

RHETORICAL DEVICES

PROPAGANDA: planned effort to spread information in order to persuade

In Shakespeare's Julius Caesar, Mark Antony's funeral speech in Act III is an example of persuasive writing at its most effective. Persuasion is the use of language to influence people to behave in a certain way. Eloquence, the art of persuasion, was an important element of life during the Roman Empire. Why do you think that it was?

Here are 6 techniques that are frequently used in Julius Caesar by Brutus, Mark Antony, and Cassius.

1. Slogan: Short easy-to-remember phrase – often shows up on bumper stickers, campaign literature, etc.
2. Specific Evidence: detailed evidence and lots of it is necessary to back up any opinion.
3. Verbal Irony: words that seem to say one thing but actually mean the opposite. Antony says that Brutus is an “honorable” man, but he means the exact opposite. How can we tell? Listen to the *tone or emotion* as the character speaks.
4. Loaded Words: some words are loaded with powerful **connotations**, or emotional overtones and associations. The associations may be either positive or negative.
5. Repetition: Advertisers know that people tend to remember and eventually believe messages that are repeated. What messages in the campaign are repeated for effect? Is it effective? When does it become less effective?
6. Parallelism: repeated grammatical structures
7. Rhetorical Questions: questions requiring no answer because the answer seems obvious.
8. Euphemisms: “Telling it like it isn't” or substituting a pleasant term for a blunt one.
9. Hyperbole: Gross exaggerations for effect
10. Appeals to Self-Interest and Other Emotions: People can be made to care most about themselves, and everyone longs for a happier, “better” life. Consider the speeches of both Brutus and Marc Antony.

ACT III, Julius Caesar

This climactic act includes both the murder of Caesar and the speeches of Brutus and Antony. Please watch and listen carefully to the *content, delivery and effect* of both presentations.

Aristotle left us The Art of Persuasion model, which tells us that effective persuasion should contain the following:

ETHOS: credibility, morality of the speaker

PATHOS: appeal to emotion, feelings

LOGOS: appeal to logic, reason

PART I. ASSIGNMENT: Brutus

1. Give examples of ETHOS, PATHOS, AND LOGOS in Brutus's speech. Be sure to include specific language and cite the line.
2. Make a list of Brutus's mistakes.
3. Support or refute the idea that Brutus is "an honorable man."

PART II. ASSIGNMENT: Mark Antony

1. Give examples of ETHOS, PATHOS, AND LOGOS in Mark Antony's speech. Be sure to include specific language and cite the line.
2. Count the number of times Mark Antony says "honorable" and "ambitious." Analyze his tone as the speech progresses.
3. List examples of rhetorical devices used by Antony.
4. Is Mark Antony an "honorable" man?
5. Why is Antony's speech considered such a superb example of rhetoric?

PART III. ASSIGNMENT: Compare & Contrast Essay

Write an essay in which you compare and contrast the two speeches. What are the similarities? Differences? Does one work better than the other? Why or why not? Give specific examples to support your response.

PART IV. ASSIGNMENT: Write Your Own Speech😊

Choose one of the two speeches (either Brutus's or Antony's) and rewrite it. Can you make it better? 😊