

What Are Rhetorical Features?

Rhetorical features of a text are all the different aspects of the text that contribute to meaning. They are strategies, tactics, and choices that the author makes that help to convey his or her message. They are identifiable aspects of the text that “do” something.

Some Rhetorical Features: The following is a list of rhetorical features of texts and other things to keep your eyes open for when analyzing a text. This list is by no means exhaustive! However, it should help to get you thinking about how and why authors make the choices they do.

- **Repetition**
- **Diction** (word choice)
- **Connotation and Denotation**
- **Types of Evidence** (e.g. personal narrative, direct quotations, interviews, historical documents)
Remember when evaluating evidence to always consider if it is authoritative or not.
- **Methods of Persuasion** (e.g. appeal to emotion or appeal to logic)
- **Figurative Language and Specific Rhetorical Devices** (e.g. metaphor, simile, alliteration, synecdoche, alliteration, hyperbole, metonymy, personification, rhetorical question, symbolism)
- **Patterns**
- **Syntax**
- **Genre**
- **Form**—look at the visual form of the text as well as the genre. Also look at how the text is organized.
- **Point of View**
- **Tone**
- **Audience** (you want to consider what audience the author is targeting and how you can determine this from the choices he or she makes)