

## Rhetoric ENG3U

### **“Organizing material for the presentation of truth”**

The study of rhetoric goes back to ancient Greece, when the ancients realized that presentation is as important as facts, or perhaps even more important. Rhetoric can refer to exaggerated or inflated talk, much like that which we hear in political speeches. That is because rhetoric refers to the art of persuasion through carefully crafted words. Rhetoric can be used as a negative term because it suggests that the speaker (or writer) is using words falsely, or inflating their words in order to sound important or to distract from the issue, instead of using "plain talk" to convey something.

On the other hand, crafted words don't have to be false words. You can say something you really do mean in an artful way. In literature specifically, that can be a good thing!

In literature, rhetoric is what convinces you to feel or think a certain way about a topic. It is the art of conveying a point in a convincing, eloquent, and effective way. Rhetoric is what makes some writing beautiful and other writing bland. Some examples of rhetorical devices are the use of metaphors, alliteration, symbolism, oxymoron etc.

**A Great Site:** “The Forest of Rhetoric” <http://rhetoric.byu.edu/>

Devices:

CLIMACTIC WORD ORDER *the arrangement of details in order of increasing importance*

PARALLELLISM *the use of successive verbal constructions in poetry or prose that correspond in grammatical structure, sound, meter, and meaning.*

METAPHOR *compare two things without using like or as*

JUXTAPOSITION *two things being placed together for contrasting effect*

ALLUSION *an indirect reference to a well-known person, event, thing, place or quality*

HYPERBOLE *extreme exaggeration*

PUN *a play on words; use words with the same sound but different meanings*

IMAGERY *use adjectives, adverbs, verbs, similes etc. to make an image in the reader's mind*

PARADOX *a statement that sounds self-contradictory or absurd but has an element of truth in it. Ex. Jumbo shrimp.*

SIMILE *a comparison which uses like or as*

PERSONIFICATION *the act of giving inanimate object living qualities.*

METONYMY: the substitution of the name of an attribute in place of the thing meant (suit for business executive)

REPETITION: the intentional repetition of words or concepts used for emphasis and rhythm.

SITUATIONAL IRONY *the opposite of what is expected occurs.*

RHETORICAL QUESTION *a question that is used for effect, not to obtain an answer.*

VERBAL IRONY *says the opposite of what is intended.*

ALLITERATION *the repetition of beginning consonant sounds in a sentence*

IDIOM *a group of words established by usage as having a meaning not deducible from those of the individual words: It's raining cats and dogs!*

APHORISM *a concise observation that contains a general truth (if it ain't broke, don't fix it).*

EMOTIVE WORDS (LOADED WORDS): strong adjectives used in persuasive texts for emotional appeal and to create bias

EUPHEMISM: milder words that replace harsh or blunt expressions.

AMPLIFICATION: repeat a word for emphasis (love, real love, takes time)

Anaphora: the repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of successive clauses

Repetition: the act of repeating something often for emphasis and rhythm

Imperative Voice: this voice is commanding, direct and instructional because it uses base verbs or simple present.

Exclamation: a remark expressing strong emotion or surprise

Imagery: using emotive language through adjectives, adverbs, strong verbs, similes, metaphors etc to paint an image in the reader's mind