

Tier One - Lowest Level of Proficiency

- The author struggles to identify rhetorical choices within a text.
- When rhetorical choices are identified, the author struggles to know what to say about them.
- Writing is formulaic. Analysis is superficial.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Most of you are beyond Tier One writing.

Tier Two - Mid Level of Proficiency

- The author can identify rhetorical choices and has an acceptable understanding of them
- The writing is segmented. Paragraphs do not connect logically to one another.
- Little attempt to show how rhetorical choices impact one another.
- Little or inconsistent attempt to connect choices to the rhetorical situation within body paragraphs.

This is where many of you are right now. This is also where your writing was last year. Your challenge for this essay is to shift—consciously and with effort—into Tier Three.

Tier Three - Highest Level of Proficiency

This is your goal for this essay.

- The author does the following:
 - **Connects all rhetorical choices to the rhetorical situation.**
 - Why does this specific author use this specific choice to communicate this specific message to this specific audience?
 - **Discusses more than one rhetorical choice in each paragraph.** (Your topic sentence can focus on choice, but your commentary in the paragraph should explore related choices.)
 - Example: How does the diction/imagery impact the tone?
 - Example: How was the personal anecdote communicated in regard to diction, imagery, pacing, et cetera?
 - **Acknowledges and analyzes changes over time in the text.**
 - How does the tone/diction/imagery/pacing change over the course of the text?
 - What is the significance of this?
 - **Acknowledges and analyzes where in the text a rhetorical choice occurs.**
 - Is it at the beginning? Middle? End?
 - What is the significance of this?

Example of Tier **Two** - An Analysis of Greta Thunberg's UN Speech

PROMPT

How does Greta Thunberg use rhetorical tool to communicate her message to her audience.

DISCUSS

ONE SENTENCE: Why is this paragraph Tier Two?

ONE SENTENCE: How can you improve this paragraph? What could be better? What changes could the author make to move to Tier Three writing?

TIER THREE

- The author does the following:
 - Connects all rhetorical choices to the rhetorical situation.
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 - Acknowledges and analyzes changes over time in the text.
 - Acknowledges and analyzes where in the text a rhetorical choice occurs.

In her speech, Greta Thunberg uses repetition to establish an accusatory tone. In her second paragraph, Thunberg exclaims, “How dare you!” Thunberg repeats this exclamation two more times early in her speech, which forces the audience to realize their own actions in regard to climate action. Between exclamations, Thunberg clarifies her accusation: “You have stolen my dreams and my childhood with your empty words.” Thunberg makes it clear that she blames the audience for the “suffering” that she sees around the world. The repeated exclamation “How dare you!” emphasizes Thunberg’s anger.

Example of Tier **Three** - An Analysis of Greta Thunberg's UN Speech

PROMPT

How does Greta Thunberg use rhetorical tool to communicate her message to her audience.

NOTE THE FOLLOWING

Commentary shows the interplay between devices.

Commentary connects choices to the rhetorical situation.

Commentary acknowledges and analyzes where in the speech a rhetorical choice is used.

Greta Thunberg's use of first and second person early in her speech establishes an accusatory tone and underscores the personal nature of Thunberg's argument for change. In her ominous first line—"we'll be watching you"—Thunberg creates a distinction between herself ("we") and the audience ("you"). She then reinforces that distinction with an accusatory exclamation that is repeated three times in the opening paragraphs: "How dare you!" Given that Thunberg was invited to speak to the United Nations as a representative of young climate activists, this admonitory and consistent use of second person likely unnerved her audience. By highlighting "my dreams" and "my childhood," Thunberg weaponizes her personal experience as a young person against "your empty words." At the beginning of her speech, Greta Thunberg positions herself not simply as a young victim of adult inaction; instead, she positions herself as part of an indignant "we" who demands action from those who have power.

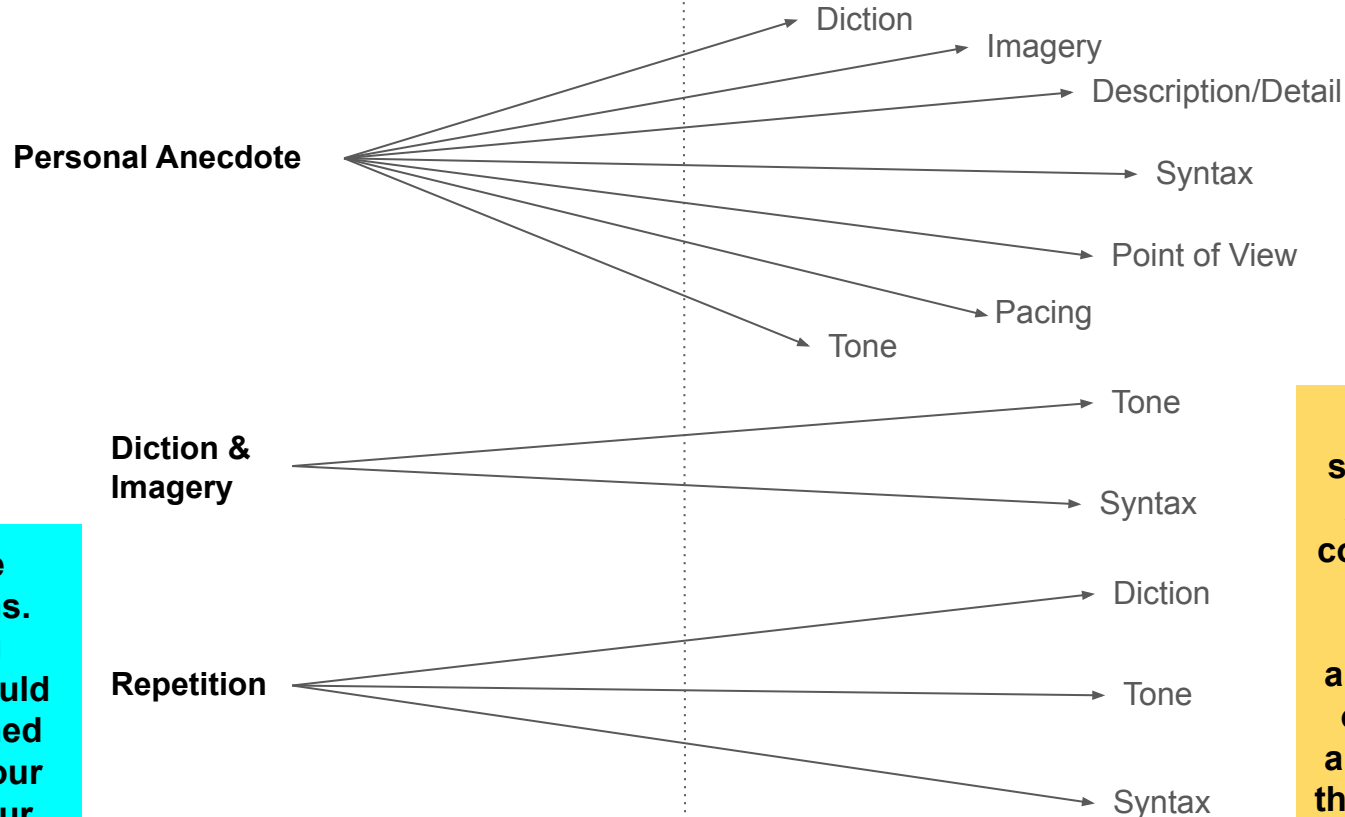
Analyzing the Interactions Between Rhetorical Choices

How do I discuss more than one rhetorical choice in a body paragraph?

An answer.

If your paragraph discusses this rhetorical choice:

Consider analyzing these rhetorical choices as well:



These are suggestions. What you discuss should be determined based on your text and your claims.

This analysis should be done *IN ADDITION TO* 1) connecting devices to the rhetorical situation, 2) analyzing changes over time, and 3) analyzing where in the speech a device occurs.

If your paragraph discusses this rhetorical choice:

Consider analyzing these rhetorical choices as well:

**Statistics and
Expert Opinions**

Organization of Information

Tone

Line of Reasoning

Concessions

Syntax

Allusions

Tone

Diction

Syntax

**Figurative
Language**

Diction

Tone

Syntax

Repetition

Point of View

(Metaphor, Simile, Personification,
Hyperbole, Oxymoron, Alliteration)

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What you
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ADDITION TO* 1)
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to the rhetorical
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over time, and 3)
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Let's Practice

PRACTICE ONE - WHICH TIER IS THIS PARAGRAPH?

TIER ONE

TIER TWO

- The author can identify rhetorical choices and has an acceptable understanding of them
- The writing is very segmented out. Paragraphs do not connect logically to one another.
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TIER THREE

- The author does the following:
 - Connects all rhetorical choices to the rhetorical situation.
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Le Guin holds a tone of determination through the majority of her speech by using clear and concise diction. She begins her third paragraph by bluntly stating, “Intellectual tradition is male.” A small, yet impactful, sentence quickly grabs the attention of her listeners and shows how truly passionate the author is about women’s societal separation. Furthermore, it leaves no confusion about what she believes and what she will be speaking about. Not to mention, the syntax of this particular sentence makes it all the more impactful because it leaves no room for interpretation. Then in the middle of her speech, she asks her audience a variety of questions, such as: “Well, is that what you went to college for? Is that all? What about success?” In doing this, she takes hold of her audience’s attention once more and makes them truly ponder about what the future holds for women as a whole. This specific use of rhetorical questions prompts the author for a tone change where she smoothly begins to take on a more inquisitive tone.

PRACTICE TWO- WHICH TIER IS THIS PARAGRAPH?

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Le Guin uses emotionally charged and synonymous word choice to integrate her personal feelings on the issue without specifically talking about herself. In the middle of her speech she uses words such as “disappointment,” “injustice,” “betrayal,” and “irreparable loss” in a way that makes the readers wonder if she knows this from personal experience. Authors always use specific words for a certain reason, so the listeners of her speech must have wondered why she used that word choice, intriguing them. Also in the middle of speech, she uses words such as “competition”, “aggression,” “violence”, and “power” to describe a man’s world. Le Guin mentions these words while she talks about women being excluded from social norms in the middle of her speech and mentions that she considers other women including herself to be “foreigners” to a man’s world. Her word choice, again, gives her listeners a sense of how she feels about the subject. Based on her words, the listeners- or readers in this case- can analyze that the topic angers her. She is upset by the world and wants women to grow above men to make it a better place.

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Then, Rice uses a personal anecdote with Former President George W. Bush to further acknowledge the need for better solutions. Condoleezza Rice declares, “He made us clear” (10). This experience of Rice communicates that even the President, of that time, wanted the commission. She mentions this personal experience near the beginning to persuade the audience even more that they will be making the right decision by supporting this commission. The Former President told Rice that “he was tired of swatting flies” (10). This personal anecdote contains a quote with figurative language. This figurative language vividly describes the desire of the President to have these planned actions be better. It proves to the other government members that the leader supports the commission. Rice uses this anecdote, with the quote from the President, in her favor by implying that the President supports the commission.

PRACTICE FOUR- WHICH TIER IS THIS PARAGRAPH?

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Christopher Reeves uses statistics to put things into perspective for the listener and allow them to understand what he is talking about. Christopher talks about how “a quarter million Americans have a spinal cord injury,” and the government only spends “about 40 million dollars” on research every year.

Christopher is using statistics here to point out the obvious flaws with how disabled people are treated in the eyes of the government. He is saying how they are treated like lesser people. The reason that he says this in the middle of the speech is because he has already gotten the attention of his audience and he wants to say something meaningful and impactful that they will remember. The use of statistical data strengthens Christopher’s points and allows for a more broad understanding of the subject.

PRACTICE FIVE- WHICH TIER IS THIS PARAGRAPH?

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Reeve uses his personal testimonies to manipulate the tone of his speech to evoke feelings of empathy, guilt, and righteousness in his audience. After establishing an air of professionalism and activism using statistics, Reeve describes the story of his friend, Gregory Patterson, who became disabled because “a stray bullet..., went through a car window, right into his neck and severed his spinal chord” (16). He mentions the story after giving facts to amplify the tonal shift that was achieved by plainly mentioning the real story of his personal friend. Reeve understands the ease of overlooking statistics, as shocking as they may be, due to them pertaining to strangers without a name or story. Giving that name and story inspires his audience to be angry on behalf of his friend and want to take action. Reeve manipulates humans’ empathy and the shift in tone to jar his audience into reality when he immediately follows up his story with “Today, because of research, he's alive” (16). Reeve does not sweeten his words with any excess and states the facts once again, shifting the tone back to professionalism while directing his audience’s attention to his goal. Giving his audience an emotional whiplash due to the rapid shift in tone from business to personal then immediately back to business, conveys the understanding of his audience: professionals who operate on business and would not look fondly on a pity party, but who are also humans with emotions.

PRACTICE SIX- WHICH TIER IS THIS PARAGRAPH?

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Ursula K. Le Guin uses allusions and diction to respectfully distinguish between her male and female readers. Early in her speech, she mentions that, unlike other commencement addresses spoken by men, her speech will be given in the “language of women” fundamentally towards young women (1). However, Le Guin goes on to say, “I don’t mean to exclude them (men), far from it,” to respectfully clarify that her speech could be helpful to the men in the audience as well, even though her message was meant primarily for women (2). Le Guin then jokingly mentions, “There is a Greek tragedy where the Greek says to the foreigner, “If you don’t understand Greek, please signify by nodding,” to compare the men in the audience to the foreigners in her story (2). She uses it to imply that although men could benefit from her speech, she is not overly worried about whether or not they will understand what she is trying to convey to her primary audience. Keeping in mind that men would usually criticize the few women who graduated alongside a majority of male students in male-dominated colleges, Le Guin was rather respectful towards the minority of few men who were graduating among the women in this women’s college. She was not obligated to do so, but in doing so, she drew a clear line between how men and women are treated by one another.

PRACTICE SEVEN- WHICH TIER IS THIS PARAGRAPH?

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Abe Shinzo uses repetition to express his sorrow for the citizens lost in the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as well as in the fighting of World War II. Abe Shinzo repeats the word “condolences” at the beginning and end of his speech when talking about World War II, connecting him with his audience emotionally to prove that Japan and the United States feel the same about the lost souls during World War II. Likewise, Abe Shinzo repeats “alliance” and “allies” at the beginning of the speech to inform the world about the growing relationship between Japan and the United States. Even through multiple past conflicts and differences, they have come to agreements and “together, will become a light for hope, for the people of the world” (8). Finally, Abe repeats the phrase: “It is the responsibility of us who live in the present . . .” (7), to present a need for cooperation by employing “us” to demonstrate that a group effort is necessary for hopes of “a world free of nuclear weapons” (7). Reiterating this phrase multiple times at the end of his speech displays his urgency in attempting to forge a new world filled with peace and free of nuclear warfare.