	✓
B.1. Write clearly and coherently using standard writing conventions.			✓
B.3. Compose and revise drafts.			✓

C.1. Understand which topics or questions are to be investigated.	✓	✓	✓
E.1. Use technology to gather information.		✓	✓

### TCCRS English/Language Arts Standards Addressed

Performance Expectation	Getting Started	Investigating	Drawing Conclusions
<i>I. Writing</i>			
A.1. Determine effective approaches, forms, and rhetorical techniques that demonstrate understanding of the writer's purpose and audience.			✓
A.2. Generate ideas and gather information relevant to the topic and purpose, keeping careful records of outside sources.	✓	✓	✓
A.3. Evaluate relevance, quality, sufficiency, and depth of preliminary ideas and information, organize material generated, and formulate a thesis.	✓	✓	✓
A.4. Recognize the importance of revision as the key to effective writing. Each draft should refine key ideas and organize them more logically and fluidly, use language more precisely and effectively, and draw the reader to the author's purpose.			✓
A.5. Edit writing for proper voice, tense, and syntax, assuring that it conforms to standard English, when appropriate.			✓
<i>II. Reading</i>			
A.1. Use effective reading strategies to determine a written work's purpose and intended audience.		✓	✓
A.3. Identify explicit and implicit textual information including main ideas and author's purpose.		✓	✓
A.4. Draw and support complex inferences from text to summarize, draw conclusions, and distinguish facts from simple assertions and opinions.		✓	✓
A.7. Evaluate the use of both literal and figurative language to inform and shape the perceptions of readers.		✓	✓
A.9. Identify and analyze the audience, purpose, and message of an informational or persuasive text.		✓	✓

A.10. Identify and analyze how an author's use of language appeals to the senses, creates imagery, and suggests mood.		✓	✓
B.3. Use reference guides to confirm the meanings of new words or concepts.	✓	✓	✓
C.3. Analyze works of literature for what they suggest about the historical period and cultural contexts in which they were written.		✓	✓
<i>III. Speaking</i>			
A.1. Understand how style and content of spoken language varies in different contexts and influences the listener's understanding.	✓	✓	
B.1. Participate actively and effectively in one-on-one oral communication situations.	✓	✓	
B.2. Participate actively and effectively in group discussions.	✓	✓	
<i>IV. Listening</i>			
A.1. Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of a public presentation.	✓	✓	
A.2. Interpret a speaker's message; identify the position taken and the evidence in support of that position.	✓	✓	✓
A.3. Use a variety of strategies to enhance listening comprehension (e.g., focus attention on message, monitor messages for clarity and understanding, provide verbal and nonverbal feedback, note cues such as change of pace or particular words that indicate a new point is about to be made, select and organize key information).	✓	✓	✓
B.1. Listen critically and respond appropriately to presentations.	✓	✓	
B.2. Listen actively and effectively in one-on-one communication situations.	✓	✓	✓
B.3. Listen actively and effectively in group discussions.		✓	

## TEKS Standards Addressed

### ***Rhetorical Analysis I: Understanding Speeches - Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS): English Language Arts and Reading***

110.34.b.1. Reading/Vocabulary Development. Students understand new vocabulary and use it when reading and writing. Students are expected to:

110.34.b.1.A. Determine the meaning of technical academic English words in multiple content areas (e.g., science, mathematics, social studies, the arts) derived from Latin, Greek, or other linguistic roots and affixes.

110.34.b.1.B. Analyze textual context (within a sentence and in larger sections of text) to draw conclusions about the nuance in word meanings.

110.34.b.1.E. Use general and specialized dictionaries, thesauri, histories of language, books of quotations, and other related references (printed or electronic) as needed.

110.34.b.6. Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Literary Nonfiction. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the varied structural patterns and features of literary nonfiction and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. Students are expected to analyze the effect of ambiguity, contradiction, subtlety, paradox, irony, sarcasm, and overstatement in literary essays, speeches, and other forms of literary nonfiction.

110.34.b.7. Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Sensory Language. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about how an author's sensory language creates imagery in literary text and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. Students are expected to analyze how the author's patterns of imagery, literary allusions, and conceits reveal theme, set tone, and create meaning in metaphors, passages, and literary works.

110.34.b.8. Reading/Comprehension of Informational Text/Culture and History. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about the author's purpose in cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding. Students are expected to analyze the consistency and clarity of the expression of the controlling idea and the ways in which the organizational and rhetorical patterns of text support or confound the author's meaning or purpose.

110.34.b.9. Reading/Comprehension of Informational Text/Expository Text. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about expository text and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. Students are expected to:

110.34.b.9.A. Summarize a text in a manner that captures the author's viewpoint, its main ideas, and its elements without taking a position or expressing an opinion.

110.34.b.9.C. Make and defend subtle inferences and complex conclusions about the ideas in text and their organizational patterns.

110.34.b.10 Reading/Comprehension of Informational Text/Persuasive Text. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about persuasive text and provide evidence from text to support their analysis. Students are expected to:

110.34.b.10.A. Evaluate the merits of an argument, action, or policy by analyzing the relationships (e.g., implication, necessity, sufficiency) among evidence, inferences, assumptions, and claims in text.

110.34.b.10.B. Draw conclusions about the credibility of persuasive text by examining its implicit and stated assumptions about an issue as conveyed by the specific use of language.

110.34.b.11. Reading/Comprehension of Informational Text/Procedural Texts. Students understand how to glean and use information in procedural texts and documents. Students are expected to:

110.34.b.11.A. Draw conclusions about how the patterns of organization and hierarchic structures support the understandability of text.

110.34.b.11.B. Evaluate the structures of text (e.g., format, headers) for their clarity and organizational coherence and for the effectiveness of their graphic representations.

***Rhetorical Analysis I: Understanding Speeches - Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS): English Language Arts and Reading***

110.34.b.13. Writing/Writing Process. Students use elements of the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) to compose text. Students are expected to:

110.34.b.13.A. Plan a first draft by selecting the correct genre for conveying the intended meaning to multiple audiences, determining appropriate topics through a range of strategies (e.g., discussion, background reading, personal interests, interviews), and developing a thesis or controlling idea.

110.34.b.7.B. Structure ideas in a sustained and persuasive way (e.g., using outlines, note taking, graphic organizers, lists) and develop drafts in timed and open-ended situations that include transitions and the rhetorical devices to convey meaning.

110.34.b.7.C. Revise drafts to clarify meaning and achieve specific rhetorical purposes, consistency of tone, and logical organization by rearranging the words, sentences, and paragraphs to employ tropes (e.g., metaphors, similes, analogies, hyperbole, understatement, rhetorical questions, irony), schemes (e.g., parallelism, antithesis, inverted word order, repetition, reversed structures), and by adding transitional words and phrases.

110.34.b.7.D. Edit drafts for grammar, mechanics, and spelling.

110.34.b.7.E. Revise final draft in response to feedback from peers and teacher and publish written work for appropriate audiences.

110.34.b.17. Oral and Written Conventions/Conventions. Students understand the function of and use the conventions of academic language when speaking and writing. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. Students are expected to:

110.34.b.17.A. Use and understand the function of different types of clauses and phrases (e.g., adjectival, noun, adverbial clauses and phrases).

110.34.b.17.B. Use a variety of correctly structured sentences (e.g., compound, complex, compound-complex).

110.34.b.18. Oral and Written Conventions/Handwriting, Capitalization, and Punctuation. Students write legibly and use appropriate capitalization and punctuation conventions in their compositions. Students are expected to correctly and consistently use conventions of punctuation and capitalization.

110.34.b.19. Oral and Written Conventions/Spelling. Students spell correctly. Students are expected to spell correctly, including using various resources to determine and check correct spellings.

110.34.b.21. Research/Gathering Sources. Students determine, locate, and explore the full range of relevant sources addressing a research question and systematically record the information they gather. Students are expected to:

110.34.b.21.A. Follow the research plan to gather evidence from experts on the topic and texts written for informed audiences in the field, distinguishing between reliable and unreliable sources and avoiding over-reliance on one source.

110.34.b.21.B. Systematically organize relevant and accurate information to support central ideas, concepts, and themes, outline ideas into conceptual maps/timelines, and separate factual data from complex inferences.

110.34.b.21.C. Paraphrase, summarize, quote, and accurately cite all researched information according to a standard format (e.g., author, title, page number), differentiating among primary, secondary, and other sources.

110.34.b.23. Research/Organizing and Presenting Ideas. Students organize and present their ideas and information according to the purpose of the research and their audience. Students are expected to synthesize the research into an extended written or oral presentation that:

110.34.b.23.A. Provides an analysis that supports and develops personal opinions, as opposed to simply restating existing information.

110.34.b.23.B. Uses a variety of formats and rhetorical strategies to argue for the thesis.

110.34.b.23.C. Develops an argument that incorporates the complexities of and discrepancies in information from multiple sources and perspectives while anticipating and refuting counter-arguments.

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110.34.b.23.D. Uses a style manual (e.g., *Modern Language Association*, *Chicago Manual of Style*) to document sources and format written materials.

110.34.b.23.E. Is of sufficient length and complexity to address the topic.

110.34.b.24. Listening and Speaking/Listening. Students will use comprehension skills to listen attentively to others in formal and informal settings. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. Students are expected to:

110.34.b.24.A. Listen responsively to a speaker by framing inquiries that reflect an understanding of the content and by identifying the positions taken and the evidence in support of those positions.

110.34.b.24.B. Assess the persuasiveness of a presentation based on content, diction, rhetorical strategies, and delivery.

# Rhetorical Analysis I: Understanding Speeches

## *Introduction*

This three-part assignment will help you to understand and practice the complex processes of analyzing and writing about speeches addressed to specific audiences at specific times. Over the next two weeks, you will learn to read, situate, and understand three speeches by carefully working through sequenced activities with increasing independence. In the first sequence, you will participate in whole-class activities to analyze a speech; in the second sequence, you will work in a small group to read, research, analyze, and write about a second speech. Both sequences require you to read a speech closely, carefully annotating words, phrases, and references with which you are unfamiliar or about which you are a bit uncertain; to examine language patterns and major and minor claims; and to conduct research on the rhetor, audience, occasion, setting, exigence, and historical and cultural context.

Finally, you will read, study, research, and interpret a speech independently and compose a 3-to-4-page rhetorical analysis essay. Your essay should demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of how the speech responds to and is shaped by a specific rhetorical situation in a particular cultural and historical context. To produce high-quality work, you will make full use of the recursive process of inventing, composing, revising, editing, and proofreading your paper.

## *Directions*

### **Getting Started**

1. Read through the transcript of the first speech.
2. Mark words that you do not understand, *including those about which you're not certain*.
3. Mark references and allusions (e.g., cultural, historical, geographical, literal) you do not understand, including those about which you're not certain.
4. Make quick notes recording your initial understanding of the speech.
5. Write down additional questions you have.
6. Participate in the class discussion that follows.
7. Note what the instructor reveals about the immediate rhetorical situation and the broader cultural, historical context of the speech. How does this information shape your understanding of the speech?

8. Note where you missed or mischaracterized words, allusions, or references in the speech, and make additional annotations to the transcript accordingly.
9. Listen carefully as the instructor describes how he or she conducted research on the speech. Take note of *the nature of* topics and inquiries that came up, what kinds of outside resources proved useful, how the instructor found those resources, and how the research process itself led to additional questions to pursue.
10. Note how the rhetor's choice of words, phrases, and sentence patterns contribute to the meaning of the speech.
11. Note how sentences, paragraphing, and larger patterns of the organization of the speech contribute to the meaning of the speech.
12. Note whether and how the rhetor's delivery (e.g., tone, pacing of words and phrases, facial expression, hand movements, clothing choice, background setting) provides additional interpretive clues.

## Investigating

1. First read the transcript of the speech independently. As you read it,
2. Mark and look up words that you do not understand, *including those about which you're not certain*. Write down the meaning that best fits the context.
3. Mark and look up references and allusions (e.g., cultural, historical, geographical, literal) you do not understand, *including those about which you're not certain*.
4. Make quick notes recording your initial understanding of the speech.
5. Write down additional questions you have.
6. Gather with your group to discuss your initial understandings. As you move through these activities, keep returning to the speech itself to weigh the comments and conclusions group members offer.
7. List points of agreement and disagreement. Your group will revisit these later.
8. Write down questions group members have.
9. As a group, determine what research needs to be conducted about the rhetorical situation and the broader cultural and historical contexts of the speech, including prevailing public opinions or concerns.
10. Perform agreed upon research; then report your findings back to the group.
11. Reread the speech individually and make quick notes on the following:
  - Key points about the rhetorical situation and the broader cultural and historical contexts of the speech, including prevailing public opinions or

concerns that group members believe helps them to understand the speech.

- How the rhetor is similar to and different from members of the intended audience.
  - Rhetor's purpose and message to his or her intended audience.
  - Rhetor's main claims or points.
  - Nature of the support for those points (e.g., explanation, examples, reasons, and research; personal, abstract, authority, text, research finding, etc.).
  - Appeals to the rhetor's character, trustworthiness, and expertise.
  - Appeals to the audience's values and emotions.
  - Distinctive choice of words, phrases, and sentence patterns and how they contribute to the meaning of the speech.
  - Sentences, paragraphing, and larger patterns of the organization of the speech and how they contribute to the meaning of the speech.
12. Discuss your preliminary analyses as a group. *As individuals share their ideas, they should point to specific parts of the text to illustrate and back up their observations.*
13. Work independently to draft a 4-page outline of a complex rhetorical analysis. As you organize your points, be sure to present them in a way that can be understood by someone who was not a member of any group discussion. You will hand in both this outline and your annotated speech transcript.

## Drawing Conclusions

1. Write a sophisticated and well-grounded rhetorical analysis essay of a speech. This essay should demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of how the speech effectively responds to and is shaped by a rhetorical situation. To accomplish this, you must engage the critical practices introduced in Getting Started and Investigating: read closely and responsibly, conduct research on the rhetor, audience, occasion, setting, purpose, exigence, historical and cultural contexts, textual references, etc. (Review your notes to remind you of the level of detail required.) In your essay, be sure to:
  - Read, research, and annotate words, phrases, and textual references in the speech.
  - Research the rhetorical situation and the broader cultural and historical contexts of the speech, and explain how the rhetor responded to prevailing public opinions or concerns.

- Identify the rhetor’s purpose and message to his or her intended audience.
  - Distinguish between your personal reaction to the speech and the reactions of its intended audience.
  - Identify the main points and support for those points (e.g., explanation, examples, reasons, and research).
  - Analyze the rhetor’s use of rhetorical strategies and devices to influence the audience by:
    - Establishing the rhetor’s character, trustworthiness, and expertise.
    - Appealing to the audience’s values and emotions.
    - Organizing its points for emphasis and for audience understanding.
  - Be sure to use ample and appropriate evidence from the speech (e.g., brief summaries, paraphrases, and direct quotation of words, phrases, and sentences) to illustrate and back up your analysis.
  - Be sure to cite and document sources accurately and ethically.
  - Present your paper in a well-organized manner.
  - Revise for focus, development and support, and organization.
  - Edit for correct mechanics, usage, and conventions.
  - Proofread for typos and other errors.
2. This work will be done outside of class, so you will need to devise a schedule and monitor your progress toward completing this paper.
  3. Seek help from your instructor when you need it.
  4. Be sure that your final draft uses language precisely and effectively, organizes your ideas logically and fluidly, conforms to conventions of standard academic English, and cites source materials correctly and ethically.
  5. You will need to turn in your work at various stages, so be sure to put your name and the date on all of your work and bring it to class every day.