

Close Reading: Understanding the Appeals

About this Lesson

This lesson is intended to teach students that the appeals constitute one of the major strategies writers of persuasive texts use to influence their audience. The three appeals are *logos* (an appeal to logic), *pathos* (an appeal to emotions), and *ethos* (an appeal to the confidence of the audience in the speaker). Students will read an Internet ad and study the effect of the appeals on the strength of the argument. They will also answer guided questions that will help them identify the speaker, intended audience, purpose and claims, and the issues presented in the ad, before attempting to deconstruct the argument based on rhetorical strategies.

Passages for LTF[®] lessons are selected to challenge students while lessons and activities make texts accessible. Guided practice with challenging texts allows students to gain the proficiency necessary to read independently at or above grade level.

This lesson is included in Module 9: Understanding the Appeals.

Objectives

Students will

- analyze the use of the appeals in persuasive texts.
- determine how the strength of an argument is influenced by the appeals.
- identify speaker, audience, purpose, claim, and issues in a persuasive text.

Level

Grades Six through Ten

Connection to Common Core Standards for English Language Arts

LTF Foundation Lessons are designed to be used across grade levels and therefore are aligned to the CCSS Anchor Standards. Teachers should consult their own grade-level-specific Standards. The activities in this lesson allow teachers to address the following Common Core Standards:

Explicitly addressed in this lesson

Code	Standard	Level of Thinking	Depth of Knowledge
R.1	Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it. Cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.	Understand	III
R.2	Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.	Analyze	III
R.4	Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.	Analyze	III

R.5	Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.	Analyze	III
R.6	Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.	Analyze	III
R.8	Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.	Evaluate	III
R.10	Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.	Understand	II
L.3	Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.	Understand	II
L.6	Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.	Understand	II

Implicitly addressed in this lesson

Code	Standard	Level of Thinking	Depth of Knowledge
L.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.	Understand	I
L.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.	Understand	I

LTF Skill Focus

The foundation for LTF English lessons is the Skill Progression Chart that identifies key skills for each domain, beginning with grade 6 and adding more complex skills at each subsequent grade level while reinforcing skills introduced at previous grade levels. The Skill Focus for each individual lesson identifies the skills actually addressed in that lesson.

Levels of Thinking					
Remember	Understand	Apply	Analyze	Evaluate	Create
Close Reading <i>written, spoken, and visual texts</i>		Grammar <i>purposeful use of language for effect</i>		Composition <i>written, spoken, and visual products</i>	
Reading Strategies Annotation Determining Audience Determining Author's Purpose Inference Literary Elements Detail Tone tone determined through diction, imagery, detail, point of view, and syntax Literary Techniques Argumentation <i>claim</i> classification emotional appeals ethical appeals logical appeals unspoken assumptions Literary Forms Nonfiction				The Process of Composition Prewriting consideration of audience determination of purpose Structural Elements Body incorporation of quotes use of commentary use of evidence Conclusion	

Connections to AP*

For success on the AP Language Exam, students must be able to recognize the use of the appeals in a persuasive text and determine how their use influences the argument and the audience. Analysis of persuasive texts is a necessary skill required of all AP students.

**Advanced Placement and AP are registered trademarks of the College Entrance Examination Board. The College Board was not involved in the production of this material.*

Materials and Resources

- copies of the dog adoption ad
- copies of Student Activity

Assessments

The following kinds of formative assessments are embedded in this lesson:

- guided questions
- graphic organizers

Teaching Suggestions

Before attempting to show students how to deconstruct an argument based on rhetorical strategies, teachers must make sure that students realize that the appeals are created through the use of rhetorical techniques and devices. Students should be able to identify the appeals as they are used in persuasive texts, but equally important is that they have a clear sense of each appeal's intended *effect* in a persuasive text.

Answers

Answers for this lesson are subjective and will vary. To obtain the maximum benefit of the lesson, ask students to go beyond the expected responses.

Close Reading: Understanding the Appeals

Below is an Internet ad about adopting a rescued dog instead of buying a purebred dog. Read it carefully; then complete the activities that follow.



There is nothing in this world that will ever love you more unconditionally than a dog. And of all the dogs you could ever own, the most loving of all are those who once shared their lives with someone special and then lost them.

IF NOW IS THE TIME TO BRING A DOG INTO YOUR HOME, YOU ABSOLUTELY MUST KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BUYING A DOG FROM A BREEDER AND RESCUING A DOG FROM A DIRE SITUATION THAT ALL TOO OFTEN LEADS TO DEATH.

Loving eyes, a wet nose, and a tail that moves like a dune buggy antenna, any dog can give you love, but there's something about a RESCUE dog that's very different.

Don't Pay Hundreds Of Dollars To A Breeder Before Discovering What's Waiting Inside That Pen At Your Local Animal Shelter.

*The Dog Whose Life You Save Just Might End Up Repaying The Favor...
... This One Did:*

When 45-year-old Debbie Parkhurst started choking on a piece of food which had become lodged in her throat, no one was around to perform the Heimlich maneuver. But as she began to lose consciousness from lack of oxygen, her 2-year-old Golden Retriever leaped up, knocked the woman to the floor, and began jumping on her chest until the food became dislodged.

You can pay a lot of money for a Golden Retriever, but Debbie didn't. She had rescued "Toby" from a dumpster just a year earlier.

Dear Fellow Dog Lover,

Do you know there are thousands upon thousands of perfectly healthy and happy dogs living on "death row?" There is only so much room available in shelters, so if a dog does not get adopted after a short amount of time, many shelters will put the helpless animal to "sleep." "Sleep" is such a gentle word, but in this case it's a sleep that the unfortunate dog is never going to wake up from.

“Pre-owned” dogs are already socialized and house trained. Most of them have experienced a few “bumps in the road of life”, but that makes them all the more willing to take their place in a happy and loving home.

Full grown dogs require less training time than puppies. They are less likely to chew on shoes, carpets and furniture, and they are less expensive to acquire.

EVERY TIME SOMEONE ADOPTS A DOG FROM A RESCUE AGENCY OR THE LOCAL ANIMAL SHELTER, HE OR SHE IS NOT ONLY SAVING A CANINE LIFE, THEY ARE REDUCING THE OPPORTUNITY FOR PUPPY FARMS TO MAKE AN ILLICIT BUCK BY CHURNING OUT UNHEALTHY AND POORLY SOCIALIZED PUPPIES TO UNSUSPECTING BUYERS.

It’s not easy to resist the *puppy in the window*; but if you knew the story behind where that puppy most likely came from, and how high the odds are that you’re buying a mistreated and undernourished animal with a high probability of developing a serious disease down the road, you’d run away as fast as you could.

Adopting a dog is becoming more and more popular as people learn about the tragedies that befall poor dogs who cannot find a home. In fact, according to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), **somewhere between 10 to 20 percent of dogs in this country are adopted from shelters and rescue agencies or pounds.** That equates to around 3 to 4 million dogs a year that are adopted or rescued.

Some people think that adopting a dog is a poor choice because they are buying someone else’s headache. That’s just not true. Very rarely does a dog end up in a shelter because he or she had behavioral problems. The majority of shelter dogs were owned by people who could no longer take care of them for reasons that have nothing to do with the dog.

Don’t think of the animal shelter as a *thrift store* for dogs, think of it as a meeting place where quality dogs are waiting to find quality owners so dog and human can both live happily ever after!

Activity One: Determining Context for Evaluating an Argument

In order for speakers or writers to be effective in capturing the attention of their audiences and influencing opinions, they must first be aware of many issues. Many of these issues appear in the left-hand column below as questions. Considering these questions, carefully review the ad, looking for answers and supporting evidence from the text. Write your responses in the chart below.

Questions to evaluate the argument	Answer	Evidence from the text
What is the writer’s/speaker’s purpose? What does he/she hope to accomplish?		
Who is the audience?		
What assumptions about the audience does the writer/speaker make?		
What authority does the writer/speaker have that makes him/her credible?		
What claims does the writer/speaker make?		
What issues are addressed or ignored?		

Activity Two: Answering the “Short Answer” Question, Using a Chart Approach

When answering a “short answer” question, you must include both an ANSWER and EVIDENCE from the text to support that answer. Using a chart to separate the two parts of that answer may clarify exactly what needs to be included.

Questions to evaluate the argument	Answer	Evidence from the text
What is the writer’s/speaker’s purpose? What does he/she hope to accomplish?	To have audience consider adopting a rescued pet rather than buying a pure bred dog	“Don’t think of the animal shelter as a <i>thrift store</i> for dogs, think of it as a meeting place where quality dogs are waiting to find quality owners so dog and human can both live happily ever after!”

The answer to “What is the writer’s/speaker’s purpose?” might look something like this:

The writer of the ad wants the audience to consider adopting a rescued pet rather than buying a pure bred dog. He makes this clear when he writes, “Don’t think of the animal shelter as a *thrift store* for dogs, think of it as a meeting place where quality dogs are waiting to find quality owners so dog and human can both live happily ever after!”

This may feel cumbersome and wordy at first, but it is a clear place to begin. Sentences can be revised and edited to make them stylistically more appealing, but they must still include both an ANSWER and textual EVIDENCE. Following are some examples of revised short answer sentences.

The writer of the ad suggests that we “think of [the animal shelter] as a meeting place where quality dogs are waiting to find quality owners so dog and human can both live happily ever after!” hoping to influence the audience into considering adopting a rescued pet.

By suggesting that an animal shelter is “a place” that results in both dogs and humans living “happily ever after,” the writer expects the audience to consider adopting a rescued pet.

Now choose another question from the Activity One chart. Using the answers and evidence you have recorded in the chart, compose a response similar to the first one above which relies on the chart.

Now revise your response to create a more concise, powerful sentence, as in the examples on the previous page.

Activity Three: Classifying and Evaluating the Use of Appeals

One of the most effective and widely used rhetorical strategies is the use of appeals.

Emotional Appeal (Pathos): The audience feels emotions such as greed, love, fear, acceptance, guilt, anger, anticipation, disgust, joy, sadness, surprise, compassion, pity, empathy.

Logical Appeal (Logos): The audience thinks “logically” about the situation because the speaker/writer provides “proof” for the argument, such as facts, anecdotes, testimonials, assertions, or examples.

Ethical Appeal (Ethos): The audience can believe and trust in the speaker/writer because he/she is an expert, has experience, is in the same situation, or has the good of the audience at heart.

Complete the chart on the following page to show how the writer of the dog adoption ad uses the various appeals. Some of the answers have been provided for you.

Quotation	Type of Appeal	How does the appeal strengthen the argument?
“There is nothing in this world that will ever love you more unconditionally than a dog.”	Emotional (love)	Most people who have ever had a dog believe that this is true. The desire for unconditional love exists in almost everyone.
“Rescuing a dog from a dire situation that all too often leads to death.”	Emotional (compassion)	
	Emotional (_____)	
“Don’t pay hundreds of dollars to a breeder.”	Logical (fact)	In many cases, breeders do charge hundreds of dollars for puppies. Most people want to avoid spending too much money for a dog.
Full grown dogs require less training time than puppies.	Logical (assertion based on a logical assumption)	
	Logical (_____)	
“Dear Fellow Dog Lover”	Ethical	Using the word “fellow” creates a sense of connection to another. The writer is a dog lover and reaches out to other dog lovers who are just like him.

The final example in the chart above is the only real attempt to establish **ethos** in this ad. What could the writer have included that would have further established credibility?

Is the ad still effective? Why or why not?

Which appeal seems to be used most often?

Why might the speaker have chosen that particular appeal as the strongest for this subject?