



Rhetoric in My World: Engaging Students in Rhetorical Analysis Through Political Speechwriting

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Teaching Situation and Rationale

"In order to make America a true democracy, it was crucial to give every citizen access to eloquence" ¹ (Roach 114). This idea, prevalent in the 18th and 19th centuries, that in school all children should receive practice with oratorical skills in order to communicate effectively in expressing their opinions, is one that seems more and more essential to me to introduce in my classroom. The majority of my students struggle with issues such as accessing affordable health care, earning a living wage and coping with immigration reform. By connecting the skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking, and using rhetorical analysis of political speeches as an entry point, I want my students to empower themselves through developing and voicing their opinions on these and other issues that affect their daily lives.

My school is a neighborhood school in East Tulsa, and is one of the most diverse high schools in Oklahoma. Over half our students are Hispanic, with a significant proportion classified as English Language Learners; 20% are African American; 13% are White; 8% are Native American; 4% are Asian; .1% are Pacific Islander, and 2% identify themselves as Multiracial. 16% qualify for Special Education services and 100% qualify for the free and reduced lunch program based on their parents' income. The average ACT score for 2012-2013 was below the state average, as was the number of students passing the English II End of Instruction Exam (one of the high-stakes exams students must pass in order to graduate), hence the increased instructional time spent on standardized test preparation during the last three years. The diversity in the school as a whole is reflected in my classroom. I will teach this unit to four sections of 11th grade Advanced Placement and Composition students. At East Central we have an open enrollment policy, so my AP Language classes are composed of students with varying ability levels, several of whom are English Language Learners (ELL's). My ELL students are usually highly motivated because they've self-selected a more advanced course, but they often struggle with vocabulary and syntax because of inadequate background knowledge. While some students are reading at or above grade level and are comfortable with the writing process and literary analysis, others are reading below grade level, have a more limited vocabulary, and are reluctant readers and writers. All, however, are smart, funny, interesting and very perceptive. Several will never have had an AP English class before, so analyzing rhetoric will be a new skill for them. Rhetorical analysis and argumentation are foundational aspects of the AP Language course, and students study and deconstruct speeches throughout the year. However, when encountering works from a more distant time period, sometimes they shut down because they feel so

intimidated by or disconnected from the reading. My main aim is to make the study of rhetorical devices and appeals more relevant for my students by helping them see these devices are at work in the world all around them, as well as identifying issues that are relevant to them. Some are undocumented immigrants and are interested in and directly affected by immigration reform issues, for example. Many students feel marginalized because of their cultural or socioeconomic backgrounds. I want to help them connect with the speeches in a way that makes them more relevant, so they recognize how current issues and politics affect their world, and become empowered through forming their opinions and developing a voice to express them.

Objectives

Oklahoma's standards are the PASS (Priority Academic Student Skills) Objectives. This unit meets the standards for Reading/Literature by exposing students to a wide variety of speeches from different politicians and different time periods. These works represent a wide range of voices and messages, from Queen Elizabeth I motivating her troops to fight bravely against Spanish forces in 1588, to Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa's speech to the National Press Club in 2007 on the necessity of improving education to combat poverty. I selected these works to help students make connections between pieces from different periods and issues, and to convey a sense of how rhetorical tools are used in different settings, often to similar effect. I also want them to think about the variety of issues covered (health care reform, education reform, minimum wage increase, space exploration, immigration reform, responses to difficult economic times), their opinions on those, and possible intersections with their experience. It will also give them a variety of models to review when they begin writing speeches on their chosen issues.

Vocabulary development and Media Literacy are addressed as we look at advertisements to understand and illustrate the meaning of various rhetorical devices. My students are always borrowing magazines from my classroom collection of newspapers and magazines. This activity activates students' background knowledge by taking a genre they are already familiar with (advertising) and using it to reinforce the meaning of various devices, while also illustrating how students see them every day while flipping through their favorite magazines. This will reinforce the idea that these are not just remote, abstract concepts; on the contrary, these devices are at work in the world around them (and that often, they are members of the intended audience).

Students will develop their comprehension as we analyze organizational patterns in speeches and evaluate the speakers' arguments, using guiding questions and graphic organizers to facilitate understanding. They will draw inferences and make assertions about these arguments, using specific references to the text to support their analysis, while also deepening their understanding of the influence of historical context on the piece. My students sometimes make assertions about a text based on what they think they remember, without going back to the text for support. The guiding questions and graphic organizers will require them to support their interpretation with evidence. They'll also use these tools to analyze how elements such as organization, repetition, word choice and use of literary devices affect the development of a work. These products will also serve as visual reminders and models of the development of different works they can refer to when preparing their own pieces.

To give them a solid foundation to work from when developing their arguments, students will research issues and select information to go into their 'casebooks'. I want them to look at specific aspects of the issues they

choose (the history, important events and people, major claims and counterclaims, anecdotes, etc.), which will improve their research skills, and give them a place to keep their facts and anecdotal information together, so they can access them easily when they begin writing.

Students will write and edit their persuasive speeches using the Writing Workshop model, paying careful attention to including rhetorical appeals and concessions, supporting their opinion with appropriate evidence and using devices they have learned from modeling throughout the unit (such as repetition, parallel structure and antithesis) to reinforce meaning, always bearing in mind that they're writing a text for oral delivery and making rhetorical choices accordingly.

And finally, they will deliver their speeches and listen to those of their peers, allowing them to hear and respond to each other. I believe students benefit greatly from sharing their ideas, and also gain confidence from delivering them orally. It is my hope that this process allows them to take ownership of their ideas and their writing, ultimately giving them greater ownership of the issues.

The Unit

Because my students are often overwhelmed by the amount of high stakes testing and test preparation they must endure as Sophomores and Juniors in my state, this unit is created around authentic purposes and products. It is focused on having students read and analyze political speeches, then helping them create real-world scenarios for writing and delivering their own. For example, students will study how rhetorical devices are used in a political speech, then be tasked with researching an issue they are interested in, writing a speech for a specific audience (for example, composing a speech for the city council on minimum wage) and then delivering it to an audience of their peers. This provides practice with rhetorical analysis and argumentative writing, and makes them more familiar with contemporary issues, all of which assists with preparation for the AP Language Exam and increases their investment in their own ideas and writing.

Strategies

Research studies, such as one conducted by Coker and Erwin in 2010, have found that instructional approaches that include "explicit instruction in the elements of argument, modeling of how to write or engage in arguments, opportunities to practice... (orally or through writing) and appropriate feedback ..." have been successful in developing the argumentative writing skills of at-risk adolescents in urban school settings.² Accordingly, this unit incorporates several strategies that allow for explicit instruction in rhetorical elements, use of a variety of models, and opportunities for development of student writing and feedback.

Since all the pieces are short works, and we will be doing extended analytical exercises in groups with each one, all assigned reading will take place in classroom. Because the unit is approximately six weeks, there will be adequate time for that. Some pieces, such as Lincoln's *Gettysburg Address*, are included in our district-adopted American Literature textbooks, but most will be provided as photocopies, so students can annotate as they are reading and keep copies in their notebooks. As available, we'll be viewing most of the speeches on

YouTube prior to reading, which will support my visual and auditory learners, as well as students struggling with reading comprehension. At various points during guided reading we will be deconstructing the speeches in sections, so I will stop frequently to check for understanding, provide clarification and introduce and guide activities. Students will read silently and aloud at different points.

As much of the terminology students will encounter in this unit will be new to them, particularly students who are taking AP English for the first time, an ongoing strategy that will be introduced at the beginning of the unit will involve introducing specific devices/vocabulary/elements of argumentation from the speeches. We will do this through "reading" and analyzing advertisements as they relate to the rhetorical triangle (speaker, purpose, audience, subject and context), and then using those advertisements to illustrate rhetorical devices we will encounter in the speeches (appeals, antithesis, parallel syntax, etc.). Students will find examples of each of the devices in print and keep a master list and examples in their casebooks (described below). Since they will be encountering new devices in different readings, this activity will be introduced through mini-lessons, and will be ongoing throughout the unit for reinforcement of concepts. There will also be a quiz given over the devices at the end of the unit, as an additional method of checking for understanding.

To help students understand the way each speech is constructed, as well as how they relate to each other, we will be completing close reading activities. The desks in my classroom are arranged in groups of four, so they can easily work together. They will use the classroom sets of marker boards to answer questions as a group (identifying the elements of the rhetorical triangle, for example) and hold them up, so I can easily check for understanding. Each group will contribute observations made on post-it notes to create charts on the wall with insights on the introduction, examples of strategies used, the methods of development and examples of rhetorical devices used. They will use these to complete individual graphic organizers where they chart the development of each piece paragraph by paragraph, so later they can compare each piece they have read during group discussion, and have models to refer to when composing their own. The emphasis on group work will help my ELL students, those who are new to the AP English program and my struggling readers.

Each Friday, from the beginning of the unit, we will have 30 minutes set aside during class for Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) time when students will use the classroom laptops to look up current news articles covering current issues from online sources such as *Tulsa World*, *New York Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, etc. and read silently to develop their understanding of events going on in the world - internationally, nationally and locally. At the end of SSR time, we'll have a group discussion where each student will tell about the news stories they read, as well as their opinions on them. This will deepen their knowledge of current events, and give them ideas for issues they could research in their casebooks.

In preparation for writing their own speeches, each student will develop a "casebook" with key information on at least two issues they are interested in, as well as articles I will give them before reading the speeches. For example, when we read the speeches on the space program, I will give them a transcript of the Walter Cronkite piece, "How Sputnik Changed the World" on NPR, so they can get a sense of the history of the space program. Also, I will give them excerpts from *On Speaking Well* by Peggy Noonan, when she writes about crafting the Challenger speech for Reagan. When we read the Long and FDR speeches, I will give them excerpts from *Union of Words* by Wayne Fields, where he gives background information about their use of the new medium of radio and connections to the Great Depression. I will also use the "Times Topics" section of *The New York Times* online to give students readings on The Great Depression as well as the history of immigration and minimum wage legislation. They will also assemble facts, statistics, background information, etc. on their two issues to develop a more in-depth understanding of both sides (they will have access to the classroom laptops and be given time during class to work on developing their casebooks). Their casebooks will

also include information on their first-hand experiences with the issues, as well as anecdotes from others; this will help them as they are developing emotional and ethical appeals.

Finally, I will incorporate a variety of writing strategies as students compose and deliver their own speeches. We will use a Writing Workshop model, where students work in groups during class time to write, share and revise their pieces. They can compose their first drafts by hand, or on the classroom laptops. Some research has shown that when students compose using laptops, they are more likely to re-read their writing as they compose, ³ and word processing can help students with writing difficulties "produce a text that looks good, and they can go back and fix things without introducing new mistakes", ⁴ so I will require them to type their second and final drafts. They'll share their writing aloud with each other at various stages, so they can hear the sound of the words and the rhythm of the language. I want them to realize how they notice different things when reading their writing aloud, so we'll review the differences in pieces that are written to be delivered aloud (such as syntactical differences) and discuss various strategies for effective delivery.

Study of Political Speeches

To relate the idea that this unit is about showing students how rhetoric is at work in the world all around them, and empowering them to find their voice in relation to an issue they care about, we will begin by watching the YouTube video of Asean Johnson's speech at a Chicago Teachers Union rally. This will help them see the impact a student voice can have. We'll then use the Smartboard to brainstorm a variety of issues that interest them.

The first three weeks will be filled with group reading (using a variety of close reading strategies, as described above), discussion and written analysis of a variety of political speeches. We will begin with two that are very accessible: Queen Elizabeth I's "Tilbury Speech" and John F. Kennedy's 1962 Presidential Address, "Preservation of Price Stability". I chose these because they each have a very clear purpose students' are quick to pick up on. They both rely heavily on an appeal to ethos to inspire confidence, use of strong diction to motivate and invoke pathos, and parallel structure to unify and emphasize ideas. The Queen's purpose is motivating her troops to fight bravely against the invading Spanish Armada in 1588. She addresses them as "My loving people", and refers to them as "faithful" and "loyal", using pathos to motivate. She says "I myself will take up arms" and "I myself will be your general, judge and rewarder of every one of your virtues in the field". In his commentary on the speech, William Safire writes that the Queen, "commanded the affection of her subjects by virtue of her courage and her identification with the nation's fate" ⁵ an idea emphasized by her use of parallel structure. Likewise, JFK is seeking to move the American people to outrage against "a tiny handful of steel executives whose pursuit of private power and profit exceeds their sense of public responsibility". He refers to their actions as "unjustifiable and irresponsible", and says they show, "contempt for 185 million Americans", the very people he is seeking to galvanize with his words. He bolsters his credibility by beginning his speech with a reminder of the sacrifices each American was making during that time, including himself, as "we are devoting our energies to economic recovery and stability", in order to emphasize that he, like Queen Elizabeth, was there with his people ⁶. He goes on to use parallel structure to emphasize the negative economic effect of the steel price hike. With this pairing, I want students to see how the same devices can be used in similar ways in two political speeches from very different periods.

Next, we will look at Abraham Lincoln's *Gettysburg Address*, focusing on use of antithesis, and, once again, diction and parallel structure. First, I'll show the "Gettysburg Address Mash Up" videos on YouTube, to bring this historical document into the modern day. Then we'll do our own "mash up" group reading, with each student taking a small section, so they can hear the sounds of the words, and how parallel structure is used to create rhythm. As we re-read and analyze, I want to give them a sense of the historical connections of Lincoln's use of antithesis, for example, to "the characteristic organization of Greek prose by polarities".⁷ I want them to understand how Lincoln's more vernacular word choice is tied to the historical context, as "events were moving too fast for the more languid phrases of the past",⁸ as well as understanding how his use of monosyllables affects the "rhythmic pacing".⁹

From there, we'll look at two sets of speeches paired around common themes or time periods: Senator Huey Long's "Every Man a King" speech and FDR's Fireside Chat on "Farmers and Laborers" (both addressing the issue of hard economic times), followed by President John F Kennedy's "Space Exploration" speech, paired with President Ronald Reagan's "Challenger" speech.

President Roosevelt and Senator Long are both voicing responses to hard economic times during The Great Depression. Both speeches utilize biblical allusions, and strong appeals to ethos, pathos and logos, underscored by use of parallel structure and anaphora. Both men also utilized the then new technology of radio to connect with the public. As an interesting side note, Samuel I Rosenman, a speechwriter for FDR, said that "Roosevelt feared a challenge from the Democratic populist-progressive Long more than from any Republican".¹⁰ At the time of this speech, delivered a year before FDR's Fireside Chat, The New Deal had not delivered the country from The Great Depression, so Long was presenting the ordinary citizens of Louisiana with his "Share the Wealth" program. He establishes his ethos by repeatedly invoking "the law of the Lord" and frequently using personal pronouns, as when laying out his main claim that "in order to cure all of our woes it is necessary to scale down the big fortunes, that we may scatter the wealth to be shared by all of the people...", and repeatedly referring to his audience as "my friends". This reinforces the idea that he is there with the people, on their side. Long appeals to the emotions of the unemployed when he sets up his claim that the problem in the country is not a lack of resources, but "the greed of a few men..." for whom "...pleasure consists in the starvation of the masses", such that ordinary people do not have money to buy the available goods. This is underscored by his use of anaphora ("We have the farm problem.....We have a home loan problem...We have trouble, my friends...") and parallelism ("we have in America today more wealth, more goods, more food...")¹¹ Long also sets up a logical appeal by detailing the economic statistics of his plan in the second half of his speech.

Roosevelt also appeals to logos in Fireside Chat #8, when he lays out the logical reasoning behind his work projects to conserve water and control soil erosion to battle the severe drought conditions affecting farmers in September 1936, as the country continued in the grip of The Great Depression. He builds his ethos in the beginning of his speech by speaking of his travels to affected areas, and underscores this idea with anaphora: "I saw drought devastation...I saw cattlemen...I saw livestock....I saw other farm families...",¹² to add to the idea that - like Long- he has a personal connection with, and concern for, those facing hardship. He also does this when beginning by addressing them as "My friends". But whereas Long's purpose was to galvanize, FDR's was more to reassure and, stylistically, to combine "the intimacy of the medium... with a great orator's sense of the poetic".¹³ Timothy Raphael observes that "The compelling narratives of Roosevelt's "chats"...eschewed facts and figures in favor of anecdotes and analogies",¹⁴ to bolster his credibility with those suffering during the depression. Roosevelt uses parallelism to underscore an emotional appeal when he follows up with a reflection on the personal qualities of "indomitable American farmers and stockmen and their wives and

children who have carried on through desperate days, and inspire us with their self-reliance, their tenacity and their courage." ¹⁵ He wants them to feel he acknowledges their struggles. Likewise, he says, "we are members one of another", a biblical allusion to a "New Testament description of a community of faith", ¹⁶ wherein all are connected, to inspire people to persevere, even in the face of struggle. I want students to make these connections between strategies and see how FDR "used radio messages as a way of connecting his audience, drawing together people" who might never actually meet, ¹⁷ while Long used it to "build a national following" and "bring new hope to people ground into poverty". ¹⁸

President John F Kennedy's speech on the early United States space program and Ronald Reagan's speech on the shuttle Challenger tragedy both address the issue of space exploration at different points in its history, but the core message is the same: the space program must continue, regardless of expense or difficulties encountered. Kennedy uses antithesis to contrast "change" and "challenge", "hope" and "fear", "cost" and "reward", "behind" and "forward", "easy" and "hard" to emphasize the direction he believes the space program must move: ahead. He makes reference to history to build his ethos, saying "This country was conquered by those who moved forward, and so will space". He concedes that the cost is high, but emphasizes the need to press onward as "we must be bold". Using rhetorical questions to make people think about "Why the moon?" he answers, employing more antithesis, that it's not because it is easy, but because it is hard. ¹⁹ Because Reagan is speaking to the pain of the nation, he uses the pronoun "we" several times to connect with his audience and include everyone in the collective mourning. He also uses antithesis at the beginning of his speech to juxtapose a past accident with the Challenger disaster, and also says that "we have forgotten the courage it took for the crew of the shuttle. But they...were aware", to make the point that even though this is an unprecedented tragedy, the crew knew the risks and accepted them. He contrasts "the fainthearted" with "the brave", ²⁰ implying that America must be brave, as the Challenger crew were. Peggy Noonan, who crafted the speech for the president, writes that it had to "make it clear to the children that life goes on" and "reassure the American people that the tragedy, though terrible, will not halt our efforts in space". ²¹ As Reagan said, "Nothing ends here-our hopes and our journeys continue." ²² I want students to see how the rhetoric of both presidents was crafted to convey a common message about national policy regarding space exploration, designed to comfort, reassure and engender support.

These will be followed by three sets of more contemporary speeches, showing different sides of current issues: President Obama's 2013 Immigration Reform Address, paired with Arizona Governor Jan Brewer's SB1070 Speech; Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa's "Pressing Urban Issues and the California Political Scene" (focusing on education) paired with Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal's Education Reform Speech on YouTube, and Senate Floor Speeches on Minimum Wage Legislation on YouTube from Senator Elizabeth Warren and Senator Ted Cruz ("The Minimum Wage Hurts the Most Vulnerable Among Us").

In their speeches on immigration reform, President Obama and Arizona Governor Jan Brewer both use repetition and appeals to ethos, pathos and logos to impart a sense of urgency regarding the issue, but I want students to see how these strategies ultimately convey a markedly different tone in each piece. Obama begins by appealing to pathos as he identifies with his audience and uses "goodwill and flattery to emotionally engage...by means of empathy", ²³ referring to them as "good friends" and acknowledging the mascot and principal of the school where he is speaking. He concludes his introduction by emphasizing the need for immigration reform, conveying urgency through repetition of the phrase "Now it she time". He goes on to acknowledge the system is "broken" but relates that others are willing to work with him "to welcome the striving, hopeful immigrants", setting a tone of acceptance and inclusiveness. He also repeats the word "stronger" to reinforce the impact he feels this will have on the economy and future of the country. He uses

repetition throughout the speech to emphasize "the important role of the immigrants in America and the necessity of a country and a politician who cares for them", ²⁴ the latter bolstering his ethos. He also builds his ethos when he lists the steps his administration has already taken to deal with the issue. He appeals to logic when he outlines the economic reasons leading up to his claim, which is "Congress must act", and referring to statistics about the scope of the problem. He ends with an emotional appeal, an anecdote about a man in the audience who benefited from legislation he signed, using him as a symbol representing all immigrants striving for better opportunities. ²⁵

In her speech on signing SB1070, Arizona's immigration legislation, Governor Jan Brewer also uses repetition of words to underscore her message, repeating "protecting our citizens" and "protecting our state" to reinforce her purpose in signing the legislation. Her word choice reflects the negative effects of illegal immigration in that state that she claims she is guarding against, such as "crime", "violence", "murderous greed" and "destruction". This emotionally charged word choice, paired with her position that the bill seeks to "solve a crisis we didn't create", sets up an urgent and somewhat defensive tone, as Brewer uses ethos, pathos and logos to support her position. She uses repetition to build her ethos, referring to her time in public service and her assertion that she has "worked without fail to solve problems diligently and practically...always with an eye toward civility, and always with the greatest respect for the rule of law", as well as how she has worked "to bring people together, no matter the color of their skin." She wants her audience to feel that she is always fair and they can trust her. She refers first to how she "listened patiently to both sides", then turns to an emotional appeal as she contrasts that with the "decades of federal inaction and misguided policy" she puts forward as her main reason for taking this action. She goes on to appeal to logic, outlining how she will ensure individual civil rights are protected, anticipating those who "have an interest in seeing us fail". She ends, once again, with repetition to emphasize what her beliefs are about the laws of Arizona ²⁶

When it comes to education reform, Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal have very different perspectives on which steps need to be taken to improve educational opportunities for America's children. Although they use similar rhetorical strategies, the ways in which they use them reflect these differences. Villaraigosa uses ethos, pathos, logos and repetition in ways that underscore his values, repeating, "I believe that people working together can change the world...I believe that in a democratic society...we have a responsibility to serve". He begins by using an emotional appeal to identify with his audience by acknowledging them and their work as members of the press, "doing what you believe in". This sets up a reference to the effects of Hurricane Katrina, in which he uses parallelism and repetition to make his point, "if you're flat broke or flat on your back, you may be flat out of luck in a time of serious jeopardy". He goes on to use a logical appeal as he lists statistics on poverty in America and talks about the work of the Mayor's Task Force on Poverty, Work and Opportunity and their recommendations for moving education reform to the front of national debate, which he lists in detail. Finally, he ends by appealing to ethos, stating "I say this as one who knows...Somebody gave me a second chance" to bolster his credibility to speak on the issue and underscore his point that everyone needs to work together to combat poverty through providing better educational opportunities ²⁷

In speaking on education reform to the Brookings Institution, Governor Jindal also uses appeals to ethos, pathos and logos, as well as repetition, in a speech framed with a series of anecdotes reflecting his belief (used to open his talk and appeal to the emotion of the audience) that "The United States of America does not provide equal opportunities in education". He emphasizes this by repeating "We do not" twice during his opening, as well as repeating "You do not have the resources" when referring to parents who cannot enroll

their child in a different school if "your child attends a failing school".

He uses words with negative, emotionally charged connotations, such as "scandalous" and "shameful" to describe the teachers unions that he believes are responsible for "stopping school choice from occurring all over the country". He claims that "Quality is driven by competition, accountability and autonomy". To support that claim, he relates a series of anecdotes that unify his argument, including stories about students who benefited from The New Orleans Scholarship Program and other programs which provide opportunities for school choice. Throughout these stories he weaves statistics that convey a logical appeal, emphasizing the numbers of students in Louisiana who have benefited from these programs and the growth of charter schools. He ends - as Villaraigosa did - by bolstering his ethos, saying "Neither should equal opportunity in education be considered an ideological issue...Equal opportunity in education should not be a conservative position, or a liberal position, it's an American position.", to leave the impression that his position is in the best interests of every American ²⁸

Texas Senator Ted Cruz and Massachusetts Senator Elizabeth Warren both gave speeches on the Floor of the US Senate on the issue of raising the minimum wage. Senator Cruz's speech came just before the Senate vote on the issue and Senator Warren's just after. As this is the last set of speeches we will look at together as a class, we'll be viewing them on YouTube without reading the transcripts, and focusing on how Warren and Cruz use persuasive rhetorical strategies to convey very different viewpoints to the same audience. Students will also think about their own opinions on the topic. As we begin, they will draw two t-charts in their casebooks (one for Warren and one for Cruz). On the left side they will record what "they say", and on the right side, what "I say" in response. This will help them think about the specific points each Senator is making and what evidence they're using for support, as well as their own reactions. When examining strategies, I want them to notice that both speakers use personal anecdotes about their parents to convey an emotional appeal, designed to persuade their colleagues to accept their very different positions. Warren also uses it to bolster her ethos, saying, "I know this story because it's my story", ²⁹ to get readers to accept her authority to speak because of her background and her personal interest in the issue. Both use statistics and facts about the history of the minimum wage to create a logical appeal, with Cruz using this to support his position that a minimum wage hike would put businesses out of work and create layoffs, using Burger King as an example, and also breaking down the unemployment rate by race, pointing out inequities. Meanwhile, Warren uses it to illustrate the numbers of Senators who voted for the legislation, to contrast them with the ones who created a filibuster to stop it from passing, which she calls "outrageous". Cruz uses visuals to underscore what he calls the "hard, brutal reality, of the Obama minimum wage", ³⁰ repeating "brutal reality" twice, for emphasis, and ends with another anecdote for emotional effect. Warren also uses repetition to emphasize her position that passing this raise is "a chance" that they shouldn't let "get away", because it's been "7 years" since the last minimum wage hike. ³¹ We will discuss which speech students found more persuasive, based on their notes and analysis, as well as discussing whether the issue of gender played any part in the effectiveness of the delivery or reception of the message. Students will also locate additional speeches (either in print or on YouTube) related to their individual topics to inform their writing, described below.

Writing

Using the pieces we've analyzed as models, and consulting their casebooks for evidence, in the following two weeks, each student will draft their own speech (min. 3 minutes) on one topic of their choice from their casebook, following a Writing Workshop model for drafting and revision. Additional digital tools, such as Wordle.net, will also be used for revision. They will begin by determining a real-world audience for their speeches, whether a group within the school or outside, to guide their choice of rhetorical elements/devices. We will utilize resources within the school who work with the community, to help students determine possible audiences for their work. During the final week, students will deliver their speeches to an audience of their peers (and their specific audience, if possible). We will also be Skyping with other classrooms to give them a wider audience for their work. The written speeches will be assembled in an anthology to develop student ownership of their writing.

Activities

First Activity: Print Ad Analysis: Identifying Rhetorical Devices

This is an activity designed to introduce students to the rhetorical devices they will be encountering in the speeches. It is repeated to introduce different terms throughout the unit, beginning the first week before students read Queen Elizabeth's Tilbury Speech. It gives students a deeper understanding of the devices and how they function in a familiar context (in advertising and newspaper and magazine headlines) and increases their ability to identify them at work in the world around them.

The Process

Choose the devices that will be emphasized in the study of each speech (a list of terms and definitions are provided in the Resources section). Before reading Queen Elizabeth's Tilbury Speech, ethos, pathos and parallel structure can be introduced, for example. Choose a print ad or newspaper or magazine headline that illustrates those devices. For example, in an ad for The Trust for Public Land, the speaker establishes their ethos when they assert that "The Trust for Public Land is protecting the places that make your community special";³² they are trying to convey that they have their audience's best interest at heart. They appeal to pathos with the picture of the smiling little girl that dominates three quarters of the ad. An ad for McDonalds utilizes parallel structure when it reads, "If it sizzles and crackles and it's coming from the kitchen, it's breakfast; If it melts and toasts and says "carpe this diem" it's breakfast, etc."³³ Find two or three examples of each device to show. To introduce each one, have students draw a triangle on a small whiteboard and discuss the elements of the rhetorical triangle (speaker, audience, topic, purpose and context) as they apply to the first ad. Identify the main claim, and then have them work in pairs to identify those elements for each piece, illustrating them on the triangle on their whiteboards. Once students have an understanding of how the elements are functioning, go back and look at the ads and/or headlines, focusing on one device at a time, explaining the meaning of the device and how it is used in the piece. Next, have students go through newspapers and magazines so everyone can find two additional examples of each device. They will put one example on a large piece of chart paper which will remain posted on the wall (one piece of chart paper for

each device), and one will go into their casebooks, along with the meaning in their own words and a quick summary of the effect. Finally, go around the room and have each student share the examples they found, explaining how and why they are used.

Second Activity: Speech Analysis Organizer

This activity is designed to give students a structured format for analyzing the speeches, so they have a process to follow. It will be introduced from the beginning of the unit, with the Queen Elizabeth and JFK speeches (after they have an understanding of the devices at work from the ad analysis activity) and will be repeated with each speech. This framework will help students develop confidence with analysis, so they can apply it to each piece we read, as well as future readings they encounter. It will also increase their ability to read a text closely, to connect method and meaning, and give them models to follow when they are composing their own speeches.

Process

To gather their impressions of the overall structure of a piece, students will read copies of the speech silently, making note of things that interest them, use of devices they notice from the pre-reading vocabulary, etc., as well as questions they have about the piece (students at each set of desks will assemble a "group list" of questions, as many of them are wondering the same things, so no one will be reluctant to ask a question). After discussing overall impressions and addressing questions, begin deconstructing the speech with students, looking at the relationship of the elements of audience, speaker, subject, purpose and context, just as when looking at the ads/headlines. Each group will have a marker board to draw a triangle with the rhetorical elements, which can be held up to check their understanding before beginning discussion. At various points, stop so each group can talk and make notes on post its to post on a chart on the whiteboard under the categories of Introduction, Appeals, Methods of Development, and Other Rhetorical Strategies, to have a master list which gives an overall idea of how each piece is developed. Next, students will use ideas from these master lists to complete an individual graphic organizer charting the development of each piece (divided by beginning, middle and end of the speech), categorized by each of the sections above. The ultimate goal is for students to have an understanding of the following elements for each piece:

1. What are the elements of the rhetorical triangle in this piece (audience, subject, speaker, purpose, and context)?
2. Introduction: How does the piece begin (quotation, anecdote, etc.)? How does the speaker draw you in?
3. What is the main claim? Are there any additional claims?
4. What are the methods of development? How does the writer get you from one place to another in the speech?
5. Which appeals are used and what are some examples?
6. Which other rhetorical/language devices are used and to what effect?
7. What other events or issues can you connect this speech to?

After each student creates their graphic organizer, project each of the questions above on a whiteboard or Smartboard and have them write a 2-3 paragraph analysis that synthesizes what they've learned. Debrief as a group, with students sharing their writing.

Third Activity: Persuasive Speech Peer Review

This activity gives students a structured format for reading their writing aloud and reflecting on changes they

want to make to convey their message, focusing on effective organization, word choice, and use of other rhetorical strategies. It will take place near the end of the unit, after students have studied all the speeches, researched their issues and written a first draft of their own speeches. Getting feedback from peers before writing a second draft gives them an opportunity to revise in a low-risk, no penalty situation.

Process

Arrange desks in pairs, so students are sitting in groups of two, facing each other. Pair each student who has finished a first draft of their persuasive speech with another in their writing group who has also finished a draft (any students who do not have a first draft will continue to work on their writing in an adjacent area of the room). Tell students to spend the first 10-15 minutes taking turns reading their writing aloud to each other; explain how they will notice different things when they read their writing aloud than reading silently. Tell them to listen to the sound of the words; allow a couple of minutes after each speech for students to respond to each other orally and write down things they notice and questions they have after reading and listening. Use a timer to help keep them on track. When they're finished, each person spends an additional two minutes each talking about the at least two things they like about their piece and two things they want to work on. Next, hand out the peer review feedback sheets, and go over the questions below, which they will respond to. Have them trade papers and read silently, answering each of the following on the paper provided:

1. Draw a rhetorical triangle for the piece, identifying the subject, speaker, audience, purpose and context.
2. How does the writer begin? What do they use to get your attention (anecdote, humor, quotation, etc.)?
3. Does the introduction give readers a sense of the writer's aim and plan? If so, what is it? If not, what can they do to accomplish that?
4. What issue drives this essay? What ideas does it explore? What is the writer's main claim? Write it down and also list any secondary claims.
5. What are the methods of organization and development the writer uses? How do they get from one place to another in the speech? List them below. Is this organization effective? If not, what can be done to improve the organization?
6. What evidence does the writer use (statistics, personal anecdotes, history, etc.)?
7. List examples of the appeals used. What is the effect? Do they help the writer make their case?
8. hos -
9. thos-
10. gos-
11. How does the writer treat those who would disagree with their claim? Is there a concession to opposing points of view?
12. What are the main rhetorical devices used (anaphora, parallelism, antithesis, etc.)?
13. Type the speech into Wordle and make note of any words that are shown as repeated often. Is it an effective use of repetition?
14. Color code the diction using colored pencils: red=powerful words; gold=sentences that should be kept; blue=hazy words or sentences that are unclear and should be revised; black=consider taking out
15. Are the sentences crafted effectively? Describe the rhythm of the sentences. Do they vary in length and structure? Do they work together to convey the writer's message? Read your favorite sentence aloud to the writer. Make note of any that could be revised for effect.
16. Are there any errors in grammar and usage? If so, mark them directly on the paper.
17. Finally, is the speech convincing? Does it make you think and/or influence your feelings about the issue? How?

When students have finished completing their peer reviews, have them trade reviews, get back in their writing groups and begin working on their second drafts, using the oral and written feedback they've received.

Appendix

Standards

The Oklahoma State Department of Education uses the PASS (Priority Academic Student Skills) Standards, which my district follows. This unit meets the following Reading/Literature Standards for 11th grade: 1.4 (through the Print Ad Analysis Activity, which requires students to expand their vocabularies by using context to understand the meaning of a variety of rhetorical devices), 2.1a, b, c and d (through the Speech Analysis Organizer, which requires students to analyze the organizational pattern of a variety of speeches, the author's position, and the devices the author uses to accomplish their purpose, and using note taking to transfer their understanding to a graphic organizer), 2.2.a and d (as students discuss the influence of the historical context on the content and strategies of the speech, making specific references to the text in their notes to support their interpretations), 4.4b and c (through the Speech Analysis activity, which requires students to analyze the structure of a variety of speeches, explaining how the organization and language affect the message, and 3.3a (through the Print Ad Analysis activity, which requires students to identify various rhetorical devices). The unit meets the following Research and Information Standards for 11th grade: 4.1a and b (through compiling 'casebooks' and reading and gathering information from a variety of sources), and 4.2e (through developing their speeches based on their research of their chosen issue). The unit meets the following Writing/Grammar/Mechanics and Usage Standards for 11th grade: 1.a,b,c,d and e (through the process of writing speeches, which requires students to develop an clear, well-reasoned argument through writing multiple drafts, being mindful of audience and purpose and editing to ensure clarity and standard usage), 1.6 (as students write their speeches, which requires them to structure their arguments in a persuasive way and support their claims with relevant examples) and 1.7 (as students give each other feedback on their writing, to strengthen content and style). The unit meets the following standards for Modes and Forms of Writing: 2.3a-e (through writing their speeches, which requires them to compose an effective persuasive composition which addresses opposing points of view). The unit addresses the following Oral Language/Listening and Speaking Standards: 1.1, 2 and 4 (through listening to the speeches of their peers, identify major ideas and supporting evidence and evaluate the message), and 2.1, 2, 3 and 5 (through delivering their speeches, which requires students to demonstrate an awareness of audience and purpose). Finally, the unit meets Visual Literacy Standard 1.1 (through the Ad Analysis activity, which requires students to interpret visual media as they apply the elements of the rhetorical triangle to print advertisements and headlines).

Rhetorical Devices

Parallelism – similarity of structure in a pair or series of related words, phrases, or clauses

Antithesis – the juxtaposition of contrasting ideas, often in parallel structure

Alliteration – repetition of initial or medial consonants in two or more adjacent words

Anaphora – repetition of the same word or group of words at the beginning of successive clauses

Climax – arrangement of words, phrases, or clauses in an order of increasing importance

Metaphor – implied comparison between two things of unlike nature

Simile – explicit comparison between two things of unlike nature

Personification – investing abstractions for inanimate objects with human qualities or abilities

Hyperbole – the use of exaggerated terms for the purpose of emphasis or heightened effect

Rhetorical question – asking a question, not for the purpose of eliciting an answer but for the purpose of asserting or denying something obliquely Irony – use of a word in such a way as to convey a meaning opposite to the literal meaning of a word Onomatopoeia – use of words whose sound echoes the sense Paradox – an apparently contradictory statement that nevertheless contains a measure of truth ³⁴

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