

Rhetorical Analysis II: Understanding Editorials

Overview

Description

This 4-part unit helps students to understand and practice the complex processes of reading, understanding, analyzing, assessing, and writing about editorials addressed to specific audiences at specific times. Over the course of approximately 2 weeks, to scaffold their learning, students will work through a specified sequence 4 times (in a teacher-led activity, in small groups, for an independent out-of-class paper, and for an in-class independent essay); this sequence affords students the practice necessary to deepen their understanding of texts and to become more self-sufficient.

Final Products: 1) Students will write an out-of-class analysis essay that demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of how effective discourse—in this case, an editorial—responds to and is shaped by a specific rhetorical situation. The assignment requires that students read closely and responsibly, understand specific genre conventions, conduct research on the rhetor (i.e., writer), audience, occasion, setting, purpose, exigence, context, textual references, etc., to inform their analysis, and that they go through the recursive process of inventing, composing, revising, editing, and proofreading their essay. 2) Students will write an in-class essay that demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of how effective discourse—in this case, an editorial—responds to and is shaped by a specific rhetorical situation. The assignment requires that students read closely and responsibly, understand specific genre conventions, make effective use of teacher-provided research on the rhetorical situation, etc., to inform their analysis, and that they adapt their reading, analytical, and composing practices to meet situational constraints (e.g., limited time, limited access to research).

Subject

English

Task Level

Grade 12

Objectives

Students will:

- Approach editorials written in the recent or distant past, understanding the genre conventions and the need to determine the rhetorical context.
- Carefully annotate editorials, marking, looking up, and determining the precise meaning of words and phrases about which they are uncertain.

- Carefully annotate editorials, 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 editorial was written.
- See how a rich understanding of context helps them to understand the editorial.
- Find reader responses to the editorial in newspapers, magazines, blogs, etc.
- Take substantive notes, including conjectures and questions that they have, as they work through an analysis of an editorial.
- Ask strategic questions in class discussion.
- Distinguish between the ways they understand and react to an editorial and the ways the original or intended audience (i.e., readers) likely understood and reacted to the editorial and related to the writer's intentions.
- Accurately paraphrase sentences.
- Accurately and concisely summarize entire or segments of an editorial in a way that the writer would deem fair.
- Distinguish between an editorial article and a news article.
- Determine what they need to know in order to analyze an editorial, acquire that information, reread parts of texts strategically, taking careful notes throughout the process.
- Analyze how the components of the rhetorical situation (rhetor, audience, occasion, exigence, purpose, context, etc.) shape the editorial and are fundamental to understanding its meaning.
- Note major and minor claims and whether and how they are supported (e.g., reasons, explanations, examples, authorities, research studies) and assess the credibility, relevance, and sufficiency of that support.
- Speculate about whether the intended audience would accept or reject their (or an outside analyst's) objective assessment of the rhetor's (i.e., writer's) support and then evaluate the legitimacy of the audience's reaction. (The point is not to evaluate the claims per se, but to evaluate the strength, quality, and support the writer has provided for those claims.)
- Identify shifts in topic, subtopic, or argumentative claim and explains how these shifts work.
- Identify points the rhetor counts on the audience to fill in and points the writer wants to avoid.
- Draft, revise, edit, and proofread a single-authored analysis of an editorial.

Preparation

- Find newspaper or magazine editorials written in the recent or distant past. Select 2 or 3 editorials on the same or related topics to use for in-class discussion and analysis. Then either select the editorial that students will write about in their papers (to avoid collusion, you could give each student a different editorial) OR prepare guidelines that help the students find an appropriate editorial to write about.

Editorials can be from national, regional, or even school newspapers and magazines; they can be from periodicals devoted to general news or specialized subjects (e.g., politics, consumer issues, sports, science). The editorials need not be recent: for example, they can be from a period and place taken up in the literature, science, or social studies curriculums. In any case, be sure that the editorials require some outside research to be fully understood.

- Work through the editorials you will use in the classroom (you will need one for each of the four parts of this unit). For each editorial:
 - Research the rhetorical situation (writer, audience, purpose, exigence occasion, setting) and its broader cultural and historical context, paying careful attention to where the editorial was published and the basic demographics of the publication's readership.
 - Note the ways in which the writer's (rhetor's) choices seem geared to the rhetorical situation.
 - Locate the editorial's major points or claims and determine whether and how they are supported.
 - Annotate the editorial, explaining significant words and phrases, references and allusions. Note the way words and phrases are used for effect, noting tone (e.g., calm, defensive, offensive), connotation (e.g., might the writer have chosen a more neutral word or phrase?), register (e.g., conversational, slang, playful, formal), etc.
 - Note the writer's use of sentence structures and their effect. For example, does the writer ask questions or intentionally use sentence fragments?
 - Work through organizational patterns. How does the writer shape paragraphs? Does the writer make any of the paragraphs particularly long or short and to what effect? How does the writer move the audience through the argument?
- Be prepared to discuss what a topnotch analysis paper on these editorials needs to include in order *to deepen its readers' understanding*. (Teachers may want to consult textbooks and other materials on rhetorical analysis to deepen their own reading of the editorials.)
- Make copies of the editorials. Every student will need copies to write on.
- Ensure students have access to the Internet and dictionaries.

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 and their importance in understanding texts.
- Understand basic rhetorical terms.
- Understand and have facility with the components and recursive nature of the writing process.
- Use word processing program.

Key Concepts and Terms

(* indicates vocabulary that state standards do not expect beginning 12th graders to know)

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| • Rhetorical Situation,
Rhetorical Context | • Claim, Reason, Explanation,
Evidence, Example |
| • Rhetor, * Speaker, Writer | • Opposing Arguments |
| • Purpose | • Refute/Refutation |
| • Message | • Editorial/Editorialize |
| • Audience, Intended
Audience, * Listener, Reader | • Byline |
| • Exigence* | • Editorial Board |
| • Occasion* | • Annotate/Annotation* |
| • Context | • Allude/Allusion |
| • Culture/Cultural* | • Denotation, Connotation |
| • Persuasion | • Style |
| • Devices | • Sentence Structure,
Sentence Patterns |
| • Strategies, Tactics | • Tone |
| • The 3 Proofs: Ethos, Logos,
and Pathos | |

Time Frame

Approximately two weeks: 1 week of class time with substantial homework and 1 additional week of out-of-class time during which students work independently to complete an analysis paper. Additional day for in-class essay.

This unit should be modified to meet the needs of different classroom schedules and student ability levels. Note that to achieve the unit's learning objectives, students must engage fully in the processes outlined above, practice them, and through sustained, determined inquiry move toward deeper levels of comprehension. Done hastily, the unit will be completed with students continuing to do superficial analyses.

Instructional Plan

In each part of this unit, students will focus on a different editorial to develop their skills in reading, research, analysis, and writing. **Part 1** reviews the differences between news stories and editorials and familiarizes students with genre conventions (e.g., single or multiple authors named, unnamed authors who represent a publication's editorial board; general rather than specific attribution of source material). Students then participate in whole-class activities to situate and analyze an editorial using information the teacher has already researched; the process familiarizes students with the multifaceted processes involved in understanding and analyzing an editorial argument. **Part 2** has students work in groups to read, research, analyze, and write notes about a second editorial. **Part 3** requires students to work through the entire process independently to compose an essay analyzing a third editorial. **Part 4** requires students to perform an independent in-class analysis.

Getting Started

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Distinguish between an editorial and a news story.
- Read an editorial.
- Mark words and phrases about which they are uncertain on the editorial.
- Mark references and allusions (e.g., cultural, historical, geographical, literal) about which they are uncertain.
- Make quick notes recording their initial reading of the editorial, including questions they have.
- Based on class discussion and teacher commentaries, annotate the editorial by writing down the precise meaning of words and phrases of the words they had marked, as well as 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 editorial by writing down the meaning of references and allusions (e.g., cultural, historical, geographical, literal) which they had marked, as well as 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 editorial was written.
- Understand how a rich understanding of both the immediate rhetorical situation and the larger historical and cultural context helps them to better understand the editorial.
- Discuss and work through sentences, paragraphing, and larger patterns of the organization of the editorial and take substantive notes on how and what they contribute to the meaning.

- Discuss and take notes on what a rhetorical analysis paper should include in order to deepen its reader's understanding of the editorial.

Procedure

1. Ask students the difference between editorials (argued opinion) and news stories (objective reporting). Make clear that while they learned about the distinctions in earlier grades, they must now read with greater sophistication. Acknowledge that although news stories are occasionally biased, there are nearly always distinctions between these two types of journalism. Stress that an editorial should present an argument— that is, a major claim plus support. Caution students too about the range of meanings encompassed by the word “opinion,” which the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines as “a view held about a particular issue; a judgement [sic] formed or a conclusion reached; a belief; a religious or political conviction” and later as “what or how one thinks about something.” In argument, opinions must be explained and supported although editorials sometimes fail to do so.

As needed, provide examples of several news stories and editorials and ask students to determine which are news stories and which are editorials based only on the content. (Be sure to project only the main text to avoid revealing the section in which the text appeared.)

2. Put the following on the board: Vermont C. Royster, “[T]he editorial page of the paper should begin where the rest of the paper leaves off.” Explain that Royster spent more than 6 decades working for *The Wall Street Journal*, most of that serving in editorial positions.” (He was awarded 2 Pulitzer prizes.) Ask students what Royster meant. If they need further prompting, read the citation Ronald Reagan read when awarding Royster the Presidential Medal of Freedom: “For over half a century, as a journalist, author, and teacher, Vermont Royster illuminated the political and economic life of our times. His common sense exploded the pretensions of ‘expert opinion,’ and his compelling eloquence warned of the evils of society loosed from its moorings in faith. The voice of the American people can be heard in his prose—honest, open, proud, and free.”
3. Provide students with a definition of “masthead.” Here is a definition from the *Oxford English Dictionary*: “A section in a newspaper or journal (usually on the editorial page or next to the table of contents) giving information relating to the publication, such as the owner's name, a list of the editors, etc.” Ask students to find the masthead in a newspaper and a magazine. What information does a masthead contain, and what is the importance of that information?
4. Project several editorials and ask students to name the authors and how to find out more about them. Stress that they should determine whether an author is part of the publication's staff, a regular contributor though not part of the staff, an author whose column is syndicated, a member of the community unaffiliated with any publication. Finally, project an editorial that doesn't name an author, this time presenting it as it appears to readers (the publication's name should be visible, etc.) and ask students who wrote the piece. Explain the function of an editorial board and the conventions

- for referring to unnamed authors (e.g., the editorial board, the *Dallas Morning News* editors).
5. Distribute copies of one of the editorials 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 editorial, including the main point or unifying claim and how it is supported
 - write down additional questions they may have
 - Remind students that you will be walking around to glance at how they've marked up their copy and to address individual questions and concerns about the process
 6. Tell students about the immediate rhetorical situation and the broader cultural, historical context of the editorial, inviting student comments and questions along the way. Remind students that editorials are a response to an exigence, i.e., a circumstance or problem the author perceives
 7. Ask a few students what they wrote down as you discussed context (number 6 above), explaining how the notes will prove useful and offering pointers on what else they should be writing down. (*Repeat this procedure for one, several, or most of the remaining steps according to your students' needs.*)
 8. Discuss what in the text and context you needed to research, what outside resources you used, how you found them, and how the research process itself led you to discover additional points you to pursue.
 9. Based on class discussion and teacher commentaries, have students annotate their copy by writing down the precise meaning of words and phrases of the words they had marked on the transcript, as well as words and phrases they hadn't realized they misunderstood, and words and phrases they had simply overlooked. Point out the pitfalls of settling for the first definition listed under a word in the dictionary.
 10. Based on class discussion and teacher commentary, have students annotate their copy by writing down the meaning of references and allusions (e.g., cultural, historical, geographical, literal) which they had marked on the transcript, as well as references and allusions they hadn't realized they misunderstood, and of references and allusions they had simply overlooked.
 11. Show students how a rich understanding of the immediate rhetorical situation and the larger historical and cultural context helped you and them to better understand the editorial.
 12. Show how the writer's choice of words, phrases, sentence patterns, paragraphing, and larger organizational decisions contribute to the meaning of the editorial.

13. Ask students—and have them take notes on—what a rhetorical analysis paper should include in order to deepen its reader’s understanding of the editorial.

Distinguish between students’ (and/or your own) reactions to the editorial and the reactions of its intended audience. Are they (and/or you) part of the intended audience?

Investigating

Students will analyze, do research for, and discuss a second editorial either in small groups or in whole class discussion.

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Read and carefully annotate, engage in research for, and compose notes for a full rhetorical analysis that:
 - introduces the rhetorical situation and the broader cultural, historical contexts of the editorial and explains how the writer responded to prevailing public opinions or concerns
 - Identifies the writer’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 writer’s use of rhetorical strategies and devices to influence the audience by
 - establishing the writer’s character, trustworthiness, 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 editorial (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 writer’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 editorial and ask students to read and mark up

2. Assign students to small groups (3 to 5 people) to work through a rhetorical analysis of the editorial
3. Ensure that students have access to the Internet *during class* as well as to dictionaries, 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 annotated text, and research and invention notes in a folder with his or her name on the folder and contents. The work pieces should be dated.

Drawing Conclusions

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Read and carefully annotate, engage in research for, and draft, revise, edit, and proofread a 2½-to-3-page analysis paper that:
 - introduces the rhetorical situation and the broader cultural, historical contexts of the editorial and explains how the writer responded to prevailing public opinions or concerns
 - Identifies the writer'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 writer's use of rhetorical strategies and devices to influence the audience by
 - establishing the writer's character, trustworthiness, 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.
 - Assesses 1) the accuracy, quality, sufficiency, and relevance of the writer's support for claims, and 2) the extent to which they will likely satisfy the audience
 - Uses ample and appropriate evidence from the editorial (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 the real readers (you and others) understand the analysis

- Is well edited for correct mechanic, usage, and conventions
- Uses and documents research ethically and responsibly
- Quotes the editorial accurately and uses proper citation conventions
- Is proofread for typos and other errors

Procedure

1. Distribute the third editorial.
2. Distribute instructions for the rhetorical analysis paper assignment.
3. Clarify, address questions about, etc., 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 (e.g., copy of the editorial 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 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.

Checking on Academic Habits: Part 4, In Class Individual Analysis— Reading, Questioning, Analyzing, Planning, Research, and Writing

Learning Objectives

Each student will

- Read, carefully annotate, write planning notes for research for, and write an analysis for a short editorial that
 - Introduces the rhetorical situation and the broader cultural, historical contexts of the editorial and explains how the writer responded to prevailing public opinions or concerns to the extent that in class constraints allow
 - Identifies the writer's purpose and message to his or her intended audience (the teacher identifies the audience)
 - Identifies the main points and support for those points (e.g., explanation, examples, reasons, research)
 - Analyzes the writer's use of rhetorical strategies and devices to influence the audience by
 - establishing the writer's character, trustworthiness, 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 editorial (e.g., brief summaries, paraphrase, direct quotation of words, phrases, and sentences) to illustrate or back up the analysis
- Distinguishes between the intended audience's likely response to the text and his or her response to text
- Is organized in ways that help real readers understand the analysis
- Quotes the editorial accurately, ethically, and responsibly
- Is proofread

Procedure

1. Distribute the fourth editorial
2. Distribute instructions for the in-class analysis essay. The instructions should include information about the rhetorical situation of the editorial.
3. Clarify, address questions about, etc., instructions for the assignment, emphasizing that you understand the time and other constraints and that they need to complete the assignment during the period.
4. Ensure students have access to dictionaries. If students have access to the Internet *in class*, you may choose to allow them to do quick research as needed.

Scaffolding/Instructional Support

The following suggestions are examples of scaffolding that can be used by instructors to meet diverse student needs while students are completing this assignment.

The goal of scaffolding is to help students to understand precisely what the assignment requires, to help them to a deeper understanding of the text and to convey their analyses more precisely, to encourage and support stick-to-it-iveness, independence and self-management. Instructors can use these suggestions, in part or all together, to meet diverse student and class needs. The more skilled the student or class, however, the less scaffolding needed. 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 in order 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' essay.
- Offering revision advice on each student's rough draft.
- Reviewing and/or providing exercises on when and how to quote from texts, how to use cite and document sources.
- Reviewing skills and concepts listed in the Prior Knowledge section of this unit.

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 cross-disciplinary skills.

Necessary Elements

- Evidence of deep reading that moves well beyond obvious points
- Deft use of historical context to explain editorial
- Judicious quotation of words, phrases, and sentences, etc., from the editorial 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 finding only superficial knowledge about the rhetorical situation.
- 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 paper, which has 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 editorial.

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

<i>Rhetorical Analysis II-Editorials - Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS): English Language Arts and Reading</i>
<p>110.34.b.1. Reading/Vocabulary Development. Students understand new vocabulary and use it when reading and writing. Students are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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.
<p>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.</p>
<p>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.</p>
<p>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.</p>
<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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.
<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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.
<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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.

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110.34.b.12. Reading/Media Literacy. Students use comprehension skills to analyze how words, images, graphics, and sounds work together in various forms to impact meaning. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater depth in increasingly more complex texts. Students are expected to:

110.34.b.12.A. Evaluate how messages presented in media reflect social and cultural views in ways different from traditional texts.

110.34.b.12.B. Evaluate the interactions of different techniques (e.g., layout, pictures, typeface in print media, images, text, sound in electronic journalism) used in multi-layered media.

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.13.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.13.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.13.D. Edit drafts for grammar, mechanics, and spelling.

110.34.b.13.E. Revise final draft in response to feedback from peers and teacher and publish written work for appropriate audiences.

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

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information from multiple sources and perspectives while anticipating and refuting counter-arguments.
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 II: Understanding Editorials

Introduction

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

The remaining sequences require you to employ these skills independently. Outside of class, you will read, study, research, and interpret an editorial on your own and compose a 2½- to-3-page rhetorical analysis essay. Your essay should demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of how the editorial responds to a specific rhetorical situation in a particular cultural and historical context. It should not only reveal the writer's argument but how the writer's textual choices shape that argument. To produce high-quality work, you will make full use of the recursive process of inventing, composing, revising, editing, and proofreading your paper.

At the close of the unit, you will test these skills in a timed setting by composing an analysis of a fourth in class.

Directions

Getting Started

1. Read through the editorial.
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 editorial, including the main point or unifying claim and how it is supported.
5. Note anything that marks it as an editorial rather than a news story.

6. Write down questions you have.
7. Participate in the class discussion that follows.
8. Note what the instructor reveals about the immediate rhetorical situation and the broader cultural, historical context of the editorial, including the exigence to which the writer is responding. How does this information shape your understanding of the editorial?
9. Note where you missed or mischaracterized words, allusions, or references in the editorial, and make additional annotations to the transcript accordingly.
10. Listen carefully as the instructor describes how he or she conducted research on the editorial. 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.
11. Note how the writer's choice of words, phrases, and sentence patterns contribute to the meaning of the editorial.
12. Note how the writer's decisions about paragraphing (length, method of development) contribute to the meaning of the editorial.
13. Note how the writer's larger organizational decisions contribute to the meaning of the editorial.
14. Take notes on what a rhetorical analysis paper should include in order to deepen *my* reader's understanding of the editorial.
15. How does my reaction the editorial differ from the likely reactions of its intended audience? Am I part of the writer's intended audience?

Investigating

1. First read editorial on your own.
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 editorial.
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 editorial 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 editorial, including prevailing public opinions or concerns.
10. Perform agreed upon research; then report your findings back to the group.
11. Reread the editorial individually and make quick notes on the following:
 - Key points about the rhetorical situation and the broader cultural and historical contexts of the editorial, including prevailing public opinions or concerns that group members believe helps them to understand the editorial.
 - How the writer is similar to and different from members of the intended audience.
 - How you are similar to and different from the members of the intended audience.
 - Writer's purpose and message to his or her intended audience.
 - Nature of the support for those points (e.g., explanation, examples, reasons, and research; personal, abstract, authority, text, research finding, etc.).
 - Appeals to the writer'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 editorial.
 - Sentences, paragraphing, and larger patterns of the organization of the editorial and how they contribute to its meaning.
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. Review the elements of a complex rhetorical analysis as a group. Then discuss how you can cull through, prioritize, develop, and organize your observations in ways that will help people better understand what your group's editorial means *and how it works*. As you discuss developing and organizing your points, bear in mind that the analysis must be understood by someone who has not analyzed the editorial.
14. Each group member must hand in his or her outline and annotated editorial.

Drawing Conclusions

1. Write a well-grounded rhetorical analysis essay of an editorial. This essay should establish the rhetorical context of the editorial and demonstrate a

sophisticated understanding of how the editorial responds to it. To accomplish this, you must engage the critical practices introduced in **Getting Started** and **Investigating**, so review your notes to remind you of the level of detail required. Because this work will be done outside of class, you will need to devise a schedule and monitor your progress toward completing this assignment, seeking help from your instructor when you need it. Your final draft should use language precisely and effectively, present your ideas logically and fluidly, conform to conventions of standard academic English, and document source materials correctly and ethically. As you work on this assignment, be sure to:

- Annotate words, phrases, and textual references as you read.
 - Research the rhetorical situation and the broader cultural and historical contexts of the editorial to help you discern how the writer responded to prevailing public opinions or concerns.
 - Identify the writer's purpose and message to his or her intended audience.
 - Identify the main points and support for those points (e.g., explanation, examples, reasons, and research).
 - Analyze the writer's use of rhetorical strategies and devices to influence the audience by:
 - Establishing the writer's character, trustworthiness, and expertise.
 - Appealing to the audience's values and emotions.
 - Organizing editorial's points for emphasis and for audience understanding.
 - Be sure to use ample and appropriate evidence from the editorial (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 essay in a well-organized manner that fosters your reader's understanding.
 - Revise for focus, development and support, and organization.
 - Edit for correct mechanics, usage, and conventions.
 - Proofread for typos and other errors.
2. 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.