



YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

to strengthen teaching in public schools®

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2014 Volume IV: Eloquence

Elements of Rhetoric in the Language-Learning Classroom: Convince Me You are Fluent!

Guide for Curriculum Unit 14.04.06, published September 2014
by Crecia Cipriano

In this unit, I seek to explore and indeed exploit the elements of rhetoric, those tools used in effective and persuasive speaking and writing, to open up a new pathway to fluency for world language students, both in prepared and spontaneous communication. With these tools, they will not only learn to inject more style and voice into their writing and speaking, but in so doing, will in fact hasten to persuade the listener or reader of their linguistic fluency. In the act of convincing others, they will without doubt start to convince themselves. And this, of course, is where the magic happens for our kids.

Simply put, rhetoric is the art or study of writing or speaking effectively or persuasively. At first blush, it might seem that the application of rhetorical canons and devices would be too advanced a concept for beginning language learners. Here one might begin to imagine powerfully worded political speeches or ancient and serious philosophical debates more clearly than question-and-answer paired practice around ordering foods or introducing family members. Yet by distilling these rhetorical elements down to their core and tweaking them to our language learning purposes, I believe that they become powerful allies in our quest for smooth speech and oral confidence for our students.

(Developed for French 1A, grade 7, and French 1B, grade 8; recommended for World Languages, grades 7-9)

<https://teachers.yale.edu>

©2023 by the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, Yale University, All Rights Reserved. Yale National Initiative®, Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute®, On Common Ground®, and League of Teachers Institutes® are registered trademarks of Yale University.

For terms of use visit https://teachers.yale.edu/terms_of_use